

Use “The Scene” to introduce “The God of Second Chances” the High School Sunday school lesson for January 29, 2017. The lesson is found on page 57 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



Above the door of a men’s residential center operated by Wheeler Mission, in Indianapolis, there is a message etched into the stone arch: “GIVE GOD A CHANCE.” Housed inside this building are dozens of men who entered through this doorway, wondering if this might be their last chance. As the Wheeler Mission Facebook page stated, “Many of them have come here with problems of life-dominating addiction, homelessness, and chronic isolation problems that run the gamut of human emotion . . . and now they are trusting God with those problems and discovering that He makes good on what He says.”

Wheeler Mission is a nondenominational, Christian, social services organization, which provides critically needed goods and services to the homeless, poor, and needy of central Indiana without regard to race, color, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, or religion. A large portion of those who enter the doors of the mission are people with addiction problems, and Wheeler has a residential program specifically designed to help those who want to recover from their addictions. This long-term, intensive program lasts for six months (after an initial orientation program of about one month) and involves work training, counseling, Bible study, education in forgiveness, and family counseling.

As one former participant said about the program, “Sobriety’s not the goal. It’s the by-product. He’s the one that changes you.”

Sometimes people may feel so desperate, may have tried so many promised solutions that ended up in failure, that they want to give up. But at Wheeler, they just ask people to step through that door and meet the God who said: “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?” (Jeremiah 32:26, 27, NIV).

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above article to read. Then discuss it in this way:

Have you ever had someone give you a second chance at something? How did that work out?

Is there anyone you would say doesn’t deserve a second chance? Why? What do you think God would say about that person?

Though we may all agree that nothing is too hard for God, a lot of things are too hard for us to do on our own. What is something that you have failed at that you would like to have another chance to accomplish? How are you working toward that goal? Have you asked anyone to help you?

We’re all thankful for times when we get a second chance. Today we’re going to read about the apostle Peter. He made some mistakes that could have been impossible to overcome, but Jesus gave him a fresh start.