

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Trusting God When I Feel Hurt,” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for May 24, 2015. The lesson is found on page 75 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

Two years ago, Meaghan Hudson sent a devastating text to her family and friends: she had cancer (multiple myeloma, which affects bone marrow), and her chances of survival were grim. She was 23 years old. “At one point there was the understanding that she may have had less than a year to live,” said Hudson’s high school friend Chelsey Whild. Hudson’s friends and family rallied around her, setting up fundraisers, shaving their heads, and even getting tattoos of the words “Sing on,” written in Meaghan’s handwriting. Today, Meaghan is alive, strong, and healthy. Was it a miracle? No, it was a lie.

“She [Meaghan] shaved her head. She would upload pictures of herself at so-called doctors’ offices,” according to Meaghan’s sister Haley. “She would upload random statuses and pictures saying she was sick or hurting that day.” Meaghan’s family lives out of state. “So it was pretty easy for her to pull the strings and tell us that she was going to the doctor’s appointments and stuff like that. We had to take her at her word because we couldn’t be there with her.”

In an effort to help with medical expenses, Meaghan’s stepmother set up a GiveForward fundraising page on the Internet, raising \$5,000 in support of Meaghan. “My father had died of cancer just two months before this. My father-in-law [Meaghan’s grandfather] had died of cancer just eight months before. Given that our family was still very much reeling in grief over their deaths, it didn’t even cross my mind that she could be lying about her diagnosis.” Mrs. Hudson and her husband have posted an apology on the fundraising page and have promised to pay back every dollar. They haven’t spoken to her since.

And neither have her friends. After learning of Meaghan’s illness, they flew her from California to Dayton, Ohio, where they hosted a fundraising event at a local bowling alley. They shaved their heads and tattooed their wrists in an effort to show support for their friend. Their efforts raised an additional \$2,000 for Meaghan. “I wanted to show her that she wasn’t alone,” said her friend Chelsey. “It’s still unreal sometimes. I still can’t believe that it happened.”

But it’s real, all right. After police received an anonymous tip claiming that Meaghan was faking, she confessed. “I think, one day, I was in a very dark place and I didn’t feel like I had that unconditional love or support, and I wanted it. The thought process was just that I wanted someone to pay attention.”

The prosecutor’s office was paying attention. Meaghan Hudson, now 25, is charged with two counts of fraud and two counts of grand-theft felonies.

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:

How do you think Meaghan’s family and friends feel about her now?

What do you think about Meaghan’s explanation for her actions?

When have you felt used or hurt by someone close to you?

We have all been in situations when we have felt hurt or taken advantage of. It’s a very painful thing, and it even happens in the church. Let’s take a look at some biblical advice on how to respond when we feel that way.



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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