

"Cranky Pants"
James 5:13-20
October 1, 2006
By Marianne Brock

Good morning. Because I'm filling in for Mr. Couch, who was filling in for Mrs. Enney, I was told that today I'd be setting the "sub-standard."

In today's second lesson, James is telling his friends how they can all be valuable in the family of God. I wish that he would have written, "If any of you like to ride your bicycle, then ride," because I really like to ride my bicycle. I like to ride my bicycle long distances. I especially like to ride my bicycle long distances with my friends.

Last year, at about this time, I had the opportunity to do that very thing. Six of my friends and I planned to riding together in the Seagull Century, a 100-mile bicycle ride. But, you see, when we woke up on the day of the ride, it was raining.

Actually, it was raining when we went to bed the night before.

ACTUALLY, it was raining when we left our homes the morning before.

I DON'T like riding in the rain, so just like Elijah in the lesson, I prayed that the rain would stop. It didn't stop and I didn't want to ride. I prayed that someone in my group of friends might be reasonable enough to suggest that we *not* ride ... but NO ONE seemed to think that not riding was a possibility.

So we began our ride.

Now, usually, when I ride my bike, I wear these really attractive black stretchy/squishy shorts with extra padding for my caboose. But on that morning, I must have mistakenly put on my Cranky Pants.

I don't know if you've ever worn Cranky Pants, but I'm here to tell you that they're not very comfortable or flattering at all. So the first thing that I did was to leave my group of friends. Cranky Pants are embarrassing and I didn't want them to see me like that.

The second thing that I did was to begin riding as fast as I could. This is not my favorite way to ride at. I usually just enjoy riding away from the refrigerator and enjoying the scenery.

I was MISERABLE. As I rode, my Cranky Pants became more and more uncomfortable. The rain was stinging my face, the wind was blowing my bicycle sideways so I had to keep leaning into the wind, and there was a lot of debris on the road making the riding very tricky. I was so wet that, when I stopped at a rest stop, I stood in a puddle to dry off my feet!

When I got to Mile 86 or so, feeling absolutely awful about everything, a guy rode up beside me and said in a very cheerful voice, "Hey! How are you!?" Apparently, he didn't notice my Cranky Pants. I told him that I was having a terrible time, thank you very much. He invited me to ride along with his friends and, seeing no better options, I did. And it worked out pretty well because he was a big guy and he blocked the wind for me!

We began to chat. He asked if I did a lot of cycling in that area. I told him that I usually rode in Adams County, PA near the camp where I work. He said, "That wouldn't be Camp Nawakwa, would it?" And it turned out that he had been a camper at my camp! I couldn't believe it! He used to go to church in Harrisburg where my friend, Pastor Brenda Kiser, was his pastor. It also turned out that his cousin was my third grade teacher (who, incidentally, also did not tolerate

whistling in the classroom). The next thing I knew, we had reached the Finish Line and my Cranky Pants had been replaced by my wet cycling shorts. AND I was in a much better mood!

At the end of that Second Lesson that Mr. Trissler read to us, James says, "If any of you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death." Well, I don't know if that guy on the bike ride saved my soul from death, but I do know that he made my ride a lot more enjoyable and I am very grateful for that. He helped me remember why I enjoy riding my bike and why I enjoy riding with other people. Sometimes it takes just one person doing one nice thing to make another person's situation a lot better.

James told his friends that we all have something to contribute to God's family.

Now, I've been wearing my Cranky Pants again recently. I've been wearing them because Mrs. Enney has been gone for THREE WEEKS! I don't like it when she's not here because I get very concerned about Elizabeth, Barabbas, Uncle Floyd, and the rest of our friends. Last weekend I went to a wedding and both Mrs. Enney and Elizabeth were there. They assured me that next week they would be back here...then we can all wear our Happy Pants, and Mrs. Potato Head can wear her Happy Mouth!

THE END