

A script from



“Batter Up!”

A Puppet Skit for Springtime

by
Tom Smith

- What** Willie discovers that there are more reasons than one to celebrate the arrival of spring. **Themes:** God, Creation, Spring, New Life, Baseball
- Who** Willie
Betsy
- When** Springtime
- Wear
(Props)** Spring clothing
Flowers
Baseball Cap
Ball
- Why** 2 Corinthians 5:17
- How** Attach the baseball cap to Willie’s head with a safety pin to prevent it from falling off.
- Time** Approximately 10 minutes

An upbeat **Betsy**, holding flowers in her hand, begins talking to herself.

Betsy: Oh, I just love spring. The flowers, the colors, the smells. The whole earth seems to have God's marvelous creation on full display. *(Smells flowers)*
Ahhhhhhh.

Willie enters wearing a baseball cap and holding a ball.

Willie: Hey Betsy!

Betsy: Oh, hi Willie.

Willie: What'cha doing?

Betsy: I was just admiring these beautiful flowers. *(Holds flowers out toward Willie)* Want one?

Willie: *(sarcastically)* Yeah, right.

Betsy: *(lowering flowers)* Suit yourself. *(Pause)* What are you up to this morning?

Willie: I'm supposed to meet with Sammy. We're going to play some catch.

Betsy: Oh. *(Taking a deep breath and speaking dreamy like)* Don't you just love spring?

Willie: Sure do. No school. *(Pleased)* Hey! I just made up a rhyme. Sure do. No school. Ha ha. Sure do. No school.

Betsy: Oh, I don't mean because school is closed, I mean because of how beautiful everything is.

Willie: Oh. Yeah, I guess so.

Betsy: Listen to this verse I found in the Song of Solomon this morning during my study time.

Willie: Okay.

Betsy: "For behold, the winter is past. The rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth. The time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." *(Song of Solomon 2:11)*

Willie: *(confused)* Huh? Turtledove?

Betsy: Yeah, isn't that beautiful? It's so *(dreamy like)* poetic...and romantic. It almost gives me goosebumps.

Willie: Puppets don't get goosebumps.

Betsy: I know. That's why I said "almost". *(Pause)* I sure do wish it could be spring all year long.

Willie: Yeah...me too. *(Pause)* Hey Betsy, what do you like most about spring?

Betsy: Everything! I just like **everything**. The flowers, the birds, the green grass, the butterflies. Lots and lots of butterflies.

Willie: *(nodding in agreement)* Yeah, I like those things too. But ya wanna know what I **really** like about spring?

Betsy: *(curious)* Yeah, what?

Willie: I'll give you a clue.

Betsy: Okay.

Willie: *(shouts)* Batter...up!

Betsy: *(puzzled)* Huh?

Willie: I'll say it again. Batter...up!

Betsy: *(thinking)* Hmmmm. Well, I have a friend who works at a seafood restaurant. The cook there is always shouting "batter up".

Willie: *(upset)* I'm not talking about **that** kind of "batter".

Betsy: Oh, okay. Give me another clue.

Willie: Okay, uh...here goes. *(Shouts)* Strike *one!*

Betsy: *(puzzled)* Strike one? Hmmmm. Sounds like a labor union dispute.

Willie: *(shaking his head in disbelief)* Oh brother. This is gonna be harder than I thought. Okay...let's try this. *(Shouting)* Hot Dogs! Peanuts! Cracker Jacks!

Betsy: *(thinking)* Hmmmm.

Willie becomes more and more frustrated with each new clue that he gives to Betsy.

Willie: *(shouting)* Cubs Win! Cubs Win! Cubs Win!

Betsy: Hmmmmm.

Willie: *(flabbergasted)* Okay, this is your last clue. You better get it.

Willie begins singing "take me out to the ball game" way off key.

Betsy: *(thinking)* Hmmmmm

Willie: *(totally losing it)* Auuuugggggg!!! I can't believe you don't know!

Betsy: *(giggling and interrupting)* Oh, I'm just teasing you Willie. I know you're talking about baseball.

Willie: *(exhausted)* Whew! Well I would hope so.

Betsy: Sorry, I just couldn't resist.

