

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

THE BATTLEFRONT OF THE 21ST CENTURY

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **History** – Over 400 years ago the trans-Atlantic slave trade emerged as Africans were forcibly taken from their land and exported all over the world for purposes of forced labor. It is hard to imagine anything as brutal as what occurred during that time. Entire nations and economies were built on the backs of slaves.
- B. **Modern Day** – What is shocking however is that in our modern-day civilized-society slavery has once again emerged with a brutality that rivals anything in history. In fact the scope and gravity of this issue is utterly staggering. Conservative estimates project that there are 27-30 million slaves on the earth right now. And some experts estimate that there are as many as 200 million.
- C. **Rapid Increase** – Not only that but the rapid increase is absolutely startling. The United Nations estimates that as many as 4 million women and children are trafficked around the world for purposes of forced prostitution, labor, and other forms of exploitation every year; meaning every thirty seconds another person becomes a victim! In 2003 there were an estimated 10,000-15,000 victims trafficked into the U.S. each year. Currently there are as many or more than 100,000 trafficked into the U.S. annually.
1. America is the third largest destination country for trafficked victims, behind Japan and Australia.
- D. **Sex Slaves** – One of the most appalling aspects of today's slavery is the fact that 70-80 % are sex slaves. We're seeing entire economies fueled by the sexual exploitation of women and children.
- E. **The Battlefield of the 21st Century** – One author called this *the* human rights issue of the 21st century. We can no longer continue to talk about slavery as a relic of the past; it is time for us to recognize that slavery is a major battlefield facing our generation.

II. VICTIMS

For the hurt of the daughter of my people I am hurt. I am mourning; astonishment has taken hold of me. – Jer. 8:21

- A. The sad reality is that these are not just statistics. We are talking about real people. The plight of those in slavery today tells one of the most tragic stories in human history. The vast majority are woman and children who are forced into prostitution, and other forms of sexual exploitation. It is horrifying to imagine an individual being raped one time, just once, but these victims live a life of ritual systematic abuse. Their whole life is consumed in meeting the demands of their captors. Girls are forced to service as many as 50 men in a single day. It's not uncommon for an enslaved girl to have a dozen abortions at the hands of her captors in just 2-3 years. The physical, emotional, and spiritual trauma this wreaks on a person is simply indescribable.

She weeps bitterly in the night. Her tears are on her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies. – Lam. 1:2

- B. **The world has turned against its women and children.** We're seeing people become victims through abduction, deception, fraud, having been sold by a family member, and other illicit means.

III. SIX CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- A. The question often comes up, "how does slavery exist in our modern civilized society?" There are several factors we need to consider:
- B. **#1 Globalization** – The trend towards globalization has made it possible for an industry to emerge where now human's can be bought, sold, and traded on an open market. Human Trafficking has been called the dark side of globalization.
- C. **#2 Poverty** – Grinding poverty in various places has created a desperate situation that often leaves people extremely vulnerable to being exploited.
- D. **#3 Organized Crime** – Organized crime groups are the force that supplies unsuspecting women with the cruel demands of perverted men. It has become the second most profitable industry in organized crime and, according to experts, is on a path to overtake drugs as number one. Unlike drugs and arms, which can be sold only once, a human life can be sold over and over again. Further more, there is far less risk involved and the profits are extremely high. One pimp said it this way "I can pay \$10,000 for a girl and make my money back in two weeks." These groups have established highly organized logistical networks between international countries with recruiters, brokers, intermediaries, taxi drivers, and madams.
- E. **#4 Government Corruption** – One of the most disturbing features of today's slavery is the government corruption and complicity that allows it to continue. Very little is done to stop slavery, and frequently cases come up where police officers and government officials are found complicit in the slave trade.

- F. **#5 Religion** – When you have a religious paradigm that doesn't value women it's easy to see why so many are victimized in cultures that espouse strong religious beliefs such as India, Thailand.
- G. **#6 Demand for sex** – The problem under-girding all of this is the demand for sex. The wide spread proliferation and normalization of pornography has given way to a generation of men who are beginning to rise up and demand that their sexual fantasies be fulfilled, and it is coming at the cost of the enslavement of our woman and children.

IV. HOW TO WE RESPOND TO THE GLOBAL CRISIS OF SLAVERY: 5 RESPONSES

- A. **#1 Compassion** – We must open our heart to the plight of the oppressed.

“Compassion is hard because it requires the inner disposition to go with others to the place where they are weak, vulnerable, lonely, and broken.” (*Henri Nouwen*)
- B. **#2 Pray** – Talking to God. God has ordained His kingdom to operate in conjunction with human participation. If we pray, God will release justice (Luke 18).
- C. **#3 Personal Holiness** (Rev. 2:18-29) – We must deal with our injustice against God, before we can deal with injustice done against others. This is a battle that begins “in here (our heart)” before we can ever fight it “out there.”
- D. **#4 Awareness** – Telling others.
- E. **#5 Action** – Using your gifts to help the helpless. If we were around during the trans-Atlantic slave trade would we have done something?

V. EXODUS CRY VISION

- A. Exodus Cry exists to answer the crisis of modern day slavery. We are raising up a global prayer revolution that will confront the powers of injustice that are enslaving our women and children. We can have a rock concert, a benefit dinner, do all the awareness campaigns, all the activism, but the reality is, angels and demons do not move – nothing will change. This is a battle that must be won in the heavens. Exodus Cry is summoning an army of intercessors and prayer warriors to arise and contend for the ending of slavery in our generation. This is not about having some kind of self-righteous zeal or personal heroism, it is about partnership with the heart of God. Jesus Himself said He was “anointed by the Spirit of the sovereign Lord to set the captives free, heal the brokenhearted, and deliver all who are oppressed.” Please join us in raising up a movement of prayer for the ending of modern-day slavery.