

August: Participating in Wholesome Activities Will Strengthen My Family

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AUGUST WEEK 1 Pray in your families...

Sarah had just started first grade. At first, she appeared to love it. But within only a couple of weeks, she started to cry every morning and beg her parents to let her stay home. They asked what was wrong, but she wouldn't tell them. They talked to her teacher, who had no idea what the problem might be. Sarah was well liked, she had friends, and she was doing well in her schoolwork.

One day after Sarah returned from school particularly upset, her father asked if she thought it would help if they knelt in prayer as a family the next morning and asked for Heavenly Father's help. "Oh, yes, Dad," Sarah replied. "I think that would help."

The next morning, the family went through their regular routine, Sarah crying but eventually ending up in the car, ready to go to school. "Wait, Dad," Sarah said just before they left. "We forgot to pray."

Sarah and her father went back inside and knelt in prayer with her mother and little sister. They prayed specifically that Sarah would have a happy day and a good time at school. That afternoon, when her father picked her up, Sarah left the building with her arms raised in victory. "Prayer works, Dad!" she exclaimed. "Prayer works!"

Prayer does work. When Heavenly Father hears and answers our prayers and will bless our families. He will give our families the guidance and help we need to live our lives righteously and return to live with Him.



AUGUST WEEK 2 Family Home Evening strengthens my family.

President Hinckley shared how family home evening's strengthened his testimony and family:

"In 1915 President Joseph F. Smith asked the people of the Church to have family home evening. My father said we would do so, that we would warm up the parlor where mother's grand piano stood and do what the President of the Church had asked.

"We were miserable performers as children. We could do all kinds of things together while playing, but for one of us to try to sing a solo before the others was like asking ice cream to stay hard on the kitchen stove. In the beginning, we would laugh and make cute remarks about one another's performance. But our parents persisted. We sang together. We prayed together. We listened quietly while mother read Bible and Book of Mormon stories. Father told us stories out of his memory. ...

"Out of those simple little meetings, held in the parlor of our old home, came something indescribable and wonderful. Our love for our parents was strengthened. Our love for brothers and sisters was enhanced. Our love for the Lord was increased. An appreciation for simple goodness grew in our hearts. These wonderful things came about because our parents followed the counsel of the President of the Church"

Our families, too, can be blessed and strengthened when we have family home evening.



AUGUST WEEK 3 Scripture study gives me and my family spiritual strength.

How many times do you eat each day? How long have you gone without eating anything at all? When you go without food and water, your stomach starts to growl with hunger and your body feels weak.

Just as your body needs to be fed every day to keep it strong and healthy, your spirit needs daily nourishment to be strong and to stay close to Heavenly Father. One way to do this is by reading the scriptures. Our prophet, President Ezra Taft Benson, has said: "Heavenly Father wants you to continue to learn from the Book of Mormon every day. It's Heavenly Father's special gift to you. By following its teachings, you will learn to do the will of our Father in Heaven.

To be successful in reading the scriptures every day, you first need to promise yourself that you will do it. Then try to make it a habit of reading at the same time each day, perhaps right when you wake up in the morning, before or after a meal,

or just before you go to bed. You can read a verse, a chapter, a page, or for a certain amount of time. If you can't read, ask someone in your family to read to you. The important thing is to do it every day.

Jesus said, "And blessed are all they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost". When you read the scriptures daily with your family, you will be strengthened and blessed in many ways. You and your family will feel closer to Heavenly Father.



"I'm impressed with the five goals you scored in today's game." Collin turned around and realized the man was talking to him. "I'm starting a new soccer team and want to know if you would like to be on it."

"Would I ever!" Collin thought. Collin was nine, and he enjoyed playing soccer. When he and his parents attended the first planning meeting for the new team, the coach explained that they would be playing in many tournaments on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. "Not on Sunday," Collin thought.

After talking with his parents, Collin told the coach he wanted very much to be on the new team, but he would not play soccer on Sunday. He thought the coach would be mad and not let him be on the team. The coach paused for a moment and told Collin that he still wanted him to play. Collin felt peace in his heart and knew he had made the right decision. He was glad he had made the team. His parents reminded him that even if he had not been allowed to join the team, he had made the right decision.

Just as it is important not to do certain things on the Sabbath day so that we can keep it holy, it is also important to do some things. We should do those things that will help us feel close to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. They have taught us that Sunday is the day we worship Them. The Lord said, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy". We can keep the Sabbath day holy when we go to church, take the sacrament, and do other things that will help us feel the Spirit on the Lord's day.

