



"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®.

IS SPORTSMANSHIP . . .

In the midst of the fierce competition of the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, one incident of sportsmanship stands out. In a qualifying heat of the women's 5,000-meter race, New Zealander Nikki Hamblin stumbled and fell, causing American Abbey D'Agostino to trip over her. D'Agostino quickly got up, but rather than continuing the race she helped Hamblin to her feet. Then D'Agostino's knee gave way and she fell again, so Hamblin helped her up, and both continued to the finish line. D'Agostino later explained, "The only way I can and have rationalized it is that God prepared my heart to respond that way."

. . . THE SAME AS GODLINESS?

Top-level competition in any sport is often thought of as highly focused and individualistic, with little room for Christian graces. It's simply not how the world normally behaves. This makes it all the more amazing when one competitor puts into practice the biblical commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself," as D'Agostino did.

1. Some coaches (and others) say competition has no room for "softness" such as concern for others. Is that right, or wrong? Why?
2. How would you advocate for sportsmanship to one who says it's an outdated virtue?
3. What change in our culture has occurred that makes D'Agostino's act so noteworthy?
4. Does competition (in any area of life) tempt us to forsake Christian teachings? Explain.
5. Does competition ever show up in Christian circles? Is this good or bad? Why?

—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.