

Praying to God

Book of Mormon Practicum - Lindsey LeFevre

LEARNING

"Ask In Faith" & "Pray Always" 1. - Elder David A. Bednar

Consistency is huge part of prayer. Action alone isn't faith in the Savior. Faith in Christ leads to righteous action. Righteous prayer requires holy prayer and consecrated work. Not only should I be praying to know the will of the Lord, but I must also be humble enough to be willing to do what He says.

Pray for missionary work. We are full-time finders for the missionaries and we should not be praying for them to do our work. They are full-time teachers. I should pray more for missionary opportunities.

1. Prayer becomes more powerful when we counsel with the Lord in all of our doings. I can pray more sincerely. My evening prayer should be a continuation of my morning prayer. I can say morning prayers where I talk to the Lord about the day ahead of me and the things I hope to do and accomplish. In the evenings I can then report to Lord how my day has gone, how I followed His guidance and how I can improve.

2. Prayer becomes more meaningful when we express heartfelt gratitude. Prayers of gratitude build our confidence in the Lord because we realize just how strong His hand is in our lives and our dependence on Him. I should make sure to regularly say prayers of gratitude without asking for anything. It enlarges the conduit for revelation.

3. Prayer becomes more meaningful as we pray for others with real intent and a sincere heart. The prayers of prophets are simple, but full of intent and sincerity. Praying for others helps us to hear and follow the heed of the Lord. Praying for others opens us up to seeing the needs around us and gives us more opportunities to serve. Do those I serve hear me pray for them? Probably not, I can totally work on this.

PLAN

I pretty much always mumble through my prayers, fall asleep, and repeat myself a lot. I want to change this and have more meaningful prayers. My main plan is to say kneeling prayers (outside of my bed) and to think about what I want to talk to the Lord about before I pray. I will make an effort to have better morning and evening prayers and I hope to refine my plan as I try different things and work on having a better relationship with my Father in Heaven. I will be sincere in the things I pray for and pray with real intent. I can't promise I will be perfect, but I will give this a go.

JOURNAL

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21 Nov. 2015

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up, but my evening prayers are pretty good. I try to take a minute before I pray to think about what I am going to pray for. This helps me to not just mumble a bunch of nonsense, but I have purpose in my prayer.

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23 Nov. 2015

I forgot my morning prayer yesterday! I wanted to have a more meaningful prayer so I was going to get up and do a few things before I prayed. I wanted to be more alert, but I ended up forgetting altogether. Then I got to church and it dawned on me! I mumbled a quick prayer of apology and tried to have a good evening prayer. I knelt on the floor for my night prayer and it went well. I am at a good spot in my life, so I don't have a ton to ask for, but it was good to talk to the Lord and let Him know how I am doing with the things I have been given. I have been praying to know the will of the Lord for a long time and just recently I finally humbled myself enough to hear His answer. It wasn't the answer I wanted and I definitely didn't want to do what I was told, but it has changed a lot of things. I am working to be obedient and trust in God. Each night I try to report

to the Lord how I am doing with following His guidance. It has been a really good experience and I have learned much about how prayer works.

24 Nov. 2015

I don't recall my morning prayer at all from yesterday. It must have been pretty great if I can't even remember it! I am noticing that morning prayers are a bit of a struggle. I think I need to work harder at making them just as meaningful as my morning prayers. One time I said a morning prayer where I told the Lord the 3 or 4 things I was really stressed about for that day and I simply asked for His help in those things. As I went through my day each thing worked out just fine and I was able to do all that I needed. I think I will work harder to think before I pray in the morning and think of a few things I can ask the Lord to help me with throughout the day.

25 Nov. 2015

I forgot to journal....

26 Nov. 2015

My prayers are starting to slip back to my regular prayers that aren't as thought out. I was really worried about traveling to Utah yesterday so most of prayers were pleas for safe travel and we made it safely. I have to really plan out what I am going to say in my prayers if I want them to be more sincere.

27 Nov. 2015

Yesterday was Thanksgiving and I was planning on only saying prayers of gratitude, but I was running my first half marathon in the morning and I really needed all the help I could get. I sure prayed a lot during that race and I was able to finish! I'm really sore today, but I am so thankful the Lord was able to help me.

28 Nov. 2015

Yesterday I only said prayers of gratitude. My biggest stresses are over for the moment and life is really good. With each prayer I started thinking that I didn't have a ton to thank the Lord for, but as I began praying I found that it became easier to think of things - really easy to think of things! It is amazing that the Lord will prompt you even what to say you are thankful for.

