

SLAVES AMONG US

EXODUS 3: 7I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT. I HAVE HEARD THEIR CRIES OF DISTRESS BECAUSE OF THEIR HARSH SLAVE DRIVERS. (*The New Living Translation*)

CAN YOU HEAR THE CRIES OF DISTRESS OF THOSE BOUND BY HUMAN
TRAFFICKING?

A STUDY ON MODERN DAY SLAVERY

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For the International Disciples Women's Ministries

Of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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INTRODUCTION

"Modern slavery - be it bonded labor, involuntary servitude, or sexual slavery - is a crime and cannot be tolerated in any culture, community, or country ... [It] is an affront to our values and our commitment to human rights." Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State

In a study of the Bible and the history books there is evidence that slavery has been a part of human history throughout the world. The Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians and the Babylonians. The Israelites also had slaves and had laws concerning the treatment of slaves. Conquering armies made slaves of their defeated enemies. England sent indentured servants and prisoners to the new world, America, as bonded laborers. Massive numbers of slaves were shipped to North, South, and Central America from Africa during a brutal and bloody period of our history. In our modern world most countries have made slavery illegal. There are laws on the books in many countries intended to eliminate this practice, so we would think that slavery is a thing of the past. Not so; there are more slaves in our world today than at any other time in the history of the world. It is estimated that there are 27 million people in modern-day slavery across the world.¹ Contrary to common assumption, human trafficking is not just a problem in other countries. Cases of human trafficking have been reported in all 50 states, Washington DC, U.S. territories and Canada.

The International Disciple Women's Ministries sponsored a resolution at the 2011 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that was unanimously adopted calling for the whole church to educate and advocate on behalf of the victims of human trafficking. This Bible study is one part of the education process.

In this study we will explore the different types of human trafficking. We will learn how to identify victims. We will discover ways to help. We will study what God has to say about this human injustice issue. We will become modern day abolitionists.

Ecclesiastes 4:1 (New Living Translation)

Again, I observed all the oppression that takes place under the sun. I saw the tears of the oppressed, with no one to comfort them. The oppressors have great power, and their victims are helpless.

¹ Kevin Bales of Free The Slaves and U.S. Department of State's 2007 Trafficking in Person's report

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE LEADER

Establish a worship center which may include:

- Candle to light at the start of worship to represent the presence of God
- Bible
- A length of chain and a bolt cutter
- Fair Trade chocolate or coffee
- In the U.S., a sign with the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline number: 888-3737-888; informational signs and cards can be ordered here also
- In Canada, a sign with the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association Tip Line 800-222-8477

Sessions 1 through 4 each contains five sections:

Section 1. Contains information on a particular form of slavery

Section 2. Contains suggestions on what you can do

Section 3. Contains a scripture verse to study

Section 4. Contains discussion questions for smaller groups of 3-4 or individual reflection

Section 5. Contains resources for further information

Session 5 is an additional abbreviated session that includes resources for further reflection. You or your group may wish to combine this session with a hands-on service or mission opportunity.

Prayer: Oh Lord, you are a just and mighty God. We thank you for this opportunity to learn more about your people who are suffering. Lord, open our hearts and minds to the plight of those who are trapped in human trafficking. Lord, open our hearts and minds to the plight of the children who are being abused. Lord, forgive us for our lack of knowledge, action and or care. Lord, give us the strength, the power and the wisdom to do what we can to be a part of the modern day abolitionist movement that is working to end this horrendous crime against your people. We ask this and all blessings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Amen

Suggested Song: "I Am On the Battlefield for My Lord" (*African American Heritage Hymnal* #480)

Suggested Song: "Go Down Moses" (*Chalice Hymnal* #663)

SESSION 1 WHAT IS IT?

Human trafficking is the illegal trade of human beings for sexual exploitation or forced labor or services by fraud, coercion, force, debt bondage, or in which the person induced to perform such acts has not attained 18 years of age.

