



"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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THE DESTROYERS

President Bashar al-Assad of Syria has a history of using nerve gas to annihilate his opposition in the long-running Syrian civil war. The West has threatened, and sometimes attempted, to destroy Assad's ability to conduct such activities. Last week, the United States, Britain, and France sent missiles to Syria, obliterating three of the facilities suspected to be crucial to Syria's chemical weapons program. Humanity has great creative abilities, but we often use those abilities to create means of destruction, regardless of which side we are on in our various conflicts with each other.

THE CREATOR

Conversely, the Bible presents God as the One whose very essence is the Creator. In the beginning, he made all things (Genesis 1), and even today, he continues to sustain everything by his powerful word (Hebrews 1:3). Today's text reminds us that even more amazing sights await us than those we can see in God's present creation!

1. What rationale might a leader have for using outlawed weapons on his own citizens? Can you think of parallels to Assad's recent actions?
2. Why do you think human creative powers are so often used for destructive purposes?
3. When a human creation has the potential of being used for both good and evil (nuclear power, for example), on what basis should we decide to proceed with it (or not)?
4. Can you think of biblical examples of God using his power for destructive purposes? How do those examples align with the view of God as Creator, not destroyer?
5. What implications for everyday life do you see for us as the children of God to act as creators rather than destroyers?

—Charles R. Boatman

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