

Human Trafficking

RESOURCES

Worship Aids



SCRIPTURE

Consider using one of the verses or passages below as a focus for a sermon.

Genesis 1:27 – a verse that reminds us of our inherent dignity, the creation of every human being in God's image

Exodus 3:7-12 – God has always heard the cries of the enslaved

Psalm 9 – a psalm of deliverance: the needy will not always be forgotten and hope is not lost for the poor

Psalm 10 – This psalm expresses the frustration sometimes felt by those who are exploited: Where is God in all of this? We are assured that God does hear their cries and will work out justice for them.

Psalm 140 – a psalm of one who feels trapped

Proverbs 31:8-9 – a call to advocacy

Ecclesiastes 4:1 – here is recognition of the plight of one who is not comforted

Isaiah 42:22-23 – these verses offer a description that applies to trafficked persons: robbed, plundered, trapped in holes and prisons

Isaiah 43:1-7 – verses that remind us God calls all of us by name and returns us from exile

Isaiah 58: 1-12 – a reminder that true worship means the establishment of justice for all

Isaiah 61:1-3 (see also Luke 4:16-21) – the verses Jesus read in the temple that speak of his mission: to bring good news, healing, liberation, and comfort

Lamentations 5 – this passage offers a description that applies to trafficked persons (see especially verses 5, 11, 13, and 15)

Amos 5:21-24 – a reminder that true worship means the establishment of justice for all

Micah 6:8 – a familiar verse about what God requires of us

Matthew 25:31-46 – the familiar passage of the sheep and the goats who are judged based on how they have treated the disenfranchised

John 10:10 – a vision of abundant life for all

Philippians 1:19 – the power of prayer

Hebrews 13:3 – a verse that calls us not only to remember those who suffer but also to identify with them

MUSIC

Some of the following hymns and songs speak of God's response and our response to exploitation. Others give us insight into the perspectives of the exploited.

A Voice Was Heard in Ramah (Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, MV 111)

Abide with Me (Henry Francis Lyte, SASB 670, VU 436)

Amazing Grace (John Henry Newton, SASB 390, VU266)

And Can It Be That I Should Gain (Charles Wesley, SASB 283) – note: You may wish to highlight verse 3. Often these lines are interpreted in a purely spiritual manner. But what if we saw them more literally as Christ working to liberate those imprisoned by human trafficking?

Arise, My Soul, Arise (Charles Wesley, SASB 106)

The Church of Christ in Every Age (Fred Pratt Green | James William Elliott, VU 601)

God of Comfort and Compassion (Doris Rendell, SASB 576)

God Weeps (Shirley Erena Murray | Jim Strathdee, MV 78)

He Came to Give Us Life in All Its Fullness (John Gowans, SASB 274)

Healer of Our Every Ill (Marty Haugen, VU 619)

It Came upon the Midnight Clear (Edmund Hamilton Sears, SASB 83, VU 44) – note: this may seem an odd song to sing outside of the Christmas season, but it speaks of peace and rest for the weary. Consider adding the following two original verses (between the SASB's verses 3 and 4):

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And warring humankind hears not
The love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise and cease your strife,
And hear the angels sing.*

*And you, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!*

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love (Tom Colvin, VU 593)
May God's Sheltering Wings (Judith Snowdon, MV 214)
O Lord, Whose Human Hands Were Quick (Malcolm Bale, SASB 518)
Out of the Depths, O God, We Call to You (Ruth Duck | Jeeva Sam, VU 611)
People Held in Bondage (Grace Pugh Hubbard, available at http://salvationist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Hymn_People-Held-in-Bondage.pdf)
The Saviour of Men Came to Seek and to Save (Albert Orsborn, SASB 527)
Sisters Let us Walk Together (Judith Snowdon, MV 179)
Someone Cares (John Gowans, SASB 238)
There is a Place of Quiet Rest (Cleland B. McAfee, SASB 973)
We are the Hands of Christ (David Fraser, SASB 851)
We Wonder Why Christ Came into the World (John Gowans, SASB 274)
What a Friend (Joseph Scriven, SASB 645, VU 664)
What Does the Lord Require of You (Jim Strathdee, VU 701)
When A Poor One (J. A. Oliver | Migùel Manzano, VU 702)
When I Needed a Neighbour (Sydney Carter, VU 600)
When Painful Mem'ries (Ruth Duck | Sally Ann Morris MV 74)
Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life (Frank Mason North, VU 681)
Why Stand So Far Away (Ruth Duck | Michael Mahler, MV 72)

SASB – Salvation Army Song Book
MV – More Voices supplementary hymnal
VU – Voices United hymnal

PRAYER

Prayers and readings can be found at the following websites:

http://www1.salvationarmy.org.uk/uki/www_uki.nsf/vw-sublinks/7F7C63D5F85D5A59802574C10045C8DA?openDocument

http://www.stophumantrafficking.org.za/images/resources/Worship_Resources_Human_Trafficking_Awareness_Day.pdf

<http://www.ucc.org/justice/womens-issues/pdfs/Human-Trafficking-Awareness-Sunday.pdf>

<http://www.ucc.org/justice/womens-issues/pdfs/The-Sum-of-Justice-for-Human-Trafficking-Middleton.pdf>

SERMON

Sermon helps can be found at the following websites. It would also be appropriate to make the focus of your sermon the subject of human dignity.

<http://salvationist.ca/docs/Trafficking/letmypeoplego.pdf>

<http://salvationist.ca/docs/Trafficking/humandignityvshumantrafficking.pdf>

<http://salvationist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/sa-human-trafficking-sermon-outline.pdf>

<http://www.abwmbreakthechains.org/media/Barbara%20Anderson's%20BTC%20closing%20worship%202008%20%20Do%20You%20Hear%20the%20Spirit%20May%2020081.pdf>

http://www.freedomSunday.org/downloads/Sermon_seeds.pdf

Misc.

During the sermon, invite people to turn on their cell phones and text a donation to a ministry that addresses human trafficking. Consider donating to a ministry of The Salvation Army or highlighting another ministry you are familiar with.

--inspired by John Ortberg, "Preaching Like a Prophet," *Leadership* (Summer 2010): <http://leadershipjournal.net>.

If you have a coffee hour or fellowship time before or after your worship service, consider serving only Fair Trade coffee, tea and sugar. Fair Trade aims to alleviate poverty, ensure safe working conditions and foster sustainable development. Products that are certified Fair Trade have been produced outside of sweat shops and without the aid of trafficked workers. For more information on Fair Trade see <http://www.salvationarmyethics.org/fair-trade/>.

Worship leaders are often keen to incorporate the testimonies of those who have been exploited through human trafficking. This is understandable as personal testimonies are a valued part of our worship culture. But consider the following: those who have survived such exploitation, especially sexual trafficking, have the need to move past these experiences. Being known as someone who was once trafficked for sexual purposes can have implications for one's future. This kind of label may make it difficult to establish a career or working life, to build new and meaningful relationships, to begin a family, etc. One way of being sensitive to those exploited by human trafficking is to limit testimonials to those offered anonymously. Consider using the testimonies available online at: <http://salvationist.ca/action-support/human-sexual-trafficking/resources-2/>. Or invite someone else who can help educate and inform on this issue, such as a social worker, police officer or someone else experienced in working against human trafficking.

Please be aware of the language you choose to use when dealing with a sensitive topic like human trafficking. Avoid labels that may diminish or demean a person, such as "prostitute." Instead, speak of those who are exploited by injustice, whose dignity is violated by others.