

Call, Don't Fall

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If we call out to God, I testify we will not fall.

Today I would like to begin by testifying of the complete certainty within my heart that God hears our prayers and answers them in a personalized way.

In a world going through times of uncertainty, pain, disappointment, and heartbreak, we might feel inclined to rely more on personal abilities and preferences, as well as the knowledge and security that come from the world. This could cause us to put in the background the real source of succor and support that can counter the challenges of this mortal life.

I remember an occasion when I was hospitalized for an illness, and it was difficult for me to sleep. When I turned off the lights and the room became dark, I saw a reflective sign on the ceiling in front of me that said, "Call, don't fall." To my surprise, the next day I observed the same message repeated in several parts of the room.

Why was that message so important? When I asked the nurse about it, she said, "It is to prevent a blow that might increase the pain you already have."

This life, by its nature, brings painful experiences, some inherent to our physical bodies, some due to our weaknesses or afflictions, some due to the way others use their agency, and some due to our use of agency.

Is there a promise more powerful than the one the Savior Himself made when He declared, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock," or call, "and it shall be opened unto you"?¹

Prayer is the means of communication with our Heavenly Father that allows us to "call and don't fall." However, there are circumstances in which we might think that the call has not been heard because we do not receive an immediate response or one according to our expectations.

This sometimes leads to anxiety, sadness, or disappointment. But remember Nephi's expression of faith in the Lord when he said, "How is it that he cannot instruct me, that I should build a ship?"² Now, I ask you, how is it that the Lord cannot instruct you, that you do not fall?

Confidence in God's answers implies accepting that His ways are not our ways³ and that "all things must come to pass in their time."⁴

The certainty of knowing that we are children of a loving and merciful Heavenly Father should be the motivation to "call" in devout prayer with an attitude of "pray[ing] always, and not faint[ing]; ... that [our] performance may be for the welfare of [our] soul[s]."⁵ Imagine the

feelings of Heavenly Father when in each prayer we make a supplication in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ. What power and tenderness, I believe, are displayed when we do so!

The scriptures are full of examples of those who called out to God so they would not fall. Helaman and his army, while facing their afflictions, called upon God, pouring out their souls in prayer. They received assurance, peace, faith, and hope, gaining courage and determination until they achieved their goal.⁶

Imagine how Moses would have called and cried out to God when finding himself between the Red Sea and the Egyptians approaching to attack, or Abraham when obeying the mandate to sacrifice his son Isaac.

I am certain that each of you have had and will have experiences where calling will be the answer to not fall.

Thirty years ago, while my wife and I were preparing for our civil marriage and our temple marriage, we received a call informing us that civil marriages were canceled due to a strike. We received the call three days before the scheduled ceremony. After several attempts at other offices and not finding available appointments, we began to feel distressed and doubtful that we really could get married as planned.

My fiancée and I “called,” pouring out our souls to God in prayer. Finally, someone told us about an office in a small town on the outskirts of the city where an acquaintance was the mayor. Without hesitation, we went to visit him and asked him if it would be possible to marry us. To our joy, he agreed. His secretary emphasized to us that we had to obtain a certificate in that city and deliver all the documents before noon the next day.

The next day, we moved to the small town and went to the police station to request the required document. To our surprise, the officer said that he would not give it to us because many young couples had been running away from their families to get married secretly in that town, which of course was not our case. Again, fear and sadness overtook us.

I remember how I silently called out to my Heavenly Father so as not to fall. I received a clear impression in my mind, repeatedly saying, “Temple recommend, temple recommend.” I immediately took out my temple recommend and handed it to the officer, to my fiancée’s bewilderment.

What a surprise we had when we heard the officer say, “Why didn’t you tell me that you are from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? I know your church well.” He immediately began to prepare the document. We were even more surprised when the officer left the station without saying anything.

Fifty minutes passed, and he did not return. It was already 11:55 in the morning, and we had only until noon to deliver the papers. Suddenly he appeared with a beautiful puppy and told us it was a wedding gift and gave it to us along with the document.

We ran toward the mayor’s office with our document and our new dog. Then we saw an official vehicle coming toward us. I stopped in front of it. The vehicle stopped, and we saw the secretary inside. Seeing us, she said, “I’m sorry; I told you noon. I must go on another errand.”

I humbled myself in silence, calling with all my heart to my Heavenly Father, asking for help once again to “not fall.” Suddenly, the miracle happened. The secretary said to us, “What a beautiful dog you have. Where could I find one like that for my son?”

“It is for you,” we immediately replied.

The secretary looked at us with surprise and said, “OK, let’s go to the office and make the arrangements.”

Two days later, Carol and I were married civilly, as planned, and then we were sealed in the Lima Peru Temple.

Of course, we need to remember that calling is a matter of faith and action—faith to recognize that we have a Heavenly Father who answers our prayers according to His infinite wisdom, and then action consistent with what we asked for. Praying—calling—can be a sign of our hope. But taking action after praying is a sign that our faith is real—faith that is tested in moments of pain, fear, or disappointment.

I suggest you consider the following:

1. Always think of the Lord as your first option for help.
2. Call, don’t fall. Turn to God in sincere prayer.
3. After praying, do all you can to obtain the blessings you prayed for.
4. Humble yourselves to accept the answer in His time and His way.
5. Don’t stop! Keep moving forward on the covenant path while you wait for an answer.

Perhaps there is someone right now who, due to circumstances, feels like they are about to fall and would like to call like Joseph Smith did when he cried out: “O God, where art thou? ... How long shall thy hand be stayed?”⁷

Even in circumstances such as these, pray with “spiritual momentum,” as President Russell M. Nelson taught,⁸ because your prayers are always heard!

Remember this hymn:

Ere you left your room this morning,
Did you think to pray?
In the name of Christ, our Savior,
Did you sue for loving favor
As a shield today?

Oh, how praying rests the weary!
Prayer will change the night to day.
So, when life gets dark and dreary,
Don't forget to pray.⁹

As we pray we can feel the embrace of our Heavenly Father, who sent His Only Begotten Son to relieve our burdens, because if we call out to God, I testify we will not fall. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. Matthew 7:7.
2. 1 Nephi 17:51.
3. See Isaiah 55:8.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 64:32.
5. 2 Nephi 32:9.
6. See Alma 58:10–11.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 121:1–2.
8. See Russell M. Nelson, “The Power of Spiritual Momentum,” *Liahona*, May 2022, 97–100.
9. “Did You Think to Pray?,” *Hymns*, no. 140.