



 **The Scene**

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture



Use “The Scene” to introduce *High School Bible school Lesson 4*.

Some girls in Gloucester (Massachusetts) High seem to have made a pact between themselves. But have they chosen the right people to trust? Will their promises bring them unexpected consequences?

A high school health clinic in the city of Gloucester became suspicious after seeing a large number of girls seeking pregnancy tests. Suspicions were heightened when many of the girls seemed disappointed that they were *not* pregnant. Local officials say that nearly half of those who became pregnant have admitted that they entered into an agreement with one another to have their babies together.

Some blame Hollywood for glamorizing teen pregnancy. Seventeen-year-old Jamie Lynn Spears, sister of pop icon Britney Spears, gave birth to Maddie Briann on June 19. The younger Spears gained fame apart from Britney as the star of the Nickelodeon program, *Zoey 101*.

“If you look at all the celebrity magazines, celebrity TV shows, you can’t turn a page without seeing more and more celebrities getting pregnant,” observes psychologist, Dr. Lisa Boesky. “Now, instead of unplanned teen pregnancies, what we’re seeing in this town (Gloucester) is actually *planned* teen pregnancies.” Recent movies such as *Juno* and *Knocked Up* have also been blamed for portraying pregnancy outside of marriage as lacking in serious consequences.

Others warn that there is much more to teenage pregnancy than what is shown on the screen or in magazines. Amanda Ireland, who just graduated from Gloucester High, had a child when she was 15 years old. “Don’t, don’t try to get pregnant,” she warns. “People say, ‘I know what it’s like because I have siblings.’ But you really don’t. No one knows until they actually go through it. And it’s a lot of work.”

Furthermore, the consequences for the fathers of these children can be much more that they bargained for. Under Massachusetts’ law, it is a crime to have sex with anyone under the age of 16. “At the very least these men should be held responsible for financial support, if not put in jail for statutory rape,” argues Greg Verga, chairman of the Gloucester School Committee. Gloucester mayor Carolyn Kirk agreed. “Some of these boys could have their lives changed. They could be in serious, serious trouble.”

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:

Does this story about a pregnancy pact taken by teenage girls surprise you? Why or why not? Do you think that something similar could happen in your school? Defend your opinion.

Many people argue that Hollywood gives an inaccurate picture of teenage pregnancy. Why do you agree or disagree with this statement? How many of your friends trust celebrities or movies as the source of their values? What makes you think that? What does this pregnancy pact say about the trust some Gloucester High students had in one another? What types of people do you find the easiest to trust? Whom do you find harder to trust?

Sometimes it is easier to trust the wrong people than to trust the right people! Even Jesus’ disciples found it easier to trust those just like them rather than to truly trust Jesus, the Savior of all people. During the last year of His ministry on earth, Jesus performed a miracle that gave His disciples a clear illustration of faith. Let’s look at that miracle today.

