



“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®.

### **A TARNISHED GIFT**

Bill Cosby gave America a gift in the 1980s and ‘90s. As Cliff Huxtable, he was the affable father of an upper-middle-class African American family. In presenting this image, *The Cosby Show* intimated that the American dream was accessible to all regardless of race. However, in recent years, allegations of numerous sexual attacks by Cosby began to tarnish our memories of this gift. Last week’s guilty verdict in three charges of sexual assault further stained the gift he had given us.

### **AN UNSULLIED GIFT**

The gifts God required of Israel were to be untarnished by ulterior motives. God wanted their gifts to be made willingly, by “hearts that were moved.” In a similar fashion, the New Testament reminds us that God loves for us to give willingly and cheerfully. Our gifts are not to be made to satisfy a selfish appetite of any kind.

1. How can we evaluate the good a person has done when his other actions seem to invalidate it? Explain.
2. Do we all have “skeletons in our closets?” If so, is it fair for us to criticize others’ sins? Can we be perfectly pure in any of our actions? Explain.
3. Do you ever give from less than cheerful motives, such as when giving to a homeless person? Describe your feelings in such a situation.
4. How do you make sure your giving is motivated by a willing, cheerful spirit?

—Charles R. Boatman

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