29 Nov. 2015

Today I rolled out of bed and mumbled my prayer. It was simple and short and I asked Heavenly Father to watch over me as I traveled back to Idaho. It snowed

during the night and I was quite worried about the roads being icy. Despite my semi-pathetic prayer, the Lord did indeed bless me with safe travels back to Idaho. I'll make sure to say a prayer of gratitude tonight and not mumble so much.

30 Nov. 2015

I have no idea if I really said a prayer of gratitude last night. I was pretty tired last night and I don't remember how my prayer went. This morning's prayer was like my regular short, simple morning prayers. I would like my morning prayers to be a little longer and thought out, but I usually need to go to the bathroom and I'll forget to pray if it isn't the first thing I do in the morning. I do remember thanking Heavenly Father that I got to go back to school today! I prayed for a good day and today was really quite nice.

1 Dec. 2015

Last night I planned on having a good conversation with the Lord, but sleep kept creeping on me! It was so hard to stay focused and stay awake. But this morning I made sure to pray again at breakfast and I was able to have a more alert and sincere prayer. The Lord answered my prayer by helping me prepare an assignment for class that worked well.

2 Dec. 2015

Saying kneeling prayers has been a challenge as it is so cold these days. Last night I ended up shivering so bad I couldn't think of anything to say, so I climbed under a blanket to finish my prayer and I fell asleep - very effective! But this morning I was able to make a little list of things I hope to accomplish today and I asked the Lord for His help and sincerely thanked Him for the blessings in my life. I think I am pretty good at not having vain repetitions. I am usually genuine in the things I continually thank the Lord for. If I am sleepy then they become just words that my brain mumbles. I need to make sure I am always alert when I pray.

REVIEW

WHAT DIDN'T WORK

Kneeling on top of my bed to pray isn't the best because I fall asleep. Praying right after my alarm goes off is bad because I am usually half awake and just mumble stuff. Staying up really late. When I get to bed I am too tired to think about what I am praying for. Praying when I am cold distracts me.

WHAT WORKS

Kneeling upright on the floor helps because I can't fall asleep that way. Sit on the floor and make a mental outline of what I want to talk to the Lord about. Being fully awake in the morning before praying.

THOUGHTS

This was a really good project! I definitely wasn't perfect everyday, but I feel like I was able to say more genuine prayers these past two weeks than I have all semester. I learned what works and what doesn't. Meaningful prayer takes a lot of preparation and work. Whenever I didn't have meaningful prayer was usually because I was lazy and didn't put in the effort required.

One thing I really worked on was to be more genuine in my prayers. Often I will just list off things I am thankful for and then things I want. It is easy to say prayers like that. When I took the time to think about what I wanted to pray about I found myself really thinking about my day and my life. I found specific moments throughout my day where the Lord was involved. I found that I probably receive way more help than I give the Lord credit for. I also realized that I have been asking for things I shouldn't be asking for. There are so many things that I want and I don't always take the time to think about if they are things the Lord wants me to have. The Lord knows so much better and if I have His help when I ask, I will be more likely to get the answers I am looking for.

All semester I have been begging the Lord to help me to just get asked out - just once! This is my last semester and I was beginning to panic that I hadn't found my

exit buddy yet. This desire consumed me so much that every single prayer was just a desperate plea for a guy to ask me out. I have prayed for little else. After one of our class discussions on the will of God I realized that I was not listening and I prayed with an open mind. The answer that I got was the one I did not want. I felt the impression that I am not supposed to be dating right now. I hated the answer and that's probably why I had never heard it before. But in class I realized that maybe the Lord wants to see if I will be obedient and give up the thing I want very most to follow Him. I decided then that I can do as the Lord has asked. I can sacrifice my personal desires to have a better relationship with my Father.

Each week I try to report to Lord how I am doing and seek further guidance. I have realized that I was so distracted by dating and now I can focus on other things without feeling stressed. The Lord has blessed me so much and it hasn't been as painful as I thought. This experience has changed the way I pray. I have a much better understanding of how we can hear the will of God. It takes humility and a listening ear.

NOW WHAT?

I now have a good idea of how I can stay awake when I pray. I am working on saying meaningful things and now it is time I learn how to listen. I have been focusing so much on staying awake and what I am saying that I have neglected the listening part. I want to practice listening and receiving revelation. This will take even more time and effort, but I have seen how listening can be more important than talking.

During the past two weeks I thought very little about praying for others. This was one of Elder Bednar's main points and I can improve. I will try to adding "others" to my outline of main points and take the time to think about the people in my life who could use my prayer.

I also liked journaling about my prayers. I don't think I will do a daily journal, but each Sunday I would like to evaluate how my prayers have been going and how I can continue to improve further.