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TOOLS FOR

FAITH LEADERS

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FAITH IN ACTION

FAITH IN ACTION

THE TOOLS FAITH LEADERS NEED
**TO WIN THE BATTLE AGAINST
THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**
OF OUR CHILDREN

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SEX TRAFFICKING: GOD'S PERSPECTIVE AND YOURS

FAITH LEADER'S GUIDE

Sex trafficking doesn't make for a comfortable sermon topic. There are few biblical passages that address the topic head-on. Many in your congregation will approach the topic with little awareness. And the subject matter will require discretion. However, it is a matter that cannot be overlooked from the pulpit. Scripture very clearly reveals God's heart, and the preacher can help the church frame a biblical, Christian response.

+ MESSAGE BUILDING PASSAGES AND TIES

While the Bible doesn't offer a specific "thou shalt not traffic in human beings" verse, it does provide many passages that express the heart of God—saying exactly that and more, calling us as Christians to actively respond to sex trafficking. These are passages you might use in outlining messages on the subject, some with additional passages or hints attached.

Genesis 1:26-27—Human beings are created in God's image and likeness. The worth of human life in God's eyes starts right here. (See also Genesis 9:5-6.)

Genesis 37:12-28—Trafficking isn't new. Joseph's story offers many parallels to the experience of the enslaved and exploited. (See also Genesis 38-50 for the rest of the story. Evil doesn't have the last word.)

Genesis 38—The objectification of women isn't new. Judah provides an example of man viewing a woman as something to be used, bought, or sold for his own pleasure. Tamar is stripped of respect and her God-given value.

Exodus 3:7-12—God hears and responds to the cries of the enslaved. (See also Exodus 1-15, the context and story of the Exodus.)

Deuteronomy 6:5-9—The Shema passage contains a tremendous outline for parents, to first love God themselves, and then to impress that love for God on their children. This passage can be especially challenging for dads and the impression their behavior and integrity in the area of sexual purity has on their sons.

2 Samuel 13—The story of Amnon and his sister Tamar provides an example of the objectification of women and of the tremendous pain and suffering it brings to all affected.

Psalms 3, 10, 12, 22, 59, and 70—All psalms of lament that can be used to express the suffering of those exploited and abused. (See also Lamentations 5, where several verses are descriptive of the experiences of a victim of trafficking.)

Psalms 9—A psalm of deliverance revealing God's heart for those in dire circumstances, that they are not forgotten and hope is not lost.

Proverbs 31:8-9—A clarion call for advocacy for the enslaved and exploited.

Ecclesiastes 4:1—A passage descriptive of victim and oppressor.

Isaiah 42:22-23—A passage descriptive of conditions experienced by the enslaved and exploited: plundered, looted, trapped in pits and prisons.

Isaiah 58:1-12—True worship means the establishment of justice for all—freedom for the oppressed, rescue for the exploited. (See also Deuteronomy 27:19, Isaiah 1:17, Amos 5:21-24, Micah 6:8, James 1:27.)

Isaiah 61:1-3—This is the passage Jesus read in the temple (see Luke 4:16-21). He declared this as His mission—fulfilled in their presence—to proclaim the good news, heal, and set captives and the oppressed free.

Matthew 25:31-46—In this parable, the sheep and the goats are recognized and judged by how they have treated the needy and the oppressed.

1 Timothy 5:2—A great passage for men, not only to check themselves, but also to instruct the next generation, the younger men in their lives. (See also Philippians 4:8-9. Wouldn't it be great for dads to be able to say to their sons, "Whatever you've seen me do...you do that!" with consistency?)

Hebrews 13:3—A call not only to remember those who suffer, but also to identify with them.

James 2:14-17—Once you've been made aware of the realities of sex trafficking, and that it's happening in our own towns, malls, schools, and families, to do nothing is not an option. (See also Proverbs 31:8-9.)

+ MESSAGE BUILDING OUTLINES

Here are three ready-made outlines you might consider in planning messages on the topic of sex trafficking.

