



“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®.

AN EVIL VIEW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Suicide bombers blew up three churches and three hotels in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday. Islamic State representatives claimed responsibility for the terrorist acts. Here we see what human attempts to create righteousness, according to one set of extremist religious views, leads to. It should not surprise us that human attempts to be righteous turn into legalism and judgment that sometimes produce evil results.

THE ONLY RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT COUNTS

Christians are also tempted to focus on our external appearance of righteousness. Legalism prompts us to develop lists of supposedly righteous acts and beliefs that elevate us above “ordinary sinners.” But according to the apostle Paul, this demonstrates the pride that can infect even the good that we do! In today’s background text (Romans 3:10), Paul tells that no human can be righteous on his or her own. Only Jesus, the Righteous One, can make us pleasing to God, and it happens when we come to Him through faith in Christ and His righteousness, not pride in our own.

1. How can one’s thinking get so twisted as to think that God is honored by committing murder in His name?
2. What does Paul’s life before meeting Jesus on the Damascus road (Acts 9) suggest about this?
3. In what ways have you struggled with a focus on the appearance of external righteousness?

—Charles R. Boatman

www.standardlesson.com/category/in-the-world

Copyright © 2019 by Standard Publishing, part of the David C Cook family. All rights reserved.
Each download is for the use of one church only.