

# TENT PRAYERS

## Who is Jesus?

### What is this all about?

An introduction to who Jesus is. Every day the campers look at a part of the gospel where one side of Jesus' character is shown. It starts with him as a good teacher, then a miracle maker, then a human being, then a creator, then a saviour. It allows them time and space to discuss who they think he is.

### Who is it suitable for?

	None	Some	Lots
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of faith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church experience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	13, 14	15, 16	17, 18
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Overview of the days please!!

- Sunday : Get to know each other
- Monday : Jesus, the great teacher
- Tuesday : Jesus, the miracle maker
- Wednesday : Jesus, the human
- Thursday : Jesus, the saviour
- Friday : Jesus, the creator
- Saturday: Who is Jesus to you?

# TENT PRAYERS

## Advice for leading Tent Prayers (1/2)

### What is the point of Tent Prayers?

A successful tent prayers provides campers with the opportunity to get to know you and each other, to discuss their faith with each other in a friendly and fun environment and to learn together and from each about God.

### Five handy hints

#### (1) Meet in a TOP place (Together, Out of the tent and Private)

- *Together*: Find a place where everyone feels part of one single group. I would recommend sitting in one circle so that everyone can see each other. It helps if everyone is sitting on the same level (avoid having some on the floor and some on seats). Try not to have anything in the middle of the group like a table (feel free to rearrange the any of the marquees to make the right space for your group).
- *Out of the tent*: Definitely leave the tent. A tent is a bad place to have tent prayers. Campers can't really see each other very well and they get really distracted with their belongings. They also tend to fall asleep! Even if it's raining, don't be tempted to meet in the tent. Take some chairs out of the chapel or main marquee and put them up in field. Or meet in the chapel, lounge, teaside or main marquee.
- *Private*: Try to find a space not too near another group so that your campers will be able to talk in private and won't be too distracted by each other!

#### (2) Prepare

Prepare what you are going to do in advance. Decide at the beginning of the week which tent leader is going to take responsibility for leading each day. In preparing, you can use the material in this booklet. Everything marked with an **R** is recommended, everything marked **O** is optional. You will need to think what is most appropriate for your campers. You will not have time to do everything!

#### (3) Stop talking!

As much as possible get the campers talking. Ask them what *they* think, ask them what *they* think of what each other has said. If you are not leading the session, try not to talk at all!!

#### (4) Be yourself

Be yourself with the campers. If you want the campers to share their personal stories and views, then you need to lead by example (without talking too much!!)

#### (5) Have fun and let it flow

You're not at school. And even if you were, people learn better if they're enjoying themselves! Having banter and playing games are a critical part of tent prayers – not a waste of time!! Also don't worry too much about covering all the material you have planned if the campers get into a debate or discussion. It is fine to go where the energy is.

# Advice for leading Tent Prayers (2/2)

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Do I have to use all the time?**

A: No, definitely not. It is much better to have a really good 15 minute session, than a 30 minute session that drags. However, if you find time is dragging I would encourage you to spend the extra time playing games or walking to the beach together as then you are getting to know each other!

**Q: How do I get them out of bed?**

A: First of all, expect them to get out of bed. Expect them to do what you say. You are their authority figure and they will tend to do what you say, if you make it clear that you expect them to. However if you appear unsure whether they will do what you say, then they will realise that and not do it. On this basis, tell them what you want them to do and then assume they will do it. When it comes to getting out of bed, give them advance notice of what you expect them to do: i.e. when and where you expect them to be. (You can give them a choice about where they want tent prayers to be – but not in the tent!!) Having told them to get up, try not to hover over them. If you hover, they will feel that you don't believe they are going to do what you say. If they are being very slow go back and tell them once – act amazed that they haven't got up. If they continue to take ages get some 1 on 1 time with them afterwards, ask why they were so late and explain that it is important that they are there on time. If you have any problems here, talk to a Cheese

# TENT PRAYERS

## Sunday: Get to know each other (1/2)

### AIM OF THE SESSION

- Get to know each other a little. Help the campers to feel comfortable with each other and with you by getting them talking (about anything!!)
- Explain what you will be doing in Tent Prayers each morning.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

#### R Get together

- Get everyone together in a TOP place (Together, Out of the tent and Private)
- Explain that you have until breakfast at 9am to have a bit of time to get to know each other.

