



"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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### **A GAME OF MAKE-BELIEVE . . .**

Two weeks ago was Hallowe'en, a day significant in church history. In 1517, on All Hallows Eve (as it was then called) Martin Luther made public a lengthy list of his theological grievances against the Roman Catholic Church. Since then, however, October 31 no longer has any religious significance for most people. For two-thirds of adults from ages 18 to 45, it's party time with an average of \$50 spent on costumes. An increasing number of adults are playing make-believe on Halloween, sometimes in costumes meant to be sensually alluring.

### **. . . AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

When Jacob deceived his father to gain the blessing of the birthright, he also engaged in a game of make-believe. He wore a costume that fooled his blind father into believing he was his older brother, Esau. This was no mere game. There were significant consequences for his family and for the Hebrew people for many generations to come. Animosity between the brothers would last for decades. Despite the deception, Jacob's family line would become the one through which the Messiah would come.

1. Dressing up for Halloween is widely viewed as an activity of harmless fun for children. Do you think the same is true for adult involvement in masquerade activities? In what ways might adults and children view wearing a costume differently? What criteria might a believer use to judge whether a costume is appropriate for a child? for an adult? Explain.
2. Try to define the terms *masquerade*, *dressing up*, *cosplay* ("costume play" at a comic book convention, for example), and *impersonation*. Which best describes what occurred in today's Bible text? Explain. Why do you think God allowed Isaac's blessing to stand?
3. In what kind of figurative masquerades or impersonations do Christians participate? What blessings might we be seeking by doing so? What can be the consequences?

—Charles R. Boatman

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