

**"Be Strong in the Lord by Praying Always—  
That You May Come Off Conqueror"**

**[Based on Doctrine and Covenants, Section 3, Verse 1e]**

by Elder Bill Jones

In the book of John, it says that within every man is the enlightenment of God. (Read John 1:4) That means the Spirit of God is invested in each one of us that comes into this life. If there is to be a growth or expansion or continuance of that enlightenment, then we have to do the things that will nourish and encourage the desired spiritual growth. How responsive we are to God is the determining factor in how successful we are.



Prayer is a key part in our spiritual life—our relationship with God.

Prayer is also a key part of this life's contest between good and evil. So many things that affect or determine the outcome of our relationship with God is dependant on our prayer life.

The reason behind the revelation from which this scripture was taken lies in the fact that Joseph Smith had not been diligent in following the strict commandments of God—in keeping and protecting the manuscript being produced—while translating the plates of the Book of Mormon. He loaned 116 pages of the manuscript to Martin Harris. The failure of Joseph Smith to follow the commandments of God in safeguarding the things entrusted to him, resulted in the 116 pages of the manuscript being stolen from Martin Harris.

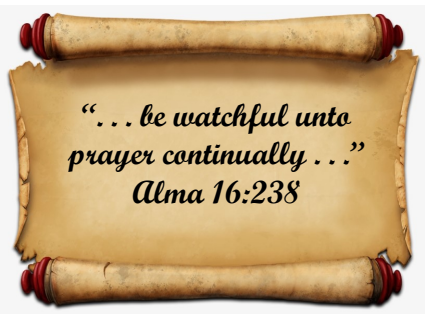
As a result, the Urim and Thummim and the plates were taken from Joseph by God; the translation of the plates ceased for a while and Joseph received this admonition from God.

(Read D&C 2:3c) “. . . although men set at naught the counsels of God and despise his words, yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; [referring to Satan's efforts to destroy the credibility of the Book of Mormon] and he [God] would have been with you in every time of trouble.”

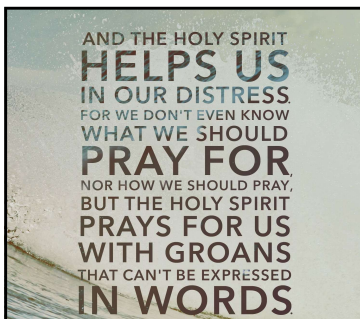
A short time later, when Joseph Smith was given instruction to proceed again with the translation of the Book of Mormon, it is reasonable to assume the words of admonition we just quoted from Section 2 in the Doctrine and Covenants were still uppermost in his mind. The Spirit followed with further instruction on how he was to conduct his life and successfully complete the task given him to translate the Book of Mormon. “Be diligent unto the end; **pray always that you may come off conqueror**; yea, that you may conquer Satan and that you may escape the hands of the servants of Satan that do uphold his work.” (Read D&C 3:1e) It was made very clear to Joseph Smith that his success or failure in completing the work God was requesting of him would be determined by his dedication to prayer.

Amulek in his counsel to the Zoramites expressed a similar warning, “. . . Yea, and I also exhort you, my brethren, **that ye be watchful unto prayer continually**, that ye may not be led away by the temptation of the devil, that he may not overpower you, that ye may not become his subjects at the last day: for behold, he rewardeth you no good thing.” (Read Alma 16:238)

The reality is this: If we are desirous to fulfill the work or the tasks that God asks us to do; we too are to pray always. Prayer is a process that leads us to a greater understanding. The larger our vision of God, the better our concept of prayer, and the more meaningful our outreach to God will be.



There is a statement in 1 Corinthians 2:11, which says this, “. . . the things of God knoweth no man, except he has the Spirit of God.” This means we have to obtain the Spirit of God, or the nature of



God, more fully in our lives in order to understand God. God’s Holy Spirit assists in this endeavor. Evan Fry, in his book [The Restoration Faith](#), page 32, explains it this way: “One function of the Holy Spirit is to make our nature like God’s nature so that we may think God’s thoughts, understand His promptings, and act as He would act.”

How do we do this? There are two examples in the Book of Mormon—Ammon and Amulek. Ammon approaches the answer by explaining that the nature of God is reflected in His mercy and great love for us, and the desire He has that we may do the things necessary to obtain salvation for our souls. “Yea, he that repenteth, and exerciseth faith, and bringeth forth good works, **and prayeth continually without ceasing**, unto such it is given to know the mysteries of God. . . .” (Read Alma 14:103) The catalyst that successfully brings about **knowing the mysteries of God**, is prayer. The fact that Ammon said to “pray continually without ceasing,” is an indication as to the degree of discipline which should be reflected in our praying. It is a requirement we have in our lives if we are to establish the desired relationship with God.

Amulek, in Alma 16, recognized as well the amount of prayer that is required in our lives so that our relationship with God might be expanded and our understanding increased. In his counsel to the Zoramites, he emphasized what was to be considered daily in their prayers so their thoughts would always be focused on God. Beginning with verse 219, he told them to humble themselves and continue in prayer when in their fields or with their flocks, that they may increase; and pray unto God for their households morning, noon and night; pray unto God against the power of their enemies and against the devil who is an enemy to all righteousness. Then Amulek suggests it does not matter where you are or what your circumstances are, you can pray to God for His support, whether in your closet, your secret place or in your wilderness. Even if you are not praying, your thoughts are to be centered on God continually—for your welfare and the welfare of those around you.



As our theme says, if we are to be people who are strong in the Lord and come off conqueror—because of our prayer life—then we have to be a people of understanding, whose prayers are not designed to ask God to set aside His actions and His purposes so that we might have things just as we would want. Instead we must seek to line up with His ways, that we may not make the mistake of asking amiss. We do not always know what we should pray for or how to pray for the things we sense we need, but the Spirit is able to teach us and to intercede for us.

Evan Fry says, “The Holy Spirit functions to teach men how to pray and for what to pray, **that their prayer may be in harmony with God’s will and therefore may be FULLY ANSWERED.**”

Nephi’s words add to this. “Behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always and not faint, [not falter or lose faith] that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord, save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be **for the welfare of thy soul.**” (Read 1 Nephi 14:22)

This means that God will bless and direct what you do and say, so that your actions won’t be contrary to God’s will and you will benefit from His blessing. We do not utter our prayers alone, and God is not ignorant of what we need or what is best for us.



As Paul says in Romans 8, it is the Spirit of God that addresses our needs and administers to our infirmities, since we do not know all we should pray. But Christ, who searches our hearts and knows what is in the mind of the Spirit, makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God, and we are blessed.

“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)