

# The Lowedown

A monthly newsletter from the life and ministry of Dave & Jennifer Lowe

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## A New Step of Faith

About a year and a half ago, we bought Jacob and Joshua new bikes. They had outgrown the little bikes that they scooted around on in the backyard, so we went to Wal-Mart and got them bigger bikes that they could grow into.

We live right behind a school and the boys are always wanting to go over to the school and play. When we got the bikes, I envisioned them wanting to ride the bikes all the time over at the school. But what I found was that even though they were excited about the "idea" of getting new bikes (and bike helmets and elbow and knee pads), they were actually afraid to hop on and ride them.

Despite the fact that the bikes had training wheels, they were afraid they would fall over and get hurt. So every time I suggested that we head over to the school on our bikes, they would immediately ask, "can we drive our jeep over there instead?"

Finally, over time, with much encouragement and a little nudging, they began riding their bikes more and more. After a while, they became very comfortable riding their bikes and they didn't hold back on going as fast as they could.

But then one day they saw one of their class-mates, come riding to school on his bike, *without* training wheels.

That day, both Jacob and Joshua announced that they wanted to ride their bikes without the training wheels.

No Problem. "This parenting thing is easy", I thought. I didn't push them and they decided on their own that they didn't want their training wheels anymore. So I thought.

So we went over to the school and I had the wrench in hand. When Joshua realized that the bike was not as stable as before, he got scared. Instead of trying to see if he could do

it, he just kept grabbing my arm to make sure he wouldn't fall over.

Because he just kept hanging on to me as I was trying to guide him and launch him loose, he never had a chance to really go. He just fell over every time I let go.

It was at that point that he announced that he wanted his training wheels back on. And when one of them wants something, the other one is usually right there as well.

I decided not to push the issue and I put the training wheels back on. But when I put them on, I raised them up as high as they could go on each side. This made the bike a little more wobbly when riding it even though the training wheels were still on.

The boys rejected the new wheel alignment at first because they didn't like how wobbly the bike was to ride. I was pretty firm on this. "You can ride your bike without the training wheels or you can leave them on as they are. That's the deal."

I wanted them to deal with the struggle to learn because I knew that if I just put the wheels back on and made it easy, they wouldn't have to struggle with learning to balance their bike.

So for the next few weeks, they didn't want to ride their bikes. They wanted to ride their jeep to the school, ride their scooter to the school, or walk to the school. They were back to that fear of the bike that they had at the very beginning.

After a while, though, they slowly began riding their bike. Yes, it wobbled, and that took some getting used to, but the more they rode, the more comfortable it became and pretty soon they were tearing it up on the playground again, going as fast as they could on their bikes.

Then a few weeks ago, we went over to the school with the bikes and I

decided to take the wrench. When we got there, I announced that we would just try to ride without training wheels on the grass.

Jacob went first. I held the seat behind him and got him going and then I let him go. And he didn't fall. He just kept going. All that practice of riding the bike with the wobbly training wheels really paid off.

When Joshua saw that Jacob was doing it without falling over, he wanted to try.

He got on the bike and I held the back of the seat. I gave him a little push and then let go. And he didn't fall either. He just kept going. It was a great moment and they were both very proud of their accomplishment.

Thinking about this whole experience makes me realize even more how much I am like Jacob and Joshua in my spiritual life. I tend to gravitate towards what's comfortable and I am often afraid to try something that is new and unfamiliar.

God wants me to step out in faith and ride the bike but I just want my training wheels. I'm not convinced that riding a bike could be more fun without the training wheels so I settle for an experience that is not what God fully intends for me.

It's only when I step out in faith and experience the exhilaration and freedom of riding without the training wheels that I realize that God really does have an exciting abundant life for me.

Please pray for us to be open to new steps of faith.

Pray also for us as we definitely do not have this parenting thing down!