



BEN OBEYS

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(Based on a true story)

Children, obey your parents in all things

(Colossians 3:20).

Hi, Mom,” Ben called as he rolled his bike into the garage.

“Hi, Ben,” Mom answered. Closing the recycling bin, she turned to look at him, and her smile faded.

“Where’s your helmet?” she asked.

Ben slid his bike into its place. “I don’t need it anymore.”

Mom’s eyebrows went up. “Ben, what is our family rule about helmets?”

Ben took a deep breath and slowly repeated: “If you’re riding your bike, you wear a helmet.”

Mom looked steadily at Ben until he squirmed. “But, Mom!” he protested.

“Please go inside. We’ll talk about it in a minute.”

Ben went in and sat down at the table. Pretty soon Mom and Dad joined him. “So, Ben, tell me about your helmet,” Dad began.

“Dad, I don’t need it anymore. I’m a great bike rider now.”

“You are a good bike rider,” Dad said. “But helmets aren’t just for beginners. I’ve been riding a bicycle for many years. Do I wear a helmet?”

“Yes, you do,” Ben admitted. “But the kids at school think only babies wear helmets.”

“Oh,” Mom said. “So it isn’t cool to wear one?”

“No, it’s not!” Ben exclaimed.



“Ben, do you know why we have the helmet rule?” Dad asked.

“To make me look stupid?” Ben answered with a wry smile.

Dad chuckled. “No. For exactly the opposite reason. It’s to help keep that brain of yours safe.”

“As a matter of fact,” Mom added, “every rule, whether it’s a family rule or one of Heavenly Father’s commandments, is given to help us be safe and happy.”

“But having kids make fun of me for keeping the rule doesn’t make me happy,” Ben complained.

Dad thought for a moment. “Sometimes we have to be obedient even when other people make fun of us for it. I know that in the long run you’ll be happier because you obey.”

Mom looked Ben in the eyes. “Ben, this wasn’t the first time you went riding without your helmet, was it?”

Ben’s shoulders drooped. “No,” he admitted.

“Thank you for being honest,” Dad said. “Your Mom

and I both feel that it is very important that you obey our family rules. You’ve broken this one. What do you think a good consequence would be?”

Ben was quiet for several long moments. “Maybe a time-out from my bike?” he said at last.

Dad nodded. “That sounds fair. I think maybe it should be long enough to help you remember the rule. How about until the end of summer?”

Ben groaned.

“OK,” Mom said. “When school starts, you get your bike back.”

As the sunny days of August went by, Ben often looked wistfully at his bike hanging on the garage wall. “Next time I’ll obey the rule,” he told himself. He remembered what Mom had said about obedience helping people be happy. “Well,” he thought, “It’s true that I’ll be happy when I can ride my bike again, even if someone makes fun of me.”

When school began, Mom helped Ben lift the bike

down. First he checked the tires and oiled the chain. Then he picked up his helmet, adjusted the fit, and snapped it onto his head. It felt great to be riding again!

One bright sunny afternoon in December, Ben was riding home from school. When he came to an intersection he stopped and looked carefully both ways. But a young lady who had just learned to drive turned right without looking or stopping. The bumper of her car struck Ben's bike and sent him flying headfirst into the sidewalk.

A neighbor who saw the accident called Mom. As she

"Our safety lies in repentance. Our strength comes of obedience."

President Gordon B. Hinckley,
"The Times in Which We Live,"
Ensign, Nov. 2001, 74.



ran down the street, she heard a siren and saw the ambulance. "Ben!" she shouted.

"I'm here, Mom."

Two paramedics were checking Ben. "Your son is

going to be just fine," one of them said. "He was wearing this, and it saved his life." He handed her Ben's helmet. There was a big dent in it.

Mom gave Ben a long hug. "I'm glad you were wearing your helmet today," she whispered.

"Me too," he said. "Obeying the rules really does help keep me safe and happy." ●

