



“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®.

### **CALLING EACH OTHER NAMES**

“Liar, liar, pants on fire!” We’re all familiar with this childhood taunt. Unfortunately, that seems to be what political discourse in America has become. It is the nature of partisan debate on many issues. President Trump and his critics have taken up this kind of interchange. Last week the president tweeted harshly about the cohosts of MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” show. When the tweets raised a firestorm of protest, deputy press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders defended the president, essentially saying that when he gets criticized, he replies in kind.

### **CALLED BY GOD**

When Isaiah was called by God, the seraphim didn’t shout “Sinner!” And Isaiah didn’t defend himself, as we all tend to do when criticized. Instead, as Isaiah stood in the presence of God, he recognized God’s holiness and admitted his own sinfulness. So it was that when God called him on a mission, Isaiah responded, “At your service!”

1. What remedies would you recommend for the baseness of public discourse in America?
2. Although we like to blame our leaders for our problems, how do we common citizens contribute to the harshness of public debate?
3. How should awareness of God’s holiness affect the way we respond to criticism when it is unfair? . . . when it accurately points out our sin?
4. How do Matthew 5:39 and Colossians 4:6 apply to this situation?
5. How should God’s call to us as Christians determine the nature of our conversation with others?

—Charles R. Boatman

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