The numbers speak volumes:

- Worldwide there are 27 million people in modern-day slavery²
- 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders every year³
- 1.3 million children are exploited by the global sex trade, every year⁴
- \$32 billion in total yearly profits are generated by the human trafficking industry⁵
 - -\$15.5 billion in industrialized countries
 - -\$9.7 billion in Asia
 - -\$13,000 to \$67,200 per year generated on average by each forced laborer
- 300,000 children and youth in the United States are estimated to be at risk of sexual exploitation⁶

These numbers are astounding and shocking. How can this be happening in our world and in the United States and Canada?? In many instances it is happening in plain sight. David Batstone, author of the book *Not for Sale* and leader of the Not For Sale Global Forum and abolitionist movement, talks about how behind the facade in any major city or town in the world today you are likely to find a thriving commerce in human beings. Human trafficking victims can be found working in your local restaurants, nail salons, garment factories, farms, hotels, slaughter houses, packing factories, and private homes, as well as in street prostitution. In today's high tech world, girls, boys, women and men are advertised online via the internet for the purpose of prostitution.

Money is the driving force behind human trafficking. A restaurant owner does not have to pay a slave waitress minimum wage, cover health care expenses, pay taxes or provide safe working

² Kevin Bales of Free The Slaves and the U.S. Department of State's 2007 Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report)

³ TIP Reports from 2001 through 2006

⁴ U.S. Department of State, "The Facts About Child Sex Tourism: 2005"

⁵ ILO "A Global Alliance Against Forced Labor, 2005"

⁶ Estes, Richard J. and Neil A. Weiner, "The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the U.S., Canada and Mexico," The University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work, 2001 Study funded by the Department of Justice

conditions, vacation days or off days. With only the cost of a cot in a back room and a few meals, profits tend to grow and the owner can get a jump on the competition.

A sex trafficker can make up to \$200,000 per year from one girl. Drug dealers are turning to sex trafficking because it is not as risky as drug sales, profits are greater and the criminal penalty is not as severe. The girls are so intimidated and brainwashed that it is difficult to get them to testify against their pimps. Unlike drugs that have to be replaced when sold, the girls can be used over and over again. Most women working as prostitutes today got started as child trafficking victims.

Child pornography is one of the fastest growing crimes in the U.S. today. Nationally there has been a 2,500 percent increase in arrests in 10 years according to FBI records. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which helps to identify and locate children in pornography photos and videos, says its staff reviewed more than 10.5 million images in 2009 alone. They also received over 160,000 tips on its cyber tip line in 2010.

Sex traffickers target children because of their vulnerability and gullibility, as well as the market demand for young victims. The children at risk are not just high school students; studies demonstrate that pimps prey on victims as young as 12. Traffickers have been reported targeting their victims through telephone chat lines, clubs, on the street, through friends and at malls, as well as using girls to recruit other girls at schools and after school programs.

What can we do???

1. Educate yourself.
2. Educate your children and grandchildren.
3. Form a study group.
4. Read a book on human trafficking.
5. Study information available on the internet.
6. Pray for the victims.
7. Pray for the criminals.
8. Lift up human trafficking in your congregations.

Scripture

James 2:14 -17 (New Living Translation)

What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

Questions to ponder in groups or individually

1. *In my community, where might I see evidence of human trafficking?*
2. *Does my local middle or high school offer training on this issue?*
3. *What laws are on the books in my community, state or province regarding human trafficking?*
4. *What do you think of the woman on the street working as a prostitute?*
5. *How has my legislator voted on laws affecting human trafficking?*
6. *What new learning did you get from this session?*
7. *When will you go online to learn more?*

Resources

- The National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline is 888-3737-888 and operates 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. You can call to get information on human trafficking, report a tip, arrange for training, receive general information, get specific information for your state and get free downloadable posters.
- In Canada, call the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association Tip Line at 800-222-8477 for the same services and information.
- The U.S. Department of State “Trafficking In Persons” (TIP) report completed yearly by the U.S. Department of State has human trafficking information on most countries and each country is graded on their prevention efforts. www.state.gov/g/tip
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security website has information on human trafficking at <http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/humantrafficking.shtm>
- Other non-profit organizations include Not For Sale Campaign www.notforsalecampaign.org, Polaris Project www.polarisproject.org, and Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking www.castla.org