Willie: Anyhow...that's what I like most about springtime. Baseball! And finally it's time to get out the o' bat and glove.

Betsy: I guess baseball has its place alright, even if it is a silly game.

Willie: *(disbelief)* WHAT!? A silly game?

Betsy: Truth is, what I really like about spring is that it reminds me about God.

Willie: *(confused)* God?

Betsy: Sure, in lots of ways. It reminds me of His greatness and how He created all things. He made everything out of nothing. I mean, who else could do that?

Willie: Gee, Nobody.

Betsy: That's for sure. Spring also reminds me of God's faithfulness. He promised way back in Genesis 8:22 that "while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." And that's the way it's been ever since.

Willie: Yep.

Betsy: During the cold, dark, freezing days of winter I can always take comfort knowing that spring is just around the corner. Just as He said it would be.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah, That's pretty cool alright.

Betsy: But mostly spring reminds me of how God gave us "new life".

Willie: *(curious)* New life? What do you mean?

Betsy: Well, *(Looking about)* Do you see that dogwood tree over there?
(Pointing)

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah.

Betsy: It's not very pretty, is it?

Willie: *(shaking his head)* No, not really.

Betsy: That's because it's just gone through a long difficult winter. It has no leaves and almost looks dead.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah.

Betsy: *(excitedly)* But just you wait. In only a few short weeks that seemingly dead and ugly tree will become the prettiest tree on the block.

Willie: It will?

Betsy: Sure will. Its branches will soon be covered with bright green leaves and pretty pink flowers. Lots and lots of flowers. Right now, the tree appears lifeless....and useless. But very soon it will offer us shade from the hot summer sun and sweet nectar for the bees. Not to mention a beautiful home for some lucky birds and squirrels.

Willie: Hmmm.

Betsy: One might think the dogwood tree had been given new life.

Willie: Yeah, I can see that.

Betsy: And that reminds me of what God did for us when we invited Jesus into our hearts. He gave us new life.

Willie: Hmmm.

Betsy: Once we were ugly inside. We were sinful and only concerned about ourselves. But when we gave our life to Jesus we became all new. 2 Corinthians 5:17 puts it this way: "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a

new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new."

Willie: Cool.

Betsy: We didn't change much on the outside like the dogwood tree does. But what did change is what's inside of us. Our hearts.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah.

Betsy: And with a new heart, God changes the way we think, what we want and who we are. Once we lived for self, but now we live for Him.

Willie: That's cool, Betsy. I never really thought about it like that before. I think, from now on, whenever I see a flower blooming or hear a robin sing, I'm going to think about our new life too. And remember all that God has done for us.

Betsy: *(pleased)* Oh, that's wonderful Willie. That makes me very happy.

Willie: *(pause)* Well, I told Sammy I'd stop by to play some catch, so I guess I'd best be going. Ya wanna come along?

Betsy: No thank you. I don't really like baseball.

Willie: You probably wouldn't say that if you knew that the **Bible** talked about baseball.

Betsy: *(surprised)* The Bible talks about baseball? *(Doubtful)* I don't think so.

Willie: *(confidently)* Sure it does. The first baseball game ever played is found in the book of Genesis.

Betsy: *(shaking her head)* No it isn't. Where?

Willie: Well, it begins at Genesis 1:1 where the Bible says "In the big Inning". And then it goes on to tell us some of the events of the first game. Eve stole first, Adam stole second, Cain struck out Abel and the Giants and the Angels were rained out.

Betsy: Oh, Willie. You're just teasing with me, aren't you?

Willie: *(laughing)* Yeah. I couldn't help myself.

Betsy: You're so silly, Willie. Hey, maybe I **will** go with you. It's probably time I learned a little bit about America's favorite pastime.

Willie: Great!
Willie and Betsy begin exiting together as Willie tosses his ball into the air.

Willie: Hey, maybe tomorrow I can show you from the Bible where the game of football was first played.

Laughing as they exit.

Betsy: Oh, brother.

The end.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

For by him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him. Colossians 1:16

The heavens declare the glory of God. Psalm 19:1

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Tips for performing with puppets:

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 your presentation is 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.