

I was about twenty months old, my father moved from Vermont into the State of New York, where I lived with him until I became a man. I cannot help that. There are a thousand circumstances I cannot help or control that are thrown around me without any action of my choice.

I cannot help being here. We might have gone to Vancouver's Island; and if we had, we should probably have been driven away or used up before this time. But here we are in the valleys of the mountains, where the Lord directed me to lead the people. The brethren who are in foreign countries desire to gather to the gathering place of the Saints, and they have for the present to come to Great Salt Lake City. They cannot help that. Why did we not go to San Francisco? Because the Lord told me not: "For there are lions in the way, and they will devour the lambs, if you take them there." What now can we do? Why, instead of being merchants, instead of going to St. Louis to buy goods, we can go down to our Dixie land, the southern part of our Territory, and raise cotton and manufacture goods for ourselves. These are circumstances we are creating with which to surround our children, and to form the foundation of the future prosperity of this community. They will be more or less governed by the circumstances we create for them. They will make their own bonnets, ribbons, hats, coats, and dresses of every kind. While we are governed and controlled by circumstances over which we have no power, still we possess ability and power in our different spheres of action to call into existence circumstances to surround ourselves and our children, which will more or less control them; and, if they are planned in righteousness, will tend to lead us and our children to heaven.

I have power to call upon the brethren to go south and raise cotton and indigo, the olive, and the grape. I have done it. In doing this, it throws them under the influence of new surroundings and new circumstances. They in their turn can, by perseverance and faithfulness, under the dictations of the Spirit of truth, bring forth a train of happy circumstances to bless them, to bless their wives, to bless their children, and to bless the kingdom of God.

I have power to send brethren to the east or to the west to buy our goods. I have power to say, John, William, or Thomas, Go and find a gold mine; but I am not disposed to exercise this power in that way. God has given this power to me. Let the brethren who have been called to go south go willingly, with their heads up and glory, hallelujah! in their hearts; for they are pioneers of future greatness, power, and independence to Israel. They possess power to do this. When the husbandman goes into his field, he has power to plough up the soil. When it is ready, he has power to plant corn in rows or otherwise; he has power to sow wheat or oats in drills or broadcast, and harrow in or cover the seeds, that they may grow. What we sow we shall also reap. We have great power committed unto us, and yet we are confined by certain laws that we cannot avert or control.

The power of choice all intelligent beings inherit from the Gods of eternity; it is innate. This statement might even be applied to the brute creation; but it is not my purpose to extend my remarks in that channel today. The Latter-day Saints can take the road that leads to life everlasting, if they choose; or, if they choose, they can take the road that leads to apostasy. As individuals, we must guard our affections from becoming contaminated