A Life's Worth

Main Idea: Human beings are made in God's image; every human life is invaluable.

Aim: Sex trafficking devalues life and stands at odds with God's intent and design.

Application: Recognize the worth God places on every life, and as His follower become a champion for those who are enslaved and exploited.

Primary Text: Genesis 1:26-27

Secondary Texts: Genesis 9:5-6, Exodus 21:12, Deuteronomy 27:25, Psalm 8:4-5, Matthew 6:26, Galatians 1:15

- Who am I? I am an image-bearer of my God.
- Who are you? You are an image-bearer of my God.
- Who is the victim of exploitation? He or she is an image-bearer of my God.
- God's justice demands advocacy for the suffering.
- When advocating for those who are enslaved and exploited, you bear a strong resemblance to your Heavenly Father.

- In what practical ways can you become a champion for those who are being exploited?
- In what practical ways can you stand against sex trafficking?

Son, Can We Talk?

Main Idea: As parents, we are the first and best example God intended for our children to have of a vibrant faith and pious living.

Aim: That we (especially men/dads) recognize and seize their responsibility to mold their son's faith, and related, their treatment of women and girls.

Application: Love the Lord your God, and live in such a way that consistently impresses faith and its application on your kids and the next generation.

Primary Text: Deuteronomy 6:5-9

Secondary Texts: Philippians 4:8-9, 1 Timothy 5:1

Note: Although primarily dealing with fathers and sons, this is a message that can offer perspective to all, on the importance of instilling faith and godly living, generation to generation.

- The Deuteronomy passage demonstrates God's intent and design for generational ministry.
- It starts with you—do you love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength?
- What would that look like? What would it look like to younger eyes watching you?
- The next step is “impressing” God's truths on the next generation.
- What does the word “impress” imply?
- How important is consistency between what you say and what you do to watching eyes?
- Where the view and treatment of women and girls is concerned, studies show ties between a father's use of pornography and the habits their sons develop. Most often, a son's first exposure to pornography comes as a result of his father's habit.
- The 1 Timothy 5 verse is instructive for both father and son.
- The Philippians passage is too, and offers a challenge for fathers: Can you say to your son, “Whatever you've heard from me—and most importantly seen in me—just do that”?
- In applying these truths to your life, dads (and all of us, really) are making a difference in this battle.

Hear Their Cries

Main Idea: Much of the Church lacks awareness of sex trafficking. We tend to look away rather than to “feel” the pain and suffering of those enslaved and exploited.

Aim: To recognize the heart of this matter and to hear the heart's cries of its victims.

Application: Allow the cries of victim's hearts to affect us; hear and respond.

Primary Text: Psalm 3

Secondary Texts: Psalm 10, 12, 22, 59, 70, Lamentations 5 (verses 5, 11, 13 and 15)

- The Psalms and Lamentations passages included in this outline are all songs of lament.
- What is a song of lament? There aren't too many of them sung in church these days.
- Encourage the congregation to use their imaginations—hear these verses of lament as if they are the expressions of those enslaved and exploited. Can you hear those cries?
- In each passage you choose to include, point out parallels. In Psalm 3, for instance, the cry “How many are my foes that rise up against me?” parallels the descending steps into trafficking a victim is often forced or coerced into taking—making the “way out” seems impossible. The phrase “Many say, ‘God will not deliver me’” is a realistic view of the hopelessness victims feel.
- The Lamentations verses are very descriptive of the experience of a trafficked person.
- Can you feel it?
- In Psalm 3 (and others), the psalmist cries out for God to bring deliverance, justice. What would this look like in the case of victims of sex trafficking?
- What role might God have you play?

