



"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®.

### **FREED BY TECHNOLOGY**

DNA testing of evidence in crimes has given freedom to many falsely convicted people in recent years. Because of this fact, two weeks ago, California Senator Kamala Harris called upon Governor Jerry Brown to order DNA testing in the case of Kevin Cooper, convicted of a quadruple murder in 1983. Nine years ago, five federal appeals court judges signed an opinion stating that Cooper was "probably innocent." Many people familiar with the case now believe Cooper was framed, but the sheriff's office in the locale where the crime took place is opposing the test.

### **FREED BY COMPASSION**

Sometimes the law works for good, sometimes not. Often, it is not the law which is at fault, but our interpretation and application of it. Such was the case when Jesus and his disciples were accused of breaking the Sabbath law. Jesus showed that compassion for people showed greater justice than a strict (mis)application of the law. To drive the point home, Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath who had been "imprisoned" by his crippled hand.

1. In what way, if any, does DNA technology's role in overturning convictions affect your view of the criminal justice system? Why might a sheriff object to DNA testing?
2. Is there a place in the Christian system for close observance of scriptural requirements, i.e. legalism? Why or why not?
3. In your understanding of the Bible, do you lean toward the law or the grace side? Why?
4. What damage in the church have you seen caused by an overemphasis on either strict interpretation or on grace?

—Charles R. Boatman

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