#### R Get to know each other

- Find out a bit about each other. One way to do this is to 'Go round the circle' (described below)

#### 'Go round the circle:'

- Go round the circle asking everyone to say: (leaders should do this too)
  - Their name
  - Where they come from
  - Their favourite TV show as a kid (alternatively their yuckiest food, best dream, ideal job)
- Go round the circle again asking everyone to say: (leaders should do this too)
  - Whether they've come to camp before
  - How they ended up coming this time
  - What they want to get out of the week

#### O Play a game

- If appropriate play a game. It helps to lighten the tone. (I would strongly recommend it – I found it worked with all the boys tents I ever led and girls aren't that different really, are they?!!!!).

#### Possible games (all explained in more detail in the appendix)

- Yee-ha
- 'Question, Question'
- Monkey Fight
- The 'Yes, No game'
- Call my bluff

# TENT PRAYERS

## Sunday: Get to know each other (2/2)

### R Explain Tent Prayers

- Explain that you'll be meeting every day at 8.30 for Tent Prayers.
- Explain what the point of Tent Prayers is – a chance to get to know our tent and to discuss together some of our thoughts about God.
- Ask them if they would be interested in leading it themselves and say you will be asking one of them later today if they would like to lead it tomorrow. (don't forget to do this!!)

### O Read a Bible Verse

- You may want to use a bible verse to illustrate how the aim of tent prayers and camp as a whole is to find out about God

#### Verses about finding out about God



- Luke 19 v1-4: Zacchaeus was prepared to climb a tree to find out about Jesus. Camp is a great opportunity to 'climb a tree'
- Matthew 7 v7: This passage tells us to you Ask and it will be given, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened. Camp is great chance to have a go at asking, seeking and knocking.

### O Find out where you're all at

- You may want to take a moment to find out where you campers are at in their faith. The best way to do this is to use an appropriate analogy which gives everyone an opportunity to say where they are. The football analogy below works well with boys, but there are plenty of others.
  - The Football Analogy: One way to think about faith is think about a football pitch. On a football pitch, you've got your strikers (who are zooming around, everything going well – they might score at any moment). You've got your midfielders (who are doing pretty well too, they're just a bit further back from the strikers but they also might score). You've got your defenders (who are much further back from the action, but they have moments when they get further forward, and they are on the pitch). You've also got the substitutes who are not on the pitch. And then there's the supporters who aren't in a team and aren't likely to get on the pitch. If the strikers are people who feel very strongly about their faith in God, the midfielders less so etc, etc, where would you put yourself?
  - You can also use a train station analogy (are you on the train, thinking of getting on the train, buying a ticket, thinking of buying a ticket, in the car park, at home etc.). There are lots of others – feel free to be imaginative.
- Explain the analogy and give everyone a chance to say where they are at. Make sure you say where you are at. Don't start with the keenest bean otherwise campers will feel that they have to say they are doing brilliantly with God and will be embarrassed to say otherwise. The key thing is to get them opening up about this stuff just a little!

### R Close

- One of the leaders should say a short prayer.
- Then remind everyone about the morning session and dash off to breakfast!

Props: Big piece of paper, a pen.

## Monday: Jesus, the great teacher (1/2)

### R Have a chat

- Take time to ask how people slept and what they thought of yesterday
- There is no need to hurry through this bit – it is important to get to know each other

### O Play a game

- If appropriate play a game. For possible games, see the appendix.

### R Discuss different views of who Jesus is

- ? Ask the campers to think of views that people have of who Jesus is and then share them with the group (you might want to give them a moment to think about it). You might want to write these views down on one big piece of paper.
  - Then explain that in tent prayers you're going to take some time to look at who Jesus is, starting with the view of him as a great teacher

### O Thinking about Jesus as a great teacher

- ? Ask the campers why people might think of Jesus as a great teacher?
  - ? Ask them to get into twos and think of two of the most famous examples of Jesus' teaching. Give them a moment, then ask them to share them with each other. (Again you might want to write these down on a piece of paper). Why did they pick those ones?

### R Looking at some of Jesus' teaching



Get the campers to read Matthew 5 vs .38 -42 ('turn the other cheek')

- Discuss what they think of this passage
  - Possible Questions
    - ? What do you think Jesus is saying?
    - ? What is going on in Israel at the time Jesus is teaching this? Is it a time of peace and happiness?
    - ? Why do you think Jesus thinks this?
    - ? Is this applicable today?
    - ? How would this work at school?
    - ? Is it practical? Some background:

Jesus is not living during a time of peace and tranquillity. Israel is full of conflict. The Jewish people have been conquered by the Romans and they are living under occupation. Many Jews are considering revolting against the Romans. Some of them think God wants them to militarily defeat the Romans. This makes what Jesus is saying even more demanding and radical.

Props: Big piece of paper, a pen.