SESSION 2 SLAVE LABOR

Katya, a student athlete in an Eastern European capital city, dreamed of learning English and visiting the United States. Her opportunity came in the form of a student visa program, through which international students can work temporarily in the United States. But when she and a friend arrived in the U.S., rather than being taken to a job at a beach resort, the people who met her put her on a bus to Detroit, Michigan. They took her passport away, and threatened her and her friends, forcing them to dance in strip clubs for the trafficker's profit. They controlled the girls' movement and travel, kept keys to their apartment, and listened in on phone calls to the girls' parents. After a year of enslavement, Katya and her friend were able to reach federal authorities with the help of a strip club patron in whom they had confided. Due to their bravery, six other victims were identified and rescued. Katya now has immigration status under the U.S. trafficking law. She works in a health club and the traffickers are in prison. This is just one of many stories of slave labor.

The slave labor topic can be broken into three types of slavery: forced labor, debt bondage and forced child labor. Forced labor is also known as involuntary servitude. Forced labor may result when unscrupulous employers exploit workers made more vulnerable by high rates of unemployment, poverty, crime, discrimination, corruption, political conflict, or even cultural acceptance of the practice. Immigrants are particularly vulnerable; they are promised good jobs in another country or city, their passports or documents are taken, and they are forced to work hard for long hours for little or no money. Domestic slavery also falls into this category. Immigrants are brought into this country to work as maids, nannies and gardeners in some of the most affluent homes in this country. They are abused mentally and physically and usually are not paid or allowed to leave. These cases are harder to uncover due to the language barrier and the fact that the workplace is informal and authorities cannot inspect private property as easily as formal workplaces.

Debt bondage results when traffickers or recruiters unlawfully exploit an initial debt the worker assumed as part of the terms of employment. Workers may also inherit intergenerational debt in more traditional systems of bonded labor. Migrant workers are most at risk of being victims of debt bondage. The illegal costs that are associated with debt bondage are often incurred with the support of labor agencies and employers in the destination country.

A typical case of debt bondage starts with an employer who will contact a labor agency with a request for workers. For a fee the agency will agree to supply the needed staff. The labor agency will contact a source in Mexico or Dominican Republic, who will recruit workers from the poverty stricken people of that country with promises of a good job in the U... A "coyote" is used to illegally escort the workers across the U.S. border to their new job for a fee. The workers are brought into the U.S. and transported to their new work location which could be in any state. The new job is usually back-breaking hard labor, with long hours and many times under hazardous conditions. The worker is charged for the recruitment fee from the labor

agency, the fee for the person in their home country who did the recruitment, the fee for the coyote who brought them into the U.S., a fee for traveling expenses, room and board while traveling to the new job, and a fee for housing and food in the new location. Before the first day of work has started the worker is already indebted to his/her employer for several thousand dollars with little to no chance of ever repaying the loan in full.

The entrapment of a child in forced child labor is one of the worst forms of human trafficking. Children find their way into forced labor by being abducted, sold by their parents, given away, or orphaned. You ask how a parent can sell a child; it sounds so harsh and unloving. Poor parents with large families are offered money for a child and falsely told that the child will be educated and given a good job and will be able to send money home to help feed the starving family. The parent reluctantly agrees to let their child go, and usually these parents never hear from or see that child again.

In a fishing village on the coast of Ghana in West Africa, the boys are taught to fish and swim at the early age of 4. Fishing is the only source of food and income for the villagers. During plentiful fishing seasons, life is good in the village because there are fish to eat and fish to sell. During the lean fishing seasons, when the people face starvation, the traffickers come. The traffickers work for large fishing companies, which are looking for boys who can swim and can be used to untangle the fishing nets.

Paul is one of the boys sold to a trafficker at the age of 5. After several years of living as a slave which included beatings, starvation and hard labor, Paul was rescued by the Christian Council of Ghana, one of our Global Mission partners. Due to his harsh abusive treatment at the hands of his traffickers, Paul's back was broken, and without medical care he was left with a severe hump in his back and a crooked spine. He never went to school and he was never paid.

