



“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 VARIABLE LIGHT**

If you go outside one night this week, you may be able to spot Saturn in the sky. On July 9th, it will be in “opposition” to us, meaning that the earth is directly between Saturn and the sun, showing the ringed planet at its brightest. In technical terms, its apparent magnitude will be as high as  $-0.55$ , which will make it brighter than all but two stars in the night sky. But as both planets continue their orbits around the sun, Saturn’s perceived luminosity will drop. At its farthest from earth, its apparent magnitude dips to  $+1.17$  (in this scale, a higher number is less bright). Saturn’s visibility rises and falls with time.

### **A RELIABLE LIGHT?**

Jesus called Christians the light of the world and compared us to a city set on a hill. If you’ve ever driven at night and seen a community or even just a single house on a hill, you can picture what He meant. It’s visible for miles around and functions as a reliable guide for those trying to find their way in the dark. But as individuals and as the global church, our apparent luminosity to the world can seem to dim with time. The people living in darkness need to continue seeing the great light.

1. If you’ve ever had the opportunity to view Saturn through a telescope, what was your reaction to its appearance?
2. What factors make the church—either worldwide or perhaps a local church—more or less reliable as a light guiding people to Jesus?
3. What’s something a church, denomination, or ministry has done that made it a bright light for the lost?

#### **Additional Resources**

Music Video, Traditional: [“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”](#)

Music Video, Multicultural: [“Sing A Song” by Nashville Life](#)

Music Video, Contemporary: [“More Than Anything” by Corey Voss & Madison Street Worship](#)

[Barclay’s Study Bible on Matthew 5](#)

[Guzik’s Commentary on Matthew 5](#)

[IVP Commentary Series Covering the Whole Sermon on the Mount](#)

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