

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Hope,” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for March 1, 2015. The lesson is found on page 81 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

# the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

“May God keep you from any more harm, any more hurt. You are in His hands now. You do not have to suffer anymore. Only now will you be able to see how much you really and truly did for this world by looking down on it from above.” These are the words of Eric Mueller, spoken at a memorial service for his first friend, best friend, and sister, Kayla, taken hostage and recently killed by ISIS militants.

Kayla was only 26 years old when she died, but she lived her short years in service to others. From her hometown of Prescott, Arizona, Kayla worked to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS. She worked the night shift as a volunteer for a women’s shelter. While attending college, she protested killings in Darfur, and even traveled to Palestine, Israeli, India, and France. She eventually moved to Turkey to serve Syrian refugees. In August 2013 Kayla left the Doctors Without Borders facility in Aleppo, Syria and was kidnapped by the terrorist group, ISIS.

Kayla was held captive for 18 months, during which time the terrorists demanded a ransom of 6.2 million dollars. In spite of everything, her parents say they always held out hope that their daughter would be freed. “I really feel that we had a chance to get Kayla out,” her father Carl said. “But how do you raise 6.2 million dollars? You know, it pretty much made it impossible.”

Not much is known about Kayla’s time in captivity or how she died. But she did manage to smuggle out a few letters to her family. The last letter contained these words:

*My heart longs to be with you all as I have never felt before. But praise be to God, you are in my dreams almost every evening. And for just those brief moments in my sleeping conscious that we are together, I am given warmth. It’s warmth enough for me to wake with a smile. Warmth enough to keep me company through the days. And warmth enough to keep my heart near to home and therefore to God.*

The Mueller family has continued Kayla’s legacy of helping others by establishing a foundation called Kayla’s Hands. “We want the world to help us let Kayla still use her hands . . . to help the people who are suffering,” says Kayla’s mother. “Especially the Syrian people right now, because they have been through so much. And that’s where Kayla’s heart is right now.”

*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:*

**Based on the words of Kayla’s family members, what gives them hope right now?**

**Based on her own words, what gave Kayla hope while she was held captive?**

**What gives you hope or confidence as you face the future?**

**When is it hard for you to have hope or be confident about what’s ahead?**

**Sometimes it’s difficult to face life with absolute confidence. There are many things in life that are uncertain or unreliable. But today we’ll discover three truths about God that we can always count on, no matter what.**

*To learn more about Kayla’s Hands, visit <http://kaylashands.org>.*



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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