

Use “The Scene” to introduce “The Definition of Love” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for March 6, 2016. The lesson is found on page 5 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

It was a harsh blow. Coach Rick Pitino said he was “sick” and “distracted” over the decision. He was speaking in a press conference soon after University of Louisville president James Ramsey made the announcement that the university would self-impose a postseason ban on its men’s basketball team for 2015–16. The reason for the ban? Violations in the men’s program that occurred from 2010–14 involving claims from a female escort that she and other escorts were paid thousands of dollars in exchange for inappropriate behavior with U of L basketball players. This exchange was allegedly arranged by a former team staffer who resigned not long ago.

Coach Pitino stated that he knew nothing of these arrangements, claiming firmly that “there’s not one coach in America that would tolerate this behavior.” He described the actions as horrible and hurting lots of people—saying “innocent people will now pay the price.”

Two of those innocent people are players Damian Lee and Trey Lewis, who came to the university only in their final year of eligibility in order to have one chance to be a part of the NCAA tournament—a chance that is likely their best route to future professional opportunities. Now that chance has been ripped from them. In remarks to the press, Trey described them as “hurt” and “devastated” by the news, but also expressed how blessed they were to play on the team and how their faith was now “truly being tested.” At the time of his remarks, Trey said, “You learn as a young guy growing up, that your actions don’t just harm yourself, but they harm others around you, so that’s what we’re dealing with today—facing consequences we don’t deserve.” But both players talked about being strengthened by the love of their basketball family, including their coaching staff, their fellow players, and their fans. Trey said, “We have nine games left, and we’re going to give them everything we got.”

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

What do you think about this penalty being imposed on players who weren’t involved in the wrong behavior? How would you react if something like this happened to you?

The actions of those who engaged in inappropriate behavior are now having far-reaching implications. Have you ever had a situation where your own poor decisions ended up hurting other people? What did you do about that?

Trey said that he had learned as a young guy that “your actions don’t just harm yourself, but they harm others around you.” How do you think remembering just that one fact might influence decisions you make about who you have relationships with, and how you act in those relationships?

We all wish we could know ahead of time how our decisions will turn out—that might prevent some wrong turns, missteps, and painful regrets. Many people probably would change the course of their love lives if they knew that heartbreak could be avoided. The Bible tells truths about relationships that can spare us pain and regret. Today we’ll look at the truth the Bible tells us about the definition of love.