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“MLK Day”

by
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What Susie is surprised to discover that Willie has never heard of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She explains who Dr. King was, and Willie learns that God loves all of us equally, no matter what color our skin is. This puppet script is a great way to teach about and celebrate Dr. King's life.

Themes: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, God's Love, Racism, MLK, Equality, Civil Rights, Puppets, Children's Ministry

Who Willie
Susie

When Martin Luther King (MLK) Day (Present)

**Wear
(Props)** No props needed

Why John 3:16

How *See “How” at the end of this script.

Time Approximately 6 minutes

Scene opens with **Susie** singing the song 'Jesus Loves the Little Children'. At the conclusion of the song **Willie** enters.

Susie: *(singing)* 'Jesus loves the little children. All the children of the world. Red and yellow, black or white, they are precious in His sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world.' La la la la...

Willie: *(enters)* Hi Susie!

Susie: *(up-beat)* Oh, hi Willie. What's up?

Willie: Oh, nothin' really. I'm just waitin' around for Sammy. Have you seen him?

Susie: *(shaking her head)* No, at least not this morning.

Willie: *(thinking)* Hmm. I guess he'll probably show up a little later. *(Pause)* Hey, was that you I just heard singing?

Susie: *(shyly)* Yeah. I was singing 'Jesus loves the Little Children'.

Willie: *(excited)* Oh, Cool. That's one of my favorite songs.

Susie: Yeah. Mine too. And I'm sooooo glad it's true.

Willie: What?

Susie: That Jesus loves children.

Willie: You mean like you and me?

Susie: Yeah, like us. And it doesn't even matter what color we are. Red, yellow, black or white, He just loves us all.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah. That's what my mom said too.

Susie: And that's what Dr. King believed too.

Willie: Who?

Susie: You know. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It's his birthday that we celebrate this week.

Willie: *(shaking his head)* Never heard of him.

Susie: *(astonished)* What? You've never heard of *(speaking slowly and getting louder with each title)* Dr... Martin... Luther... King... Jr.?

Willie: *(shaking his head)* Nope. Sure has a long name though, doesn't he?

Susie: Willie, everybody's heard of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr...unless you've had your face buried in a computer game all your life. Which, I guess in your case, is entirely possible.

Willie: *(sarcastically)* Funny. Ha ha ha. *(Pause)* So, ah...who is he?

Susie: You mean who *was* he?

Willie: Okay then, who *was* he?

Susie: Well, for one thing, Dr. King was once pastor at the Dexter Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. That's a really famous place now.

Willie: *(thinking)* Hmm. Never heard of *that* either.

Susie: *(shaking her head in disbelief)* You sure don't get out much, do you?

Willie: *(giggling)* Nope, I'm usually too busy burying my face in a computer game.

Susie: *(sigh)* Anyhow, to answer your question, Dr. King was a lot of things. He was a preacher, a dad, a husband, a friend. But mostly we remember him for his work with the Civil Rights Movement back in the 1950s and 60s.

Willie: *(excited)* Hey, I have heard of that!

Susie: *(surprised)* Amazing. Perhaps you *do* get out occasionally.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah.

Susie: *(continues)* Dr. King was also a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Willie: *(perks up)* Woah! Now that *is* a big deal. Not everybody can win the Nobel Peace Prize, ya know. What did he do to earn it?

Susie: Well, my teacher said he earned the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent resistance to racial prejudice.

Willie: Non-violent resistance?

Susie: Sure, you know...peaceful demonstrations, protests, sit-ins, marches, sermons. Things like that.

Willie: *(thinking)* Hmm. Int'resting.

Susie: One of the first things Dr. King did was to become involved in the Montgomery, Alabama boycott of the city buses. Back then the bus

companies insisted that African Americans only ride in the back seats of their busses while white people were allowed to ride up front.

Willie: Gee, that wasn't very fair.

Susie: You're right, it wasn't. But under the leadership of Dr. King, and others, the boycott was successful, and the bus companies were forced to change their policies making front and back seats available to *all* people; regardless of the color of their skin.

Willie: Good for them.

Susie: Yes...that *was* good. But it was only the beginning. It would take many years and many more battles before people of color could enjoy the level of equality that they've come to know today. Many battles. And Dr. King was at the forefront of them all.

Willie: Wow! He must have been a very brave man.

Susie: I don't know about that. I doubt that he would have considered himself to be brave. But he did have a powerful faith in God ...and a genuine love for his fellow man. As a student of the Bible, Dr. King knew that racial prejudice was evil. God's Word taught him that we're all created in the image of God and that we all have great worth. It doesn't matter what color we are; Red, yellow, black or white. With God there is only one race—the human race.

Willie: Cool.

Susie: *(nodding)* Yeah, for sure. The Bible says in John 3:16 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.'

Willie: *(excited)* Yeah...I remember that verse.