When asked what could be done to help the people of this village, the answer was simpler than one might imagine: a large industrial smoker which would allow the women to smoke and preserve the fish they catch during the good fishing season. They would then have fish to eat and to sell for the lean seasons, thus eliminating the threat of starvation and the parents' need to sell their children. The Disciples women of Arizona recently raised enough money to purchase a smoker for that village, thus making a difference in the lives of an entire village.

Many suppliers use child slave labor to harvest crops that are used as raw materials in the products we use every day. Cocoa beans, coffee beans, and cotton are just a few of those raw materials. Most of the world's cocoa beans (70%) are grown in West African nations where child slavery has been well documented. Child slaves are used to weave rugs in India. Child slaves are used and misused in a number of industries, all to bring cheaper products to market and to increase the profits of business owners.

Your shopping habits can make a difference in combatting human trafficking. When you buy Fair Trade and slave-free products you support industries that are producing products without the use of forced labor. If no one bought the products produced by the use of slave labor, those

businesses would soon be out of business and that particular form of slavery would end. We can make a difference with an informed change in our buying habits.

What can we do???

1. Learn more about slave labor.
2. Buy Fair Trade products.
3. Buy slave-free products.
4. Let your local retailer know that you support their efforts to maintain a slave-free supply chain
5. Raise money to support agencies in your area that are working to fight human trafficking.
6. Donate money to organizations for projects related to human trafficking.
7. Report suspicious situations:
 - a. In the U.S. to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 888-3737-888.
 - b. In Canada contact the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association Tip Line at 800-222-8477.
8. View the movie *"The Dark Side of Chocolate."* It is a documentary about child slaves used to harvest cacao beans.
9. Bring Fair Trade items to sell at your women's gatherings.

Scripture

Isaiah 49:25 (New Living Translation)

But the Lord says, "The captives of warriors will be released, and the plunder of tyrants will be retrieved. For I will fight those who fight you and, I will save your children."

Questions to ponder in groups or individually

1. *What do you know about Fair Trade or slave-free products?*
2. *Are you willing to spend a little more money on a Fair Trade product?*
3. *Are Fair Trade products offered in your local store? What are they?*
4. *Are there businesses in your community that might be using slave labor?*
5. *What are the signs of slave labor to look for?*
6. *What would you do if you suspected a business was using slave labor?*

Resources

- [Disciples of Christ Coffee Project](#), a partnership between the Disciples Home Missions, Week of Compassion and Equal Exchange, is a way for your congregation to join hands with small farmer communities across the world. You can put your faith into action by using fairly traded coffee, tea, chocolate and snacks in your congregation and by learning about how our consumer choices impact the global community. Through the project farmers receive fair prices for their crops, affordable credit and long-term trade relationships with Equal Exchange, a trading partner they can trust. In addition, for every pound of fairly traded products Disciples order through the Project, Equal

Exchange makes a donation to the Disciples Hunger Relief and Food Security Fund.
www.equalexchange.coop/doc/.

- Not for Sale organization has worked to create the website www.free2work.org that lists companies and products that are slave-labor free. You can also download an application for your smart phone that can scan the bar code of a product while you are in the store that will let you know if the product is a slave-free product.
- The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) Hotline 888-3737-888 is a number you can call for information on human trafficking, to report a tip, arrange for training, receive general information, or find specific anti-trafficking resources in your state.
- In Canada, contact the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association (CCSA) Tip Line at 1-800-222-8477.
- Eternal Threads is an organization that promotes micro-credit businesses around the globe and will supply your organization with slave-free, Fair Trade products to sell that will benefit those small businesses. www.eternalthreads.org
- The video “The Dark Side of Chocolate” is a documentary about child slaves used to harvest cocoa beans in West Africa. Order at www.nfschocolatecampaign.org

SESSION 3 WAR SLAVES

Child soldiering can be a manifestation of human trafficking where it involves the unlawful recruitment or use of children through force, fraud or coercion as combatants, or for labor or sexual exploitation by armed forces. Perpetrators may be government forces, paramilitary organizations or rebel groups. Some of these children are forcibly abducted to be used as combatants. Others are made to work unlawfully as porters, cooks, guards, servants, messengers or spies. Young girls can be forced to marry or have sex with male combatants. Both male and female child soldiers are often sexually abused and are at high risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases. This is the definition of child war slaves used by the U.S. Department of State.

