The Spiritual Basis for a Response to Human Trafficking

Trafficking in Persons Taskforce
Educational Objectives

At the conclusion of this program, participants should be able to:

• Compile Scripture verses that deal with the issue of human trafficking
• Use these Scripture verses to answer questions from victims of human trafficking
• Evaluate the spiritual needs of victims of human trafficking
• Describe ways to support victims of human trafficking
Justice in the Bible

Within the Bible, there are 2 general concepts of justice:

1. Adequate amends for wrong actions against another person

2. Equal treatment of all people, especially those who are more vulnerable because of circumstances beyond their control
Justice in the Bible

This module will focus on the second concept of justice in the Bible and how it relates to the issue of human trafficking.

“Equal treatment of all people, especially those who are more vulnerable because of circumstances beyond their control”
Justice in the Bible

• The Bible has much to say about how to treat the following vulnerable groups of people:
  – Orphans
  – Widows
  – Foreigners
  – Poor
Justice in the Bible

• It is not coincidental that the majority of human trafficking victims fall into one or more of these 4 categories.
  – Orphans
  – Widows
  – Foreigners
  – Poor
Justice in the Bible

This is because those within each of these categories have an increased level of vulnerability and thus less ability to protect themselves.
Justice in the Bible

The Scriptures on justice can be divided into two main categories:

1. Those that describe God’s attitude toward injustice and the oppressed
2. God’s commands to us regarding our response to injustice
God’s attitude toward injustice and the oppressed
Dt. 10:18- “He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.” (NIV)
Ps. 9:9- “The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.” (NIV)
Ps. 10:17-18 “You hear O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, defending the fatherless and the oppressed, in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more.”(NIV1984)
Ps. 68:5- “A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling.” (NIV1984)
Ps. 72:12-14 “For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in His sight.” (NIV1984)
Ps. 103:6- “The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.” (NIV1984)
Ps. 146:7- “He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free…” (NIV1984)
Luke 4:18,19 (Is. 61:2) “…He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (NIV1984)
God’s commands to us regarding injustice
Dt. 24:17- “Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge.” (NIV1984)
Dt. 24:19- “When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.” (NIV)
Ps. 82:3-"Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.” (NIV1984)
Proverbs 23:10- “Do not move an ancient boundary stone, or encroach on the fields of the fatherless.” (NIV1984)
Is. 1:17- “Learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” (NIV1984)
Is. 58:6- “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?” (NIV)
James 1:27-”Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (NIV)
These Scripture verses form the spiritual basis for our response to human trafficking.
The most famous story in the Bible that deals with helping the oppressed is the story of how Boaz helped his relative Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth, found in the book of Ruth in the Old Testament.
Boaz

- **Aware** of the plight of Naomi and Ruth
- **Had opportunity** to help Naomi and Ruth
- **Responded** by taking definite steps to provide for Naomi and Ruth
- **Protected** Ruth from other workers
Awareness

• Implicit in the commands of Scripture regarding injustice is that we must first be aware of the injustice that surrounds us
Awareness

• This requires that we **actively educate** ourselves regarding issues of injustice

• Scripture does not allow for ignorance as an excuse for not responding to injustice!
Awareness

• These educational modules will form an adequate basis for you to be educated on the issue of human trafficking.

• However, it is up to you to research the trafficking issue in your particular area.
Researching the trafficking issue in your particular area

Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline
1.888.3737.888.

- This hotline will help you:
  - Identify local community resources to help victims
  - Give you contact information so that you can reach out to them
  - Coordinate with local social service organizations to help protect and serve victims so they begin process of restoring their lives

www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking.

Call local police if victim at risk of imminent harm

1.888.3737.888
www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking
Opportunity

• As healthcare professionals, we are regularly faced with the opportunity to help those who are oppressed in various ways.
Opportunity

• That opportunity includes all kinds of oppressed people including victims of human trafficking
Opportunity

• Remember that research has shown that up to 88% of human trafficking victims encountered a healthcare professional while in their trafficking scenario\(^1\)
Opportunity

• This opportunity extends to settings that may be outside your normal practice:
  – Free clinics
  – Providing medical care for service providers
  – Drop-in centers
  – Other settings…
Opportunity

• Therefore, healthcare professionals have a unique **opportunity** to find and free victims of human trafficking
Responding

• When faced with the opportunity to help Naomi and Ruth, Boaz responded promptly with definite actions that allowed him to be of tremendous help to them.
Responding

• As healthcare professionals, we like Boaz have tremendous assets at our disposal that can be used to help the oppressed.

• Having the ability to proceed with productive actions requires proactive thought and preparation.
Responding

• An excellent productive action would be the preparation of a set of protocols on how to specifically deal with a victim of human trafficking that you may encounter in your healthcare setting
Responding

Other possible productive actions include:

- Running a mock encounter with a TIP victim
- Educating yourself on human trafficking so that you can speak to other healthcare professionals in your area
- Offering to provide healthcare to survivors of human trafficking in your area
Responding

Experience with victims of trafficking has revealed that almost every victim has 2 essential spiritual questions they are asking.
Responding

1. Why did God allow this to happen to me?
Responding

2. What does God think of me now?
Responding

• As Christians, we are able to help victims of human trafficking begin to work through the answers to those questions.
• Specifically, we are able to tangibly show them the answer to the second question through our own acts of love.
Protecting

• As we seek to model Boaz, the end result of our actions will be to offer protection to the oppressed we encounter
• This is especially critical for victims of human trafficking who may require significant protection from their trafficker
Additional Resources

• Caring for Trafficked Persons

• I Thought it could never happen to boys
References

Victims of human trafficking are trapped. Join us in taking action to free them.
Her captors use violence and drugs to keep her enslaved.

You are her only hope of freedom.

Join the fight against HUMAN TRAFFICKING
Would you walk in her shoes?
It’s not like she wants to wear them.

Join the fight against HUMAN TRAFFICKING
Post Test –
Your success in gaining knowledge through this module is important to us. To measure what you have learned, click on the following link and take a brief self evaluation:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TIPMod10

To receive continuing education credits for this module, you MUST complete the online evaluation through the link above and pay any appropriate fees (see http://www.cmda.org/library/doclib/tipcepaymentform.pdf for more information).