



strengthening
our home
and family

Deseret Book®

Family Home Evening Materials

Theme: Prayer

Packet #040404

5 tips for successful Family Home Evenings

1. **Pray.** Pray about the needs of your family as you consider topics for home evenings, and pray as you prepare.
2. **Prioritize.** Make Family Home Evening a priority; learn to say no to other activities.
3. **Involvement.** Involve everyone in the family; help little children take part.
4. **Commitment** Be committed and be consistent. Set a designated time and stick to it. Holding Family Home Evening on a weekly basis takes dedication and planning on the part of all family members.
5. **Relax** and enjoy it. The most important thing your children will remember is the spirit they feel in your family home evenings and activities. Be sure the atmosphere is one of love, understanding, and enjoyment.

Prayer

Thought:

"There are times when the only way the strait and narrow path can be followed is on ones knees!"
(Elder Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1982, p. 38)

Purpose:

To help our families understand that prayer is how we communicate with our Father in Heaven.

Suggested Song:

"A Child's Prayer," *Children's Songbook*, p. 12

Scripture:

"But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God."

(Alma 17:3)

Lesson:

Prepare four wordstrips:

DEAR HEAVENLY FATHER

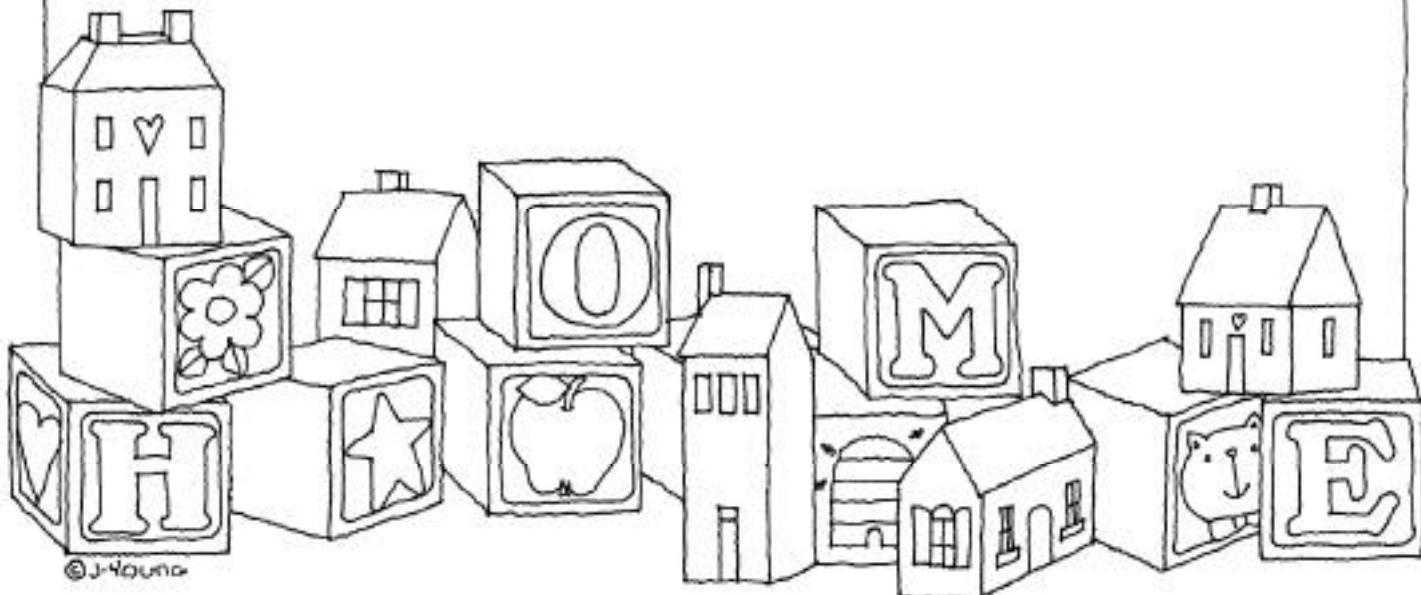
THANKS FOR BLESSINGS

ASK FOR NEEDS

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, AMEN.

Mix them up and put them on a board or the floor. Explain that these wordstrips represent the four parts of prayer but they're not in the right order. Guide the children in putting the wordstrips in order as you discuss each part of prayer. Mix the wordstrips up again and see if they can arrange them without your help.

(Beth Lefgren and Jennifer Jackson, *Sharing Time, Family Time, Anytime*, [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992], p. 66-67.)



Story:

Beth's Birthday Present

Allan K. Burgess

When Beth was ten years old, her Primary teacher taught her class that Heavenly Father would answer their prayers if they asked in faith and if what they desired was right for them. Beth was the only active member of the Church in her family, and this lesson so inspired her that, upon arriving home, she immediately went to her room and began to pray. She said, "Heavenly Father, you know my father is a good man and a good father, but he never goes to church—not even when I have a part on the program. Oh, Heavenly Father, please touch my father's heart so he will want to go to church so we can become an eternal family."

