

Use “The Scene” to introduce “God and His Message” the High School Sunday school lesson for September 24, 2017. The lesson is found on page 25 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



File this one under “Things Are Not Always What They Seem.”

A man in Ohio was detained and charged with child endangerment after donning a clown mask and chasing his 6-year-old daughter outside his home.

Meant to be a prank, as the man later told police, the father was trying to discipline the child without resorting to spanking.

Apparently choosing to terrify her with a scary clown mask was not a good alternative parenting style.

The police were called when the little girl jumped into a stranger’s car and told the woman inside that she was being chased by a clown. The woman, not knowing what was going on, called 911. Then the child ran into a nearby neighbor’s apartment and asked to stay there. When the neighbor looked out his window and saw the clown standing there, he grabbed a firearm and fired a shot out into the air.

With the latest version of *It* out in the movie theaters and with the outbreak of creepy clown sightings that occurred about a year ago, perhaps choosing a clown mask was not the best idea. A psychologist, Eileen Kennedy-Moore, advises (as reported in *Washington Post*’s article on this story) against deliberately scaring children and noted that “A lot of parents feel bewildered and helpless in terms of helping their kids to learn how to behave.”

Bewildered is one way to describe it, for sure!

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the article. Then discuss in this way:

Have you ever been scared by a prank your parent pulled on you? What happened?

What do you think is scary or worrying about people dressed in costume?

People often dress up to look like other characters for all sorts of reasons. Think of some good and bad reasons for getting dressed up to imitate someone else. Have you ever been fooled into thinking someone was different from reality because he or she was dressed a certain way?

It’s fun to dress up sometimes and pretend we’re someone or something that we are not. But in the world of religions, there are some people who turn the biblical view of God into something else by “dressing it up.” Are these harmless changes, or dangerous impersonations? To find out, let’s look at what the Bible says about the unique nature of God and of the Bible.