



"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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RESPONDING IN ANGER

Terror struck America again on July 16. A young man shot and killed five military personnel at two government sites. He died when police returned his fire.

Relatives say the shooter was battling depression and abuse of drugs and alcohol. His family had sent him to Jordan for several months last year, hoping he would find a cure.

Since the murders, counterterrorism agents have sought to determine if he had become radicalized while in the Middle East. Even before complete information was available, many Americans reacted with anger to this, yet another, violent act by a person with Middle Eastern ties.

OFFERING MERCY

Our angry reaction is natural, but it raises the question of whether we should respond with mercy instead. Micah's message condemned Israel's unfaithfulness to God, but he also offered God's mercy to them, promising them that God would not be angry forever.

1. Why do we have a tendency to assume the worst before all the facts are known about an incident such as this one?
2. How did you feel when you heard the police had killed the assassin? How do you feel now that some time has passed?
3. Should there be a difference between government's response and our reaction as Christians? Explain.
4. How, and to whom, might Christians show mercy in this context? Is it important to do so? Why?
5. Does the fact that the Israelites didn't "deserve" God's mercy affect your thinking? In what way?

—Charles R. Boatman

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