



By Elder  
Juan A. Uceda  
Of the Seventy

# I Talked to God as a Friend

*“Pray, He is there; speak, He is list’ning”*  
(Children’s Songbook, 12).

When I was young, I was very shy, and it was hard for me to make friends. I prayed a lot to God about overcoming my fears and my shyness. I prayed to Him as a friend. Nobody taught me how to do it—I just really needed to talk to someone. I didn’t have friends, so I found one by talking to Him.

Then I met the missionaries. They gave me a Book of Mormon, and I started to read it. When I read 3 Nephi 17, I was truly impressed by the way Jesus took the little children and prayed for them. I knew that this was the right way to pray.

I decided to read all the scriptures about Jesus Christ praying. In Luke 3:21, after John baptized Him, Jesus prayed to Heavenly Father and the heavens were opened. When I read that, I knew that I





wanted to pray in a way that would open the heavens too.

Sometimes I feel tired and don't feel like praying. But then I remember how Jesus prayed. I try to be honest and sincere in my prayer so that the heavens will be opened for me too.

Sometimes my prayers are short because I can't find the words to express myself well. I just have a bunch of feelings inside, and I say, "Thou know what I'm trying to say. Please just help me."

Sometimes when I pray to bless the food, I remember that even in that small prayer, the heavens can be opened. I try to forget about the world and connect with Heavenly Father. And in a very humble way, I say things that come from my heart.

When I feel peace and comfort, I know that the heavens are open to me.

After the missionaries taught my family about the gospel, my mother, sister, and I were baptized. But my father, my brother, and my other sister didn't join the Church. I really wanted my father to be a member of the Church. I fasted, and every day I prayed for my father to accept the gospel and be baptized.

I knew that I needed to pray for my father, but I also knew I needed to wait for God's answer. Sometimes He says, "No, not yet." Eventually my

father did listen and understand, and he was baptized.

If your mother or father isn't a member of the Church yet, talk to your friend—your Father in Heaven. Ask for Him to touch your mother or father's heart. Talk to Him humbly and honestly, in a sincere way. But then relax. He is in command. He knows how to do things. He knows your father and mother better than you do. He knows how to reach them.

Don't worry. You have a friend. Pray with your heart, and Heavenly Father will listen to you. The heavens will be opened. He knows you, and He will bless you. ■

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

What if someone in your family isn't a member of the Church? Or what if your family hasn't been sealed in the temple? Here are five things Elder Uceda did that you can do too:

1. Talk to Heavenly Father in prayer. He is your friend.
2. Pray for your family.
3. Trust Heavenly Father. He knows your family, and He knows how to help them.
4. Relax and don't worry. Heavenly Father is in command.
5. Know that Heavenly Father knows you and He will bless you.