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CAN GOD REALLY USE BICYCLES?

Sydney Ann New International 2019 Summer Media Intern

rowing up, I was never exposed to cycling as a sport. I had always thought it was just a casual activity people do, unless it was the Tour de France. When I heard about this ministry during my internship this summer at New International [the Missions Agency and parent organization of Ends Cycling], I was taken aback. Really? A cycling ministry? I just did not understand how cycling could fit into God's great plan. Little did I know, He was about to show me exactly this.

About half way through my internship, Ends Cycling invited me to go on one of their rides and, out of curiosity, I accepted. I joined them on their *lowa Bike Ride @ RAGBRAI*; A cycling tour across lowa known as

RAGBRAI® (Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa). Being from Florida, I had never heard of this event, so how big can it really be? 20,000 people! It was nothing like I had ever experienced before, it was insane. I was a part of the support staff and was able to take on an outsider's perspective of this ministry. I was truly impressed. Watching everyone involved serve with whole hearts and being joyful right where they were was beautiful to witness.

The days leading up to this trip, I was trying to keep from forming too many expectations; I wanted an unadulterated experience. However, I could not help but think about the people. With an end goal stretching

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over 400 miles, I was expecting to see professional, fit people riding this course. To my pleasant surprise, I saw people of all different experience levels; from beginners to pros. It was incredibly inspiring to see everyone push themselves to make it to the finish line. Although I was not on the course itself, hearing the stories our riders told when they finished for the day were fascinating. Hearing these stories really solidified this ministry for me. Ministry can truly happen anywhere, even on a bicycle in the middle of lowa.

The other support staff members and I were there to tend to our cyclists' needs. We had snacks, drinks, and encouragement ready from the start of each day to when their wheels crossed the finish line. There

were people of all different kinds wandering the streets of small towns in lowa; a perfect place to do ministry. The people we interacted with on the route and in the towns were from all different walks of life. Each night, Ends Cycling hosted worship in the host-city and occasionally some of those people that we talked to during the day would end up worshiping alongside us that night. This was my favorite part of each day. At some points, you could physically see the stress and exhaustion lift away as we turned our eyes and hearts upon Jesus.

To take a seemingly random hobby and use it to spread the word of God is amazing and something I will never forget. I am extremely grateful for the creative minds that are involved in this ministry; they are doing good work.



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