In the book *Not for Sale*, David Batstone tells the story of Charles, a bright 10-year-old boy living with his mother in a village in Uganda, who was abducted by members of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) one morning while he was on his way to school. On the first day of captivity, Charles and several other boys were ordered to pick up clubs and strike three adult men captives. When the boys did not comply, the commander made an example of one of the boys and took the club and severely beat one of the boys. Once the boys realized they had to beat the men or be beaten, they complied with the commander's order, and in a few minutes the three men were beaten to death. Their initiation into the LRA had officially started. Murder and pillage replaced reading and arithmetic in Charles's life. He learned how to shoot a gun, follow military commands, scout enemy movements and obliterate a civilian target. Charles and the other boys became killers without a conscience.

Hunger and thirst were constant companions for these children. The commanders would get most of the food and water. The boys had to share a single serving of food with a group of twelve child soldiers. The kids sat in a circle and took turns taking a bite of food. Anyone who took more than one bite was tossed out and missed the rest of the meal. As Charles saw it, you stayed weak and got beaten, or you became strong and did the beating. He knew which path he planned to take. He became a corporal and was allowed to give orders to others and gained the trust of his commanders.

Then one afternoon, at age 14, he just snapped. The faces of those whom he had killed flashed before his eyes. He wanted to get out and go back to his village. He walked to a village where he was taken to the village elder. He was met by two national army soldiers and Charles turned himself in. He was taken to their local garrison where he was congratulated for having the courage to leave the LRA. The next day he was taken to the World Vision facility, where he was greeted by other children, some of whom he knew had escaped the LRA. Charles stayed at the World Vision facility several months being rehabilitated.

What can we do???

1. More people are needed to provide material aid, shelter, food, clothing and emotional support to slaves who find their way to freedom.
2. Individuals and organizations that will focus on advocacy and public policy are needed.
3. In 2009 the U.S. Congress passed legislation called the LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act. The bill mandates a regional strategy to support multilateral efforts to successfully protect civilians and eliminate the threat posed by the LRA. Learn more about these efforts.
4. Not for Sale is supporting the Jesuits in northern Uganda in building a school designed for children who have been heavily impacted by the atrocities of war. Have a fundraiser to support this school.
5. Learn more about this issue.

Scripture

Ezekiel 18:21-22 (New Living Translation)

But if wicked people turn away from all their sins and begin to obey my decrees and do what is just and right, they will surely live and not die. All their past sins will be forgotten, and they will live because of the righteous things they have done.

Questions to ponder in groups or individually

1. *Could you forgive someone who had taken the life of a loved one?*
2. *Do we have a responsibility to care about the war slaves in Uganda? Why or why not?*
3. *What are the ramifications of turning children into war slaves?*

Resources

- International Rescue Committee www.rescue.org
- UNICEF <http://www.unicefusa.org/>
- Save the Children www.savethechildren.org
- Mercy Corps www.mercycorps.org
- *Not for Sale* written by David Batstone

SESSION 4

SEX SLAVES

When a person is coerced, forced or deceived into prostitution, or maintained in prostitution through coercion – that person is a victim of sex trafficking. This category of human trafficking is by far the largest and generates the most money. Victims of sex trafficking usually start at age 12 but some are as young as 9 years of age. It is estimated that 1.3 million children worldwide are enslaved in the sex trade each year and 100,000 to 300,000 children in the U.S. are sex trafficking victims each year.

Sarah was 14-years old when she met a man on the internet who was 10 years older than she was who showered her with attention and listened to her when she complained about her parents. As a typical teenager, finding her own identity and defying her parents were on top of her “to do” list. After about six months, Sarah knew she was in love and agreed to go with this man to meet his “family” in Cleveland. His “family” turned out to be three other girls. She was told that her role was to go out to work that night and bring him back the money. He needed to know how much she loved him by making sure that she would do anything for him. Later some of his friends came by, and he asked her to have sex with one of his friends. When Sarah refused she was brutally raped, not only by that one friend but the others as well. Afterwards he told her “that wouldn’t have happened if you would have just listened and complied in the first place.” He instructed her on what to say, how to walk, what to wear and how much money she was to bring back to him. He then forced her to go out in the streets. This was the start of Sarah’s life as a prostitute.

