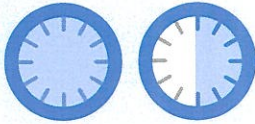


This Bible study is excerpted from the forthcoming *Hands that Heal: An International Curriculum to Train Caregivers of Trafficking Survivors*, produced by the Faith Alliance Against Slavery and Trafficking ©2007. Used with permission.

2.4

The Essential Role of the Church in Providing Care for Trafficking Survivors

TIME



90 MINUTES

SUPPLIES

BIBLE

8-10 PIECES OF ROPE OR CORD
EACH CUT APPROXIMATELY 1-2
METRES LONG

WRITE ON CARDS OR PAPER THE
WORDS FOR THE FIRST ACTIVITY:
THE NEED AND THE PROMISE

SURVIVORS WORLDVIEW/BIBLICAL
PROMISES CHART HANDOUT

BLINDFOLD

FLIP CHART/NEWSPRINT

MARKERS

PAPER

PEN

NOTES TO THE FACILITATOR

The global church is uniquely qualified and responsible to address the evil of sexual slavery for several important reasons. The church has inherent strengths and divine purposes which empower it to provide aftercare to sexually exploited women and children that are genuinely life-changing. Yet, traditions and taboos associated with sexuality in the church can cripple people of faith from helping survivors.

The significance of this session is to challenge participants to positive powerful engagement with survivors of sexual slavery. This engagement should be integrally connected to their faith in God and His Word. The biblical themes presented in Sessions 1-3 of Unit 2 provide a “faith-framework” for action. Session 4 summarises the strengths that the church and God’s people bring to battle against the evil of sexual exploitation and the unique role they can play in helping survivors find new life. This is the last of four sessions on A Biblical Framework for a Christian Response to Human Trafficking.

During this learning session, participants will...

- know that God’s mission for the church includes caring for survivors of the evil of sexual slavery.
- learn reasons why the church is uniquely equipped to help survivors.
- find freedom and healing to begin a new life.

STARTER

20 MINUTES



ACTIVITY: TELL A STORY

When Bombay Teen Challenge Director K. K. Devaraj first began to work with his staff in the Kamatipura red-light district, he discovered that many of the women and girls had been trafficked into India from the villages in Nepal. As women and girls began to take steps to begin a new life, many had a growing desire to go back to Nepal. Their stirring question to Devaraj was, “Uncle, can we go home?”

This question was not an easy one. Eighty percent of the women and girls wanting to start a new life were HIV+ and had “the Bombay disease”. Many were in sexual slavery because their families had sold them. Would they be welcome back in Nepal in their families, their villages, and in the church after years of life in prostitution and all it represented in Nepali culture?

Several courageous steps were taken to make “going home” a positive possibility. Devaraj travelled to Nepal to meet personally with the church leaders in Kathmandu. He explained the tragic plight of “Nepal’s daughters” who had been forced into sex slavery but were on the journey to transformation and new lives. He challenged them, *“Is there room in your hearts for these broken daughters of Nepal? Is there room in your churches?”*

The hearts of the leaders in Nepal were deeply touched. They agreed to partner with the ministry of Bombay Teen Challenge in helping repatriated Nepali women begin a new life. Many “daughters of Nepal” have since returned home to Kathmandu to receive holistic aftercare with the help of Nepali churches and believers.

DISCUSS

Ask the group:

1. What wisdom can be gained from how Devaraj handled the Nepali women’s dilemma?
2. How would the church in your community view the possibility of providing care to sexually exploited women and children?

EXPLAIN

The church has a life-changing role to play in providing care for survivors of sexual exploitation. Because Christians have personally received God’s grace, power, and love, they can share it with women and children who desperately need hope and a new life.

MAIN DIALOGUE

What Connects the Church to Survivors of Trafficking?



ACTIVITY



30 MINUTES

THE NEED AND THE PROMISE

- Hand out papers/cards which each contain one specific worldview (need) of survivors of sexual exploitation (one per person). See chart on next page.
- Hand out papers/cards which each contain one response that is promised in Scripture through the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- Have participants find the person with the need and solution that matches, representing the need of survivors to which there is an appropriate promise in Scripture.

