

Youth Culture Lesson
January 10, 2011

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Finding Teachable Moments in Culture
From *YouthWorker Journal* and YouthWorker.com

A Second Chance
Golden-Voiced Homeless Man Finds YouTube Fame

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Posted: Jan. 10, 2011

What Happened:

Ted Williams had no idea that Jan. 3 would be any different than Jan. 2, Nov. 17 or May 23. He figured he'd be spending the day panhandling beside a freeway exit in Columbus, Ohio, as he had for the past two years.

However, Williams was on his way to a worldwide audition, thanks to a reporter from the *Columbus Dispatch*. The reporter told Williams he'd give him a dollar if he spoke a few words in his golden "God-given voice," as described on Williams' cardboard sign. So he did.

NOTE: Link to the video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rPFvLUWkzs>

Williams said he used to be a radio announcer, but he fell into alcohol and drug abuse and lost everything, accumulating a thick police record over two decades. Though Williams had been clean for two and a half years, he still was without a job and a home—but not without hope.

The reporter posted the video on YouTube, and it promptly went viral. By Wednesday, he was being interviewed on morning shows. By Thursday, an agent was weeding through job offers for Williams—including one from NFL Films.

The Cleveland Cavaliers have offered Williams a gig as its arena announcer—in spite of his checkered past.

"We believe in second chances and second opportunities," Tracy Marek, the team's senior vice president of marketing, told the Associated Press.

Williams knows he's been given a second chance—and he believes this time he can make good...thanks to God.

"The difference between my successes of years gone by is that I didn't acknowledge the Lord or thank Him for anything before," he said on the "CBS Early Show."

“This time around, I have God in my life, acknowledging Him on a daily basis. I’ve found a new sense of spirituality now.”

Talk About It

Williams isn’t the only one in need of second chances. While most of us never have lost everything due to our sins, we’ve often made a mess of things through our own bad behavior. Can you think of a time when you’ve needed—and been given—a second chance? Tell us about it.

Williams says his voice was a gift from God—one he did not use to its fullest until recently. Have you been given talents or abilities that you haven’t used to the fullest extent? If you are using them, are you using them to glorify God? Can you think of ways in which you could better use your gifts?

Once Williams got his second chance, things happened very, very quickly. If you were given a chance of a lifetime today or tomorrow, are you in position to capitalize on it?

What the Bible Says:

“Jesus continued: ‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

“‘After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

“‘When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ So he got up and went to his father.

“‘But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him... The father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found’” (Luke 15:11-24).