

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Use It; Don’t Abuse It!” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for December 20, 2015. The lesson is found on page 17 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

Facebook founder and CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, recently made headlines by announcing that he and his wife, Priscilla Chan, were planning to give away 99% of their shares in the social media company. The shares, which are currently valued somewhere around \$45 billion, will gradually be given over time to a new organization called the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. This charitable organization, according to a letter written by Zuckerberg (which was addressed to his newborn daughter and posted for public viewing), would initially focus on promoting work in these areas: personalized learning, curing disease, connecting people, and building strong communities.

The announcement prompted a variety of reactions, from expressions of admiration and congratulation from other well-known philanthropists, such as U2’s Bono and Microsoft founder Bill Gates, to even a Facebook hoax post that stated that “if you share this post” you might then receive a million-dollar amount directly from the generous Zuckerberg himself.

Though some not-so-charitable people have (incorrectly) accused Zuckerberg and his wife of trying to avoid paying taxes, it’s clear from the couple’s history together that they are committed to giving away funds to causes that they think are important. They had already donated more than \$1.6 billion in the past ten years, including large amounts given to promote education and to boost public school systems and \$25 million to help stop the spread of Ebola. It will certainly be interesting to see what good their generosity might do in the world in the future, and also how it might affect the plans of other wealthy business owners.

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:

What do you think about Mark Zuckerberg’s announcement? What questions or thoughts does it bring up in your mind?

What might have motivated Zuckerberg to take this action? What are some typical motivations people have for being generous?

Some people have commented that it’s easy for Zuckerberg to be so generous because he’s so rich. What do you think of that comment? Explain why you agree or disagree with the statement.

Though it’s safe to say none of us is quite as wealthy as Mark Zuckerberg, we all could be considered wealthy when compared to many people living in other parts of the world today. It is easy to forget that we have luxuries that few others have had in history. The Bible tells us to be aware of the blessings we have and gives us three principles for handling our wealth.