

# the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

“Spin” has been a part of politics, it seems, since the first politicians were born. The idea of putting a good face on what might otherwise be a negative report is an actual profession these days—performed to a sophisticated level by people who have spent years crafting reputations, building up profiles, and curating public images. Sometimes it’s called managing expectations, or being diplomatic, or even providing “alternative facts.”

The recent events in the news having to do with President Trump and the summit in Russia with Putin have many people asking questions yet again about what is truthful and what is not, what is permissible or beneficial when it comes to foreign affairs, and what the public’s rights or responsibilities in hearing and understanding information are. One big story circled around the US president seeming to side with the Russian leader’s view of the facts regarding cyber-meddling in the US elections (that Russia did no such thing). Though President Trump followed up his press appearance later with a clarification about what he said versus what he didn’t say, the truth remained unclear to many.

So, what’s the big deal? Why is it important to be able to trust world leaders anyway? Aren’t they all corrupt or at the very least, dishonest? That’s what some people would have us believe. But others say the very foundation of political agreements and interactions is built on a base level of being able to know that what is said and heard in front of witnesses can be used as an accountability measure later on. That’s the reason we have these public hearings and press conferences. So, when our leaders say something, we can watch their behavior to see if it lines up. And if it doesn’t, we can call them on it. And if they say something untrue to the public, the public can call them on that too. That is, there’s a basic understanding that if you are going to get up in front of the whole world and say something on behalf of a nation of people who pride themselves on holding certain truths to be self-evident, you ought to make sure you have your story very straight and can speak the words that declare that story clearly.

*As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:*

**What does the term “putting a spin” on something mean to you?**

**How important do you think it is for US government leaders to tell the truth? Is it more important than it is for other country leaders? Give reasons for your answer.**

**What do you look for as signs of who is a good leader? In other words, how do you know who to trust?**

**The results of following the wrong leader can be devastating. Jesus warned His disciples to consider three things before following a leader. Let’s discover what they are.**



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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