

News Story Summary

A couple in Pennsylvania, along with an acquaintance, were charged in Pennsylvania court recently for creating a scam that involved online donations. The woman, Kate McClure, claimed she had run out of gas and that a homeless man, Johnny Bobbitt, gave her his last \$20 to get home. Then, the woman and her boyfriend, Mark D'Amico, started a GoFundMe campaign to raise money for the "homeless" man.

The whole story was a premeditated scam to get people to donate money. The three knew each other prior to the incident and came up with the scam together. The site raised more than \$400,000, but the "homeless" man (Bobbitt) filed a lawsuit because the couple only gave him \$75,000 of the money.

All three face charges in court for theft by deception and conspiracy to commit theft by deception. They could face between five and 10 years in jail if convicted.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the term, "Pennsylvania couple homeless man scam")

Focus Attention

To replace the Focus Attention idea, as the group arrives, ask: *What are some money scams you've heard about lately?* As they call out answers, write them on a large sheet of paper or board.

After a few responses, tell the news story about the "homeless" man who helped the woman. Ask: *How do you feel when someone deceives you? How do you feel when you deceive someone else?* Say: *Today's Bible passage focuses on one man who deceived his father and consequences of his actions.* Encourage adults to think about the parallels between the news story and the Bible story.

Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge idea, begin by reminding the group of the scam by the three people in the news story. Ask: *What consequences could these three people face for committing fraud and deceiving people? How are their consequences similar to those Jacob faced? How are their consequences different than Jacob's?* Complete the step as written.