



“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®.

### **HATEFUL ACTIONS**

On Monday, 20 Jewish community centers and schools in 12 states received bomb threats, for a total of 89 this year. The day before, about 100 headstones in a Jewish cemetery in Philadelphia were knocked over. A week before that, more than 150 headstones were toppled in a Jewish cemetery near St. Louis. In the latter case, a Muslim activist group initiated a crowdfunding campaign that raised \$55,000. In January, a mosque in Texas burned, and Americans contributed more than a million dollars to repair it.

### **LOVING ATTITUDES**

The human race finds the command to love one another difficult to obey. Desecration of religious sites and cemeteries is one of the most hateful ways this fact is demonstrated. Such attacks have caused Jewish and Muslim communities in the United States to express increasing fear in recent months. On the other hand, John says loving others is the way we know that we live in Christ and he lives in us. And God’s perfect love casts out fear.

1. Why do you think we are seeing an outbreak of threats and actions against Jewish and Muslim sites?
2. Are the contributions to repair the damaged sites an indication of a basic goodness in Americans? Why or why not?
3. How can we love people who hold to a religion in which some adherents have proved to be a violent threat to our way of life? Explain.
4. If you discovered that Christians had desecrated the cemeteries and mosque, what would be your attitude toward those persons?
5. What helps you love people whom you find unlikeable?

—*Charles R. Boatman*

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