

He's A Good, Good Father!**Pastor Mark Scarr****Matthew 3:13-17**

Starter: This Sunday was Father's Day, and the sermon focused on the role of fathers in families. Pastor Mark did acknowledge that while today can be a celebration for those with good relationships with their fathers, it can also be a challenge for many due to difficult circumstances with their own fathers. But when a father has sometimes fallen short, other men can step up in his place. Have group members share a memorable characteristic, moment or story about their father and/or an important man in their lives.

Discussion points:

1. Pastor Mark used the Chris Tomlin song, "Good, Good Father" as his inspiration for the sermon, focusing on the goodness of God. Pastor Mark also acknowledged that we, as men and women, often base our view of God the Father on our earthly, imperfect, fathers. Have group members discuss how we allow our own experiences, whether we are in a good or difficult relationship with our fathers, to colour our view of God. Point out that we should not get our view of God from a painful or imperfect past, but from the pages of Scripture.
2. Have group members read through the Scripture verses for the sermon, Matthew 3:13-17, as well as Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, and John 1:32-34. Have group members discuss how these Scriptures focus on both aspects of Sunday's service: the fatherhood of God, and the importance of water baptism.
3. Have group members read through the "Three Characteristics of A Good Father," (meaningful) attention, (consistent) affection, and (generous and sincere) affirmation, as well as the core needs to be noticed, loved and celebrated. Have group members share practical ways they can display these three characteristics, and discuss why these are important not only for fathers, but mothers too, as well as for Christians in general when interacting with family and friends.

Diving Deeper: Pastor Mark concluded by encouraging fathers, and every Christian, to cultivate an environment where you can practice all three characteristics of a good father. But he also acknowledged that some men, and some Christians in general, do not themselves have the core needs of being noticed, loved, and celebrated being met in their own lives. Encourage group members that God can and will meet these needs in each Christian. Have group members listen to and sing along (if they're comfortable) to the Chris Tomlin song, "Good, Good Father," and pray for each group member, and especially any fathers in the group.