



"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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NOT VERY GOOD

The *New York Times* reported last week that a highly-regarded doctor in the world of breast cancer research has committed a breach of ethics. He has published dozens of research articles in magazines like *The New England Journal of Medicine*, but has allegedly failed to report his connection to pharmaceutical companies that paid him millions of dollars to push their cancer-fighting drugs. The *Times* article said this is a common ethical failure, and it implied collusion between the industry, journals, and researchers.

VERY GOOD

When God brought human life into existence, he pronounced it "very good." Sin turned that equation around and that verdict was no longer an apt description of human life. It is now apparent that even people who work in the noble field of trying to cure the diseases that came because of sin may not be as untainted as we would like them to be. The same can be said of people who work in every field. This includes ministry, as recent revelations of clergy sexual abuse are indicating.

1. What problems can arise when a doctor fails to reveal his relationship to pharmaceutical companies? How can research be tainted by such a relationship?
2. Collusion occurs when two or more people or groups who are supposed to be checking on each other secretly work together. What examples of collusion can you cite in other professions?
3. What similar ethical temptations might affect us as individuals? How do you protect yourself from allowing self-interest to interfere with fulfilling ethical obligations?

—Charles R. Boatman

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