WHAT NEXT? PREVENTION

One of the things the faith community is best prepared to do is prevent young people from becoming objects of—or perpetrators of—commercial sexual exploitation. This requires education and awareness of subject matter that may be unfamiliar and uncomfortable for many. Enabling frank discussion on this topic represents a bold first step, as it will help combat conventional beliefs and misconceptions such as:

- A parent would not sexually exploit his or her own child for money
- Viewing pornography is passive, so it is victimless
- Juveniles under 18 may choose to prostitute themselves
- Violent video games are just that—games
- Sex trafficking doesn't happen in churches...and many more

+ WHAT SHARED HOPE DOES

- The video, *Chosen*, included with the Faith-In-Action Kit, is the primary prevention tool offered by Shared Hope. The film's strength is in the self-disclosure of two young women, ages 13 and 18, who were unlikely victims of trafficking. They broke the stereotype most people have of victims being runaways, drug addicts, promiscuous or truant. On the contrary, these girls were good students from two-parent homes and involved in church and youth group...yet they were still vulnerable to the lies and manipulations of a trafficker.
- The book *Renting Lacy* is the account of several victims of sex trafficking told in novel format with explanatory comments between chapters and a small group discussion guide at the end.
- Research has shown that effective training and awareness initiatives have successfully increased the number of victims being identified and perpetrators prosecuted. For this reason, Shared Hope offers customized training to fit the needs of a variety of agencies and organizations that may come in contact with victims of juvenile sex trafficking. Training curriculum is designed to improve identification and response, and covers any or all of the following topics: a national scope on domestic minor sex trafficking, victim profiles, risk factors, recruitment and grooming tactics used by traffickers, methods of control, trafficker and buyer profiles, the physical and psychological impact of trauma, and tips for interaction with victims. Expanded or stand-alone training on gang trafficking can be provided.
- If you are unable to bring a Shared Hope trainer to your community, you can purchase the *Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* training resource, available at Sharedhope.org. This package includes a training guide and 4-part video series that equips a presenter with the ability to implement basic training and includes discussion questions and group exercises to educate your audience on the issue.

- *The Ambassadors of Hope* program trains volunteer advocates to further the movement to end sex trafficking and expand Shared Hope's reach. Ambassadors are required to attend an online or in-person training to learn the basics of juvenile sex trafficking including: terminology, the scope of the problem, traffickers' recruitment, grooming and control techniques, victim indicators, and ways to take action on this issue. Shared Hope equips Ambassadors of Hope with presentations, fact sheets, reports, books, and other resources, and connects them with speaking and training opportunities.
- *The Defenders USA* are the men of Shared Hope and is a national men's awareness and advocacy group. They aim to mobilize an army of Defenders to bring dignity, honor, and respect to women and children, hold other men accountable, facilitate restoration for those affected by the sex industry and take action to oppose the commercial sex industry.

+ WHAT THE FAITH COMMUNITY CAN DO

- Utilize the tools and roles offered by Shared Hope as described above to further awareness and understanding of sex trafficking. There are a variety of videos, reports, fact sheets, testimonials and training resources available for donation or download at sharedhope.org.
- Investigate the many other awareness and prevention resources that can be found through a search of the Internet *after first critically evaluating them*. One resource we can suggest is the Prevention Project, developed by Richmond Justice Initiative, richmondjusticeinitiative.com/prevention-project, but others are available.
- Host a film screening of *Chosen* or another film on the topic that has been *evaluated in advance*. Many depictions inaccurately reflect the issue or are overly graphic; discretion must be used. One film that can be recommended is *Tricked*, a film series created by Fairfax County Public Schools, utilized in Virginia, fcps.edu/it/fairfaxnetwork/trafficking/index.html.
- Implement an institution-wide policy regarding the screening, hiring and supervision of all individuals who will work with children and youth. Request a speaker on the topic. Some resources in this area include Gunderson National Center for Child Protection, gundersenhealth.org, and Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment (GRACE), netgrace.org.
- Host a program that will educate parents and teens on Internet and smart phone techniques used by predators and how to provide protection against them. An online resource in this area is netsmartz.org, produced by National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- Host an awareness event about the intrusion of pornography, its impact on the minds of young boys and its link to sex trafficking. One resource in this area is National Center on Sexual Exploitation, endsexualexploitation.org.

