

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Do Not Murder” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for July 8, 2018. The lesson is found on page 35 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

# the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

It’s been two years since Philando Castile was killed. And many feel justice has still not been served.

Philando Castile was the Minnesota man shot by a police officer during a routine traffic stop. He had a broken taillight. That’s all. Just a light that was out. The 32-year-old school cafeteria worker was driving with his girlfriend—her 4-year-old daughter was in the back seat. During the stop, as the police officer’s video shows, Philando tells the officer that he has a firearm (that he was licensed to carry). He then reaches for his wallet. It was in those next few seconds that the scene erupted into tragedy.

The police officer thought he was reaching for his gun. Philando said he wasn’t. But he was shot anyway.

His girlfriend had her phone out and filmed what happened after that. And the world saw it all on Facebook Live.

Since that time, Philando’s mother has received a \$3 million settlement from the city for her son’s death. The police department and the city officials are taking part in a federal program meant to foster trust and respect between police and the citizens they serve.

But the police officer who reacted in haste and jumped to a conclusion one second too soon (before he saw Philando’s wallet in his hand) was acquitted. His defense was that Philando refused to comply with his order not to reach for his gun.

After this story came out, more research was done into Philando’s history. Interestingly, he had been stopped 46 times by police for various driving offenses—broken lights, improper license plate display, broken muffler, blocking an intersection, speeding . . . the list of minor offences goes on and on. If anyone knew how to behave during a traffic stop made by police, it was Philando Castile.

Have lessons been learned since Philando Castile’s death? Undoubtedly. Has justice been served?

For many, the answer is no.

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

**What do you think about the topic of this article?**

**What do you think about the consequences of the death of this man—what happened for his mother and what happened to the police officer. Were things handled fairly in your opinion? Explain.**

**The article didn’t point out that Philando Castile was an African-American man. What difference does that make to this story, if any?**

**What value does human life have? How much should a life cost? How much would replace it? Today we’ll look at the high value God places on human life.**