

Specific Ideas to Draw Closer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ

(many of these are borrowed ideas from women in our stake and our general church leadership)

PRAYER IDEAS:

- Prayer journal - organize your thoughts and see how God shows up in your life. List answered prayers in the back of the journal.
- "Tell Him First" - whether you get exciting or devastating news, instead of picking up the phone to call your closest friend, pray and tell Heavenly Father.
- At the end of each day ask each family member what they are grateful for and/or how God showed up for them that day before you have family prayer.
- Whenever you tell someone "I'll pray for you" on social media or via text, pause what you're doing and pray for them right then.
- Pray for "angels to surround" on the hardest days.

OTHER JOURNAL IDEAS:

- Keep a Book of Evidence - the times in your life when you see tender mercies and know God is aware of you. Look back at this on the hard days.
- Gratitude Journal - write down 5 things each day you are grateful for.
- Keep a mini notebook in which you write down the most comforting scriptures and quotes so when you get discouraged, you can flip it open and feel comforted.

SCRIPTURE IDEAS:

- Read the Book of Mormon and highlight times when the people were in very difficult circumstances and yet they praised God. You'll be amazed how often this happens!
- Listen to a Come Follow Me podcast each week (Follow Him, Don't Miss This, etc.)
- Keep a Book of Mormon on the kitchen table and read a verse out loud while your family is eating breakfast.
- Have a quiet half hour at home after church where each family member reads and studies religious things on their own and at their own level. (snacks and pets welcome :)

SERVICE IDEAS:

- Keep it simple. Each day ask yourself what is one way you can show love to God and one way you can show love to others.
- Do little things like hold the door for a stranger, talk with a neighbor, text someone a compliment, invite a friend to go on a walk, thank the receptionist at an appointment, etc. You can ALWAYS make a difference, no matter how low you are feeling.
- Do family history, indexing, and/or attend the temple to serve your ancestors. If you are unable to attend the temple, go enjoy the beautiful flowers on the temple grounds.

OTHER IDEAS:

- Get out in nature! God's creations are incredible - savor them.
- **Listen to Christian/uplifting/instrumental music (I have a "Julie Uplift" playlist for this)
- Change your phone's screensaver to a picture of the Savior or a favorite religious phrase like "Think Celestial"

**Some of our family favorites are listed on the back

OTHER IDEAS CONTINUED:

- Ask for a Priesthood blessing. After the blessing, write down notes of what was said.
- Study your patriarchal blessing and read about God's love for you and your spiritual gifts.
- Each week when you take the sacrament, look up "Christ, names of" in the Bible Dictionary and choose one name you want to take upon yourself in the coming week
- Learn a new skill that helps you feel the spirit (play an instrument, meditate, move your body, create something, etc.)
- Improve your self-talk - use "and" instead of "but" - i.e. I feel physical pain AND I feel seen by the Savior. I feel broken AND I know God will help me pick up the pieces. I feel depressed AND I know Jesus will sit in the dark places with me.
- Keep in mind that you can "always do today" with Jesus on your side.
- Give yourself grace - God does =)

**Some of our family's favorite non-denominational Christian songs:

- Jesus I Believe by Big Daddy Weave
- Desert Road by Casting Crowns
- Just Be Held by Casting Crowns
- I Will Rise by Chris Tomlin
- Only Jesus for my Pain by Cory Asbury
- Stay Strong by Danny Gokey
- Tell Your Heart to Beat Again by Danny Gokey
- Missing Peace by JJ Heller
- You Already Know by JJ Heller
- Blessings by Laura Story
- Storm by Lifehouse
- Forever by Nathan Pacheco
- Multiplied by Needtobreathe
- Gratitude by Nichole Nordeman
- Glorious by One Voice Children's Choir
- Flowers by Samantha Ebert
- Daughter by Sleeping at Last
- I Can Do All Things by Strive to Be & Jarica Jamison
- By Your Side (Unplugged) by Tenth Avenue North
- Nearer My God to Thee by Vocal Point