



"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 DYSTOPIAN FUTURE

At last week's Emmys, *The Handmaid's Tale* was a big winner. Set in the near future, Christian fundamentalists assassinate the President and most of Congress, suspend the U.S. Constitution, establish a totalitarian theocracy, and systematically enslave women to be breeders to provide children for an oppressive male ruling class.

The series is based on a novel by Canadian author Margaret Atwood written in the 1980s. It is meant to be a cautionary tale warning against the growing involvement by Christians in American politics, especially those who want to limit abortion on demand.

A FUTURE BLESSED BY GOD

The Handmaid's Tale pictures the influence of a Bible-based morality as a threat to freedom. Old Testament history tells another story. Judah's government had lost its godly direction, had become corrupt and immoral, and had lost its freedom.

Ezekiel paints a different portrait of Judah's future than what *Handmaid* portrays for America. The people of Judah will return with pure hearts to their land. It will be a land of plenty which God will bless if Judah responds to the moving of God's Spirit in their hearts.

1. Have you watched *The Handmaid's Tale*? If so, do you believe it depicts a plausible future? Explain.
2. The TV series has recently been cited in political discourse to explain a so-called war on women and the recent defeat of a female presidential candidate. How do we respond to this critique of Christianity and the pro-life movement?
3. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, the fictitious Sons of Jacob staged a revolution to create a theocracy that was based on many of the laws of the Old Testament. How does that compare with those who call for a greater influence of Bible morality in America today?
4. Do God's promises to a repentant Judah also apply to America if our nation repents? Explain. What differences do you see between a theocracy and a nation with people with "new hearts?"

—Charles R. Boatman

<http://www.standardlesson.com/downloads>

Copyright © 2017 by Standard Publishing, part of the David C Cook family. All rights reserved.
Each download is for the use of one church only.