- Host a candlelight vigil or prayer gathering to pray for those impacted by sex trafficking.
- Collaborate with local agencies to provide training to professionals in your community. Support for such an effort can be requested from Shared Hope staff or another qualified organization/individual.
- Designate funds to provide advanced training for those leaders in the faith community who will continue to inform and energize the entire congregation on sex trafficking and related issues. One excellent resource is Shared Hope's JuST Conference held in Washington, D.C. each fall, justconference.org.
- Know the signs of sex trafficking! (Fully covered in the *Chosen* materials.)

TO REPORT A TIP OR CONNECT WITH ANTI-TRAFFICKING SERVICES IN YOUR AREA, CONTACT:

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

1-800-843-5678

If you have information about a missing child or suspected child sexual exploitation, call to report it or visit their website, www.missingkids.com.

National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline

1-888-373-7888

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) is a national, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.

The National Runaway Switchboard

1-800-RUNAWAY

For more information, visit www.1800RUNAWAY.org The National Runaway Switchboard serves as the federally-designated national communication system for homeless and runaway youth. NRS, with the support of more than 150 volunteers, handles an average of 100,000 calls annually—more than 3 million calls since the organization's inception. Through hotline and online services, NRS provides crisis intervention, referrals to local resources, and education and prevention services to youth, families and community members throughout the country 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

WHAT NEXT? JUSTICE

Policy positions relating to sex trafficking can appear to be straightforward on paper (e.g., prosecute traffickers!) but are often more complicated when viewed as a whole and require careful wording and representation. These positions are further nuanced when seen through the lens of both the Old and New Testament writings about justice...and about mercy. When viewed from that Biblical perspective, the issue of sex trafficking introduces provocative questions for debate:

- Which is the real nexus of the crime—the trafficker or the buyer?
- Is every minor involved in prostitution a victim?
- Is the exploiter who became addicted to pornography as a child a victim or a criminal?...and many more.

It should be noted that Shared Hope does not provide direct legal representation to victims but lends a great deal of support and guidance to legislators and advocates alike.

+ WHAT SHARED HOPE DOES

- Implements a robust program directed at ensuring that justice is accessible to victims and met out to offenders. A key component of the program is the Protected Innocence Challenge (PIC) sharedhope.org/what-we-do/bring-justice. The PIC report card assesses state laws that impact the issue of juvenile sex trafficking and offers recommendations for improvement.
- Provides subject matter expertise, policy guidance, technical assistance and advocacy to both legislative and grassroots efforts to bring about changes to state and federal legal frameworks.
- Provides grants and technical assistance to select domestic partners that are providing legal representation to victims of sex trafficking in order to ensure access to justice by the victims.
- Monitors state and federal legislation for developments and provides a streamlined online access point so advocates can easily remain current on legislation and submit comments to their legislators.
- Conducts research and publishes policy papers to help shape developing policy.
- Convenes many of the nation's top stakeholders to contribute to policy positions and provide guidance for those in the field providing services to juvenile victims of sex trafficking. See sharedhope.org/what-we-do/bring-justice/just-response.

Of all the areas for advocates to engage, JUSTICE is the most technical. If you feel called to be a policy advocate, take care to master the message or refer your audience to Shared Hope materials for precise language—it can mean the difference between a good bill and one with unintended consequences.

+ WHAT THE FAITH COMMUNITY CAN DO

- Begin with a review of your state's Protected Innocence Challenge grade. View the entire country at sharedhope.org/reportcards and zero in on your state. A toolkit containing individual Issue Briefs that describe the significance of the 41 components of law contained in the Protected Innocence Framework is available on this webpage and you can print these materials for dissemination to your policy makers.
- Send a letter to your legislators using the pre-drafted message by clicking on your state name under the *Raise the Grade Campaign list*.
- For advocacy related to particular bills Shared Hope is supporting, visit sharedhope.org/what-we-do/bring-justice/legislative-action-center. If a bill in your state is featured here, you can use our pre-drafted message to your legislators to support the bill by clicking on the bill you wish to support.
- Learn more about policy and justice in the sex trafficking field by attending the national JuST Conference, justconference.org, held by Shared Hope in Washington, D.C. annually. The conference includes policy-focused workshops led by the Shared Hope policy team members who can also advise and answer specific questions as to how you can raise your state's grade.
- Read additional material to deepen your understanding of policy issues here: sharedhope.org/what-we-do/bring-justice/policy-development.

