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“The Christmas Gift Exchange”

by
Tom Smith

- What** Willie learns a valuable lesson about sharing when his classmates offer their hearts, as well as their gifts, to him.
- Themes: Puppets, Sharing, Selfishness, Humility, Sacrificing, Kid’s Ministry, Children’s Ministry
- Who** Willie
Susie
Sammy
Clyde
Joey
Miss Pickles
Classmates- as many as you’d like
- When** Present
- Wear (Props)** Classroom setting
Paper bag
Several Wrapped Presents
Squirt Gun (or some other replacement toy)
- Why** Hebrews 13:16
- How** It’s possible to perform this script with people instead of puppets. To perform with puppets, see “how” at the end of this script.
- Time** Approximately 8 minutes

Scene opens with **Willie** rushing into his classroom carrying a paper bag and a small, wrapped Christmas present. He is excited and talking out loud to himself.

Willie: Wow! *(Looking about)* I beat everybody to school this morning. This is so cool. *(Catches his breath)* It's gonna be a fun day for sure. I just love exchanging gifts. I don't know who drew my name but I've been lettin' everybody know that I would really like to have a super-duper razzle-dazzle little be-bop squirt gun this year. Sure hope I get one. *(Pause)* Hmm *(glancing into his paper bag)*. These cookies sure do smell good. It was nice of mom to let me bring them to school to share with the class this morning.

Willie glances into his bag again and begins counting the cookies out loud.

Willie: Let's see now. One-two-three...nine. *(Pleased)* Yep. There are just enough cookies for everybody to get one. Even Miss Pickles. Great. *(Thinking)* Hmm. Smelling these cookies is making me hungry. I think I'll go ahead and eat mine now.

Willie removes one cookie from his bag and eats it. Then he resumes talking to himself.

Willie: Mmmmm. That cookie was soooooooo good. Nobody can make chocolate chip cookies like my mom can. *(Pause)* Sure wish I could have another one. But if I do, there won't be enough left for everybody else to have one.

Willie is overcome with selfishness and begins devising a plan to keep all of the cookies for himself.

Willie: Hey, wait a minute! Who says I have to share these cookies with the rest of the class anyhow? Nobody even knows I have 'em. I know what I'll do. I'll hide the cookies under my desk and then I'll have them all to myself. *(Pleased)* Yeah, that's what I'll do.

Willie laughs a sinister laugh *(bwaaaaaaa)* and then places the bag of cookies beneath his desk. Soon all of his **Classmates** enter the room. Each is excited, waving a small, wrapped Christmas present above their head.

Classmates: Yippie! This is going to be fun. I just *love* Christmas time.

Miss Pickles: *(enters)* Good morning class.

Classmates: *(in unison)* Good morning Miss Pickles.

Miss Pickles: My, my. What a cheerful group I have for class this morning.

Classmates giggling with excitement and having difficulty being still.

Miss Pickles: Okay, let's all settle down now.

Classmates become quiet.

Miss Pickles: This morning we're not going to be doing any work.

Classmates: *(excited)* Yippie!

Miss Pickles: And I'm going to go speak with Principal Johnson in just a few minutes about allowing us to dismiss class a little early today so you'll be able to spend some extra time enjoying your gifts.

Classmates: *(excited)* Yippie!

Miss Pickles: Now, each of you should have a gift with someone's name on it. Is that correct? *(All puppets raise their presents high for Miss Pickles to see)* Very good. Shhhhhh. *(Quiets the children down again)* Okay, I'm going to go to the Principals office now. While I'm away, I would like for each of you to find the person whose name you drew and give them their gift. It's okay for you to go ahead and open your presents. Then you can all show me what you got when I return.

All children: *(excited)*

Miss Pickles: Okay, I'll be right back. Go ahead and exchange your gifts now.

Miss Pickles exits and the excited puppets begin exchanging gifts.

Willie: *(handing Susie a gift)* Here Susie. I drew your name.

Susie: *(surprised)* Oh! Thank you, Willie. This is so exciting. *(Opens her gift)* Oh! It's the Tiny Baby Princess Doll. I just love it. I've always wanted a Tiny Baby Princess Doll. Oh, thank you, Willie. You're wonderful.

Sammy: *(handing a gift to Clyde)* Here, Clyde. I drew your name.

Clyde: *(takes and opens Sammy's gift to him)* Wow! 'Spider King' comic book issue number 8429. This is just the one I've needed to complete my collection. I can't believe it. Thanks Sammy.

Joey: *(handing a gift to Sammy)* Uh... here ya go Sammy. I drew your name.

Sammy: Oh. Thanks Joey. Gosh. I wonder what it is. *(Opens gift tossing paper up in the air)* Oh, cool. A new baseball. Just what I wanted. Now I can start getting ready for spring training. Thanks!

Willie: *(concerned)* Hmmm. So ah... I wonder who drew my name? *(Shouting softly)* Hey, uh... Willie here. Anybody got a present with my name on it? Helloooo!? *(Mumbling to himself)* I don't think I like

the way they wrote this script. *(Shouts out loud)* HEY! ANYBODY DRAW MYNAME?

Silence

Willie: *(hurt and sad)* Nobody...got a present...for *me*?

