

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Practice Makes Permanent” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for March 8, 2020. The lesson is found on page 11 of *Young Teen Teacher* by 21st Century Christian.

# the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

Certainly, you could see how they’d want to test these things. I mean, it’s no use having such substantial items if you don’t know if they work or how well they work. And isn’t the point of having these things the idea that, if needed, they would actually function? That they would do what they were designed to do? So yes, it’s understandable and not really alarming that practice would be required. Or, it would be not alarming, if the “they” in question weren’t North Korea, and the “things” weren’t ballistic missiles.

The funny thing about practicing is that people generally don’t practice for stuff that they plan on never doing. Football players don’t practice ballroom dancing choreography in preparation for their games. Engaged couples don’t practice going to divorce court. Elite fashion designers don’t practice shopping at Walmart.

And governments don’t practice using weapons that they don’t, on some level, think they might have cause to use.

North Korea launched what are believed to be short-range ballistic missiles toward the Sea of Japan this past Monday, just days after South Korea and US officials had announced the postponement of the joint drills that usually happen annually (and anger the North), citing the threat of the coronavirus as the reason. The virus is spreading rapidly throughout South Korea. This latest launch might mean the start of many more to come as it seems that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un sees no point in restarting diplomatic talks. He announced earlier this year that he was ending the suspension of missile tests after talks between the US and his country had failed. And as far as the COVID-19 threat, North Korea claims to have no cases, as they have shut down their borders to foreign nationals. But some experts say some actions on the part of the country, including a request for test kits that were supplied for them by Russia.

While North Korea practices aiming missiles at their enemies, one wonders if they are also practicing taking care of their people in the case of a widespread infection. Doctors who have had the opportunity to travel and work in the healthcare system there in the past say that years of sanctions have left the country with a weak healthcare system, old equipment, and struggling staff. Sound like Kim Jong-un might want to pay more attention to the system designed to keep his citizens healthy rather than playing around with a system designed to bring destruction.

*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 the fact that countries practice using weapons that are meant to cause destruction in other countries?**

**What kinds of things do you regularly practice?**

**What could someone learn about you by seeing what things you practice on a regular basis?**

**Practice is meant to help people sharpen skills. But we need to know how to practice effectively, and it’s also important to consider what we should be practicing. Solomon wrote of two characteristics that can make practice successful. Let’s look at those today.**