Harriet ran away from home when she was 11-years old and moved in with a 32-year old man who sexually and physically abused her and coerced her to become a prostitute. In the next two years, Harriet became addicted to drugs, had two abortions and contracted numerous sexually transmitted diseases. The police arrested Harriet when she was 13 and charged her with committing prostitution. They made no efforts to find her pimp. Harriet was placed on probation for 18 months in the custody of juvenile probation officials. Her lawyers have appealed the decision, arguing that since she could not legally consent to sex, she cannot face prostitution related charges. She remains in a juvenile detention facility and has never been assisted in any kind of shelter for child sex trafficking victims.

Cindy pulled up to Bridget’s house in a car with two men. Cindy and Bridget knew each other from school; they were casual friends. Bridget talked to Cindy through the open window of the car. The next thing Bridget knew she was pulled into the car by one of the men. She had been abducted from right in front of her middle class home in the suburbs. Bridget was bound, gagged, blindfolded and driven around for what seemed like forever. After the process of indoctrination and intimidation, Bridget was forced to work as a prostitute in a motel room where she was not allowed to leave. She was rescued several months later when the motel

was raided after several tips of suspicious activities at the motel were reported to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline.

These events and others like them are repeated every day in every state of the country. Young girls and young boys are forced into sex slavery or sex trafficking at an alarming rate. A pimp will demand at least \$500 per night from a girl; three or four girls working every night generate a minimum of \$2,000 per night. If you continue with the math, that is quite a lot of money in one year, well over \$600,000 per year!

Sex trafficking is very profitable. That is one reason why worldwide, human trafficking is second only to illegal weapons sales. Victims of trafficking are forced into various forms of commercial sexual exploitation including prostitution, pornography, stripping, live sex shows, mail order brides, military prostitution and sex tourism. Sex trafficking operations can be found in highly visible places such as street prostitution, truck stops, large sporting events, spas, massage parlors and strip clubs, as well as in more underground places such as brothels that operate out of residential homes. In this high-tech age there is less street prostitution and more internet prostitution. An online ad for sex can be listed for as little as \$5. During major sporting events, such as the Super Bowl, pimps will bring in thousands of women, men, girls and boys transported from all over the country to work as prostitutes before, during and after the game.

Victims of sex trafficking can be women or men, girls or boys, but the majority are women and girls. There are a number of common patterns for luring victims: promises of a good job, false marriage proposals, being sold by parents, husbands, or boyfriends, and being kidnapped by traffickers. Sex traffickers will subject their victims to debt bondage, in which the victims are told they owe money for living expenses and transport into the country and must repay the debt with personal services.

Sex traffickers often use several methods to condition their victims into compliance, including starvation, confinement, beatings, physical abuse, rape, gang rape, threats of violence to the victims and the victims' family members, forced drug use and the threat of shaming their victims by revealing their activities to their family and family's friends.

Sex trafficking victims suffer from a number of physical and psychological issues. The conditions include drug and alcohol addiction, physical injuries, broken bones, concussions, burns, vaginal/anal tearing, HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, shame, grief, fear, distrust, self-hatred, depression, suicide and suicidal thoughts. The list goes on and on.

What can we do???

1. Learn more about sex trafficking.
2. Learn to recognize the signs of trafficking.
3. Teach your children and grandchildren about the dangers of traffickers and what to look for.
4. Encourage your local school to include human trafficking in their curriculum.

5. Report suspected trafficking situations to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center 1-888-3737-888. In Canada call the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association Tip Line 1-800-222-8477.
6. Host an awareness event to watch and discuss a recent human trafficking documentary.

Scripture:

Luke 4: 18-19 (New Living Translation)

The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come.

