

# Pray, He Is There

By President Susan H. Porter  
*Primary General President*

I invite you to pray to know Heavenly Father is there, pray to grow to become like Him, and pray to show His love to others.

Brothers and sisters, I feel joy as I respond to an impression to speak to children!

Girls and boys, wherever you are in the world, I want to share something with you.

Our Heavenly Father loves you! You are His child. He knows you. He wants to bless you. I pray with all my heart that you will feel His love.

Do you like to receive gifts? I want to talk to you about a very special gift that Heavenly Father has given to you to help you. It is the gift of prayer. What a blessing prayer is! We can talk to Heavenly Father anytime, anywhere.

When Jesus was on the earth, He taught us to pray. He said, “Ask, and ye shall receive.”<sup>1</sup>

What gifts can you pray for? There are many, but today I want to share three:

1. Pray to know.
2. Pray to grow.
3. Pray to show.

Let’s talk about each one.

## First, Pray to Know

What do you need to *know*?

There is a song about prayer that Primary children sing all over the world. It starts with a question. Do you know what song it is? If I were really brave, I would sing it to you!

“Heavenly Father, are you really there? And do you hear and answer ev’ry child’s prayer?”<sup>2</sup>

How can you know that Heavenly Father is really there, even when you can’t see Him?

President Russell M. Nelson has invited you to “pour out your heart to your Heavenly Father. ... And then listen!”<sup>3</sup> Listen to what you feel in your heart and to thoughts that come to your mind.<sup>4</sup>

Heavenly Father has a glorified body of flesh and bones and is the Father of your spirit. Because Heavenly Father has all power and knows all things, He can see all His children<sup>5</sup> and can hear and answer every prayer. You can come to *know* for yourself that He is there and that He loves you.

When you know that Heavenly Father is real and that He loves you, you can live with courage and hope! “Pray, he is there; speak, he is list’ning.”<sup>6</sup>

Have you ever felt alone? One day when our granddaughter Ashley was six years old, she was the only one without a friend to play with on the school playground. As she stood there, feeling unimportant and unseen, a specific thought came into her mind: “Wait! I’m not alone! I have Christ!” Ashley knelt down right in the middle of the playground, folded her arms, and prayed to Heavenly Father. The moment she opened her eyes, a girl her age was standing there asking her if she wanted to play. Ashley came to know, “We are important to the Lord, and we are never truly alone.”

Sometimes you may want to *know* why something hard is happening in your life or why you didn’t receive a blessing you prayed for. Often the best question to ask Heavenly Father is not *why* but *what*.

Do you remember when Nephi and his family were hungry while they were traveling in the wilderness? When Nephi and his brothers went to hunt for food, Nephi broke his bow. But he didn’t ask why.

Nephi made a new bow and asked his father, Lehi, where he could go to get food. Lehi prayed, and the Lord showed them where Nephi could go.<sup>7</sup> Heavenly Father will guide you when you ask Him *what* you can do and *what* you can learn.

## Second, Pray to Grow

Heavenly Father wants to help you *grow*! He loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to show us the way to live.<sup>8</sup> Jesus suffered, died, and was resurrected so we can be forgiven of our sins and *grow* to become more like Him.

Do you want to *grow* in patience or in honesty? Do you want to *grow* in a skill? Maybe you are shy and want to *grow* in courage. “Pray, he is there!”<sup>9</sup> Through His Spirit, your heart can change, and you can receive strength.

My new friend Jonah wrote: “I often feel nervous on my way to school in the morning. I worry about things like being late, forgetting something, and taking tests. When I was 10, I started saying prayers on my drive to school with my mom. I ask for the help I need, and I pray for my family too. I also think of the things I’m grateful for. [Praying to Heavenly Father has] helped me. Sometimes I don’t feel the relief right as I get out of the car, but by the time I’m at my classroom, I feel peaceful.”<sup>10</sup>

Jonah’s faith is *growing* as he prays every day and then moves forward.

## Third, Pray to Show

You can pray for help to *show* Heavenly Father's love to others.<sup>11</sup> Through His Spirit, Heavenly Father will help you notice someone who is sad so you can comfort them. He can help you *show* His love by forgiving someone. He can give you courage to serve someone and share with them that they are a child of God. You can help others come to know and love Jesus and Heavenly Father as you do.<sup>12</sup>

For my whole life I prayed that my father would become a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Even as a young girl, I knew how many blessings *he* could receive. Our *family* could receive the blessings of being sealed for eternity. My family, friends, and I prayed often for him, but he didn't join the Church. Heavenly Father does not force anyone to make a choice.<sup>13</sup> He can send us answers to our prayers in other ways.

When I was old enough, I received my patriarchal blessing. In the blessing, the patriarch told me the best thing I could do to help my family be together in heaven was to be an example of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That's what I could do!

My father lived to be 86. Five days after he died, I received a sacred feeling of joy. Heavenly Father let me know through His Spirit that my father wanted to receive the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ! I will never forget the day I knelt around the altar in the temple with my sister and brothers to be sealed to my parents. I had started praying for this blessing when I was in Primary, and I received it when I was a grandmother.

Perhaps you are praying for blessings for your family and others you love. Don't give up! Heavenly Father will *show* you what you can do.

Share with Heavenly Father what is in your heart.<sup>14</sup> As you sincerely ask for His help, you will receive His Spirit to guide you.<sup>15</sup> Praying every day will fill you with love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. This will help you want to follow Them your whole life!

Imagine what would happen if all the children in Africa, South America, Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia prayed every day. The whole world would be blessed with more of God's love!

I invite you to *pray to know* Heavenly Father is there, *pray to grow* to become like Him, and *pray to show* His love to others. I know He lives and loves *you*. "Pray, he is there." In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### Notes

1. John 16:24; see also 3 Nephi 27:29.
2. "A Child's Prayer," *Children's Songbook*, 12.
3. Russell M. Nelson, "Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 95.
4. See Doctrine and Covenants 11:13.
5. See Moses 1:6–8, 27–29, 35.
6. "A Child's Prayer," 12.

7. See 1 Nephi 16:18, 23–24.
8. See John 3:16–17.
9. “A Child’s Prayer,” 12.
10. Personal correspondence.
11. See John 13:34–35.
12. See Alma 20:26–27; 22.
13. See 2 Nephi 2:27; Helaman 14:30.
14. See Mosiah 24:12; Alma 37:37.
15. See Doctrine and Covenants 19:38.