

Dozer Wheel by Gramps Curtis

“ROSS COME LOOK OUT THE WINDOW!! QUICK!” Hope Tappin' exclaimed a little louder than was really needed for her husband behind the newspaper in his living room easy chair, to hear. Ross tossed his paper to the side and headed for the kitchen window, expecting to see the garage on fire, or a skunk parade all primed for trouble. “What's the problem, Hope?” She quietly used her trigger finger to jab a couple times at the window glass in the direction of the riding lawnmower.

She said, “Now watch a minute.” He obeyed and in a few seconds saw what looked like a man come out through the open garage door with a rag and walk toward the mower. It took only a second or two for Ross to recognize Dozer, one of the teen boys he's been discipling on the weekends out in the garage. In a soft tone, Ross told Hope, “It's OK. That's Dozer one of my teen pals. Let's wait a second and see what he does. I'm sure he's not up to no good. He's a big teen with a heart for others, to match.”

The two silver-haired Tappin's watched Dozer kneel down next to the mower and start wiping the grime and grass off the riding mower with more care that Ross would. Ross asked Hope, “Quick. Have you got a couple of those cheese 'n chocolate cookies handy. I bet he'd love 'em.” The two cookies were placed in a napkin which was handed to the lawnmower's owner as he headed out the door.

After a few steps out the back door toward the hard-working teen, Ross put on a big smile and exclaimed, “Hi ya Dozer! What'cha doin’?” The teen's reply was, “Well, Mr. Gramps, I wanted to pay ya back for your kindness last Saturday – the way ya let me work in your garage laboratory over there. I guess you just made me important enough to bust. Especially since I'm not real smart like Monte and you.” “Well hold on now, Dozer. My wife must think you're pretty important cuz she sent me out with her special cookies.” He said with a big smile.

Ross, who loved to be called 'Gramps', especially by youth, asked, “Dozer. I can see your cleaning up my mower, and doing a great job of it. But why? I don't remember asking you to.” The husky teen answered, “Actually it's 'cuz of my mom. I mean, she always taught me when somebody does me good, it's real important I do 'em back, and soon. Well I'm not good a lots of things but I'm a good cleaner-upper. I figured I couldn't wait two more days till Saturday to do ya back, so here I am.”

The cleaning process was slowed a bit while the other hand helped some great cookies get where they'd be most enjoyed. Gramps politely took the cleaning rag out of Dozer's hand and motioned him to take a seat facing the mower. The old man's first question, “Dozer, which part on this mower is the most important? Tell me. It's not a hard question.” “Gramps, I don't understand. I mean I don't know a whole bunch about machinery but, I'm not sure.” “Ok, Dozer. I'll ask it this way. Do you think a wheel is more important than, say, this brake pedal?”

A smile broke out on the teen's face as he replied, “Well, if you're missing a wheel, ya can't go. And if you're missing this brake pedal, ya can stop from running over Mrs. Gramp's flowers. I'm guessin' ya have to have 'em both, and workin' together like they're supposed to.” Gramps said, “Ya got it, Doz. Now pretend you are wheel. And pretend that Monte is the brake pedal. It may seem silly, but pretend if you can. Now pretend that Monte is mad at you and he's gonna keep his pedal down all the time. Well you're the wheel and you aren't going to go anywhere. Now you still with me?” A smile and thumbs up from the teen confirmed they were on the same page.

Gramps continued his parable, “Ok. One last thing. Suppose my backyard didn't have to be mowed, but the yard that belonged to the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself did. I know that's a tall amount of pretending, but try it.” Gramps spent the next few minutes explaining how Jesus had done Dozer good; real real good, on the Cross to pay for the teen's sins. Well, Doz had no doubts that he should do Jesus back by doing his best. The teen learned the most important was accepting Jesus' Cross-sacrifice and being a helper to other Christians, like Ross 'Gramps' Tappin.