WHAT NEXT? RESTORATION

Shame, guilt and spiritual devastation are hallmarks of the trafficking victim's experience, and compassionate people feel the call to minister to them. Throughout history, people of faith have cared for "the least of these," and it is true today that most services for victims of sex trafficking come from people of faith. That is as it should be...but no matter how you become involved, you must first "count the cost."

+ WHAT SHARED HOPE DOES

Shared Hope has founded, funded and continues to support several restoration homes in international locations. In the U.S., we offer Terry's House, a home where 18-24 year-old survivors of sex trafficking have an opportunity to thrive. In addition, we extend grants and technical assistance to several domestic partners that are providing restoration services though therapeutic foster care, case management or residential care of trafficked minors.

+ WHAT THE FAITH COMMUNITY CAN DO

If you feel the call to provide services to victims of sex trafficking through supporting an organization already engaged in direct service:

Utilize the 10-point guideline below to evaluate the organization you wish to support. Shared Hope, or a reputable organization you have thoroughly evaluated, would be grateful for your support.

If you feel called to provide services to victims of sex trafficking directly:

The 10-point guideline below is important foundational information. In addition, here are several other recommendations that are essential if your plan is to provide services to minors.

- Make it a priority to read and study everything you can learn about the issue of domestic sex trafficking and attend a training event that specifically talks about the distinct characteristics of minor victims of sex trafficking in the U.S. (Even if your intent is to serve adult survivors, most entered into the life of commercial sexual exploitation as minors.) There are many resources, both printed and video, on the Shared Hope website that we use in training and educating and they are easily accessible. If you are a professional in the helping field you can order the INTERVENE training specifically designed for service providers.
- The more you know—about sex trafficking and about how it is dealt with in your community, and the more you spend time engaged with organizations that are already in the fight—the better prepared you will be to venture into providing a safe house or shelter of your own. Investigate who is doing something in your area and help them become successful. You will learn *much* and *they need your help!*
- Start first with educating the congregation or community you will count on to support the effort with funds and volunteers. Young girls being prostituted will appear hard and unlovable to outsiders. The church or community must be educated to see them as victims of a horrible crime, not criminals!

- Evaluate the organizations in your community that are already providing services to homeless or runaway youth, pregnant teens, delinquents, etc. Many sex trafficking victims are in these situations because their victim status is seldom uncovered and they end up in trouble or in the justice system and handled as criminals. You can open the eyes of other organizations that are already providing services to trafficking victims without even realizing it. This might introduce you to a potential partnership.
- It is never advisable to take a victim of sex trafficking, even an adult victim, into your personal residence. Therapeutic foster care is an option for some trafficked youth, and your church or community may have families that desire to do that, but training on parenting such a child is an essential first step.
- Victims of sex trafficking don't present as the needy victim, grateful for your intervention; they are typically resistant to any type of assistance and view all outsiders with suspicion or contempt. Generally they don't want your help and they will return to the trafficker at the first opportunity. In addition, they may be mad at God and resistant to talk of faith or the Bible. Therefore, a commitment to help has to be made without the expectation of appreciation or acceptance of a faith position.
- Opening a safe home is a complex and expensive process. If the home will be for minors, licensing issues present a formidable obstacle and must be investigated first. Safety is a very big factor in caring for U.S. sex trafficked minors; a safe house or shelter would need to be in an undisclosed and safe location in addition to having other legally permissible safety measures.
- Consider how you will find your residents—can they be assigned through the state CPS agency or foster care? If so, there would be funds associated with placement, and also regulations. If they are located through private sources, consider whether donations will be secured to fund the home.
- Consider staffing (levels and degrees may be mandated by the type of license). Decide on qualifications for residential management; provide for medical care and mental health care, counseling and spiritual care. Consider how to screen, train and utilize volunteers, and how to provide education for minors who will not be on grade level and will not be able to mainstream into public or even private schools.