Several times every day for six years Beth pleaded with the Lord in behalf of her father. Many times during these six years she would break down and cry as she poured out her soul to God. Some people may have given up after just a few months—let alone six years—but Beth's faith never faltered. A few days before her sixteenth birthday, the family was sitting around the breakfast table. Her father asked her what she would like for her birthday. He was a well-to-do building contractor and had purchased Beth's sister a new car for her sixteenth birthday just a year before. Beth's father told her that she could have anything she wanted and that money was no problem.

Beth was about ready to suggest a new car when the Holy Ghost spoke to her and said, "Beth, here is your chance! Here is what you have been hoping and praying for all of these years!" The Spirit then told her what to ask for.

When I first heard this story I thought she was going to ask her dad to start attending church. But God had something much more powerful in mind.

After pausing a few seconds, Beth said, "Dad, there is one thing I would like to have more than anything else in this world, and it won't cost you one penny."

This really excited her father, and he wanted to know what this marvelous thing was that would not cost him anything. Beth said she would not tell him until he promised her that he would give it to her. Her father did not feel this was fair, and the rest of the family took his side, but she stood firm.

Seeing that she was not going to give in, her father finally said, "All right, I promise!"

Beth said, "Dad, the one thing I want more than anything else in this world is that we kneel down every morning together as a family in family prayer." Her father later said it was like someone dropped a ton of bricks on him—he just sat there stunned. It was a request he had least expected but knew he must fulfill in order to maintain his integrity with Beth.

The next morning, true to his word, the father called the family together for family prayer. He called upon Beth to give the prayer because she was the only one in the family who was active. Beth gave the prayer every morning for the first week. After about a week, her mother said that she would be willing

to take a turn, and it wasn't long until Beth's older sister began to pray. Soon her two little brothers were praying also. As a matter of fact, everyone in the family was praying except the father—the one who had been the focus of Beth's prayers for six years.

After about a month, as the family knelt for prayer one morning there was a pause for a moment, and then the father said, "I guess it's about my turn to pray." Beth said as her father began to pray, tears welled up in her eyes and rolled down her cheeks. She felt that she was hearing the most humble and beautiful prayer that had ever been expressed by the lips of a mortal man. It was wonderful! It was the first time she had ever heard her father pray, and the spiritual effect it had upon the whole family was overwhelming. When the prayer was over, the whole family came together in one big hug of emotion and wept in gratitude for the great blessing that had come into their home.

It wasn't long after that that the whole family began going to church together. Beth spent her seventeenth birthday in the Salt Lake Temple, kneeling at a holy altar with her family as they made eternal covenants together.

(as quoted in: Jay A. Parry, *Everyday Heroes*, [Salt Lake City: Eagle Gate, 2001] p. 159.)

Activity:

Draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. Label one side "What we usually pray for and when." Ask your family to tell when they usually pray and suggest things that are usually mentioned in their prayers. Have one person write them in the first column.

Next, label the other side "What Jesus taught the Nephites to pray for." As a family read 3 Nephi 18:15–23 and look for the principles that Jesus taught about prayer. Help your family discuss what Jesus taught by asking the following questions. Write what they learned in the second column on your paper.

- When did Jesus say we should pray? (Verses 15, 18–19, 21, 23.)
- What kinds of things should we pray for that would help us overcome the devil's temptations?
- Whose example should we follow when we pray? (Verse 16.)
- Why do you think the Lord told us three times to "pray always"?
- What can we do to make certain we get what we pray for? (Verse 20.)
- Besides our personal prayers, where else should we pray? (Verses 21–23.)
- How can family prayers and Church prayers be an important source of strength?

(Dennis H. Leavitt and Richard O. Christensen, *Scripture Study for Latter-day Saint Families: Book of Mormon*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], p. 301.)

Extras:

- Have each family member make a prayer reminder, such as a prayer rock (paint a rock with the word "PRAYER" and leave on pillow), a prayer rug (decorate carpet sample squares with paint and place beside bed to kneel on), or a prayer pillow (decorate a clean pillowcase using glow-in-the-dark paint).
- Review the story of Joseph Smith's first prayer (see Joseph Smith—History 1: 11–17).

Refreshments

S'mores Bars

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs, finely crushed
3 tablespoons sugar
6 tablespoons butter or margarine
1 package brownie mix
3 cups miniature marshmallows
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Thoroughly mix graham cracker crumbs, sugar, and butter together in a medium bowl. Press firmly into the bottom of a greased 9x13-inch pan; chill.

Prepare brownie mix according to package directions. Pour onto chilled graham cracker crust. Bake according to package directions.

Remove pan from oven and top evenly with marshmallows and chocolate chips. Return the pan to oven for 3 minutes. Cool before cutting into squares. Makes 16 bars.

(*Lion House Entertaining*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002], p. 141.)

