

*"When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers."
- Prov. 21:15*

Paths of Justice

How should I respond?

I was listening to the news on the radio the other day while driving, as I often do. A clip was played from a speech given by an elected official who quoted Isaiah 1:17.

Isaiah 1:17 (New King James Version) says: "Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow." This verse is often quoted as a reason to take part in a justice mission.

To get deeper into the verse, first consider the context of the chapter: God is giving Isaiah a message to deliver to Judah. Israel had long before been taken captive and removed. Verses 1-16 are an indictment of Judah. God is telling Judah that they haven't lived up to His expectations. They are bad, unjust, given to oppression and stealing from the orphan and widow. Verses 18-20 then spell out the possible outcomes. God says, "let us reason together." He wanted them to consider their situation. Their sins can be washed away if they are willing and obedient, but if not, they will be devoured by the sword. Reading through this caused me to consider how I am doing in measuring up to God's yardstick. We are under grace, but Jesus did not set aside the law, so these principles are still in effect and in a lot of ways our culture is much like that of Judah. —Tom Castor

Trafficking - today's slavery

Most of you are aware that a member of our congregation, Becky McNeil, has decided to invest her time to stand up for the oppressed and oppose the trafficking problem here in Columbus. Becky works at Mt. Carmel West, part of the Trinity Health System, and she has said that as she started being aware of the trafficking problem several years ago, she realized that some of the patients that had come through the ER were victims of trafficking. There was minimal training for ER workers to recognize this activity so these girls came in, were treated and left the hospital still trapped in slavery.

Becky knew that something needed to be done, so she set about learning all that she could to recognize when people who were in this bondage were admitted. Her position at the hospital involves creating training for the staff, so she is in the right place to help the staff recognize human trafficking.

Trinity also decided that they needed to address this problem and formed a companywide

Human Trafficking committee of which Becky is a member. Trinity has developed an online training program for hospital staff and Becky convinced them to include ICU, because if there is a serious ER problem, the patient usually goes to ICU. The hospital only treats the medical situation, but Becky trains her staff to recognize the other issues that are part of the trafficked person's life so that they can identify victims and determine their needs.

The Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition (CORRC) is the organization foremost involved in combating the trafficking of victims in our area. The mission of the CORRC is "to provide a collaborative community response to human trafficking in central Ohio through education, services, advocacy, and prosecution." It is managed by the Salvation Army.

Becky is a member of the CORRC Social Committee as is the Manager of Mt. Carmel's Crime and Trauma Department who works with (over)



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Definition of injustice: Injustice occurs when someone with greater power deprives someone with lesser power of freedom, dignity, treasure, or livelihood.

"Now when all the princes and all the people, who had entered into the covenant, heard that everyone should set free his male and female slaves, that no one should keep them in bondage anymore, they obeyed and let them go."

- Jeremiah 34:10

Trafficking- today's slavery (Continued)

CORRC as an official hospital employee. CORRC is working to find housing and rehabilitation for freed trafficking victims. One idea that they are working on is to find an apartment complex that will rent to victims and then train the management to know how to work with these survivors of trafficking.

In addition to physical care, CORRC offers training for the general public. Becky is able to work through both CORRC and Mt. Carmel to speak to groups around Columbus, providing training and information about human trafficking. Becky says, "Anytime that we can enhance awareness, improve education, recognize a potential victim or prevent a situation where someone could be assaulted or approached by a trafficker is a day closer to defeating modern day slavery."

One good resource to learn about trafficking from the inside is a short, informative, and encouraging video about "Catch Court", a program set up by Judge Hubert in Franklin County to help victims. To view it, go here:

<https://vimeo.com/197952424>

The motivation for stopping slavery (for sexual and labor purposes) is the love of Christ. For example, the Salvation Army's commitment to this emerges from their mission - to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in His name without discrimination - and it is rooted in the organization's early history.

The Salvation Army was founded in London, England, in 1865 by the husband and wife team of Catherine and William Booth. The Booths went against Victorian conventions and took their ministry to the dirty and dangerous streets of London's east side where they reached out to the destitute and

desperate. Their efforts eventually evolved into a battle to protect women and children from the horrors of sex trafficking. Upon learning of the desperate needs of women and children at risk of or already caught up in organized commercial sexual exploitation, The Salvation Army responded by opening homes for women and girls and developing intensive "Rescue Work."

The Salvation Army also participated in an undercover investigation into the trafficking of young girls for prostitution - a detailed account of which was published in 1885 by the Pall Mall Gazette in a series of articles called, "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon." This created public awareness that led to support of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, a measure which, when passed, raised the age of consent from 13 to 16 (although reformers sought 18).

More help is still needed today. We have attended this month's CORRC meeting and are learning more about the efforts of the Salvation Army and others in our community, and how we at FCC might make a difference.

One important step we all need to take is to be aware of indicators of human trafficking.

Please take a moment to see the list of them here: <http://swo.salvationarmy.org/rescueandrestore/whatis> and if you notice a potential trafficking situation, please call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888. Also, we can all work to end the demand for trafficking by helping those we know to not view or purchase indecent materials or activities. We are exploring further steps we can take, so please pray for wisdom in that process.



Opportunities / Activities

- There is a pregnant mother through PDHC whose due date is in November. More information about the situation and how we can help is forthcoming.
- Help is still needed to make personal contacts with those we've served through Angel Tree.
- Do you want to get more involved with righting injustice? Come to our Justice Team meeting. Our next one is on Wednesday, July 12 at 7:00 pm. There will be prayer, sharing of information, a guest speaker from the Bair Foundation (the Christian organization in Columbus that's focused on adoption and foster care), and more.
- Check with Tom Castor (tcbus7@att.net) or Doug Dunsmoor (dwdunsmoor@hotmail.com) for more information about these and more opportunities.