



"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 SPIRIT OF LIES AND HATE

The black-masked ISIS executioner who is responsible for a horrific series of beheadings has been identified. He is Mohammed Emwazi, known in the news media as "Jihadi John." There are conflicting reports regarding the time of his youth in London. Some say he was a polite young man, but others tell of his extreme anger. In any case, he is one of many radicalized citizens of Western nations who have joined ISIS, where a spirit of falsehood undergirds their support of an extremist agenda.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND LOVE

Emwazi is the exact opposite of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus has sent. The Spirit is variously referred to as our *advocate*, *comforter*, and *helper*, depending on translation. Jesus said the Spirit would come to bless the world with truth, not deceive it with lies. The Spirit produces the fruit of love, not of hate. All who claim to act in God's name must show evidence of both truth and love in their lives.

1. What causes people such as Emwazi to leave so-called Christian nations to become violent executioners in the name of religion?
2. How can we bring the truth to those who are as extreme as Emwazi, or should we even try?
3. How should Christians under imminent threat of martyrdom continue to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit prompts their behavior? Be specific.
4. Considering Ephesians 2:1-3 and 1 John 4:1-6, when was a time you acted in a way contrary to how the spirit of this world was prompting you to behave?
5. How might the Holy Spirit prompt us to act when disagreements occur among Christians?

—Charles R. Boatman

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