



"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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HIS NAME WAS JOHN

John Glenn, the first American to orbit the earth, died December 8 at 95 years of age. His three-orbit flight made him the forerunner of a multitude of his countrymen to explore even deeper in space. Years later, at age 77, he became the oldest person ever to fly in space. Glenn's 1962 flight pales in comparison to what has been done by those who followed him, but his flight was an act of tremendous courage.

HIS NAME WAS ALSO JOHN

The angel Gabriel told Zechariah his son should be named John, which means "The Lord is gracious." John's divinely appointed role in life was to be the forerunner of the Messiah, announcing that God's gracious kingdom was coming in the person of Jesus. His role also called for courage, but unlike John Glenn, the courage of John the Baptist resulted in his life being cut short (Matthew 14:3-12). However, his few years of life found him faithful to his calling.

1. Which do you think took more courage: John Glenn being the first to fly into space or John the Baptist preaching as the forerunner of Jesus? Why?
2. What situations do Christians face today that require them to act with courage?
3. Are our roles in life divinely appointed, as John's was? Why or why not?
4. Do our names have an effect on who we become? Should Christians consider this when naming their children? Explain.

—Charles R. Boatman

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