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How Can I Make My Prayers Feel More Natural and Meaningful?

- Recognize that God is your Father and you are His child.
- Counsel with the Lord in all your doings.
- Say morning and evening prayers.
- Keep a prayer in your heart throughout the day.
- Always express heartfelt gratitude.
- Pray for others with real intent and a sincere heart.

From Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Oct. 2008 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 41–44).

TALKS WITH GOD ON SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I had trouble falling asleep each night. It was frustrating to be so tired and still not be able to rest.

I talked to my parents about my struggle, and they suggested I switch out my pillows, move my head to the other side of the bed, and not be near any electronic devices before bedtime. But even after following their advice, I still couldn't sleep!

Then my dad gave me one more suggestion that changed everything. He said, "When you say your nighttime prayers, just talk to Heavenly Father."

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 "Think of it: the absolute Supreme Being, the most all-knowing, all-seeing, all-powerful personage, encourages you and me . . . to converse with Him as our Father."

Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer," Apr. 2007 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 8).

So night after night, I began talking to Heavenly Father about my day. I would start with when I woke up and talk about everything that happened until right when I was in my bed. I told Him about people I saw, blessings I was grateful for, how pretty it was outside, and things that made me feel happy. I also told Him about things that were sad, like if I hurt my leg or made a mistake.

I wasn't able to fall asleep right away, but I noticed that my relationship with my Heavenly Father was strengthening. He listened to me. He understood my high points and my low ones. He helped me feel calm enough to eventually fall asleep each night.

I am so grateful I could talk to Heavenly Father during those sleepless nights. I know He loves me and helps me, even with small things like helping me sleep.

Alyssa B., 19, Virginia, USA

STANDING FOR SOMETHING

ONE DAY at my high school, we had an assembly about the negative effects of drunk driving and drinking alcohol in general. After a brief introduction, the speaker paused and scanned the auditorium. He said, “If you’ve never once tasted alcohol, stand up.”

Laughter bounced off the walls as people whispered jokes to each other. Their laughs were cut short when they noticed a few people were actually standing. Out of nearly four hundred students, seven were standing, including me.

As I felt my classmates’ eyes on me, my face grew hot and I shifted from foot to foot. But then, something I had often repeated in Young Women came into my mind:

“We will stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (see Mosiah 18:9).

With a soft yet powerful whispering from the Spirit, I straightened my back and stood tall. I was no longer embarrassed.

I stood for something.

Charlene J., Arizona, USA



FROM JUST NICE TO JUST RIGHT

I WAS 14 when I got baptized, but I didn’t really like going to Church activities because I didn’t have any friends. It was hard coming into a totally new experience feeling like I didn’t know anyone. On top of that, I still had school and other things to worry about.

But as I got older, I felt a desire to strengthen my testimony of the Savior, so I started attending seminary. It was just a nice experience at first. But then I made friends with some of my classmates, and they helped me become more active in the Church. I even set a goal to graduate from seminary.

I could tell that my heart was being molded each day as I went to class and learned about the Savior. I read the scriptures more and came to rely on them, especially when I faced challenges.

Now I’ve graduated from seminary and made a new goal to serve a mission so I can help others learn about Christ. I know the Lord helps us when we act on our faith—even if it starts out as just a little seed.

Romino P., 20, Philippines

