**The Test**
My best friend had moved away when I was about 6 years old.  Our moms soon realized how much we needed each other so they would made extra efforts to arrange for visits. She was now the "country girl" and I remained the "city girl". It was a sweet contrast that we celebrated. We were able to enjoy both cultures because of how our lives intersected.

It just so happened that she was showing up first thing in the morning for one of these visits. We had planned a day long bike ride through the neighborhood...but there was a problem! The brakes on my purple Spyder bike were out! Since Dad was going to be at work, he wouldn't be with me when the time came to repair the brakes. *Dad spent that evening teaching me how to replace the brakes...he told me, he showed me and then he watched me. I was all set, right?*

The next morning, the parts arrived just before my friend. I rushed through the job and ran out to greet her! When my friend arrived she noticed a couple of extra parts laying on the ground nearby.

"Hey, what are these for?"

I nearly choked thinking that if I had taken off on my bike that day without those critical parts that our bike ride could've ended much differently.

There are so many stories of Jesus teaching the disciples in the four gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Sometimes he taught them in parables, sometimes he taught them by taking them alongside himself, sometimes it was directly teaching just them...and then there were times he sent them out and let them find out where they needed more instruction.

Did my father know if I was ready to replace my brakes at the tender age of 7 or 8 years old? I'm sure he believed that he had done all he could do....but, then came the test.

Jesus knew his disciples well. Read Luke 9:18-20,

*18Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”*

*19They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”*

*20“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”*

Just like the spare parts on my garage floor that day...I thought I was ready. Yet, I had rushed because I was so excited about my friend arriving and taking that bike ride. Once my friend called the parts to my attention, I was quickly able to fix the problem because I had listened to what I was taught.

If you were asked that same question today, how would you answer? Read Peter's response in Luke 9:20, Matthew 16:16 and Mark 8:29.

If we haven't met, I want you to know that when I walked into this church alone with a 5 year old daughter and a 2 month old son this church embraced me. But bigger than that the Gospel and what God did in my life changed that girl forever! And I know He will do the same for you like He did for all of us! He will! Enjoy church, the SPF ministry and this SPF newsletter. **Allow yourself to get excited about what God has in store for you and your children.**

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