



"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 DEBT SETTLED

Eight members of an extended family were killed execution-style in southern Ohio a week ago. Four were twenty years old or younger. As this was written, authorities were looking into a connection between the crimes and a drug cartel. Three of the four crime scenes contained sophisticated marijuana growing sites, with plants worth about \$500,000. It was a "much bigger operation than something for personal use," according to an official in the investigation. Southern Ohio has a recent history of massive marijuana operations.

DEBTS FORGIVEN

The crimes suggest the existence of some personal or professional debt involving the killer(s) and the victims. It's hard to imagine Christians being involved in whatever led to them. Regardless, the need to forgive and be forgiven is one common to all of us. A recurring theme runs through Jesus' teaching on forgiveness. Whatever the offense, we are to exercise forgiveness multiple times toward those who have sinned against us.

1. Regardless of the plausible drug connection in the Ohio crimes, why is settling debts of various kinds by retaliation such a common thing?
2. What responsibility for harm should be taken by users of supposedly "harmless" substances?
3. Does Jesus' command to forgive extend to the families of the victims? Why or why not?
4. Tell of a situation in which you have seen forgiveness offered multiple times, as Jesus commands? What was the eventual result?
5. How can our failure to forgive cause someone to stumble, as Jesus implies?
6. How does a forgiving spirit connect with the servant Jesus describes as going beyond what is expected?

—Charles R. Boatman

<http://www.standardlesson.com/downloads>

Copyright © 2016 by Standard Publishing, Part of the David C. Cook Family. All rights reserved.
Each download is for the use of one church only.