

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Trusting God When I Feel Anxious,” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for May 10, 2015. The lesson is found on page 63 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

What will I eat tonight? Where will I sleep? What if it rains? What if I have to go to the bathroom? What if somebody steals my clothes while I'm asleep? What if someone tries to hurt me? These aren't questions that most of us deal with on a daily basis—if ever. But if you are a homeless person living on the streets, these and many other questions haunt you every minute of every day. Irene “Smokie” McGee was in such a spot. She was a 60-year-old, homeless grandmother who had lost her husband and her home. She'd been sleeping in the dirt on the streets of Los Angeles for 10 years. Until she met Elvis, her “guardian angel.”

Elvis Summers was introduced to Smokie when she approached him to ask for his recyclable trash. She was collecting plastic bottles, newspapers, and magazines to turn in for money. “I knew she was homeless,” Elvis says, “but only found out about three weeks ago that she didn't have a tarp or cardboard box to sleep in. . . . So I asked her, ‘What would you think if I built you a mini house?’ and I think she thought I was crazy. I saw online that people were building these tiny homes. I had done construction before, so I figured that's easy—I could do that.”

He went to the hardware store and spent about \$500 on wood. Other building materials such as a door and shingles were donated. Five days later, Elvis handed Smokie the keys to her very own home on wheels—a 3½ x 8-foot dream come true, complete with her own keys and a sign that reads “Home Sweet Home.” And as long as she moves the structure to a new spot every 72 hours, city officials are fine with it.

As word spread, Elvis started hearing from other homeless people who needed a safe place to sleep. “As I started talking to other homeless people, I started to understand their stories. . . . These people aren't the [stereotypical] homeless that are just drug addicts and don't care. They care deeply and don't want to be there. They want help.”

Because of Elvis, many of them will get that help. A local church in Los Angeles has offered him a 10,000-foot square of their property where more movable homes could be parked. The church has offered to help with showers, food, and clothing for the people who will reside in these homes. And Elvis' GoFundMe page has raised nearly \$60,000 to “build tiny houses for homeless women, men, children, U.S. veterans, and families.”

“I feel marvelous,” Smokie says with a smile. “You can't even explain how I feel. I'm on my way to a different life. I want to get my own place and all of that. He's my guardian angel.”

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:

Smokie had a lot of big things to worry about. What are some of the big worries in your life?

What are some of the everyday, less-important things that stress you out?

The truth is, worry—whether big or small—can steal our joy. Jesus gave His disciples some directions for combating the worries in their lives, and those directions hold the key to a free and focused life. Let's see how they apply to us.

To learn more about donating to this cause, visit GoFundMe.com and search for “Tiny House Huge Purpose.” To watch a video about this story, visit YouTube.com and search for “California Man Builds Tiny House for Homeless Woman.”



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

©2015 Encounter Curriculum. Written by Karen Cain. Copies may be made for classroom use only. Not for resale.

<http://www.encounterface2face.com/category/the-scene/>