

The Strange Tale of Willowbee Warthog

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"Hey Bertha!" shouted Ridgely. "Take a look at that weird kid on the playground. Why he's the funniest thing I've seen in a long, long time. Just look at those big teeth and stubby nose. I thought you had to go to the zoo to see something as strange as that. Better tell everyone to stay away or they'll get a case of the humungus fungus."

Poor Willowbee. Can you imagine how he felt as he listened to the kids talk about him that way? You see, Willowbee had just moved to Fairhope, and he didn't have any friends. But despite being lonely and teased, Willowbee managed to smile and be friendly.

One day Baron Von Beetle decided to play with Willowbee, but that turned out to be a terrible mistake. Everyone made fun of Baron. Finally, he couldn't take it any longer, and he ran off to the other beetles. I'm sure Willowbee was hurt, but he just kept smiling and being friendly.

Another time Penelope Pig was especially mean to Willowbee. "Hey, weird Willowbee!" she quipped. "Where'd you get the funny clothes? Looks like "lost and found" stuff to me. With that kind of outfit you ought to be a clown in the circus."

Willowbee's mother and father were hard workers, but they had little money for clothes. So sometimes Willowbee's socks didn't match and sometimes his pant legs had to be rolled up. But, so what? Did it really matter that colors often clashed and sizes weren't always perfect? Willowbee didn't think so. He was happy just to have good clean clothes. And he continued to smile and be friendly even though the others laughed and made fun of his clothes.

Then one day something happened that changed the lives of everyone.

At morning recess all the children, except Willowby of course, ran down the hill and across the road to Peterson's Pond. The children knew it was against the school rules, but they did it anyway.

Ridgely and Bertha climbed on the "old fallen log" and began bragging how they could walk the length without falling off. Nobody knows what happened, but just as the two reached the end there was a tremendous shudder, and the log came crashing down. Both Ridgely and Bertha fell and toppled into the pond.

Quickly the others cried out, "Help! Help! Somebody help! But nobody came and nobody helped.

Again the children yelled "Help! Help! Somebody help! Still nothing happened. Then they realized there was no one to help, and they didn't know what to do.

Willowbee, who had been standing alone on the playground, heard the cries and ran to the pond. Immediately he saw the struggling pair and sprang into action. Grabbing a fallen tree limb, Willowbee waded into the water. "Grab it! Grab it!" he shouted, and extended the branch to the pair. "Hold on and I'll pull you out." Within seconds a frightened Ridgely and Bertha were safely on shore.

The children looked on in disbelief. They had been unable to help when it was needed, and it took the new kid with the funny face and mismatched clothes to save their friends.

Bertha and Ridgely were thankful to be rescued, and now they and the others were ashamed of their treatment of Willowbee. It was very, very quiet as everyone stared at the ground and thought about what had just happened

What occurred next was amazing. The children exploded into cheers and shouts of joy. "Yea Willowbee! Yea Willowbee! Three cheers for Willowbee!" Then they ran over, raised him onto their shoulders, and marched triumphantly back to school. It was a sight to behold.

From that day on there was a new attitude at school and a new attitude in the community. It was an attitude of love, caring, and sharing. The children had learned an important lesson. It is wrong to judge others by how they look or dress. In fact, it is simply wrong to judge. We may not always agree with others, but the right thing to do is to love and care for them anyway.

And why did Willowbee come to the rescue when Ridgely and Bertha had been so mean and cruel? He did it because it was the right thing to do.

A MESSAGE FOR YOU:

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:31-32 (NKJV).

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. Ephesians 5:1-2 (NKJV).

CHECK THIS OUT:

Find 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, in your Bible, write it down, and ask God to help you live it every day.

I Corinthians 13:4-8 _____

REMEMBER THIS:

"This is the message you have heard from the beginning. We should love one another.
(1 John 3:11).

"THE END"