Susie: Well, when the verse says that God so loved the 'world' ...that would mean everybody, including all ethnic groups.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah, I think you're right.

Susie: And we know that God wants us to love everybody too. He told us so in the Bible.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah.

Susie: Truth is, whenever we treat others badly, we are hurting somebody who God loves and who Jesus died for.

Willie: Gee. I never thought about it like that before. I guess we really should try hard to love everybody and get along with each other.

Susie: That's what Dr. King wanted too. In his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech he said, "I have a dream that one day little black boys and girls will be holding hands with little white boys and girls." Now I think that's a pretty good dream, don't you?

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah, sure is. A very good dream. *(Pause)* Well, it's getting kinda late and I haven't seen Sammy yet. Guess I probably should go look for him.

Susie: Okay. Hey, would you like me to go with you? I'm not doing anything right now anyhow.

Willie: Sure. That would be great. And Susie?

Susie: Yes, Willie?

Willie: Thanks for telling me about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Now I know who he is. Whoops! I mean, who he was.

Susie: *(giggling)* You're welcome, Willie.

Willie: Just one question.

Susie: What's that?

Willie: Well, I was wondering... how does someone celebrate Martin Luther King Jr day? What are you supposed to do?

Susie: Well, at my church we try to honor Dr. King by remembering his hard work and accomplishments. But mostly we see MLK Day as a day to remember and celebrate that God loves us all.

Willie: Cool.

Susie: This year we're having a picnic. There will be singing and games and lots and lots and lots of food.

Willie: *(excited)* Food!!!! Did you say food? Oh, yummy, yummy, yummy.

Susie: *(giggling)* I thought you might like that. Ya wanna come?

Willie: Sure do!

Susie: Great.

Willie: Hey, I've got an idea. Why don't we sing 'Jesus Loves the Little Children' right now in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's honor?

Susie: Yeah, good idea.

Willie and Susie sing one verse of 'Jesus Loves the Little Children' which Willie sings way off key.

Willie: That was fun. Well, we'd best be going.

Susie: *(nodding)* Yeah.

Willie and Susie begin to slowly exit together as they carry on a conversation.

Willie: Hey Susie.

Susie: Yes Willie?

Willie: Do you think Jesus would love us if we were purple?

Susie: Of course He would.

Willie: How 'bout if we were pink.

Susie: Now you're bein' silly.

Willie: How 'bout if we were polka-dotted?

Susie: *(giggling)* Now you're really being silly.

Willie and Susie exit from view. They will now be heard but not seen.

Willie: *(sounding far off)* How 'bout if we had two noses?

Susie: Oh, brother!

THE END

John 3:16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Galatians 3:28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Acts 10:34. Peter opened his mouth and said, "Truly I perceive that God doesn't show favoritism.

Romans 2:11. For there is no partiality with God.

How:

Puppets are wonderful tools for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in a fun, lighthearted way. What great joy it brings to hear the laughter of children when your performance goes well. I would like to take just a moment to focus on a few areas that I believe are key in order for that to happen.

The first has to do with the stage (curtain) itself.

PREPARE YOUR WORK AREA. How you feel behind the curtain can make a big difference in how you are seen in front of it. You will want a large enough work area behind the curtain to allow three or four puppeteers to maneuver comfortably behind it. A short stool or a rolled-up blanket can provide relief from the discomfort to your knees and back. Proper lighting is a must. This will help prevent you from losing your place while reading from the script. You may want to attach several copies of the script to the back of the curtain and have each puppeteer highlight their individual parts.

Next, because puppets are mostly expressionless, you will need to give them their spirit and vigor.

BE HIGHLY EXPRESSIVE AND ANIMATED. Wave those arms, raise your voice and include lots of wows, boings, zonks and thuds! Children love that.

The presentation is most important. It is so easy for a good skit to suddenly go bad due to poor delivery. Reading over a script two or three times before performing it can make a world of difference.

COMMIT TO MEMORY AS MUCH OF THE SCRIPT AS POSSIBLE. This will free you up to spend more time concentrating on the handling of your puppet, adding slap-stick humor, etc.

ALWAYS KNOW WHAT YOUR PUPPET IS DOING. Is he positioned too high up...or down too low. Is he looking at who he's speaking to? Are his lips in sync with your words?

And finally, don't forget the 'risk' factor. By this, I mean to be bold. Take risks. Dare to be differently. So what if your puppet (or your audience) gets a little wet. Who cares if your puppet ends up with whipped cream (shaving cream) on its face or with a little Play-Doh in its hair? It all comes out in the wash.

DO THE UNEXPECTED. Your children will love it. If they are still talking about your puppet skit days, or even weeks, after it's over you're probably doing something right. In short,

HAVE FUN!

1. Prepare your work area
2. Be expressive
3. Commit to memory much of the script and know what your puppet is doing
4. Do the unexpected
5. Have fun.

PURCHASE
SCRIPT
TO
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