

Use “The Scene” to introduce “Breaking Barriers” the High School Sunday school lesson for March 22, 2020. The lesson is found on page 23 of *High School Teacher* by 21st Century Christian.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

One of the strangest and yet sort of heartwarming aspects of the current virus crisis is the knowledge that everyone is in the same boat. That is, everyone is dealing with it. Everyone is staying home. Everyone is, well, kind of bored.

Talk show host Ellen has been on Instagram this week demonstrating this fact. She’s been doing various things to pass the time while staying at home, including taking videos of her pets, trying to work puzzles, doing unsuccessful magic tricks, and calling up her celebrity friends to see what they are doing. Spoiler alert: also nothing.

In a time when just weeks ago we were talking about all the major divisions in the world—racially, politically, socioeconomically, etc.—it’s actually hopeful to see people united in this effort to protect one another and find new ways to encourage each other. The physical separation has created new opportunities for spiritual union.

But divisions still do exist. Some of the younger generation have been called irresponsible for still flocking in crowds to beach destinations, at a time when spring break would have been a normal occurrence, before the virus outbreak. There have been fights in stores and online between the haves and the have-nots—in particular, those who have toilet paper and those who have not. And some politicians have been accused of creating unnecessary racial or national discord through referring to COVID-19 as the “Chinese virus” or the “Wuhan virus,” as a way of noting the origin of the outbreak, but also as a subtle way of suggesting that China was to blame. But pointing fingers, however washed those fingers might be, still seems pretty ugly right now, and potentially harmful.

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:

How are you dealing with the current virus crisis? What are you doing to keep busy?

What do you think about the idea of everyone—rich and poor, famous and not—being in the same boat and having to endure the same restrictions? How have you seen divisions disappear?

What divisions are still existing among people? What can be harmful about blaming certain people or a whole nation for something like this?

Some people like to separate themselves from others and make judgments about people as a way of feeling more secure about who they are. They like to decide what groups of people are superior and which ones are inferior. But this type of attitude is not from God. Today we’ll look at God’s perspective on prejudice.

