



"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®.

THE POWER OF THE OFFICIAL WORD

With 2:21 left in last Sunday's Super Bowl LII, the outcome hung on the official word. Philadelphia Eagles player Zach Ertz caught a 12-yard pass from quarterback Nick Foles. Ertz took two steps before being tripped by the defender and then fell into the end zone. There on the ground, he bobbled the ball before gaining control of it. Was Ertz a pass receiver who did not have control of the ball when he crossed the goal line, or was he a runner who fumbled, but regained control of the ball? The play was reviewed, and the official word was that Ertz was a runner. The touchdown call stood, and the New England Patriots could not regain the lead.

THE POWER OF OUR WORDS

We may think our words are inconsequential, since most of us never speak in any "official" capacity. Yet when we say something hurtful or false or foolish, our words have power. We realize this when we are on the receiving end of such words, but we sometimes minimize their importance when we speak in ways we shouldn't. James reminds us how evil our tongues can be. But the problem isn't the tongue. It's the mind and will that refuses to be led by the Spirit of God.

1. Official review of football plays has changed the game; how might such a review change the way we speak? Be specific.
2. Share with the class an example of how you have been *hurt* by the power of words. Share an example of how you have been *helped* by the power of words.
3. What trends do you see in our society that demonstrate the power of words, either positive or negative?
4. What is the difference between having self-control and being controlled by the Holy Spirit? How can you know whether your words are being directed by the Spirit?

—Charles R. Boatman

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