



"And now I am no more in the world,
but these are in the world..." (John 17:11).

Use this recent news story to help your students see the relevance
of this week's lesson from the Standard Lesson Commentary®
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A TIME OF FEAR AND VIOLENCE

The recently released report on the Central Intelligence Agency's "enhanced interrogation techniques" has aroused anger, both at America's response to 9/11 and at those who wrote what some are calling a partisan report. Regardless of one's point of view, the report has forced debate over what, in normal speech, we call *torture*. The violent attack on America in 2001 prompted a harsh response in an atmosphere of fear. As of this writing, it remains to be seen how the government of Pakistan will respond to the murder of over 130 children by the Taliban a few days ago.

A TIME OF JOY AND PEACE

The time of Jesus' birth was one of fear and violence as well; his birth even prompted some of it (Matthew 2:16-18). But the angel said Jesus would usher in joy and peace. Even with their limited understanding of what was beginning to happen that night, the shepherds glorified God because of what they experienced in Bethlehem. How much more should we glorify God because we know the whole story of God's love for us! It is a story wherein fear and violence must give way to joy and peace.

1. Can "enhanced interrogation techniques" ever be justified under a Christian "lesser of two evils" concept? Why, or why not?
2. How should Christians respond to the tragedy in Pakistan?
3. When was a time God's peace comforted you while you were being victimized by evil?
4. What tends to rob you of a sense of joy and peace in Christ? Why?
5. What will you do in the coming week to glorify God because of what he has done through Christ?

—Charles R. Boatman

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