

Use “The Scene” to introduce “How to Forgive,” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for January 25, 2015. The lesson is found on page 49 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

“Dear Abby” is the name of an advice column that has been around for decades. In it, people anonymously write in for help in handling a wide variety of situations—from nosey neighbors to toddler tantrums to more serious conflicts. “Abby” responds in hopes of helping her readers resolve their issues, whether big or small. Read the letter below, recently published.

DEAR ABBY:

I am 42 years old and a divorced father of two. Earlier this year, I caused a fatal drunk driving accident. Once I came to and realized what I had done, I accepted responsibility and pled guilty to my crime. I have never before been in trouble with the authorities.

I believe God has forgiven me. I know my extremely supportive family and friends have also forgiven me. But how do I forgive myself? I think about it and cry daily for my victim and that family. I pray they will find some comfort that I am behind bars.

I plan to volunteer and use my time to help others as I have done in the past, once I am free. I also plan to tell my story to as many people as will listen to help stop the senseless act of driving under the influence.

I can never, and will never, forget what I have done. But I know I must forgive myself in order to move forward and start helping others. Any advice or suggestions you can give to help me work on forgiveness while I am in here would be greatly appreciated.

—UNFORGIVEN INMATE IN CALIFORNIA

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

How would you respond to the author of this letter?

Do you think this man deserves to be forgiven? Why or why not?

Are any offenses simply too wrong to ever be forgiven? Give examples.

Sometimes forgiveness seems almost impossible, doesn't it? The idea that God could forgive horrible crimes is difficult for us. It is even more difficult to think of forgiving such acts ourselves. But God forgives and wants us to do the same. Today let's examine what Jesus taught about forgiveness.



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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