## TENT PRAYERS

### Monday: Jesus, the great teacher (2/2)

#### O Explain an alternative view of the passage

- One alternative view of this passage is rather clever. It suggests that Jesus is teaching passive resistance.
  - Take verse 39: (You may want a volunteer to help you act this out!) There are two main ways to hit someone on the cheek: you can punch them striking them on **their** left cheek (assuming the attacker is right handed), or you can slap them backhand on **their** right cheek. In Jewish culture, the respected way of hitting someone was the latter – a backhanded slap on the right cheek said that the victim was unimportant and below the attacker. Punching on the right cheek was seen as a lower-class way of fighting – it brought the attacker down to the level of the victim. One way of reading what Jesus is saying here therefore is, “If someone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other cheek – this forces them to only be able to punch you which is to their embarrassment. Thus without violence, it stops the conflict.
  - Take verse 40: In Jewish culture, nudity was seen as embarrassing for the person who saw the naked person, not for the naked person. Therefore to offer your shirt when sued for your coat would be to put the person suing you in a n embarrassing position. Again without violence, it would stop the conflict.
  - Verse 41: Under Roman law, a Roman soldier could legally force a Jewish citizen to carry his load up to one mile. However if he forced the citizen to carry his load beyond one mile he could be court-martialled. Therefore to offer to carry the load further than a mile would be to put the soldier at risk. Again without violence, it stops the conflict.

?

- What do the campers think of this interpretation?

#### O Pray

- If there is time and it is appropriate you might want to ask if the campers want to pray about anything. There are different ways you can do this.

##### Possible ways to pray

- Say you're all going to pass around an object to the left and when you have it in your hand you can say a prayer either out loud or in your head
- Ask the campers if there is anything they think it would be good to pray for and then either the leaders or a couple of the campers could pray these things

#### R Close

- If you haven't prayed already, one of the leaders should say a short prayer.
- Then remind everyone about the morning session and dash off to breakfast!

Props: Big piece of paper, a pen.

## TENT PRAYERS

### Tuesday: Jesus, the miracle maker (1/2)

#### R Have a chat

- Take time to ask how people slept and what they thought of yesterday
- There is no need to hurry through this bit – it is important to get to know each other

#### O Play a game

- If appropriate play a game. For possible games, see the appendix.

#### R Reminder of yesterday's tent prayers

- Ask the campers what you did yesterday in tent prayers

#### O Thinking about Jesus as a miracle maker

- Explain that one of the things that makes Jesus more than just a great teacher is his miracles
- Ask the campers why people might think of Jesus as a miracle maker?
- What views would you get at school if you asked people about whether Jesus was a miracle maker?
- Ask them to get into twos and think of two of the most famous examples of Jesus' miracles. Give them a moment, then ask them to share them with each other. (Again you might want to write these down on a piece of paper). Why did they pick those ones?

#### R Looking at one of Jesus' miracles



Get campers to read out Mark 2 vs 1-12 'Jesus heals the paralytic

- Discuss this passage.
  - Possible Questions
    - How hard would it have been for the men to get their friend to Jesus?
    - Why do the men make such an effort to get their friend to Jesus?
    - In Verse 5 we see Jesus' response to the paralysed man. He forgives his sins. He doesn't heal him until later (to some extent, only to make a point to the pharisees). Can you imagine how weird this must have seemed to everyone standing round watching and especially to the friends who had carried the paralysed man for miles to get healed. Why do you think Jesus does this first? (Hint: What does it say about Jesus' priorities)
    - Have you ever heard of a healing like this one? Do you think they happen nowadays?
    - How is Jesus able to do these sort of miracles do you think?

Props: Big piece of paper, a pen.

## TENT PRAYERS

### Tuesday: Jesus, the miracle maker (2/2)

#### R What does it mean that Jesus claims to be able to forgive sins?

- Explain: The Pharisees in verse 6 are knowledgeable Jewish teachers. They know clearly that only God can forgive sins (verse 7).
- Discuss: What does it mean then that Jesus is prepared to forgive sins?

By forgiving the paralytic man's sins, many theologians believe that Jesus is claiming to be God.

#### O Pray

- If there is time and it is appropriate you might want to ask if the campers want to pray about anything. There are different ways you can do this.

##### Possible ways to pray

- Say you're all going to pass around an object to the left and when you have it in your hand you can say a prayer either out loud or in your head
- Ask the campers if there is anything they think it would be good to pray for and then either the leaders of a couple of the campers could pray these things

#### R Close

- If you haven't prayed already, one of the leaders should say a short prayer.
- Then remind everyone about the morning session and dash off to breakfast!

Wednesday Tent Prayers do not always happen. If there is no time, then move straight on to Thursday's recommended activities.

