

MAKE THE CHOICE:

# BITTER or Sweet

WHEN YOU'VE BEEN DEALT A BITTER BLOW, HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

By Matthew Garrett

This scenario might be all too familiar to you: A classmate you considered to be your true friend has left your friendship behind to hang out with the popular crowd. What's more, she has started to make decisions that break gospel standards and has started to make fun of you for not doing the same.

How would you respond? Do you feel *bitter* about how your friend left you behind? Or do you try and live the *sweet*, Christlike attributes of love and forgiveness? Sure, you already know which path is the path the Savior would have you follow, but when your emotions are hurting, it's not always easy, is it? Follow the bitter and sweet paths to find out where each response leads.



## THE Sweet Path

You want to help your friend but aren't sure how. You begin by praying for guidance. (See Matthew 5:44.)

You decide to take your friend aside for a one-on-one chat. You tell her that you're hurt by her words and actions but still love and care about her. (See Matthew 18:15.)

Although your friend continues to make choices that you know aren't right and sometimes still makes fun of you for living the gospel, you continue to invite her to wholesome activities and Church events. (See D&C 31:9.)

You text your friend to see how she's doing and tell her you miss spending time with her. She admits she is confused and thanks you for caring. (See Proverbs 15:1.)

You realize that whether or not your friend chooses to hang out with you anymore, that doesn't mean you can't be friendly. You commit to being nice no matter what, and doing so brings you peace—even on the hard days. A lot of hard work remains, but you've started to feel true compassion and now know how sweet being a real friend can be. (See Ephesians 4:32.)



### YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CHOOSE

"There may be many things about life that are beyond your control. But in the end, you have the power to choose both your destination and many of your experiences along the way."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Three Sisters," Oct. 2017 general conference.



### WHAT FORGIVING DOES

Truly forgiving someone can have sweet rewards. Forgiveness is a conscious choice: it is entirely up to you! Through prayer to Heavenly Father and the strength that comes from the Atonement of Jesus Christ, you can develop the capacity to forgive those who have wronged you. You can overcome bitter feelings to develop the strength to forgive, help others, and repair friendships. Learning to forgive can be truly sweet! **NE**

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