



North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW)
PO Box 121; Botsford, CT 06404 *** Phone/Fax (tollfree): 888.426.4712
Email: info@nacsww.org *** Website: <http://www.nacsww.org>

"A Vital Christian Presence in Social Work"

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND FAITH: A CALL TO JUSTICE AND HOPE

Murray Lamb

**Presented at:
NACSW Convention 2007
March 2007
Dallas, TX**

"We must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued. The slaves were undeniably an element of strength to those who had their service, and we must decide whether that element should be with us or against us". Abraham Lincoln

Introduction

Human trafficking is the second most lucrative exploit today. "After drug dealing, trafficking of humans is tied with arms dealing as the second largest criminal industry in the world, and is the fastest growing" (US Department of Health and Human Services, ACF, 2006, Rescue and Restore Campaign). Human trafficking, or modern day slavery, affects us everyday from the products we use to the services that we enjoy.

There are many who believe that slavery in the United States ended with the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863; however, it continues today. Modern day slavery is much harder to detect and the emancipation of those currently held captive almost impossible. Some experts of this field refer back to slavery in the American south as a common experience from which to build an understanding of today's slavery. In the 1850's, in the American south, the average slave cost his or her owner approximately \$40,000 in today's money (Bales, 2004, p. 16). The slave was considered an investment

for the landholder and as such, it was in the slaveholder's best interest to protect his investment. To do this, laws were passed to help the slaveholder maintain his rights over slaves who were stolen or had run away, and provisions were made for the slaves such as housing, food and medical treatment (albeit primitive). However, today slaves are much cheaper. According to Free the Slaves, an anti-slavery non-profit directed by Kevin Bales, the average slave today costs just \$90 (Freetheslaves.net, 2006, Slavery Today). Today slavery is illegal everywhere and therefore the protection formerly afforded to slaveholders is no longer available and neither is the incentive to protect their "investment"; hence, the title of Kevin Bales' book *Disposable People*. "Since they are so cheap, slaves are no longer a major investment worth maintaining. If slaves get sick, are injured, outlive their usefulness, or become troublesome to the slaveholder, they are dumped or killed" (Freetheslaves.net, 2006, Slavery Today). Bales (2004) has established that human trafficking as it exists today differs from the slavery that we saw in the American South. The following table graphically shows what these differences are:

Old Slavery	New Slavery
√ Legal ownership asserted	√ Legal ownership avoided
√ High purchase cost	√ Very low purchase cost
√ Low profits	√ Very high profits
√ Shortage of potential slaves	√ Glut of potential slaves
√ Long-term relationship	√ Short-term relationship
√ Slaves maintained	√ Slaves disposable
√ Ethnic differences important	√ Ethnic differences not important

What is important to understand from this table is, with the loss of seeing an investment in their property, slaveholders now can benefit from *not* taking care of their slaves. As a result, human trafficking has become the second largest organized crime cartel in the world and one of the most lethal. Slaveholders can realize extraordinary profits from an extremely low start-up venture, whereas, as with the slavery the American South saw, slavery was tied to such a high start-up investment that slaveholders could not afford to dispose of their slaves.

While there are many differences between the “old” slavery and today’s slavery, much can be learned from the abolitionists of the past who fought to eradicate slavery from the face of the earth. At the center of the debates of the past was the subject of God and His Word in relation to slavery and servitude. Because of faith being intertwined in the debates about slavery, many people of faith emerged in the abolition of slavery.

The names of John Newton and William Wilberforce emerge when discussing the abolition of slavery in Great Britain. Likewise, the names of Sojourner Truth and Angelina E. Grimkè were common names in the abolition movement in the United States. Grimkè (1836) describes, “If slaveholders are determined to hold slaves as long as they can, let them not dare to say that the God of mercy and of truth ever sanctioned such a system of cruelty and wrong. It is blasphemy against Him” (§ 21). Through her faith, she fought the battle. These men and women of faith compel us to act to become a catalyst of change today. Learning from abolitionists of the past, this paper will explore modern day slavery, what it is, where it exists, what to do if one should encounter it, and how the Christian faith intersects at every level of human trafficking.

Human Trafficking: The Problem

The United States' State Department estimates between 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders every year and of those it is estimated that approximately 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States annually (U.S. State Department Website, 2006, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons). "In 2002, the DOJ [Department of Justice] reports that survivors of trafficking who received federal assistance resided in Texas (31%), Florida (19%), and California (14%) (Bales, Fletcher & Stover, 2004, p. 10). According to Free the Slaves (2006), a leading anti-trafficking NGO (Non-Governmental Organization), there are currently 27 million slaves in the world.

