

Agency

True to the Faith, 12-13

Your Heavenly Father has given you agency, the ability to choose and to act for yourself. Agency is essential in the plan of salvation. Without it, you would not be able to learn or progress or follow the Savior. With it, you are “free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil” (2 Nephi 2:27).

You had the power to choose even before you were born. In the premortal Council in Heaven, Heavenly Father presented His plan, which included the principle of agency. Lucifer rebelled and “sought to destroy the agency of man” (Moses 4:3). As a result, Lucifer and all those who followed him were denied the privilege of receiving a mortal body. Your presence on the earth confirms that you exercised your agency to follow Heavenly Father’s plan.

In mortality, you continue to have agency. Your use of this gift determines your happiness or misery in this life and in the life to come. You are free to choose and act, but you are not free to choose the consequences of your actions. The consequences may not be immediate, but they will always follow. Choices of good and righteousness lead to happiness, peace, and eternal life, while choices of sin and evil eventually lead to heartache and misery.

You are responsible for the decisions you make. You should not blame your circumstances, your family, or your friends if you choose to disobey God’s commandments. You are a child of God with great strength. You have the ability to choose righteousness and happiness, regardless of your circumstances.

You are also responsible for developing the abilities and talents Heavenly Father has given you. You are accountable to Him for what you do with your abilities and how you use your time. Do not idle away your time. Be willing to work hard. Choose to do many good things of your own free will.

Additional references: Deuteronomy 11:26–28; 30:15–20; Joshua 24:14–15; 2 Nephi 2; Helaman 14:30–31; D&C 58:26–28; 101:78
See also Obedience; Plan of Salvation; Temptation

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