+ EVALUATING RESTORATION SERVICES FOR DOMESTIC SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Guidelines for establishing restoration services or funding the efforts of others

1. **There must be a clear vision and reason for the selected area of service and awareness of other services offered in the community. Where does this service fit on the continuum of care needed for a survivor of sex trafficking to reach full restoration? Is there a plan to address the unique needs of each individual?**

Note: The particular niche filled by a service provider could range from congregate residential care to foster care to community-based care. It could be for emergency, restorative, long term or transitional housing.

2. **A sustainable funding plan is of utmost importance and must be developed prior to embarking on any plan to provide services for sex trafficking victims, either juvenile or adult.**

Note: Shelter and service providers must formulate a funding plan that does not rely on one source of funding and that demonstrates a realistic probability of sustainability.

3. **Community acceptance of the proposed facility or service must be considered and cultivated. Identify services in the community that will allow the survivor to continue on the healing journey and transition towards independence.**

Note: Develop a plan to assure acceptance with neighbors and community. Cultivate a good working relationship with other stakeholders in the community such as law enforcement, child protective services, other service providers, and any local or regional human trafficking task forces or coalitions.

4. **Residential service providers for juveniles must work closely with state and local authorities to obtain proper licensing for the population served and type of care provided. In addition, local zoning ordinances will apply to either existing or new construction for housing programs for either minors or adults.**

Note: Obtaining a license and permits for a treatment program for juvenile sex trafficking survivors is often a lengthy and difficult process. License provisions must be confirmed to include the ability to attach to other necessary supports such as education or mental health resources.

5. **Residential service providers for juveniles must have staff that has knowledge of state and local child welfare and juvenile justice policies and practices, as well as regulatory and compliance aspects of the applicable license.**

- 6. Residential facilities must be staffed with or have regular access to medical and psychological care and case management professionals trained in trauma-informed care.**

Note: Training in trauma-informed care must extend to all staff members and volunteers, not just professional staff, as well as host families or foster families that may open their homes to a juvenile survivor of sex trafficking.

- 7. Programming must be strengths-based and assist survivors with accessing the inherent abilities and qualities of character they possess but may not recognize. They must be empowered to discover and develop their talents and skills through the availability of educational and vocational opportunities.**

- 8. The role of the family in the juvenile sex trafficking survivor's life must be assessed, and if healthy, a plan for family participation is necessary to help in the ultimate success and independence of the survivor.**

Note: Parents frequently experience their own trauma when faced with the reality of their child's victimization and need assistance in healing for themselves and their child. Parent support groups and family counseling is imperative.

- 9. Residential service providers for juveniles must be equipped to identify and respond to internal and external security risks, such as victims' high flight risk, potential harm to self or others, internal or external recruitment, etc.**

Note: All staff and volunteers must be trained to recognize and de-escalate behavior leading to internal security risks and recognize that these are often symptoms of trauma that require a therapeutic response. Providers should also have a response plan in place for external security threats. Law enforcement should be aware of the program's operation and available to respond if an emergency situation arises.

- 10. Programming must be survivor informed. The individuals served should have the greatest role possible in developing their services plan. Survivors who are sufficiently healed to take leadership roles in the program and serve as mentors for sex trafficked individuals demonstrate that it is possible to overcome exploitation.**

Note: Be aware that licensing provisions may prohibit many survivors from working with youth because of a previous criminal record incurred during their own trafficking experience.



For more information about restorative services in the U.S. please visit sharedhope.org/justresponse.



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