

In His Time

by Becky Stayton

Chapter One

Angie rode her bike to her house, rattling all the way. A car honked at her as she turned the corner and headed for her driveway. *Where had it come from anyway?* she thought.

The driver rolled down his window and shouted, "Signal next time, why don't you!"

Umm, it's not like this bike has blinkers, she felt like shouting back.

She rolled into the driveway, dropped the bike, ran up the steps to the house, threw off her jacket and plunked down on the sofa.

She shouted into the kitchen, "What are we having for dinner, Mom?"

Her mother answered, "Hamburgers and sweet potato fries. But, I don't have any hamburger buns. I need Dad to run to the store really quickly. Could you ask him? He's in the garage."

"Sure, Mom!" Angie replied, as she walked to the door to the garage and yelled the request to her father.

Angie went back to the sofa and pulled out her phone to see if her friend Kelsey had texted her. She heard the garage door open and then shut as her father pulled out of the garage. The next sound was a crunching sound that made her sick to her stomach.

"Oh no! My bike!" Angie cried as she leapt off of the sofa.

She ran outside, and there in the driveway was the remains of her bicycle. Her father did not look happy. He examined the back of the car to see if there was any damage, and thankfully, the car seemed okay.

"What was your bicycle doing in the middle of the driveway?" he asked angrily.

“I’m sorry, Dad. I didn’t know you were going anywhere when I got home. And then... then I forgot. I can’t believe it’s destroyed! That was my only bike!”

“I’m sorry about your bike, Honey. You should have put it away. Can you get it into the garage? I need to go.” He opened the garage door for her, got into the car and left.

As Angie drug the bent bicycle into the garage, she wiped tears from her eyes. As her eyes cleared, she noticed a box that she hadn’t seen before. It was large and rectangular. Looking at the picture on the side of the box, it looked like a new bicycle. It looked even nicer than the one she had wanted. Angie was confused. Who was this bike for? It was too large for her younger brother. Besides, he didn’t need a new one. She had been asking and praying for a new bike for the longest time. Was she finally going to get one?

She was still dawdling around in the garage when her father came back with the hamburger buns. He noticed her looking in the direction of the box.

“I see you found it,” he said.

“Is it for me?” she asked. “Did I just ruin Christmas?”

“Well, to be honest, it was supposed to be for your birthday last year,” her father admitted.

“You’ve had it that long?” she shrieked. “Why didn’t you give it to me? You know I needed a new bike!”

“Let’s continue this conversation after dinner,” her father suggested as he walked inside to deliver his package.

“After dinner? Why not now?” she asked running after him. Her father held up his hand and said, “I said, not now.”

Angie knew better than to talk back to her dad. But, her heart was racing and she was upset. Here was a bicycle that no one was using and she had been riding an old clunker. What was up with that? It seemed so unfair. Eating dinner was the last thing on her mind.

Discussion:

Chapter 2

Finally, dinner was over and Angie and her father sat down on the sofa to have that conversation. Angie just couldn't understand why her parents had not given her the bike when they had it right there in the garage!

Her father began by asking, "Do you remember how you ended up with the beat up bicycle you have been riding?"

"Yes, of course I do," answered Angie. "You guys wouldn't give me a bicycle, so I did some extra chores and sold some of my stuff at a garage sale to buy that used one. It was all I could afford."

"Okay. That's partly true," her father said. "Except that you left out part of the story. Do you remember what your mother and I asked you to do, to get ready for a new bicycle?"

Angie looked down at her lap. "Umm. I guess so. You said I needed to learn traffic laws and start taking responsibility with my other things. But...but...it's just a bike. Not a car!"

Her father answered, "It's important to be faithful in small things before you can be trusted with larger things. I know that's in the scriptures somewhere. But, here is a scripture for you," he said as he opened a Bible. "See if you can tell me what it means."

James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss...

Angie thought about it and said, "I think it means you don't get what you ask for because you're asking for the wrong thing."

Her dad nodded. “Uh-huh. But it may also mean that you’re asking for the right thing at the wrong time, or for the wrong reasons. The scriptures also say to obey your parents so that things will go well with you. Having a bicycle before you were ready hasn’t turned out for the best. Things haven’t gone well for you.”

“What else was I supposed to do?” Angie asked. “I prayed about it and asked you guys, but it looked like that was a dead end street. So, I decided to do it myself.”

“We love you, Angie. God loves you. He loves to give good gifts. We would love to give you your nice new bicycle, but there are some conditions to gifts and promises. We love you so much that we want what is best for you.”

“I guess I should have waited and done more to be prepared,” admitted Angie. “I’m sorry, Dad. I’ll try to do better about taking care of my stuff.”

Dad said, “That sounds good. Anything else?”

Angie thought about it and said, “Maybe I can use my allowance to get a bicycle helmet?”

“That’s a good idea. You are getting closer,” answered her dad.

“Oh yeah. Umm. Could you help me with learning the bicycle traffic laws?” she asked.

Her father gave her a hug and said, “Now you’re on the right track. I can’t wait to give that bike to you when you’re ready.”

Angie smiled up at her dad. “Thanks, Dad. I can’t wait either.”

Angie ran to her room to call her friend Kelsey to tell her the good news and the bad news. As they talked, she realized that God had been trying to answer her prayer all along, but *she* hadn’t been ready.

Now Angie knew that God answers prayers in His own time and in His own way because he loves His children and He wants the very best for them, just like her parents.

Discuss:

Why did Angie have an old clunker of a bicycle?

Did her parents want her to have a nice bicycle?

What would have happened if they had already given Angie the nice bike?

How does this relate to our prayers? Do you think God really WANTS to bless you?

Why do you think holds God back from blessing us, sometimes?

Activity: