

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Elijah—Courage to Stand” the High School Sunday school lesson for April 3, 2016. The lesson is found on page 31 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

Whether we like how they are going or not, the 2016 US presidential campaigns are marching along. One of the latest revelations came this week from the former communications director of a Trump-supporting political action committee. In her “Open Letter to Trump Voters” released this week, Stephanie Cegielski made several troubling statements about Mr. Trump, but perhaps the most troubling words were those from Trump himself. Ms. Cegielski quoted Trump’s response (via Twitter) to a tragic terrorist attack in Pakistan, which just occurred on this past Easter Sunday: “Another radical Islamic attack, this time in Pakistan, targeting Christian women & children. At least 67 dead, 400 injured. I alone can solve.”

I alone can solve. Now, for a moment, put aside whatever feelings you may have—positive, negative, or otherwise—about the Donald. Just look at those four words: *I alone can solve.* On the one hand, they sound heroic—strong and full of confidence. If that statement were true, even a little, wouldn’t you be compelled to follow such a person, one who had the guts to make that statement?

But then there’s the other hand—the hand that shows up with the palm out, firmly planted in your face. *Wait just a second.* What did he say? *He alone* can solve? Solve what? Terrorism? Unstable nations? Religious and cultural divides? The anguish and pain that are right now gripping the families of all those victims? What is it, exactly, that he is claiming he can solve? World peace? And all this, alone?

Whether we’re campaigning to be president of the country or just president of the senior class, we need to remember: There is only One who can really solve the devastating problems of our world. Only One who can put behind those words the truth that gives them real strength. There is only One in whom we can put all our confidence. He alone can solve.

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 allows a person to have any kind of confidence? What builds up confidence?

The word *confidence* comes from a Latin word that means to “have full trust.” How can you tell whether what someone says is trustworthy or not? What kind of tests do you use to know who you can trust?

Is it possible to take a courageous stand or speak confidently about an issue that you know nothing about? Explain your answer. How are courage and confidence related to belief and trust?

History has been changed when people have made courageous stands. The prophet Elijah took a courageous stand at a very trying time. Let’s discover the characteristics that allowed him to take such a stand.