

Pray for an End to Human Trafficking

Week 3

Prayers are adapted from Make Something Beautiful.

Human trafficking is the recruitment and transport of a child or adult for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Sadly, there are more people enslaved today than at the height of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Human Trafficking Statistics

- Adults and children in forced labor and sexual slavery: 40 million
- Countries without adequate laws to prevent trafficking: 18
- Out of more than 7 billion people, 25 million are in forced labor
- Profits from forced labor: \$150 billion annually

Sources for statistics: U.S. State Department and the International Labor Organization

1. Pray for repentance of our own sin.

1 John 1:8-9: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

God, we acknowledge that we struggle with selfishness, lust, and greed, three factors that greatly feed the evil of human trafficking. Please forgive us for our sins. Help us to repent and change. Enable us to serve and love others. Make us different, shining like the stars in the heavens. Amen

2. Pray against poverty, greed, and lust.

Proverbs 14:21: (poverty) "Whoever despises his neighbor is a sinner, but blessed is he who is generous to the poor."

Luke 12:15: (greed) "And he said to them, 'Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'"

Matthew 5:27-28: (lust) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Jesus, you know the roots of this atrocity. They are poverty, greed, and lust. God, first we want to pray for those in poverty. Would you help bring people out of positions that lead to desperation, making them vulnerable to traffickers. Please bring work into these areas - animals, crops, and industry. Father, grant a way for people to care for their families and themselves so that they are not easily stolen away. We are so broken over the other roots as well, lust and greed. Would you open hearts and eyes to the sickness of lust and greed. Would you make them see that feeding off the flesh and backs of others is wrong and leads to nothing but emptiness. Amen.

3. Pray for awareness to grow.

Ephesians 5:13: "But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible."

God, would you help the public including those in the Church to see this as a problem for us all, not just those directly touched by slavery. We ask that you would help awareness increase. Show us how this is not only a problem overseas, but right here in Fairfield County and southwest Connecticut. God, reveal to people how pornography plays into the trafficking of women and children. Give favor to those, especially Sister Maureen, who are giving a voice to this cause. Help the truth of what is happening to these victims reach all races, ethnicities, and socio-economic classes. Pierce our consciences with the truth. Amen.

4. Pray for the church.

Matthew 5:13: "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet."

Father, we pray for your church to rise up and speak for the helpless, vulnerable, imprisoned, and oppressed. We ask that you would awaken this issue in our congregations and bring unity between denominations so that we can unite to end this evil. We pray for new laborers to come out of the church for this cause, people willing to work daily to bring an end to slavery. Amen.

5. Pray for governments to help stop trafficking.

Proverbs 21:1: "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will."

Amos 5:15a: "Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate."

Father, we pray for governments to stand on the side of the victims. Your word says that you hold the king's heart like a stream in your hand. So we ask that you would turn the hearts of leaders, that they would enact laws and systems to protect the vulnerable. We pray against corruption in all levels of government and law enforcement. We ask you to change governments so that they hate evil, love good, and establish justice at their gates. Amen.

6. Pray for guidance.

James 1:5: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."

Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

God, as Church of the Apostles comes together next week to learn more about and pray against trafficking in our region, towns, and neighborhoods, please grant us wisdom and vision for how you are calling us to pay attention to the needs of those in slavery, to stand against all personal and corporate evil that permits and supports slavery, and to stand for those who are enslaved. Make clear all avenues for partnership with other churches and organizations. Give us patience to wait for your guidance and courage to act when called upon. Amen.