

HOW TO PRAY AND SEEK ANSWERS



By Elder
Richard G. Scott

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

HOW YOUTH HAVE APPLIED THIS

"I try to pray and say thanks when I recognize a blessing. It helps me express my feelings better."

Debora V.

"Thoughts in Sunday School and from friends who have made an effort when I need them have shown me that Heavenly Father knows what I stand in need of and is aware of my feelings."

Skylie D.

Prayer is a gift of our Father in Heaven to every soul. Prayer is most effective when we strive to **be clean and obedient**, with worthy motives, and are willing to do what He asks. Humble, trusting prayer brings direction and peace.

Don't worry about your clumsily expressed feelings. Just talk to your compassionate, understanding Father. You are His precious child whom He loves perfectly and wants to help. As you pray, recognize that Father in Heaven is near and He is listening.

A key to improved prayer is to learn to **ask the right questions**. Consider changing from asking for the things you want to honestly seeking what He wants for you. Then as you learn His will, pray that you will be led to have the strength to **fulfill it**.

Should you ever feel distanced from our Father, it could be for many reasons. Whatever the cause, as you continue to plead for help,

He will guide you to do that which will restore your confidence that He is near. Pray even when you have no desire to pray. That is when you most need to pray. Never feel you are too unworthy to pray.

Often when we pray for help with a significant matter, Heavenly Father will give us gentle promptings that require us to **think, exercise faith, work, at times struggle**, then act. It is a step-by-step process that enables us to discern inspired answers.

His answers will seldom come while you are on your knees praying, even when you may plead for an immediate response. Rather, He will prompt you in quiet moments when the Spirit can most effectively touch your mind and heart. You should **find periods of quiet time** to recognize when you are being instructed and strengthened. Be thankful that sometimes God lets you struggle for a long time before that answer comes.

It is so hard when sincere prayer about something you desire very much is not answered the way you want. The Savior taught, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, *that is expedient for you*" (D&C 88:64; emphasis added). At times it is difficult to recognize what is *best* or *expedient* for you over time.

You are asked to **look for an answer** to your prayers. Obey the Master's counsel to "study it out in your mind" (D&C 9:8). Often you will think of a solution; as you **seek confirmation** that your answer is right, help will come. It may be through your prayers, or as an impression of the Holy Ghost, and at times by the intervention of others.

An important aspect of prayer is **gratitude**. When we contemplate the incomparable gift of prayer and the limitless blessings that flow from it, honest appreciation fills our mind and heart to overflowing with thanksgiving. **NE**

From the general conference address "Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer" (Ensign, May 2007, 8–11).

Share Your Experiences

Share *your* experiences in applying this principle and read the experiences of other youth by going to lds.org/go/72F.