The Need (Worldview) & The Promise

SURVIVORS WORLDVIEW	BIBLICAL PROMISES THROUGH THE ENGAGED CHURCH
Exploitive relationships	Value-adding caring relationships
Illiterate/limited education	Literacy training and basic education
Bound by destructive evil power	Freedom through God's liberating power
Income derived in a violent and abusive environment	Vocational training for new financial independency
Questionable legal status	Access to legal counsel and aid
Hopelessness	Hope in Christ for a future
Feelings of betrayal	A God who is trustworthy
Betrayal by father	Heavenly Father who is loving, protects His children
Loss of family	A new family/community of faith
Loss of identity	New identity in Christ
Value attached to sex	Value as creation of God
HIV/AIDS	Prayer for healing, medical resources through compassion ministries
Anger, hatred	Love and forgiveness received and given
A death of shame	Death with dignity and hope
Rejection	Unconditional love and acceptance by God and community of faith
Spiritual bondage	Spiritual freedom through Christ Jesus
Trauma from abuse	Prayer, emotional, and psychological healing, counselling

DISCUSS

Have pairs representing survivors' needs and the hope that they have in Christ Jesus stand together. Have each couple present why they connect. Ask the whole group to discuss how each biblical promise addresses the specific needs of the sexually exploited.

EMPHASISE

The needs of women and children who have survived sexual exploitation are overwhelming and difficult. Yet, the redemptive work and power of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit is available and effective in bringing healing to every aspect of their needs. The challenge is for people of faith to present hope to survivors in a relevant way, recognising that Jesus came to bring healing, freedom and hope to today's oppressed and wounded.

Summary: What connects the church to survivors of sexual exploitation?

EXPLAIN



20 MINUTES

1. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

In Luke 4:18,19, Jesus quoted the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1 in proclaiming His mission on earth.

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
Because he has anointed me
To preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom
for the prisoners
And recovery of sight for the blind,
To release the oppressed,
to program the year of the Lord’s favor.”*

The focus of Christ's passion was to bring liberating, healing truth to the poor, the wounded and oppressed. He came to set captives free from sin, injustice and exploitation and give them new life. As His followers, His mission is also our mission.

The freedom and healing of survivors of sexual exploitation is at the heart of the mission of the church.

2. THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH

The destructive world of sexual exploitation is marked by violence, betrayal, deception and hopelessness. In contrast, the message of the gospel offers loving concern, trust, and life-changing hope. This is not a superficial hope based on the best of one's intentions and abilities. It is based on the character, love, and life-changing power of the True and Living God.

The eternal promise of God for every man, woman, boy or girl who have been enslaved in prostitution is proclaimed by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:17.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come.”

The message of the church as found in Christ is one of hope for every person regardless of his or her background or life experience.

The belief that sexually exploited women and children can find new life in Christ Jesus is at the heart of the message of the church.

3. THE MEANS OF THE CHURCH

The greatest resources in the global church for fighting the evil of sexual slavery and giving survivors transformational care are people of faith who are the Church. Men and women in local churches around the world can offer their skills as counsellors, doctors, social workers, teachers, lawyers, and spiritual parents. They can take up the challenge and provide faith-based care that addresses each area in survivors’ lives in order to provide the holistic care they desperately need to begin a new life.

The love, faith, concern and professional skills of people of faith in the global church are untapped resources. They can be mobilised and coordinated to fight the evil of trafficking and to help the exploited find healing.

4. THE CHURCH AS COMMUNITY

Women and children who are rescued from the brothels and slavery are leaving a “community”. However, because they have been identified with the community of prostitution, survivors are often marginalised from their families, home communities, and society. In order for healing to occur, survivors must have a community into which they can come and find supportive relationships. They cannot survive alone.

Transformational care for survivors of sexual exploitation occurs best in a caring supportive community. For survivors who have lost everything, the local church as a New Testament community can serve as a new “family” with which survivors can identify and find healing.

The local church can provide a supportive, caring, ready-made community for survivors of sexual exploitation in which they can find faith, support, and a new life.

EMPHASISE

Through Jesus Christ, the church is able to offer survivors care for the spiritual as well as physical, psychological, and social dimensions of bondage. Aftercare that ignores the spiritual needs of exploited women and children is partial, though well-meaning. Without addressing their spiritual needs, care can never be truly transformational.

Human beings can physically rescue the sexually enslaved from the brothel or place of sexual exploitation. But only God can heal the crippling scars of the brothel in the survivor’s heart, mind, and spirit. This is a key aspect of healing that the church — acting on God’s behalf and in His power — is equipped to address.

WRAP UP

20 MINUTES



The Bondage of Sexual Slavery and God's Promise of Freedom



ACTIVITY:
ROLE PLAY

Select a young woman to represent the millions of women and girls enslaved in sexual exploitation in the world today. Have 8-10 pieces of cord or rope cut into 1-2 metre lengths. Ask volunteers to come forward, one by one, take a cord, and name a factor in our world that contributes to her slavery while tying the rope around her.

Ask participants to come forward to name how the church is responsible for enacting God's promise of freedom. As they do they remove a cord until the young woman is symbolically free.

PRAY

- Pray for the freedom of millions of women and children in sexual slavery in our world.
- Pray for understanding, courage, and the will in the community of faith in their city and nation to act on behalf of victims, providing healing and care.
- Pray for passion and vision for how your church can respond.