## TENT PRAYERS

### Wednesday: Jesus, the human being

#### R Have a chat

- Take time to ask how people slept and what they thought of yesterday
- There is no need to hurry through this bit – it is important to get to know each other

#### O Play a game

- If appropriate play a game. For possible games, see the appendix.

#### R Reminder of yesterday's tent prayers

- Ask the campers what you did yesterday in tent prayers

#### O Thinking about Jesus as a human being

- Explain that we often forget that Jesus is 100% human as well as being 100% God. This means that Jesus was in many ways just like us – he had armpit hair, could have a bad hair day, could wake up with sleep in his eye, could burp and even fart.



Is it hard to remember that Jesus was a human being?



#### R Looking at Jesus' human side



Get campers to read out John 11 vs 1-3, 17, 32-36, 38-44 ('The Death of Lazarus')

- Discuss this passage.
  - Possible Questions
    - What do you make of the fact that Jesus wept when he heard that Lazarus was dead?
    - Why do you think he wept when he knew he could raise him from the dead?
    - We sometimes forget that Jesus was human and think of him as some sort of 'superman'. Why is it so hard for us to remember that he was as human as you are?
    - Does it make a difference to you that Jesus is 100% human – that he has human emotions: that he cries and that when on earth he had close friends?

#### O Pray

- If there is time and it is appropriate you might want to ask if the campers want to pray about anything. There are different ways you can do this.

##### Possible ways to pray

- Say you're all going to pass around an object to the left and when you have it in your hand you can say a prayer either out loud or in your head
- Ask the campers if there is anything they think it would be good to pray for and then either the leaders or a couple of the campers could pray these things

#### R Close

- If you haven't prayed already, one of the leaders should say a short prayer.
- Then remind everyone about the morning session and dash off to breakfast!

# TENT PRAYERS

## Thursday: Jesus, the saviour (1/2)

### R Have a chat

- Take time to ask how people slept and what they thought of yesterday
- There is no need to hurry through this bit – it is important to get to know each other

### R Reminder of yesterday's tent prayers

- ? Ask the campers what you did yesterday in tent prayers

### R Why focus on Jesus' death?

- ? (without giving away that you are about to focus on his death!) Ask campers what they think is the most important action of Jesus' life and why?



Get the campers to read Matthew 12 vs 38-40

- ? What does Jesus mean by the 'sign of Jonah'?
- ? What does Jesus mean in this reading then?

Jesus is referring to his death and resurrection. As Jonah was 3 days in the whale, he will spend 3 days in the earth (dead!), then like Jonah he will return.

He means that the sign that he is speaking the truth will be his resurrection. If we want God to show us a sign that he is real, then the resurrection is the key sign

### O How do we know Jesus rose from the dead?

- ? Ask the campers what other theories might be and what they think of them.

A number of different theories have been put forward, but they all have real flaws:

#### Theory

#### Flaws

(1) Jesus was never dead

having  
3 hours?

The Romans clearly thought he was

How did he move the big rock across his tomb  
been flogged and hung on a cross for

How would he convince the disciples he was the  
conqueror of death – he would have looked terrible!

(2) The disciples stole the body

How would they get past the guard on the tomb?  
Why would they go to their deaths for a lie?

(3) The Romans or Pharisees  
stole the body

Why didn't they just produce the body then to prove  
that he was not risen from the dead when his  
followers started saying that he was risen?

"When you remove the non-credible options, whatever you have left – no matter how incredible – must be the truth" [Arthur Conan Doyle] The most credible view in my opinion

# TENT PRAYERS

## Thursday: Jesus, the saviour (2/2)

### O What does it mean that Jesus rose from the dead?

- Get a camper to read Mark 15 vs 33-38 ('The death of Jesus')
- Discuss the passage. Possible questions
  - What strikes you in this passage?
  - Why does Mark decide to tell us about the curtain ripping in two?
  - Why does Jesus feel abandoned by God?

One eminent theologian (Karl Barth) has suggested that Jesus feels forsaken because he has the sin of the world on him at this moment. This sin has separated him from his Father for the first time in his life. Therefore he feels forsaken.

The curtain divided the main area of the temple from the holiest area known as the 'holy of the holies'. Only the holiest priest was allowed in here. When Jesus dies, the fact that the curtain has torn in two, means that anyone can go into the holiest area and meet with God.

### O Pray

- If there is time and it is appropriate you might want to ask if the campers want to pray about anything. There are different ways you can do this.

