

Jessie's prayers had always been the same—until now.

By Charlotte Mae Sheppard

(Based on a true story)

Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good (Alma 37:37).

It's time for family prayer!" Dad called. Jessie raced down the stairs to join her family in the living room. Kneeling down between her sister, Kayla, and her brother, Aiden, she reverently folded her arms.

Dad looked over at her. "Jessie, could you say it tonight?" he asked.

Jessie nodded and bowed her head. "Dear Heavenly Father," she began, "we thank Thee for this day. We thank Thee for keeping us safe. Bless us to not have bad dreams tonight. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

"Amen," the family echoed. But before anyone could stand, Dad stopped them. "Just a minute," he said. "Mom and I want to talk to you about something."

Mom looked around at them, smiling. "We love how reverent you all are during our family prayers," she said. "But there's more to prayer than just being reverent. The words we say are important too."

Jessie wondered what Mom could mean. "Did I do something wrong?" she asked.

Mom pulled her into a hug. "Not at all, sweetie." She thought for a moment. "When you kids come home from school, what do I have you do?"

"Tell you about our day," Aiden said.

Mom nodded at him. "Prayers are like that. They're a chance to tell Heavenly Father about the important parts of your day, like what you're worried about or grateful for. That way you won't have to say the same things over and over."

"But the things I say over and over are the important parts," Jessie said. "I'm always grateful for my day. And I'm always scared about bad dreams."

"And that's OK," Mom said. "But I bet there are all sorts of other things Heavenly Father wants you to talk to Him about as well. Maybe you can try to think of some tonight."

So Much to Talk About





Later that night Jessie knelt by her bed. She folded her arms and bowed her head. “Dear Heavenly Father,” she began, “I thank Thee for this day. I thank Thee for keeping me safe . . .”

Jessie stopped. What else would Heavenly Father want to hear about? What *had* happened today?

She thought a moment. First she had gotten up. Then she had eaten breakfast. “I’m grateful that Mom surprised us with pancakes,” she said.

And then what? She thought some more. After breakfast she had gone to school. “And I thank Thee that I did a good job on my spelling test. And I’m sorry that I wasn’t very nice to Rachel at recess,” she added. “I’ll invite her to play with me tomorrow.”

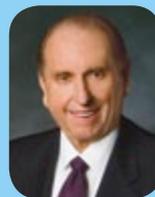
Jessie continued to go through the rest of her day, telling Heavenly Father everything that had happened. By the time she was done, it was past her bedtime. Jessie yawned. “And please bless me to not have bad dreams,” she said. “In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.” Crawling into bed, she fell right asleep.

The next morning Jessie was the last one downstairs for breakfast. “Did you sleep in?” Mom asked, pouring her a glass of orange juice.

Jessie shook her head. “No. I got up early to say my prayers.”

As Jessie started to eat breakfast, she smiled to herself. There was just so much to talk about. ♦

“Not a day has gone by that I have not communicated with my Father in Heaven through prayer. It is a relationship I cherish—one I would literally be lost without. If you do not now have such a relationship with your Father in Heaven, I urge you to work toward that goal. As you do so, you will be entitled to His inspiration and guidance in your life.”²



President Thomas S. Monson