

The Dream

*"Whoever finds their life will lose it,
and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."
- Matthew 10:39 (NIV)*

It was the second week of school. Monday morning Ian bounced down the stairs instead of his typical stomp through the kitchen. Ian has Asperger's Syndrome, a high-functioning form of autism. "Mom, I dreamed I was riding my bike. It was so much fun," he shared rummaging through cereal boxes.

"It must mean you're ready honey," I offered. Almost eleven, he shrugged his shoulders but his eyes told a different story. September afternoons seem to fade into night so quickly as fall approaches. At least three times a week we try to walk the neighborhood together. Walking moves into talking.

That Monday, the night was beautiful and the sharing was plenty. Ian spoke again about his bike dream. This time, he was excited. "Mom, I was so happy!" My soul smiled. The chill in the air persuaded him to bury his hands deep in his pockets. He looked up and said knowingly, "I'm gonna make it a goal." "Good for you, pal, it won't be long now," I urged. We headed home.

From then on, we didn't speak of the dream. Sunday, his father visited. The summer-like day lent itself to outdoor play. Ian and Danny, his younger brother, took turns shakily balancing on their bikes. Danny would not ride because his brother couldn't. As he waited his turn, Ian spun around in the driveway. One foot on a pedal, his other foot scraped the pavement.

On the way out to run errands, I found Ian with his Dad practicing in the street. "I just can't balance," he said with incredible frustration. He stopped a hundred feet from me looking so defeated. "Close your eyes Ian. Remember how great it felt to ride, remember you could do it in your dream," I encouraged. Then, I prayed, *Father, be with him.*

He squeezed his eyes shut and then opened them with determination. Placing both feet on the pedals he biked to me, never stopping. It was awesome. Ian was riding his bike. The smile on his face was as wide as the sky above. I whooped, hollered and clapped. He leaned over the bike and hugged me, but not for too long. I raised my hands to the heavens and whispered, *thank you.*

The family across the way came out of their house, cheering him on. Another friend ran to congratulate him. Ian stopped only for a quick celebration of pink lemonade and Oreos. This childhood milestone had been realized.

The afternoon was hot but the smell of crisp leaves was in the air. Autumn would have to wait one more day. I thought how life is such a balancing act of knowing when to hold on and when to let go. Ian had to do a little of both that day.

I wondered how long our heavenly Father watches and waits. Jesus' nail-pierced, precious hands are outstretched, an open invitation of His love. I know He waits for me, to let go of me. But I resist. Almost daily, I have to surrender to the Lord, to His plan and purpose for my life. I stumble, fall, wanting to do life my way. Yet, through it all, I know He is with me.

Something amazing happens when I give my day to Jesus. My cares turn into joy; my worry is replaced with peace. When I place all of me in His hands, let's just say mercy and love chases me down. When I notice white knuckles on the handlebars of my life, I will remember Ian's victory. Even if I have to do it on purpose, I will let go and well, gain everything.