



By Elder  
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Of the Seventy

# I'd Never PRAYED BEFORE in That Way

**W**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.




## LINKED PRAYERS: COUNSELING WITH THE LORD

"There may be things in our character, in our behavior, or concerning our spiritual growth about which we need to counsel with Heavenly Father in morning prayer. After expressing appropriate thanks for blessings received, we plead for understanding, direction, and help to do the things we cannot do in our own strength alone. . . .

"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.



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my father pray  
for the first time,  
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## WHAT KEPT ME STRONG: *Daily Prayer*

**A**s a teenager in an area with a lot of Church members, I found that daily prayer was one of the most important things that helped me stay spiritually strong. I made sure to pray every day and developed a pattern that helped me—morning and evening prayers.

### MORNING PRAYERS:

Every morning I would share with the Lord:

- My plans for the day.
- What I wanted to do.
- What I thought the Lord wanted me to do.

I would present my plans to God and then ask for the Lord's help in accomplishing them.

### EVENING PRAYERS:

Every evening I would:

- Report on how my day went and if I had accomplished the things I had set out to do.
- Share things that had been difficult for me.
- Share things that I had learned from people or through the Spirit that day.

The more I prayed, the more I learned to understand and receive impressions from the Holy Ghost. These impressions helped me gain more strength to follow the direction of the Lord. **NE**