

Use “The Scene” to introduce “When Bad Things Happen” the High School Sunday school lesson for August 9, 2020. The lesson is found on page 63 of *High School Teacher* by 21st Century Christian.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

The death toll of COVID-19 worldwide has reached more than 700,000. In the U.S. alone, there have been more than 160,000 people who have lost their lives to the pandemic.

These numbers seem so large, it’s hard to wrap our minds around them. It’s more U.S. deaths than the number killed in World War I.

But behind every number, is an actual person. Someone’s grandma or grandpa. A coworker. A singer, an artist, a great speaker. A writer or an actor. A government worker. A nurse or doctor. Someone’s friend, or sister, or brother. Someone that someone else in the world counted on. All taken away from us, too soon and too suddenly.

Anyone who has lived for very long in this world is used to the idea that people pass away and die. But no one is used to a situation like this—in which a great, nameless, invisible enemy seems to range about among us, unfettered and unpredictable and almost undefeatable. And no one is used to dealing with such a thing at the same time as businesses struggle, people lose their jobs, and political or civil divisions produce anger, stress, and at times, violence.

What believers are used to though, or should be, is the way that God continues to show up for us, to provide for and comfort us, even in the darkest moments.

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:

Do you know anyone who has been affected by a death in the family due to COVID-19? Do you know of anyone who has suffered from anxiety or loneliness or other hardship from this crisis? How have they dealt with it? How have you?

Are some kinds of suffering harder for you to understand than others? How so?

Have you ever known of something good to come out of a time of suffering? What do you think about that? Do you believe that sometimes people have to suffer in order to understand goodness?

Many things in life are hard to understand. One thing that’s very hard to understand is suffering. Why do bad things happen? Why do we suffer? Today we’ll look at the story of Job to help us think through the experience of suffering.

