



"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®.

### **EXPECTING SILENCE**

Stephanie Clifford (aka exotic dancer/porn star Stormy Daniels) announced a few weeks ago that she and Donald Trump had an affair in 2006. The big news about the alleged relationship in recent days has been the \$130,000 said to have been paid to her by Mr. Trump's lawyer before the 2016 election. There are conflicting reports on whether the President did or didn't know about the payment, when he first knew about it (if he did), or whether he perhaps authorized it. Regardless, nondisclosure agreements are a sort of "first fruits" offering, with the "harvest" being the silence of the recipient, a *quid pro quo*—if you do this, I'll do that.

### **EXPECTING A BLESSING**

A two-way expectation also existed when the Israelites made their first fruits offerings. First, God expected the best gift, one without defect, from his people. Second, the Israelites made the gift in expectation that a bountiful harvest would follow. This was also, to some extent, a *quid pro quo*.

1. What other kinds of *quid pro quo* arrangements exist in life? Are such arrangements necessarily bad? Explain.
2. What kind of offering might a Christian make to the Lord that would be comparable to the first fruits offering? How might first fruits offerings differ according to one's life circumstances?
3. What has been your experience in being blessed because of your giving?

—Charles R. Boatman

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