STOP THE HATE® you TH Speak ou Till



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is a sixth grader at Copley-Fairlawn Middle School. He is a Boy Scout who enjoys writing, martial arts, running and skateboarding. He is an active member of Grace Church in Bath, Ohio. Ben would like to either become a journalist or a Youth Minister when he finishes his schooling. As the bell sounded that cold February afternoon, I rushed to class! Behind me were the most popular kids in my class, who, unfortunately, didn't take a liking to me. Why? Probably because I wasn't really into sports, I was pretty good at most everything at school, and they weren't. So I made my way to Social Studies; out of the blue, a lengthy arm knocked my books to the floor.

"Where are you going?" a dreaded voice from behind asked me.

"I'm going to class." I replied.

I bent down to grab my books, and the culprit kicked them away. He grabbed them and threw them down the hallway.

"Dude, what the heck?!" I questioned.

He shrugged and kicked the rest of my books away. He laughed on his way to class. After that, I picked up my books and tried to carry them.

"Here, let me help you." someone told me.

The culprit's friend knocked my books out of my hands again, and ran away with them.

"Give it back!" I yelled to him.

Next, he laughed and dropped my planner into the drinking fountain. After I had finally picked them all up, I made my way to class.

"Where were you?" my Social Studies teacher asked me.

"I was in the halls." I shyly retorted.

"Maybe you should stop wandering the halls and get to class!" she exclaimed.

"Instead of wandering around the halls, you can spend some time with me for recess."

I frowned and sat down. That day was only the beginning, however; multiple times the culprit and his friends would harass me. They threw footballs and basketballs at me. They stole my glasses and threw them across the room! Imagine dealing with this for a whole year. I was miserable!

Following months of brooding, I began to think of solutions for myself. One solution I considered was thinking of the good aspects of myself, and writing them down on a piece of paper. I did just that, and was surprised how many I could think of. Imagine how many good things other people could think of.

I suggest listing talents, grades, etc. Honestly, it worked for me. Try this. Now if this doesn't work, try to make friends with good people. Tell an adult about what has happened to you, or take a different route to class.

Imagine for a second how horrible others like me have felt. Answer honestly. Would you take a stand against injustice? If you would, be a friend to those in need, those who are oppressed by people craving attention. I know I will stand by them. Question is: will you?