

## 'I don't think you have done bad things because you are the Prime Minister': The most disarming letter Mrs T ever received - and her equally charming handwritten response

- Letter was written on March 15, 1980 by David Liddelow, a vicar's son
- The former Prime Minister replied to letter within weeks
- Admitted in handwritten letter she admitted that even she was not perfect
- Wrote: 'As Prime Minister, I try very hard to do things right'

By [Jill Reilly](#)

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She may have been known as the Iron Lady, but Baroness Thatcher revealed an usually soft side when she wrote a touching handwritten letter to a nine-year-old schoolboy.

The former Prime Minister was replying to a note written on March 15, 1980 by David Liddelow.

The young son of a vicar, from Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, had written to her asking: 'Last night when we were saying prayers my Daddy said everyone has done wrong things except Jesus.

'I said I don't think you have done bad things because you are the Prime Minister. Am I right or is my Daddy?'





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**Softer side: She may have been known as the Iron Lady, but Baroness Thatcher revealed an usually soft side when she wrote a touching handwritten letter to Peter Liddelow schoolboy**

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Tuesday, 1 April 1978

Dear David,

What a difficult question you ask, but I will try to answer it.

However good we try to be we can never be as kind, gentle and wise as Jesus. There will be times when we say or do something we wish we hadn't done and we shall be sorry and try not to do it again. We do our best, but our best is

not as good as his daily life. If you and I were to paint a picture it wouldn't be as good as the pictures of great artists. No one's life could be as good as the life of Jesus.

As Prime Minister, I try very hard to do things right and because Jesus gave us a perfect example I try even harder. But your father is right in saying that we can never be perfect as He was.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

Surprise: The schoolboy was shocked to receive a reply from the leader of the country, reported the Daily Express

A few weeks later, the schoolboy and his father, the Rev Peter Liddel, were shocked to receive a reply from the leader of the country, reported the Daily Express.

Lady Thatcher had written a lengthy handwritten note, on white A4 paper headed '10 Downing Street.'

In the reply she noted Mr Liddel had posed a 'difficult question' but said she 'would try to answer it.'

4 Goodwood Path  
Borehamwood

Herts

15th March 1980

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

Last night when we  
were saying prayers my Daddy  
said everyone has done wrong  
things except Jesus.

I said I don't think you  
have done bad things because  
you are the Prime Minister

Am I right or is my  
Daddy?

Love

David Liddelow

Aged 9

Quandary: Peter Liddelow's 1980 letter to Baroness Thatcher asking her the tricky question

'However good we try to be, we can never be as kind, gentle and wise as Jesus,' Lady Thatcher wrote in fountain pen.

She added: 'There will be times when we say or do something we wish we hadn't done and we shall be sorry and try not to do it again!

'We do our best, but our best is not as good as his daily life. If you and I were to paint a picture it wouldn't be as good as the picture of great artists. No our lives can't be as good as the life of Jesus.'

In the final paragraph, Lady Thatcher added: 'As Prime Minister, I try very hard to do things right and because Jesus gave us a perfect example I try even harder. But your father is right in saying that we can never be as perfect as He was.'



**Grown up; Mr Liddelw, now lives in Australia with his swimming instructor wife Leisa, 40, and children Emma and Jack**

The letter, signed 'Margaret Thatcher' has been cherished by the Liddelw family ever since and became even more precious to them since Lady Thatcher's death this week from a stroke.

Mr Liddelw, 42, now lives in Australia with his swimming instructor wife Leisa, 40, and children Emma and Jack,

The quantity surveyor the letter had showcased Lady Thatcher's softer side adding: 'I think it showed that the Iron Lady had a warm heart.

'I remember being amazed and surprised that the Prime Minister, who was so important with such a busy life, still found the time to send a two-page, hand-written letter to a young boy and to tell him what his Dad had said was right.'



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**Correspondence: Mr Leddelow wrote similar letters to the Queen, left, and the then Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie right, also receiving short replies from both, but Lady Thatcher's was fullest**

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Mr Liddelow had written similar letters to the Queen and the then Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, also receiving short replies from both.

But it was Lady Thatcher's reply which gave the most detail in answer to his quandary.

Her correspondence came at a busy time during her time in Office - it was sent in the year that Thatcher made a defiant speech to Conservatives at the party conference in Brighton.

In it she stressed her determination to stick to tough economic policies despite doubts expressed within Tory ranks and famously uttered 'The lady is not for turning!'