

Walk in the Light

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You make choices every day and almost every hour that keep you walking in the light or moving away toward darkness.

For each of us, life is a journey. Heavenly Father designed it for us out of love. Each of us has unique experiences and characteristics, but our journey began in the same place before we were born into this world.

We all were taught by Elohim, the Father of our spirits. We loved Him and wanted to be like Him and to be with Him forever. He told us plainly what it would require for us to have that joy. We would have to receive a physical body, with all of the trials that would bring. We would be subject to illness and have within our bodies the processes which would finally lead to death. And our bodies would have in them powerful cravings for physical satisfaction.

Heavenly Father explained to us what it would take to make the journey from where we were then to be with Him forever and live the life that He lives. We would make the journey through life without a memory of our time with Him in the spirit world. And the only way back to Him would be for us to overcome physical death and the effects of sin which would come from our breaking commandments. He told us that we could not overcome the effects of either death or sin by ourselves—without our having a Savior who would break the bands of death and provide a way for us to be washed clean from the sin which we would surely commit.

You know from the scriptures revealed by God through prophets that there was a rebellion in the spirit world when the plan for our journey was offered to us. Those who rebelled did not want to accept and to depend upon a Savior nor run any risk that they might not return again to Heavenly Father. Every one of you was among the brave, the faithful, and the true in that conflict. You accepted the Savior and the plan for this journey to return to the joy of our Heavenly Father's presence.

You are remarkable, even among those who chose right in the contest in the spirit world. You qualified to come into mortality and to make this journey at a time when the gospel of Jesus Christ was on the earth. And among the billions of Heavenly Father's children now living, you were privileged to find the gospel of Jesus Christ and His true Church. Even more than that, the fact that you are listening tonight means that you have chosen to make the journey of life walking in the light.

Every child of Heavenly Father born in the world is given at birth, as a free gift, the Light of Christ. You have felt that. It is the sense of what is right and what is wrong and what is true and what is false. That has been with you since your journey in life began. The fact that you were baptized and received the Holy Ghost is evidence that you chose to walk in the Light of Christ.

When you were confirmed a member of the Church, you were given the right to have the Holy Ghost as your companion. The Holy Ghost is a powerful source of light to recognize truth, to follow and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and to find your way back to God after this life.

But the spirit who led the rebellion in the world before still opposes the plan and wants you to be miserable. He wants you never to find your way home again. That enemy of your soul knows you and your goodness. He knows that if he can turn you away from walking in the light, he can both capture you and stop you from helping others along the journey. He knows how good you are and your power to teach and influence hundreds of Heavenly Father's children in this life—and thousands over the generations that will follow your path. If he can get you to wander away from the light on your journey, he can do harm and bring misery to many.

The fact that you are listening now is evidence that God recognizes your great importance and that you have chosen to walk in the light He offers you. Such choices are not always easy to see clearly. You make choices every day and almost every hour that keep you walking in the light or moving away toward darkness. Some of the most important choices are about what you set your heart upon.

There are so many things you may consider desirable. For instance, all of us want, to some degree, the approval of other people. All of us feel a need for friends. All of us are searching for some evidence that we are persons of worth. We make choices based on those desires. Some might lead us away from the light God offers us as a guide. Some may brighten that light by which we can find our way.

As I look back, I realize that I was unaware of the importance of some of those desires and choices. I wanted to be selected for athletic teams. I wanted to do well in school. I wanted to find good and true friends. And when I made the choices that came from those desires, more than I realized, I was either moving away from the light or toward it.

Some of my achievements and some of my friends were major factors in my sensing light. Others, more than I knew at the time, were edging me away from the light. In important and long-lasting ways, choices I made to satisfy my desires for companionship and a sense of recognition were taking me either toward or away from the light to guide my path.

Long ago Heavenly Father, through His prophets, gave us a way to know which choices matter most and why—and how to make them.

The best summary I know is in the words from Moroni as he quotes his father, Mormon. I only wish I had understood them better when I was your age, and I pray that the Lord will carry them into your heart tonight.

“But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.

“Wherefore, take heed ... that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

“For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.”¹

The scriptures tell us the source and the power of the light.

“For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

“But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.”²

I can see now, better than I could as a young man, how I might have used that guidance. There were sports teams that had players and coaches who influenced me to do good. There were some that did not. There were friends, some of them not members of the Church of Jesus Christ, who by their example influenced me to do good and to remember the Savior.

There were schoolmates and teachers whose approval and friendship I sought who somehow made me want to do good and enhance my feelings for the Savior. I was blessed to find my way. But I would have done even better had I understood both the importance of my choices and the way to choose.

Mormon knew that. Had I read more carefully his words in the Book of Mormon, and others like them, I would have been even more blessed and more protected. Here are Mormon’s words:

“Seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged.

“Wherefore, ... ye should search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.

“And now, ... how is it possible that ye can lay hold upon every good thing?”³

It is by faith that you can lay hold upon every good thing. I pray with all my heart that your faith will be increased that you are a daughter of a loving God. I testify to you that you have been one of the valiant ones to reach the point where you now are in this journey of life. Just as you are marked as a target by the enemy of righteousness, you have been protected and watched over by your Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. They know you. They know all of the forces and individuals around you. They know what is ahead of you. And so They know which of the choices you make, which of the desires you decide to satisfy, and which of the circumstances around you will make the most difference in keeping you walking in the light. I testify that by the Spirit of Christ and by the Holy Ghost, you may walk confidently in whatever difficulties will come. Because you are so valuable, some of your trials may be severe. You need never be discouraged or afraid. The way through difficulties has always been prepared for you, and you will find it if you exercise faith.

You must have faith to pray. You must have faith to ponder the word of God. You must have faith to do those things and go to those places which invite the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Ghost.

I promise you that within the next few days you will feel the illumination of the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Ghost in your everyday life. When you walk in the light, you will feel at that moment some of the warmth and the happiness that will finally be yours when you are welcomed home again with the hundreds and perhaps thousands of others whom you will bring with you, who have walked in the light because you did.

This is the true Church of Jesus Christ. There is a living prophet, Thomas S. Monson. And there are both true servants and angels to help you along the lighted path. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Moroni 7:13–15.

2. Moroni 7:16–17.

3. Moroni 7:18–20.

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