



## JAMES RANSOM & CHERIE JOHNSON— MISS DEVINE ANIMATION

### TRANSCRIPT

**James Ransom:** Let's talk about Miss Devine.

**Cherie Johnson:** Miss Lizzie Devine.

**JR:** Miss Devine was a wiry lady. She wore summer dresses. She had a bandana and a straw hat, and she was the only person I knew that had more power than my grandmother.

**CJ:** She wasn't a mean person. She was stern.

**JR:** Stern, yes, very stern.

**CJ:** And you knew when she said something, she meant exactly what she said. In fact, she was our Sunday school teacher. The only thing that would keep you from going to Sunday school, you had to have one foot on a banana peel and the other in the grave—

**JR:** Absolutely.

**CJ:** That's the only thing.

**JR:** There's no excuse.

**CJ:** You had to go.

**JR:** Had to go.

**CJ:** One of the things that you prayed for when you were in Miss Devine's class was "Lord, please let me get old enough to get out of this class." She did the catechism: "Who made you? God. Where is God? Everywhere." She went through, and we said, "O Lord, have mercy, please."

**JR:** This Miss Devine would come in on Sunday mornings to take us to Sunday school. And when I saw her come, Cherie, I thought the leaves would be blowing off the trees and the sky would go black and the clouds would come in, and she come in the house one morning and say, "Good morning, children." And everybody, my mother on down, said, "Good morning, Miss Devine."

And she says, "It's time to go to Sunday school this morning, children." I said, "Miss Devine, I can't go to Sunday school today." She said, "No?" I said, "No, ma'am." She says, "Why not?" I said, "My mother didn't bring enough clothes for me to go to Sunday school this morning." She said, "Oh, no?" I said, "No, ma'am." She said, "What do you have, what kind of clothes do you have?" I said, "All I have, Miss Devine, are my pajamas and my tennis shoes." She said, "Well, that's OK, honey. Put your tennis shoes on. We'll go to Sunday school."



*Listen. Honor. Share.*



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I looked at my mother, and she looked away, Cherie. Miss Devine made me walk two blocks in my pajamas and my tennis shoes. I had to sit in church, with my friends, during Sunday school in my pajamas and my tennis shoes ... I'm gonna tell you, Cherie, I never lied again.

**CJ:** Miss Devine was always there to take care of us. But when Miss Devine braided your hair, your eyes went up like this. You had to sleep on soft pillows because, I mean, boy she had it tight. And Miss Devine had mango trees all over her yard, but Miss Devine never brought you a mango until it was rotten. It would smell like liquor. That's when she brought you the mango.

**JR:** But you know what? That's the kind of stuff that we got growing up. And I'll never forget that.

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