



"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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DISTORTED LOVE

On March 13, Tad Cummins, a 50-year-old school teacher, and Elizabeth Thomas, his 15-year-old former student, disappeared from Culleoka, Tennessee. There had been reports of a romantic relationship between them, and they apparently fled as the investigation into the affair developed. The pair's location was unknown for five weeks, but they were finally found in an isolated cabin in northern California. Police were able to arrest Cummins without resistance. Elizabeth was safe and has been returned to her family, while Cummins faces several state and federal criminal charges.

SELFLESS LOVE

We humans find numerous ways to twist life circumstances so that our relationships become distorted into something outside of God's will for us. Jesus spoke of how thieves try to steal the sheep, as opposed to the good shepherd who loves them and cares for them. Jesus does this even to the point of giving his life for them, as opposed to using them for selfish purposes, like a thief would.

1. What can society do to prevent the kind of situation that developed between Tad Cummins and his student?
2. What should the consequences be for Cummins?
3. How can Christians be God's agents in bringing healing to people like Cummins, Elizabeth Thomas, and their families?
4. How can we avoid fooling ourselves into thinking our sins are OK?
5. If you have experienced others trying to use you, can you express how Christ has cared for you in spite of your experience?

—Charles R. Boatman

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