



Learn how the *Friend* magazine can help your family understand a different sensitive topic each month.

UNANSWERED PRAYERS

“Why aren’t my prayers being answered?” It’s a question that many of us have probably wondered about. It can be a particularly confusing question for children who are still learning about the relationship between prayer and principles like obedience, faith, and Heavenly Father’s will. Two articles from this month’s *Friend* can help you start a family conversation of your own about this sensitive topic.



“Answers from an Apostle” (page 12)

Short quotes from Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles answer the question “Will Heavenly Father always answer my prayers?” On the next page, there’s a short story about Elder Oaks’s father getting sick and dying when Dallin was seven years old. Has your family had any similar situations? Talk about how your family can find peace even when heartfelt prayers aren’t answered with happy endings.



“Don’t Forget to Pray for Erik” (page 36)

This story is about a family praying for a son who has distanced himself from the Church. You could use the same backpack analogy to explain that agency plays a central role in what happens when we pray for others.



SCRIPTURE SUPPORT

- *Jesus Christ’s example (Matthew 6:10)*: When Jesus taught us how to pray, He used the phrase “Thy will be done.” Talk about what this means. Jesus Christ set the perfect example in the Garden of Gethsemane (see Matthew 26:39). Are there ways your family prayers can shift to acknowledge God’s will?
- *Joseph Smith receiving the golden plates (Joseph Smith—History 1:53)*: When Moroni told Joseph about the golden plates, Joseph wanted to start working with them right away. However, he was told to wait for four years until he was ready. Why do you think Heavenly Father wanted Joseph to wait?



OBJECT LESSON IDEA

Sometimes prayers aren’t answered the way we want because we understand only a small part of life, while Heavenly Father sees the big picture. You could use a puzzle or painting to help children understand this idea. Looking at only one piece of a puzzle or small area of a painting, it’s impossible to tell how the color and shape fit with the whole. Only when we see the big picture do we understand the purpose of a particular piece. Similarly, we can trust that Heavenly Father is answering our prayers in ways that will come together beautifully.