



**By President  
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First Counselor in  
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# Families AND Prayer

Once, as I sat by my father’s bedside through the night, he talked about his childhood. He spoke of the love of his parents in difficult times and of the love of his Heavenly Father and the Savior. I knew he was dying of cancer, so it did not surprise me that at times he mixed up his feelings for his Heavenly Father with the love and kindness of his earthly father. My father had often said that when he prayed, he thought he could see in his mind the smile of Heavenly Father.

His parents had taught him by example to pray as if he spoke to God and that God would answer him in love. He needed that example to the end. When the pain became intense, we found him in the morning on his knees by the bed. He had been too weak to get back into bed. He told us he had been praying to ask his Heavenly Father why he had to suffer so much when he had always tried to be good. He said a kindly answer came: “God needs brave sons.”

And so he soldiered on to the end, trusting that God loved him, listened to him, and would lift him up. He was blessed to have known early and to never forget that a loving God is as close as a prayer.

That is why the Lord taught parents, “And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord” (D&C 68:28).

The gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored—with the Book of Mormon and all the priesthood keys that can bind

families—because Joseph Smith as a boy prayed in faith. He gained that faith in a loving and faithful family.

Twenty years ago the Lord gave families this counsel in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” from the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”<sup>1</sup>

We owe an overwhelming debt of gratitude to the family of Joseph Smith the Prophet for his upbringing. His family exemplified not only faith and prayer but also repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.

The generations that come after you may call you blessed for your example of prayer in your family. You may not raise a great servant of God, but you can by your prayers and your example of faithfulness help the Lord Jesus Christ raise up good and beloved disciples.

Of all that you might choose to do to help the Lord, prayer will be at the heart of it. There are apparently ordinary people who, when they pray, inspire others to open their eyes to see who is there. You can become such a person.

Think of what that can mean to those who kneel with you in family prayer. When they feel that you speak to God in faith, their faith will increase to also speak with God. When



you pray to thank God for blessings they know have come, their faith will grow that God loves them and that He answers your prayers and will answer theirs. That can happen in family prayer only when you have had that experience in private prayer, time after time.

I am still being blessed by a father and a mother who spoke with God. Their example of the power of prayer in families is still blessing the generations who came after them.

My children and grandchildren are blessed every day by the example of

my parents. The faith that a loving God hears and answers prayers has been passed to them. You can create such a legacy in your family. I pray that you will. ■

**NOTE**

1. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.

**CELEBRATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION ON THE FAMILY**

**T**he Family: A Proclamation to the World" teaches principles that are just as timely today as when it was first presented on September 23, 1995. Consider inviting the individuals or families you teach to celebrate the proclamation's 20th anniversary by:

1. Listing principles it contains that have special significance for them. (See how President Eyring does this with prayer in the message above.)
2. Discussing how each principle can bless them today and in the future.
3. Setting specific goals to incorporate those principles into their lives and to share them with others.

## Working at Prayer

**P**resident Eyring teaches that your family can be blessed by your strong relationship with Heavenly Father. You can improve your relationship with Him by improving your prayers! Here are a few ideas of how to do so:

Before you begin your prayer, take a few moments to think about what you want to say. Consider questions you might have or things that have been bothering you—you can even write them down so you don't forget. Use this time too to clear your mind from the ruckus of the day so you can focus on the gentle impressions of the Holy Ghost. If your mind tends to wander while you pray, try to visualize Heavenly Father listening. Speak in specifics. Also, leave a few minutes at the end of the prayer to listen to the promptings of the Spirit. You might write down your impressions in your journal.

Remember that prayer has been called "a form of work" (Bible Dictionary, "Prayer"), so don't worry if it takes

practice or seems hard! Your effort in praying can help you forge a relationship with God that will bless generations.



Heavenly Father  
**HEARS  
 YOUR  
 PRAYERS.**

He loves you.  
 He knows  
 your name.

President Henry B. Eyring,  
 First Counselor in the First Presidency.  
 "Continuing Revelation," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 73.

## CHILDREN

### A Prayer Reminder

**P**resident Eyring teaches that it's important to pray with your family. You can be an example to your family by praying every day. You can also remind your family to pray together every day. Cut out the card on the left and put it where your whole family will see it. This way you can always remember that Heavenly Father wants to hear from you!

