



"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®
or Standard Lesson Quarterly®.

DIFFERING CLAIMS

This week, President Obama announced unprecedented environmental regulations. His Clean Power Plan would require existing coal-fired power plants to reduce carbon emissions by 32 percent from 2005 levels by 2030. The president called his regulations "the single most important step America has ever taken in the fight against global climate change."

His political opponents reacted strongly, promising to fight the regulations in court. They challenged the president's claims, saying the regulations would hurt poor and middle class Americans with skyrocketing energy bills, seriously damage the economies of several states, and do virtually nothing to alter climate patterns. The highly charged political atmosphere in Washington makes it hard for the average person to know whom to believe.

DECEPTIVE CLAIMS

Jeremiah's day saw similar situations. Strongly differing ideas were being stated—some by Jeremiah and some by false prophets. Jeremiah called the message of his (and God's) opponents "deceptive."

1. How does one determine who is speaking the truth on the politically charged issues of our time? Give examples.
2. Should the church take positions on these political issues? Why or why not? How does one differentiate between political issues and religious/moral issues?
3. What are some current issues on which God's people should speak up against deceptive moral and religious claims made by cultural leaders?
4. In criticizing the sins of our nation, should we condemn them harshly as Jeremiah did in his time? Why or why not? Is there a valid alternative?

—Charles R. Boatman

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