



"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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FEARING THE WORST

The weeks following the terror attacks in Paris have been eventful. Politicians debated the wisdom of accepting Middle Eastern refugees into the country. A luxury hotel in Mali was attacked. A hotel in Egypt was bombed. The city of Brussels has been on "lockdown" in the face of threats of further violence by ISIS. Hackers claimed they found evidence ISIS was planning to attack churches. This week, the U.S. government warned Americans to avoid worldwide travel.

FACING THE WORST WITH FAITH

When preaching in Macedonia, Paul was imprisoned, was hunted by rioters, and was forced to flee for his life. He moved on to Corinth, but soon the ominous storm clouds of resistance again darkened his horizon. It would have been only natural that Paul would fear the worst!

At that point, the Lord appeared to him in a vision. He assured Paul that no further attacks would occur and no harm would come to him. Taking God at his word, Paul found great success in proclaiming the gospel and enjoyed an eighteen-month ministry among the Corinthians.

1. How should potential threats affect a nation's policies concerning: accepting refugees? imposing travel bans? cancelling events at which large numbers of citizens would be present?
2. What are proper reactions for Christians to the fear-filled times we live in? What biblical principles inform your opinion?
3. Have you ever been in a situation in which you felt threatened because of your faith? How did you respond? What guided that response?
4. How do the apostle Paul's reactions to opposition guide us when we face similar threats? Do any of his reactions and emotional responses surprise you? Explain.

—Charles R. Boatman

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