



"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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IT'S THE LAW . . .

President Trump announced a new executive order regarding Middle Eastern and African immigrants on Monday. The White House insisted that the new ban was country-based, not religion-based. On another immigration front, national policy regarding immigrants already in the country illegally remains a point of contention. Critics of the administration continue to call for looser immigration policies. Overall, the issue seems to be whether immigration policy should be strictly a matter of law or whether some grace should be extended in individual cases regarding deportation decisions.

. . . BUT SHOULD GRACE BE EXTENDED?

Law versus grace is an age-old issue. Jesus' opponents criticized him for not keeping the Jewish law, even though he said he had come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17). Today's text makes it plain that trying to achieve salvation by works—i.e., by keeping the law—only brings death, because none of us (unlike Jesus) can do that successfully. The glory of the gospel is that God's grace through Christ brings us from spiritual death to everlasting life.

1. Should immigration policy be strictly a matter of law? Why or why not?
2. Should grace have any role in enforcement decisions? If so, in what situations? If not, why not?
3. Do passages such as Leviticus 19:34 and Luke 10:25-37 apply to this issue? Explain.
4. In what ways do our transgressions and sins make us "dead"?
5. What should the effects of God's grace be in our lives?

—Charles R. Boatman

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