

Famous Prayers Unpacked

— 26 five-minute stories —

exploring The Lord's Prayer and the
prayer of St Francis



Ideal for
KS2

Brian Sears

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.
Now and for ever. Amen*

The prayer of St Francis

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy;*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

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Introduction

In this book you will find 26 read-aloud stories based on the character of Tom Wetherby, a young boy who enjoys the kind of everyday adventures recognized by children everywhere. There are 13 stories to help explore the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and 13 to help explore the themes of the prayer for peace, widely attributed to St Francis of Assisi. Each of the stories links into a phrase from these famous prayers.

The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer is the model of prayer that Jesus taught to his disciples. In the Gospels it can be found in Matthew 6:9–13 and Luke 11:2–4. It is a great encouragement for a teacher when he or she is asked by a class or a group to teach them something special. How pleased Jesus must have been when his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' Their request was the prompt for the prayer that is now prayed by thousands of people every day. Something of the meaning contained in this wonderful prayer is unpacked for children through Tom's adventures. The prayer is presented in modern language, but traditional language can be substituted if children are more familiar with that version.

The prayer of St Francis

St Francis was born in Assisi, Italy, in 1182, around the time that Robin Hood is thought to have been living in Sherwood Forest, England. After a carefree youth, Francis turned his back on his inherited wealth and committed himself to God. Like many early saints, he lived a very simple life of poverty and, in so doing, gained a reputation for being the friend of animals. He established the rule

of St Francis, which exists today as the Order of St Francis, or the Franciscans. He died in 1226, aged 44. His prayer includes many of the biblical truths that uphold Christian values, so even if Francis did not pray this prayer line by line, he certainly practised it and it has come down to us as a pattern to follow.

Bible links and follow up

Each story is accompanied by an appropriate Bible link, suggesting which Bible passage or story might best be used in conjunction with the phrase of the prayer being explored. Follow-up material for the assembly or classroom includes ways to help children to:

- ★ get to grips with the story
- ★ express the story
- ★ own the story
- ★ live out the story

The stories can be used in collective worship and assemblies, PSHE and Circle Time, as an aid to the teaching of RE, or purely for enjoyment at story time.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven

Some grandad

Bible link

When Jesus had finished praying, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his followers to pray.' So Jesus told them, 'Pray in this way:

Our Father in heaven...

LUKE 11:1–2a AND MATTHEW 6:9a



As Tom Wetherby has grown older, he has found out more and more about his grandad. He has found out, for example, that Grandad Wetherby used to be in the Air Force. Grandma showed Tom the medals his grandad had been awarded.

'He flew planes for the RAF,' she told him. 'He was promoted to Group Captain,' she added proudly. Tom thought that sounded grand: Group Captain Wetherby.

'But I shall still call him Grandad,' said Tom.

Then it turned out that Grandad had been an athlete, a long-distance runner. He had won a 10,000 metres race for the county where they still lived. Grandma showed Tom more medals and some cups from when Grandad had been a lot younger.

Another thing was Grandad's work. He had been a manager and then managing director at a local firm. There had been a big article in the paper when the firm was awarded the Queen's award for exports. Tom had read all about it and taken the cutting to school. Now Grandad was retiring and he had been invited to a garden party with the Queen at Buckingham Palace. What a famous, important grandad!

It was typical of Grandad that on the day of the garden party he arranged to give Tom a treat as well.

'I can't take you with me to the palace for the tea party, but we'll go sightseeing first and then you can come home with your father when he finishes at the office.' Tom couldn't wait. A day in London with Grandad to himself!

When the day came, Grandad Wetherby was all dressed up in his best suit, fit for the Queen. He was full of information and stories about London. Tom listened, enjoying every moment. After dinner, grandad and grandson arrived at the Tower of London. A zigzag path took them down a steep slope towards a car park. It was then that Tom spoiled the day. He took it into his head to take a short cut, leaving the path and going straight down the steep, grassy slope, in spite of the warning signs.

'No, Tom!' shouted Grandad, but it was too late. The steepness of his chosen route made Tom's legs work faster and faster until they were out of control. Tom lost his footing and tumbled head over heels to crash on the grey tarmac. The last glimpse that Tom saw before unconsciousness swept over him was of Grandad, in spite of his best suit, leaping down the same slope that had been too much for Tom.

When Tom regained consciousness, the first thing he saw was that best suit of Grandad by the side of his hospital bed. Grandad squeezed his hand and winked.

‘Shouldn’t you be with the Queen?’ murmured Tom.

‘Never mind about that. It’s much more important to get you right. There’s quite a bump on your head, so I’ll just sit here with you until your dad arrives from his office.’

Just before he went off to sleep again, Tom thought about that. Grandad thought it was more important to be with his grandson—his silly grandson who hadn’t kept to the path—than to be at Buckingham Palace.

‘That’s my grandad all over,’ thought Tom.

Helping children get to grips with the story

- ★ Even though God, our Father in heaven, is not mentioned in the story, which character has most to teach us about what God is like?
- ★ Which character has most to teach us about what we are like?
- ★ Did Tom find out about his grandad all at once? How did he build up his knowledge?

Ways for children to express the story

- ★ Write or tell a story called ‘Not doing as I was told’.
- ★ Draw a picture of Tom tumbling down the slope.

Helping children to own the story

- ★ What mistakes did Tom make? Do we make those kind of mistakes?
- ★ How can we build up our picture of what God is like?

Ways for children to live out the story

- ★ Talk to someone you trust about their beliefs in God.
- ★ What are some of the things you already know about God?
- ★ Is God only in heaven? What do you think about heaven?

Ideal for
KS2



Meet Tom Wetherby, a young boy who enjoys the kind of everyday adventures recognized by children everywhere.

Famous Prayers Unpacked uses the adventures of Tom and his family and friends to explore, a phrase at a time,

two well-known and well-loved prayers: the Lord's Prayer and the prayer for peace, widely attributed to St Francis of Assisi. There are 13 stories about Tom to help explore the meaning of The Lord's Prayer and 13 stories to help explore the themes of the prayer for peace.

The stories can be used in collective worship and class assemblies, PSHE and Circle Time, as an aid to the teaching of RE, or just for enjoyment at story time.

Alongside each story, there is a suggestion for an appropriate Bible link, designed to show where a Bible passage might best be used in conjunction with each phrase of the prayer. There is also simple, thought-provoking follow-up material for the assembly or classroom, including ways to help children to:

- ★ get to grips with the story
- ★ express the story
- ★ own the story
- ★ live out the story

'I really enjoy your stories. They really wake me in the morning and make me jolly. I also think it's clever how you can make stories out of prayers. Thank you for coming. I look forward to when you next come in.'

IAN, LITTLE GREEN JUNIOR SCHOOL, CROXLEY GREEN, HERTS

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