

One of the blessings of praying always is the spiritual strengthening that comes from being constantly connected with our Father in Heaven. When we are connected through prayer, God blesses us with the guidance of the Holy Ghost, which strengthens us and fortifies us against temptation.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Look up the following scriptures. What pattern do you notice?

- 3 Nephi 18:15
- 3 Nephi 18:18
- D&C 31:12
- D&C 61:39
- D&C 93:49



Even the Savior prayed in his most trying hour in the Garden of Gethsemane. While atoning for the sins of the world, Jesus was struggling and he knelt down “and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, *strengthening him*” (Luke 22:41-43; emphasis added).

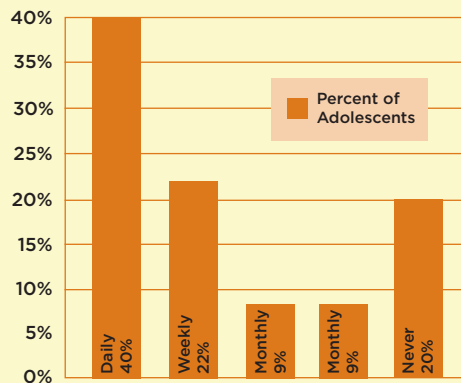
For all of us who are striving and struggling to do what is right and need strengthening to overcome sin, there is little doubt why we should pray always.

Recommit to having consistent personal prayer each day. Find ways that you can “pray always” throughout the day.

**DO  
TRY THIS  
AT  
HOME!**

A four-year study by the University of North Carolina of 90,000 youth grades 7 through 12 found that 40% of the youth prayed daily.<sup>7</sup> Do you?

**Frequency of Prayer, Adolescents 1995**



Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health, 1995

## Pray Always to Know God

Joseph Smith taught, “It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God”<sup>8</sup> and “I want you all to know Him . . . and be familiar with Him.”<sup>9</sup> Another reason why we should pray always is that prayer helps us get to know our Heavenly Father. Prayer is a key that unlocks the door and opens a relationship with God. Bishop H. Burke Peterson taught, “Without prayer we will never really know our Heavenly Father or his Son, the Savior.”<sup>10</sup>

Just as we stay in touch with our friends by texting, blogging, talking on the phone, or spending time with them, prayer allows us to spend time with our Heavenly Father. Through prayer we will feel his love for us, his knowledge of our life's details, and his care and concern for our personal problems, and we will know he is watching over and blessing us. Figuratively speaking, he is ready to visit our own homes and talk over dinner. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

At judgment day, we do not want our Heavenly Father saying to us what was said to the foolish virgins, "Ye know me not" (JST Matthew 25:12). Praying always allows us to develop an intimate relationship with God so that when we see him, we will feel comfortable in his presence and "shall be like him" (Moroni 7:48).



## VAIN REPETITIONS

See if you can fill in the blanks of these familiar prayers:

"Please bless this food that it will \_\_\_\_\_." (at an event with food)

"Please bless that \_\_\_\_\_." (before leaving on a trip)

"We thank thee for the \_\_\_\_\_." (if it's raining)

"Please bless that we can take this lesson and \_\_\_\_\_." (in a class)

"Please bless that all those who weren't here this week \_\_\_\_\_." (after a meeting)

The Savior taught us to avoid using "vain repetitions" (Matthew 6:7) when we pray. It is difficult to feel close to God if we are simply rattling off memorized phrases without really thinking about them. The problem is not in the *repetition* of the prayer (after all, the sacrament prayer is repeated verbatim every Sunday), but in the *vain* repetition (meaning without real intent) of prayer. For us to feel close to God in prayer, the language and phrases we use must be said with sincerity and meaning.

Answers: Nourish and strengthen our bodies. No harm or accident will come upon us. Moisture (or rain). Apply it in our daily lives. Can come next week.

## Yes, God Answers Every Prayer

Some people occasionally become frustrated because they feel that God does not answer their prayers. Please don't confuse God *answering* a prayer with God doing *what we want*. They are not the same thing. We could pray to God for a million dollars right now, and he would answer that prayer—the answer would probably be "No," but he would have answered.

If a child approached a parent and asked, "Mom, can we have ice cream for dinner?" The mother will (hopefully) say "No," not because she doesn't love her child, but because she does! It is not in the child's best interest to eat ice cream for dinner. But she still answered.