

## **SPIRIT TEACHES PRAYER**

(2 Nephi 14:1-12)

Nephi continues the theme from the preceding chapter of enduring to the end. But, he is specifically targeting people who don't really want to endure to the end (v. 1-11). Rather, they ignore what Nephi says about what they should do (v. 2-3) and choose "unbelief, wickedness, and ignorance" instead (v. 9). They have abandon prayer (v. 10-11) when this really is how they would find out what they should do (v. 12).

The focus of the text is v. 5-6 where Nephi tells them plainly that their deliberate ignorance of his words are leading them off towards spiritual death.

The parallelism of v. 3 and 6 suggests the core doctrinal issue is receipt of personal revelation regarding the doctrine of Christ. Those who receive the personal revelation (v. 3) accept and adhere to the doctrine of Christ (v. 6), while those who do not end up wandering aimlessly off into the dark (v. 4-5).

The underlying principle of human psychology here is one we grapple with today, one of personal testimony. You can preach at a person all day long, as Nephi has done to the Nephites, but those intellectual and theological principles don't bear any weight until the person hearing them has a spiritually convicting experience. And a person can't have a spiritually convicting experience unless they want to.

Its up to the individual, and here Nephi states that is clearly the case, and he washes his hands of the matter. But, in doing so, laments over the fact that so many choose this route (v. 9).

**V12** "pray always", I would assume by this Nephi means we should pray formally and informally in a consistent fashion over time. Such as "Always pray daily" or "Always have personal prayer in the morning and evening" or "Always pray over your food". We obviously cannot be literally praying always.