#### Possible ways to pray

- Say you're all going to pass around an object to the left and when you have it in your hand you can say a prayer either out loud or in your head
- Ask the campers if there is anything they think it would be good to pray for and then either the leaders of a couple of the campers could pray these things

### R Close

- If you haven't prayed already, one of the leaders should say a short prayer.
- Then remind everyone about the morning session and dash off to breakfast!

Props: Piece of paper and pen for each camper and leader.

## TENT PRAYERS

### Friday: Jesus, the creator (1/2)

#### R Have a chat

- Take time to ask how people slept and what they thought of yesterday
- There is no need to hurry through this bit – it is important to get to know each other

#### R Reminder of yesterday's tent prayers

- ? Ask the campers what you did yesterday in tent prayers

#### O Thinking about creation

- Tell the campers that you're going to spend a bit of time thinking about creation. Ask the campers to spend a few moments in silence looking around at the beauty of creation. Warn them that afterwards, you are going to ask them what strikes them as particularly beautiful about creation. (You may want to take them down to the beach for a little walk for this)
- ? Ask the campers what struck them as particularly beautiful about creation?
- ? Ask the campers if there is one place in the world that they think is most beautiful – maybe somewhere they have been or somewhere they would most like to go? What is it about it that makes them think it is beautiful?

#### R Jesus as creator

- ? Ask the campers to take a moment (without telling you or anyone) to think where they think Jesus was while the world was being created?



Ask one of the campers to read 1 Colossians v 15-17

- ? Where was Jesus when the world was created? What was he doing?
- ? Are they surprised?
- ? Does it make a difference to how they imagine Jesus?

#### R So ... who is Jesus?

- Take some time to reflect with the campers on what you have looked at in Tent Prayers this week
- ? Ask them what sides of Jesus' character they have seen? (e.g., great teacher, miracle maker, human being, saviour, God, creator etc.)
- Hand each camper (and leader!) a piece of paper and a pen and ask them to draw a picture that represents Jesus to them. (Drawing is a good way to get them to think using a different part of their brain, so I would recommend drawing if they will stomach it. However, if you think they will feel really uncomfortable with this, you can give them the option of writing themselves a letter describing Jesus). Tell them that you are going to ask them to share their pictures (or letters) with each other if they want to.  
Ask the campers to share and explain their pictures (or letters)

# TENT PRAYERS

## Friday: Jesus, the creator (2/2)

### O Take time to pray for each other

- It is great to make time to pray for each other about heading back home. If there is not time to do this on Friday, I would strongly recommend doing this on Saturday morning (you can get up early before set down!)
- There are two obvious ways to do this
  - Give one camper (and leader) the chance to share the things they would like prayer about leaving camp. Then a few of you pray for that person. Then go clockwise to the next person.
  - Get two or three campers/leaders to share the things they would like prayer for. Then the rest of the tent pray for those three people. Then move on to the next three people.
  - Ask everyone to share some things they would like prayer for. After everyone has shared ask the everyone to pray for the person on their left all at the same time. (it is worth telling people before sharing that they will be praying for the person on their left, then they will make the effort to remember what this person has said!!)

### R Close

- If you haven't prayed already, one of the leaders should say a short prayer.
- Then remind everyone about the morning session and dash off to breakfast!

## Appendix: Games

### 1 Yee-Haw

- Everyone plays at once
- Great fun – but easier to explain face to face! Ask Jonny Hopper or Mikey Walker to explain it to you

### 2 Question, Question

- Two people play at a time
- Person 1 asks Person 2 a question. Person 2 needs to respond with a question (that makes sense as a response!). Person 1 has to then respond to that with a question, etc.etc.
- The first person not to be able to respond with a question that makes sense as a response without pausing for too long loses!
- Winner stays on!

### 3 The Yes, No Game

- Everyone plays at once
- One person is selected to be 'on'. That person is then asked questions by everyone else in any order. They must answer every question without saying Yes or No (or any version of these words – e.g. Yep, Nope.) They are also not allowed to shake or nod their head. They are not allowed to ignore questions. Once they say one of these words, their go is over and a new person is 'on'.
- The person who lasts the longest wins. (if anyone lasts 60 seconds, you might want to stop and declare them a winner)

### 4 Monkey Fight

- Everyone plays at once
- Great fun – but easier to explain face to face! Ask John Tomlinson, Andrew Tomlinson or Jon Yates to explain it to you!

### 5 Call my bluff

- Everyone plays at once
- Get one person to come up with three (or four) statements about themselves. One of these should be a lie and the rest should be true. They then tell everyone the statements in any order without telling the group which is the lie. The group then has to vote on which they think is the lie.
- You could play this everyday which a different person doing it everyday. However, you will need to give campers advance notice that they need to come up with some statements or the game will take forever!!