Sammy: *(concerned)* What's the matter Willie?

Susie: *(sympathetically)* Nobody drew his name.

Classmates: Wow, that's terrible. How could he have been left out?

Sammy: *(compassionately)* Hey **Willie**. I'm sorry nobody drew your name. Here, *(offers Willie his baseball)* I want you to have this.

Willie: *(surprised)* But that's *your* gift **Sammy**. You need it to practice for spring training.

Sammy: Ah...no big deal. I can always get another baseball.

Willie: *(amazed)* You'd do that for me?

Sammy: Well, sure. You're my best friend. And besides, I don't like to see you so sad.

Sammy walks away as Clyde approaches Willie.

Clyde: Uh...Willie?

Willie: Yes, Clyde?

Clyde: *(extending his Spider King comic book towards Willie)* I want you to have this.

Willie: *(amazed)* But Clyde, that's your Spider King comic issue number 8429. It completes your collection.

Clyde: I know, Willie. But it would mean more to me if you would take it.

Willie: *(humbled)* Wow. You sure are a good friend. Thanks, Clyde.

Clyde walks away as Susie approaches.

Susie: Willie.

Willie: *(shaking his head no)* I don't want your Tiny Baby Princess Doll **Susie**.

Susie: *(relieved)* Whew! Good. But I want you to know that, if you ever do, it's yours.

Willie: *(grateful)* Thanks, Susie.

Willie begins to feel ashamed. While he didn't want to share his cookies with his Classmates, they were all willing to give to him their treasured gifts.

Willie: Hey everybody. *(All Classmates become quiet and give Willie their attention)* You have all been so nice to me. I don't know what to say. I didn't even wanna share my chocolate chip cookies with you but you were all willing to give your Christmas gifts to me. You're all so wonderful. You have helped me to see the true spirit of Christmas. I hope someday you can forgive me.

Susie: *(comfortingly)* Oh, we forgive you Willie.

Classmates: Yeah, we all forgive you.

All puppets circle Willie giving him hugs and pats on the back.

Susie: This reminds me of what the Bible says about sharing and about how our sharing with others makes God happy.

Willie: Really?

Susie: Yeah. In Hebrews 13:16 it says, "But don't forget to be doing good and sharing. For with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Willie: Cool.

Susie: *(nodding)* For sure. Sometimes, because of our sinful natures, we allow selfishness to take over instead of sharing. And that's never a good thing.

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah, that's what happened to me. I became selfish and didn't wanna share my cookies. Then I ended up feeling really bad about it.

Susie: Yep, that's usually what happens. We need to remember that sharing is very important. My Sunday school teacher said that we are most like Jesus when we share ourselves with others. Pretty cool, huh?

Willie: *(nodding)* Yeah, pretty cool. And that's a lesson I'm going to remember for a long, long time. To always share with my friends. 'Cause I got the best friends in the whole wide world.

Suddenly Miss Pickles rushes into the classroom out of breath.

Miss Pickles: *(concerned)* Oh, my. I am soooooo sorry. **Willie**, are you okay? I'm the one who drew your name and I forgot to give you your gift

before I went to see the Principal. I feel just terrible. I hope you'll forgive me. Here, *(handing Willie his gift)* this is for you.

Willie: *(excited)* Wow! For me?

Willie takes the gift and quickly tosses wrapping paper about.

Willie: *(excited)* WOW! A super-duper razzle-dazzle little Be-Bop squirt gun!

Miss Pickles: I hope you like it.

Willie: Like it! This is about the most bestest gift ever! Oh, thank you Miss Pickles.

Joey: Show us how it works, Willie.

Classmates: Yeah, let's see you use it.

Willie: I can't. There isn't any water in it. See?

Willie, unaware that there is indeed water in his toy, accidentally squirts Miss Pickles.

Willie: *(concerned)* Uh...whoops!

There is a moment of silence as the puppets fear that Miss Pickles might be angry. Suddenly she burst out laughing and shouting.

Miss Pickles: Merry Christmas everybody.

All: *(join in laughing and shouting)* Merry Christmas everybody!

The end.

**Alternate ending*

Willie: *(excited)* WOW! A super-duper razzle-dazzle little Be-Bop squirt gun!

Miss Pickles: I hope you like it.

Willie: Like it! This is about the most bestest gift ever! Oh, thank you Miss Pickles.

Miss Pickles: You're very welcome Willie.

Willie: *(humbled)* You all have been so nice to me. Now I would like to share something with you. Beneath my desk there's a bag with nine chocolate cookies. That's one for each of you.

Before Willie can finish talking his Classmates shout 'Cookies!' and make a dash for his desk. Miss Pickles follows in hot pursuit.

Miss Pickles: *(shouting and waving her arms in the air)* SAVE ONE FOR ME!
All puppets erupt in laughter. The end

Additional Bible verses that may be useful with this skit.

Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Romans 12:13.

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured out into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Luke 6:38.

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity of them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:16-18

Author's note

Be creative with the gifts that are exchanged. They don't have to be dolls, comic books, baseballs or a Super-duper razzle-dazzle little Be-Bop squirt gun. Whatever works best for your group will be fine.

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 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 different. 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 you for 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!**