



"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®.

### **UNDER THE POWER OF SIN**

As this week began, Islamic jihadists made three suicide attacks in Saudi Arabia. The strikes appeared to be motivated by the ISIS vow to use the Muslim holy month of Ramadan (which ended Tuesday) to press their cause upon the rest of the world, including members of other Muslim sects. Fortunately, two of Monday's attacks only resulted in death to the perpetrators. However, attacks the previous week in the Muslim countries of Iraq, Bangladesh, Turkey, and Yemen resulted in the killing of scores of victims.

### **UNDER THE GRACE OF GOD**

While claiming to do "good" (as they see it), the Muslim extremists' persistent efforts to bring bloodshed, ruin, and misery are an ironic example of the power of sin mentioned in today's text. Their efforts to gain salvation by obedience to a distorted view of God contradicts the apostle Paul's teaching that salvation comes to those who place themselves under the grace of God.

1. How does a jihadist rationalize killing or maiming other human beings in the name of God?
2. Can you think of examples of Christians using violent means to make a political (or even a theological) point?
3. In today's culture, in which making moral judgments is considered wrong, how can Christians present the falsehoods of Islam without meriting condemnation for being judgmental?
4. How does the biblical doctrine of grace affect your understanding of what God expects of you?
5. Is it possible for Christians to place themselves under the power of sin? If so, in what circumstances?

—Charles R. Boatman

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