



# Finding a Way to **FORGIVE**

By Bonnie Brown

**W**e will all face a time when someone does something that hurts us. Sometimes it feels impossible to let go of the pain. But even when the offense is great, the Savior taught us to forgive all people. Forgiveness can be hard work, but by doing things that bring us closer to Christ, we can access the peace that forgiveness provides. Below, two young women share their experiences with forgiving others.

## Forgiving a Friend

When Renee\* moved to a new school in Belgium, she was happy to make new friends. Then one friend did something to make things difficult. Renee explains:

“My friend Nora created a Facebook account using another friend’s name, Kate. She started harassing people using that profile, and everyone accused Kate of being the bully. Nora even made fun of me at school, picking on my religion and

my personality. I tried to avoid these attacks but I couldn’t, so I started hanging out with other people.

“When Nora confessed about the fake profile, everyone was mad at her. Nora gave me a letter of apology, but I didn’t think I could forgive her. I was so angry.

“One day I was reading the scriptures, and I came across Doctrine and Covenants 64:9–10: ‘Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not

his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin. I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.’

“Instantly I thought about Nora. I knew it wasn’t right for me to feel so angry. I prayed and asked Heavenly Father if He would help me forgive her. It wasn’t easy, but I still managed to do it. I started by sending her messages asking her about her day, and occasionally we talked at lunch. I learned that Nora’s father had died four years earlier. Her life was hard, and she thought everyone disliked her. I was glad I hadn’t stayed mad at her. Kate and some others didn’t understand how I could forgive Nora, but I knew that what I had done was right, and I knew that Heavenly Father was proud of me.”

Renee learned that God commands us to forgive all. By following that commandment, she gained compassion and understanding for Nora and was able to completely forgive.

### Finding Peace in My Brother’s Death

When Janet’s brother was killed in a car accident caused by a drunk teenage driver and his passengers, she knew she needed to let go of the bitterness she felt, but she didn’t know how.

“It was hard to tell what pained me most—my anger toward these

mindless teenagers or my sincere yearning to have my brother back. I couldn’t bear to think of the huge void in my life. I remember praying fervently for what seemed like hours. All I wanted was to have Nathan back.

“I felt pity for the boys responsible for Nathan’s death because I knew that they felt a tremendous guilt. But I also felt anger and resentment. It was easy to blame them. I said in my mind that I forgave these young men, but anger still flooded my thoughts when I dwelt on the accident. I frequently asked myself, ‘How will I ever truly forgive these young men, and how will I know when I have?’

“It wasn’t until after hundreds of prayers, earnest fasts, and much studying and reflection that I finally felt I had truly forgiven them. I remember pondering one day. I thought, ‘I forgive them. How could I not? Everyone makes mistakes, and who am I to judge? I will never solve anything by holding on, so I am letting go.’ The feeling was amazing! I’d constantly yearned to know that I’d truly forgiven the young men, and in time it came. I cannot change what happened to Nathan, but I can choose to react with forgiveness and love rather than anger.”

Janet learned that truly forgiving can take time and effort. The Savior said, “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you” (D&C 88:63). Janet drew closer to the Lord through fasting, prayer, scripture study, and

other efforts. As we do the same, we can let our anger and hurt be replaced with feelings of peace and forgiveness.

### Filled with Love

Just like with Janet and Renee, forgiveness helps us feel compassion, understanding, and patience. As we forgive others, the Lord will fill us with His pure love and we will become more like Him. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

*\*Names have been changed.*



### PURE LOVE

“The pure love of Christ can remove the scales of resentment and wrath from our eyes, allowing us to see others the way our Heavenly Father sees us: as flawed and imperfect mortals who have potential and worth far beyond our capacity to imagine. Because God loves us so much, we too must love and forgive each other.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Merciful Obtain Mercy,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 76.