



"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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### **AN INVITATION TO PRAY RESCINDED**

A furor erupted a week ago at Duke University. At issue was a plan to broadcast a Muslim call to prayer from the tower of the school's historically Christian chapel. The university reversed the decision after questions were raised internally by the Dean of Duke Divinity School and publicly by Franklin Graham, who said, "It's wrong because it's a different God." Some wondered about an apparent contradiction between allowing the Muslim call to prayer and the university's affirmation (on its website) that it "maintains a historic affiliation with the United Methodist Church."

### **THE NEED TO PRAY STRESSED**

Duke University wrestled with a decision that may have been as much political as it was religious in nature. But there is no question about James's call to pray, found in the text for today's lesson. Are we in trouble or sick? Have we sinned? Prayer is the first action to take, for ourselves and for each other.

1. Is there such a thing as "Christian spaces" that should be off-limits to non-Christian prayer or worship? Why, or why not?
2. When does toleration of other religions cross the line to tacit approval of them? How do we keep from crossing that line?
3. Which circumstance named by James do you find yourself praying about the most? Why?
4. Which of those circumstances do you find it most difficult to pray for? Why?
5. Does the call of James to pray for one another extend to praying for those who are not Christian? Why, or why not?

—Charles R. Boatman

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