



"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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POTENTIAL PHYSICAL ABUSE

In a town near Ft. Collins, Colorado last week, a woman sent an alarming note to the teller in a bank's drive-up window. The note said that a man in her car wanted money and was threatening to harm her children. The teller gave her \$500 and notified authorities. Soon after, the woman was arrested and charged with robbery and two counts of child abuse. In fact, the woman was babysitting the children who were not her own. If the situation had turned violent, the children could have been put in mortal danger.

SPIRITUAL NEGLECT?

The disciples' attempt to keep the children away from Jesus did not put the children in physical jeopardy. Those children would not have been harmed physically if the disciples had their way. However, the disciples may have been guilty of spiritual neglect by keeping the children from what might have been a once-in-a-lifetime chance to be held in the arms of Jesus. Who knows how their lives might have been changed?

1. What drives a person to put in possible danger a child who has been entrusted to their care? What should the consequences be for such a person?
2. Although we usually think of child abuse and neglect in physical terms, what other kinds are you aware of?
3. Some argue that Christian training for children is a form of spiritual abuse, forcing beliefs upon them. Can that ever be true? Why or why not? Could the argument be made that *refusing* Christian training is spiritual neglect? Explain.
4. How might Christians turn children away from Jesus today? Give examples.
5. How would you define or describe "childlike faith"?

—Charles R. Boatman

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