

# PRAYERS AND PLANES

**By David Dickson**  
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(Based on a true story)

*“Continue in prayer” (Alma 34:19).*

Vern’s eyes snapped open as he woke up. Today would be the day. He just knew it! He jumped out of bed and hurried to the back door.

Vern flung open the door and stepped onto the porch. The cold cement stung his bare feet.

There was the bench, just like normal.

And there on the bench was . . . nothing at all. No model airplane, just like normal.

Vern’s shoulders slumped. “I don’t understand,” he muttered. “Am I praying wrong or something?”

He went back inside and poured a bowl of cereal. *Does Heavenly Father answer prayers, or not?* he wondered.


As he ate his breakfast, Vern thought back to a few weeks ago, when he went to church for the first time. The teacher who taught the lesson said that you can pray about anything at anytime, anywhere. Heavenly Father always hears your prayers! Vern felt warm and happy inside as the teacher talked about prayer.

So he started praying! Each night he prayed for what he wanted more than anything else—a model airplane. “Please put it on the bench on the back porch,” he’d pray. And for two weeks now, he had run out to check the porch every morning. But the plane never appeared.

Vern finished his breakfast and got ready for the day. On his way to school, he couldn’t stop

“MAYBE I CAN  
BUILD A PLANE OUT  
OF THESE.”





When Vern grew up, he fixed and flew planes for a living. He knows God guided his life all along, including his love and understanding of airplanes.

thinking about prayers and airplanes. As he walked past an empty field, something caught his eye. Someone had thrown away a couple of old wooden fruit crates.

*Maybe I can build a plane out of those,* he thought.

All day at school Vern imagined what kind of plane he could build with the crates. Pretty soon his notebook was full of drawings of his ideas.

After school, Vern ran back to the empty field as fast as he could. He picked up one of the crates and carried it home.

First he pulled out all the nails and stacked the boards on the ground. Then he got the old saw and kitchen knife Mom let him use as tools. He was carefully cutting one of the boards into the shape of an airplane wing when Mom got home from work.

“What’s that?” Mom asked.

“An old crate,” he said. “I’m using it to build a model plane!”

Mom looked impressed. “That sounds like a great idea.”

Every day after school, Vern worked on his airplane. Little by little, he kept shaping the wood. He didn’t have anybody to show him what to do. But somehow he always figured out what to do next.

Vern was grinning widely when he showed his mom the finished model.

“Wow!” Mom said. “You did this all by yourself?”

He nodded. The plane had turned out even better than he’d hoped!

As Vern showed Mom all the cutting, sanding, and nailing he’d done, he suddenly realized something. His prayers had been answered after all! They just hadn’t been answered the way he was expecting. Instead of giving him a plane, Heavenly Father helped him figure out how to build his own. Prayer *did* work.

That evening, Vern took his airplane outside and set it on the bench. “Heavenly Father, thanks for helping me make this plane,” he prayed. “I promise to take good care of it!” ●

See *Come, Follow Me* for Alma 30–31 and Alma 32–35.