



"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®.

### **A REST FROM SHOPPING**

Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is the busiest shopping day of the year. Outdoor gear and apparel retailer, Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), has rejected the necessity of doing business on that day, however. REI closed its doors on Thanksgiving Day and Black Friday this year. They paid employees to "opt outside"—to spend their time outdoors rather than in crowded stores. The REI website reports that 1,408,000 of its customers and employees followed that suggestion.

Some observers believe a trend may be developing. At least two dozen other national companies have decided that closing on holidays may pay a dividend in customer loyalty and goodwill.

### **A REST FOR OUR OWN GOOD**

God wants us to live by divine principles. It is not a matter of imposing his will on us. Rather, his principles make life better for all of his creation. The Sabbath day, as well as other feast and fast days in the Old Testament were ordained so that Israelites might step back from the everyday busyness of life and give their attention to what really matters. To this day, the Sabbath principle is worthy of our respect.

1. To what extent do you believe closing on Thanksgiving Day and Black Friday is a marketing gimmick? Are you more inclined to shop at stores that stay closed on those days? Why or why not?
2. The practice of observing the Sabbath is an Old Testament command. But is the principle of setting aside a time of rest binding on Christians? If so, how should we practice it?
3. In your opinion, does shopping on holidays or Sundays have anything to do with the Sabbath idea? Defend your position.
4. Tell about times when you believed you were too busy to set aside a personal Sabbath rest. How did that affect your life? List some ways Christians can practice the Sabbath principle. What benefit might such practices bring?

—Charles R. Boatman

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