



 **The Scene**

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture



Use “The Scene” to introduce *Young Teen 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 than 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 these students will find consequences for their actions that they did not expect. What might some of those consequences be? Tell about a time when you found out that a situation was much more complicated than you thought at first. Why do you think you that you had received only partial information about that matter?

Life is complex. We sometimes learn about unexpected consequences of our actions after it is too late. That will prove true at Gloucester High. It is also true of our other deepest beliefs.

At the outset, Jesus’ first disciples thought He was just another wise teacher. They failed to grasp some unexpected consequences of following Him. But a very strange miracle that Jesus performed illustrated very clearly who Jesus was and what it meant to follow Him.

