

By Elder José L. Alonso Of the Seventy

I'd Never PRAYED BEFORE in That Way

hen I was 15, I went to live with my father while I finished high school. He lived and worked in another city and had joined the Church. I didn't know he was a member, but I saw that he acted differently. He acted with love and kindness and was interested in my concerns and needs.

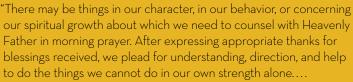
The first night I arrived, I was so hungry. We sat down for dinner and I started to eat, but my father

said, "Wait a minute. We need to pray." I said, "We need to what?" I didn't even know what the word pray meant! My father explained that he was going to thank God, our Heavenly Father, for the food we had received from Him, and then we could eat. My father prayed, and in his prayer he mentioned my name and asked for God to bless me. I felt something wonderful. That was the first time I felt the Spirit so strongly in my life.

My father taught me to pray to Heavenly Father on my own. Later, when the missionaries taught me about Joseph Smith's prayer, I immediately felt that it was possible for the Lord to answer the prayer of a young man. The missionaries asked me to read the Book of Mormon and to pray to know if Jesus is the Christ, if Joseph Smith was a prophet, and if the Book of Mormon is true.

That night I read the story in 3 Nephi 11 of when Jesus visits the Nephites. I was in a private place, so I got down on my knees and I prayed. Even though I was only 15, I had faith that the Lord would answer my prayer. I received an impression in my mind, as clear as anything I had ever seen, that Jesus is the Christ, Joseph Smith was a prophet, and the Book of Mormon is true. I felt like Joseph Smith after that prayer. I was so happy to truly know that Heavenly Father answers prayers from young people.





"At the end of our day, we kneel again and report back to our Father. We review the events of the day and express heartfelt thanks for the blessings and the help we received. We repent and, with the assistance of the Spirit of the Lord, identify ways we can do and become better tomorrow. Thus our evening prayer builds upon and is a continuation of our morning prayer. And our evening prayer also is a preparation for meaningful morning prayer."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Pray Always," Ensign, Nov. 2008, 41-42.

