

GOD'S HIGHWAY



Gary Wadding

Here I am riding a motorcycle for my job, attending biking events of all kinds and showing my Sweetie Pie the world on two wheels. Wow! I'm living my dream! But a few years back this dream was dead and gone. Here's the story.

My job at the Kennedy Space Center was exciting, but it was killing me. I had a mini-stroke due to the stress and pressure. I woke up with little use of my legs, my arms or my voice. I quit my job as a matter of self-preservation, and didn't work for over one year. The savings went down and it was time to make some serious decisions about my future. I was accepted into a medical training program and moved to start back to college. I sold almost everything in order to get the ball rolling. That included my bike. The beautiful electric blue machine had been my first new bike and had never let me down. The dream was dead and gone.

Sometimes people have to give up one dream in order to get another one. "There is a time for every purpose under Heaven." You can't always have everything at once. You trade one part of your life for another one, and you keep working to improve your overall condition. My financial situation left me no choice, so my bike was sacrificed for the higher dream of a job where I could live and not die. I ended up riding a ratty old bicycle several miles to college and to my night job. Many would chastise me for giving up my motorcycle, but I made the right choice, for the future.

Several years later my dad gave me back a motorcycle that I bought him for Christmas in the past. It was sad to see him give up riding, but it put me back on two wheels again, and I have never been without a motorcycle since.

During Daytona Bike Week last month I traveled back and forth to Orlando every day to spend time with my dying mother. Her Alzheimer Disease had been stealing her from me for years, and her body was now unable to continue the journey. She no longer focused her eyes on anything in particular, couldn't recognize anybody, couldn't speak a whole sentence, and finally couldn't make actual contact with the world around her. I did all I could for her but it just wasn't enough. It was time for her to leave. As Daytona ended, Vicky and I spent all day Monday sitting with her. We read the Bible to her and prayed. She couldn't respond, but we felt it helped her. I spoke loving words of appreciation to her and released her to go. At 9:40pm her breathing finally stopped and her life on earth ended.

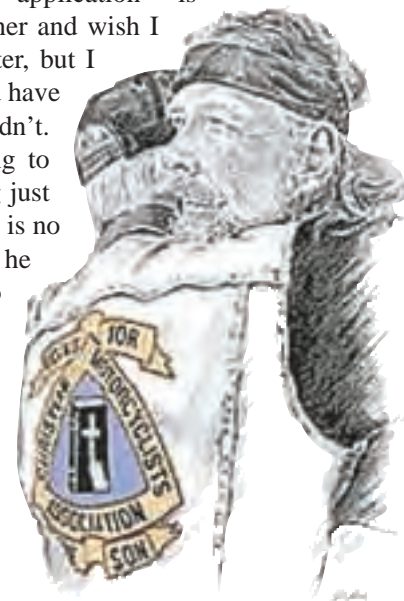
Her situation was much like the one I described earlier. It was time for me to quit the job that was killing me. I needed to move on to something better, and I had



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to leave the rest behind as part of the move. In the end I received much more than I ever had before. What was lost was not worthy of being compared with what was gained. Same for Mom. At the age of 44, she had bowed her head, confessed her sins and asked Jesus Christ to save her soul. Her life wasn't easy at times, but it was blessed from that day onward. At her memorial I read words she had written years earlier while she still had her mind. She described the profound changes that came into her heart that evening, and talked about her heavenly home that awaited her at the end of the journey. She had to trade in one dream for another one that was far better by any comparison. She is now living her dream in truth and reality.

The personal application is obvious. I miss my mother and wish I could have made her better, but I couldn't. I wish she could have lived forever, but she couldn't. Or could she? According to Jesus' words, she is doing just that. Jim Elliott said, "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, in order to gain what he cannot lose". Mom gave up something, but she gained everything. God bless you, Momma.



THE DREAM IS ALIVE