

## Don't Build Your Life on the Loose Gravel

A friend of mine asked me the other day if I thought it was a good idea for him to buy his son a dirt bike. Before he was finished asking I was already setting about to put a halt to that nonsense. If he was thinking I'd endorse such a plan in front of his wife, he was sadly mistaken. Before he could safely drag her off beyond earshot I'd barraged them with at least a half dozen tales of the near death encounters I'd experienced as a kid on my little Honda XR-75.

The one that finally caused her to gasp and give him 'the look' was the story about the time I was scooting along on a loose Mississippi gravel road with my little brother Heath on back. The following re-telling brings shivers up my spine too.

Heath had been whining that morning about having to wear his head protection. He complained he looked goofy in my old football helmet- said the mouthpiece tasted funny. (*Maybe I'd called him hard-headed so long he was starting to believe it.*) Anyway, I had to agree to wear my helmet too before he'd hush.

Within minutes we were cruising miles from home; way too far out really, considering we'd been told to stay in the yard. It's not like we had any place to be either. Of course we had that little engine wound out on the off chance we might need to get there quick. (*People had always told us we were headed nowhere fast.*)

Despite the squirrelly handling the motorcycle was exhibiting on the fresh gravel, we couldn't bring ourselves to slow down. We loved to feel the wind on our faces, even if we were collecting more bugs in our teeth than a voracious Venus fly-trap on vacation in the Everglades.

Everything was peachy, at least until we rolled up on that sudden ninety degree turn! I screamed, and stomped the brake. The bike screamed, and began to hydroplane. Heath screamed, and squeezed my breakfast clear back up to my tonsils.

I fought a power slide for the next forty or fifty feet, and then made the executive decision to lay it over. Our only alternative was to hit the oncoming ditch at full speed.

We left the road sideways, and both tires slammed into the far bank at the same time. The resulting jolt catapulted us like we'd been shot out of a giant slingshot. I'm not sure how far we actually flew, but I reckon it probably rivaled some of the previous man-flight records of the day.

We came down with a heavy plop in a muddy soybean field, side by side, face down. When I came to I was spitting mud and spitting mad. I looked at Heath and my first thought was, "Why is that dummy wearing his chin strap across his forehead?"

Heath just had this big blank stare on his face like he was in shock. I followed his gaze and found we were both staring right into the business end of a rusty old plow. Its razor sharp disks mere inches from our foreheads. Helmets or not, another foot and our hard heads would've been sliced thinner than a honey baked ham!

But anyway- I believe if some of you'd take the time you might see yourself in this story. You see, you've rejected the firm foundation of God's Word and built your life on loose gravel. Now you find yourself far from home and headed nowhere fast. Your life is hydroplaning out of control. Stop being so hard-headed! Get off that squirrelly path before you run into the sudden 90 degree turn of judgment and reap what you've been sowing. Turn to the Lord. He is merciful and will show you a better way. (*I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.* **Psalms 40:1-2 NLT**)

Take some advice from a guy who's seen the blades of the reaper up close. Put on the helmet of God's salvation offered through His son Jesus Christ. Now... before it's too late.

-Guy Sheffield 1-15-08