



"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®.

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN . . . ?**

. . . to be British? The citizens of Great Britain sought to answer that question in the "Brexit" referendum last week on whether to remain a member of the European Union. A slight majority said it means to be a more insular nation, not forced to abide by the immigration, economic, and trade policies of the EU. Many observers see similarities between the populist mood in Britain, which has rejected the nation's leadership, and the fervor that has affected the American political wars this year.

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN . . . ?**

. . . to be Christian? Many people apparently believe this question can also be answered by a referendum. However, Paul says that biblical faith is not subject to popular vote. Neither is it to be determined by what we say about how we identify ourselves. Instead, our attitudes and the behavior that reflects them is the standard by which God will judge our faith.

1. What similarities, if any, do you see between populist politics and the "popular religion" approach to spirituality which is prevalent today?
2. What do you think Paul would say to modern people who say that being a good, moral person who "lives by the rules" is sufficient?
3. On the other hand, what might Paul say to the person who says, "My heart's in the right place, so it doesn't matter if my behavior doesn't measure up to what the Bible calls for"?
4. How would you restate Paul's concept of "circumcision of the heart" in terms a modern audience would find culturally meaningful?
5. What factors can cause us not to see areas of our behavior that contradict what we say we believe?

—Charles R. Boatman

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