



"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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ENSLAVED IN THEIR OWN BODIES

Yesterday, October 28, was National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Its purpose was to provide a convenient way to get rid of prescription drugs, as well as to educate people regarding the dangers of overusing medications. The previous "take back" day (in April this year) netted 450 tons of drugs. An estimated 6.5 million Americans abuse controlled prescription drugs, most getting them from friends or family members. In America, 20,000 people die each year from abusing prescription painkillers. Four of five new heroin users shift from prescription drugs to heroin because it is cheaper and easier to get!

ENSLAVED IN THEIR OWN LAND

Nehemiah led a nation which was enslaved in the land God had given to them. The cause of this situation was that their leaders and ancestors had forsaken God and become addicted to their sins. Nehemiah called the Jews to repentance. Under his guidance, the people and their leaders—including those who were entrusted with spiritual oversight of the nation—entered into a covenant to return to godly ways.

1. To what extent, in your opinion, is the epidemic of substance abuse in America a spiritual problem? Explain.
2. Can someone be a sincere Christian and yet have a drug abuse problem? Why or why not? How do our addictions to various behaviors and attitudes affect (or reflect) our relationship with God?
3. What responsibility do leaders have for encouraging or facilitating the enslaving sins of their people? Does Nehemiah's blaming his nation's slavery on the decisions of its kings and religious leaders have an application to America today? Explain.

—Charles R. Boatman

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