



"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®.

UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor has ruled that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is unconstitutional after Congress repealed the provision that individuals must buy health insurance or pay a penalty. Critics of the ruling say it may negatively affect insurance rates and the stock market. A common concern voiced is that altering or abolishing the ACA puts those with preexisting conditions (often falsely equated with chronic conditions) in peril. The ruling will surely be appealed to a higher court. America is still debating whether we are doing enough to provide health care for all who need it.

UNCOMFORTABLE?

Jesus said God's judgment will be based on whether we have fed and clothed the needy, cared for the sick, visited the imprisoned, and done other acts of mercy. If we are honest, many of us have trouble with Jesus' words. They call attention to our lack of enthusiasm for showing concern for the less fortunate in society.

1. Do Jesus' words indicate we shall be judged on our works? Explain how what he says can be reconciled with what the apostle Paul says about justification by faith (Romans 5:1,2).
2. Do you think the actions of the average Christian indicate that we take Jesus seriously? Why or why not? Assisting which type of need Jesus speaks of challenges you the most? Why?
3. What excuses do we sometimes hear for not performing the acts of mercy Jesus speaks of? How might Jesus respond to our excuses? How does God's judgment mesh with his love?

—Charles R. Boatman

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