



“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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WATER BRINGS SADNESS

Perhaps in the form of torrential rains or blizzard-like snow conditions, the first week of January brought challenging, wet weather to most of the United States. In the drought-stricken West, multiple storms filled recently empty reservoirs to overflowing. California’s famous Pioneer Cabin sequoia tree—believed to be 1,000 years old (and having a car-sized hole carved through it in the 1880s)—fell because of the rain. In the South, severe flooding spread from Texas to Florida. Meanwhile, the North and East experienced heavy snowfall that blocked roads and caused numerous multivehicle crashes.

WATER BRINGS GLADNESS

The psalmist speaks of God as the source of water that does us good: enriching the land, bringing forth a bounty that blesses us and causes us to sing joyfully. The fact that some of the water with which the earth abounds at the present brings suffering and sadness may sometimes cause us to question the way God works through the natural forces he has put in place.

1. In response to destructive natural phenomena like we have seen recently, how would you answer the question, “Why does God allow such things to happen?”
2. Are such events really “acts of God,” as they are sometimes called? Explain.
3. Have you ever experienced loss through a flood, blizzard, or another weather event? How did your faith help you cope with the situation?
4. Should we praise God for tragic events? Why or why not?
5. Would you prefer to phrase question 4 differently? If so, how does that help you deal with difficult circumstances?

—Charles R. Boatman

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