

Use “The Scene” to introduce “The Workers in the Vineyard” the High School Sunday school lesson for July 17, 2016. The lesson is found on page 43 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



A wall on the border, paid for by Mexico. Free college for everyone. High tariffs on imported goods. Free high-quality preschool. Better healthcare. More jobs. More military spending.

These are just a few of the many statements that have been made so far by US presidential candidates in the 2016 election’s parade of promises. As John Stossel pointed out in a recent article for Reason.com, “If businesses promised things the way politicians do, the owners would be jailed for fraud” (“The Worst Campaign Promises of 2016,” March 16, 2016, reason.com/archives/2016/03/16/).

But none of these promises come without strings attached, because none of the issues they are meant to address are simple matters. Take for example Donald Trump’s claim that he will impose high tariffs on imported goods from China and Mexico. The idea of restricting trade to hold onto American jobs sounds great, until you realize that when trade is supported (instead of slowed down), more Americans become employed and also often get cheaper and better products.

Free college, as well, sounds wonderful. This was one of Bernie Sanders’s promises. But the government can’t just create money out of nothing. So who will pay for this free education? Taxpayers. That means us. Hmmm. Suddenly, free sounds really expensive.

So far the only things the candidates seem to be able to give out freely on a regular basis are empty words.

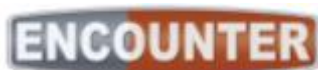
As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above article to read. Then discuss it in this way:

What do you think of the statements made in this article? What particular issue jumped out at you?

Do you think it’s good for politicians to make campaign promises? Why or why not?

If you pay attention at all to any of the candidates’ speeches, you are bound to hear some of these promises or similar ones. How can you go about finding out what is true about what they say and what is not?

Even the best offers in life often have conditions attached. Today we’ll see that God’s grace is available to everyone, with no strings attached.



MEETING GOD FACE-TO-FACE

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