

"The Incident at the Church Picnic and the Clever Giraffe"

Luke 16:1-13

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By Rebecca Enney

Today's Bible story is kind of complicated but then that makes it even more interesting. Elizabeth and her parents went to a picnic with lots of families from Pastor Ed's church and lots of families from a church in Harrisburg. And guess who Elizabeth unexpectedly saw there? Latisha and Taquoia, her two little potato friends! They had a lovely time playing with all the toys Elizabeth had brought along in her picnic basket! (show toys)

You might remember that Latisha and Taquoia's family does not have much money. So when they saw Elizabeth's toys they became envious.

"I wish WE had so many toys," said Latisha. And Taquoia said "Let's take some. Elizabeth has so many, it's not like she would even notice." And so somehow Latisha and Taquoia felt justified in taking some of Elizabeth's toys. It was like Elizabeth was sharing, except without knowing. HMMMMMM. In other words, they DID steal the toys from Elizabeth and slipped them into their bag!

It was a very nice picnic and as the event was ending Latisha and Taquoia's father was saying goodbye to Mr. Mawakasunga. The girls were all horsing around and the Latisha dropped the bag and out fell some of Elizabeth's toys!

Elizabeth looked surprised! Mr. Mawakasunga looked confused! Latisha and Taquoia's father looked angry. And Latisha and Taquoia flinched away from their father as if they thought he might hit them!

It was very wrong of Latisha and Taquoia to steal from Elizabeth. Elizabeth was hurt and angry! She should teach them a lesson about how bad it is to steal! I think their father is about to teach them a lesson!

But this is where the story becomes more complicated. Elizabeth saw the two little potato girls duck away from their father's anger. So instead of acting on her feelings of hurt and anger, Elizabeth did a very clever thing. She acted in love. And this is what she said:

"Oh, I forgot to give you the little case for those toys! Here, this is yours too."

Latisha and Taquoia looked at Elizabeth, who smiled and nodded at them to show she really meant for them to take the little container.

Years from today Latisha and Taquoia will grow up to be big potatoes and will always remember the lesson they learned at the church picnic. Even as children they realized they had received a gift of forgiveness from Elizabeth. And because they are both good little potatoes, they learned never to steal again.

How very clever of Elizabeth to show love instead of anger! We should all be so clever!

THE END