Questions to ponder in groups or individually

1. *Have you ever seen a prostitute on the street? What did you think of her? Why?*
2. *Have you closed your eyes to the suffering of others?*
3. *What do you think our response to this scripture should be? Why?*
4. *Do you think Jesus is only speaking of himself? Who is the "me" in this scripture?*
5. *What have you learned new?*
6. *Are you overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem? How will you overcome that feeling so you will not be immobilized by that feeling? What steps can you take?*
7. *Are you ready to become a modern day abolitionist?*
8. *What is one thing you are willing to do to help?*

Resources

- Read *Half the Sky* by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn or go to <http://www.halftheskymovement.org/>.
- Look at documentaries on human trafficking on www.youtube.com.
- Contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 888-3737-888 to identify an agency in your city or state that is working to eradicate human trafficking.
- In Canada find information at <http://www.canadiancrimestoppers.org/www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking>.
- Find information from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking.

SESSION 5

CONCLUSIONS

As we start or continue our journey as modern day abolitionists, there are a few things we need to know. We don't need to rush out to our nearest massage parlor with a battering ram and cell phone intent on rescuing slaves. That role is for the professionals. History has shown that with many things, the biggest impact can be made on a situation by doing the smallest things. Tips from observant people to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline Number (1-888-3737-888) or 911 in an urgent situation or to the Crime Stoppers National Tip Line (1-800-222-8477) in Canada have been responsible for the rescue of hundreds of human trafficking victims. We need to be observant and know what to look for and what questions to ask.

Everyone has the potential to discover a human trafficking situation. While the victims may sometimes be kept behind locked doors, many are hiding right in front of us at construction sites, restaurants, elder care centers, hotels, nail salons, and agricultural fields, to name a few. Traffickers' use of coercion, such as threats of deportation and harm to the victim or the victim's family, is so powerful that even if you reach out to the victims, they may be too fearful to accept your help.

This is not an all-inclusive list, but it includes some key red flags of a trafficking situation to look for that should be followed up or reported:

- Living with employer
- Poor living conditions
- Multiple people living in cramped space
- Inability to speak to individual alone
- Answers appear to be scripted or rehearsed
- Employer is holding identity papers
- Signs of physical abuse
- Unpaid or paid very little
- Under 18 and in prostitution

If there is an opportunity to speak to a suspected victim privately without the suspected trafficker watching or putting the victim in danger, here are a few sample questions to ask to follow up on the red flags. You should only do this if you have developed a relationship with the suspected victim and feel comfortable asking these questions.

- Can you leave your job if you want to?
- Can you come and go as you please?
- Have you been hurt or threatened if you tried to leave?
- Has your family been threatened?
- Do you live with your employer?
- Where do you eat and sleep?
- Are you in debt to your employer?

- Do you have your passport or identification? Who has it?

If you believe you have identified someone in a trafficking situation, in the U.S., call the information into the hotline number 888-3737-888. In Canada, call 800-222-8477. **Do not attempt a rescue yourself.** If it is an emergency, call 911. It works in the U.S. and in Canada.

Scripture

Isaiah 1:17 (New Living Translation)

Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the cause of orphans. Fight for the rights of widows.

Psalms 82:3-4 (New Living Translation)

Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. Rescue the poor and helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people.

Scripture clearly calls us to take a stand and to seek justice for the oppressed people of our world. The millions trapped in human trafficking fall into the category of being oppressed. When Jesus started to feed the 5,000 on the mountain with two fish and fives loaves of bread, we can imagine that those watching thought he was crazy and would never be able to do much with such a small amount of food. Who knew that after feeding over 5,000 people there would be 12 baskets of leftovers?!! Who knew that when a tired Rosa Parks sat down on a bus that she would spark a movement that would change discrimination and segregation practices in our country? Who knew that Mother Teresa's decision to live with and help the poorest of the poor in India would grow to become the Missionaries of Charity that would have more than 610 centers in 120 countries? It is obvious that God uses the little steps we take and multiplies our efforts in ways that we could never imagine.

Won't you let God take your efforts to help eliminate human trafficking and multiply them?

We may not be able to address the entire problem, but if everyone would do something – no matter how big or how small – it would make a difference, and soon, with God's help, slavery would truly be a thing of the past.

We can make a difference!

We CAN and we WILL make a difference in this growing crime in our society.

U.S. – 1-888-3737-888

Canada – 1-800-222-8477