



"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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### **A NEW YEAR**

A week ago today, we celebrated the beginning of a new year. Most people found the year past was—as usual—a combination of good and bad circumstances and experiences. In hope of making their lives better, many people start the new year by making resolutions . . . and soon after breaking them! Surveys show that the most common broken resolutions include efforts to 1) lose weight and get fit, 2) quit smoking, 3) learn something new, 4) eat healthier and diet, 5) get out of debt and save money, 6) spend more time with family, 7) travel to new places, 8) be less stressed, 9) volunteer, and 10) drink less.

### **A NEW SONG**

Psalm 96 provides a different focus for us. Rather than urging us to resolve to work at improving ourselves, it commands us to "sing to the Lord a new song." That is, self-improvement starts with having a new attitude toward God: praising—and obeying—the one who gives us salvation. Without turning to God, our own efforts to be better people will achieve limited success.

1. What do you think causes most New Year's resolutions to be abandoned?
2. Do you make such resolutions? With what kind of resolutions have you found the most success?
3. What spiritual resolutions do you think Christians should make?
4. How does praising God fit into your self-improvement agenda?
5. This year, if you were to focus on one new praise to offer to God daily, what would it be?

—Charles R. Boatman

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