



I Didn't Feel Worthy to Pray

When I prayed, nothing changed. In fact, things at home got worse. I began to wonder if I didn't deserve answers.

Name Withheld

I'd always been somewhat confused about prayer, especially growing up with parents of separate religions.

With such confusion, I didn't have a testimony and I didn't feel like I could trust what I heard about prayer, because everyone seemed to believe something different.

I especially struggled with this when I started at a new school with no friends and no stable family or belief system to keep me rooted. I floundered for a long time and, with uncertainty and confusion, became really depressed. As it worsened, I felt so lost and far from my Heavenly Father. With everything going on within my family, it was easy to feel unworthy of love or compassion.

I'd prayed before that things would get better in my family, but they didn't seem to. I thought that if Heavenly Father really answered prayers for other people, then I must not be worthy of having my prayers answered, because nothing changed in my family. In fact, things got worse.

I thought that maybe I didn't deserve answered prayers since I was so confused about what to believe. How could I expect Heavenly Father to answer me when I didn't feel like I knew Him very well? In my eyes, I deserved to drift because it seemed I couldn't figure out what the right thing was. I thought

I'd stumbled too many times and that—for that reason—I wouldn't be given answers.

So I stopped praying, partly out of anger and partly because I didn't feel worthy to. I slipped further into despair until I no longer had a desire to keep going. I really felt like I didn't matter. I was at the end of my rope, feeling utterly worthless, when I finally turned to Heavenly Father.

"What's the point?" I asked. "Why should I go on?"

Suddenly I felt something I'd never felt before. Despite the hurtful things I'd believed about myself, I *knew* that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love me. They always had, and nothing I'd done had driven them away. I knew that Christ is my Savior, something I'd had a hard time believing before. I remember hearing the words "*You are loved.*" I'd never before felt like I could say that I *knew* anything with certainty. At least not until then. I *knew* that I was loved and valued and that I had eternal worth. I know that Jesus Christ and His Atonement are real and that He truly is my Savior. I'm grateful that even when I had turned my back on Them, He and our Heavenly Father were still there to lift me up once I was ready to reach for Them. **NE**

At the time this article was written, the author had not been baptized.



DO NOT FORGET

"I know that . . . reassuring feelings of love are difficult to recall when you are in the midst of personal struggles or trials, disappointments, or broken dreams. . . . In the midst of life's greatest storms, *do not forget* your divine heritage as a son or daughter of God or your eternal destiny to one day return to live with Him."

Elder Ronald A. Rasband
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,
Oct. 2016 general
conference.