In the United States, it estimated that approximately "...293,000 American youth are currently at risk of becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation..." (USDOJ, 2007, Domestic Sex Trafficking Minors). Many youth who become victims of prostitution were abused at home or neglected; others were recruited into their trafficking situations through abduction, coercion from family, or a false agreement between the traffickers and the parents (USDOJ, 2007, Domestic Sex Trafficking Minors). The reasons that these youth are trafficked stem from many of the same reasons that people are trafficked internationally; lack of money, lack of resources. "About one-fifth of these children become entangled in nationally organized crime networks and are trafficked nationally....the average age at which girls first become victims of prostitution is 12-14—for boys and transgender youth, the average age of entry into prostitution is 11-13" (USDOJ, 2007, Domestic Sex Trafficking Minors).

Traffickers are adept at profiling their potential victims to be able to coerce or manipulate them into their grasp or knowing how and when to force them into their

cartels. According to a report completed by Free The Slaves and Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley, one of the case studies of the traffickers they conducted showed that Lakireddy Bali Reddy, a business man who exploited young girls from his hometown in India in California, regularly used "...techniques of disempowerment and disconnection to create dependency among the teenage girls he trafficked into the United States" (Bales, Fletcher & Stover, 2004, p. 37).

Obviously, human trafficking exists and is a major issue with which to contend in our world today.

Human Trafficking: The Definition

In 2000, the U.S. congress passed landmark legislation called the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) which defined human trafficking within the United States and provided guidance for the protection against such acts. Later, in 2003, the U.S. congress reauthorized this law. The TVPA also created two new visas, one of which is called the T-Visa and applies specifically to human trafficking victims. The TVPA of 2003 defined human trafficking as:

- 1) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under 18; or
- 2) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjecting that person to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (Seltzer, Stewart, Thukral, & Tomatore, 2005, p. A-2).

Since its inception, the TVPA has provided the means to implement program development for VOT assistance, allow for joint efforts to be established between the State Department, Department of Justice and the Labor Department, and increase public awareness (ACF, n.d., TVPA Fact Sheet, p. 1-2). The United States remains one of the leading nations combating human trafficking and has established a tier system to monitor the efforts of other nations. Additionally, within the United States many states have implemented their own anti-trafficking laws and taskforces.

Human Trafficking: A Biblical Perspective

With the current attention drawn to human trafficking by the United States, one would think that it is a modern problem. Even the introduction of this paper describes human trafficking as “modern day slavery.” However, an examination of the Bible reveals that human trafficking is not merely a modern concept (“Let My People Go, That They May Serve Me”, 2006, p. 3). The Old Testament account of Joseph indicates that he was sold to a group of traders by his brothers. He served in Potipher’s house as a slave, and eventually was falsely accused of inappropriate activity with Potipher’s wife and sent to prison. Due to the Lord’s intervention and Joseph’s faithfulness to the Lord, he ended up being second in command to Pharaoh. Years later, due to famine, the Israelites, Joseph’s people, moved to Egypt and became slaves under Egyptian rule (Genesis 37-47). This single act of human trafficking led the entire Israelite people into slavery. God redeemed His people and used the situation for good, but these events in the life of Joseph reveal to us several concepts about modern day slavery (“Let My People Go, That They May Serve Me, 2006, p. 4).

The first concept is that human trafficking can happen in and around God's people. Joseph and his family were Israelites, God's chosen people and yet they were in the middle of a human trafficking situation. The body of Christ is neither immune to or exempt from either trafficking or being trafficked. The following story from the Administration for Children and Families "Look beneath the Surface" DVD (n.d) illustrates this point. Given Kachepa was a young 11 year-old boy from Zambia. He was brought to the United States to sing in churches through an all boys choir with the promise of money and education for himself and others in his home country. Tragically, this was not provided deceiving young Given. The people at a church where he performed became suspicious as they began talking to Given and others in the group. They contacted the authorities and Given began his escape to freedom. From this example, it is evident that trafficking can even occur in the church. It can happen by people who are using Christ's name to lure victims. It is a dangerous combination that unfortunately is destroying lives.

Another dimension that Joseph's story reveals to us is that victims are vulnerable to various manipulations and abuses by their captors. In the case of Joseph, he was sent to prison for accusations by Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39). His word was meaningless. In a similar way, victims today are forced to work off debt that either never existed or about which they were misinformed. They are indebted and seemingly have no way out of their situations. As social service providers it is important that we become familiar with the signs that indicate that someone is experiencing human trafficking so that assistance can be made available to the potential survivor. (Please refer to the table for an easy guide to recognizing potential trafficking victims.) While trafficking victims are under the control

- Signs:**
- ✓ Evidence of being controlled
 - ✓ Evidence of an inability to move or leave one's job
 - ✓ Bruises or other signs of battering
 - ✓ Fear or depression
 - ✓ Non-English speaking
 - ✓ Recently brought to this country from Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, Canada, Africa or India
 - ✓ Lack of passport, immigration or identification documentation

of their traffickers, their ability to make independent decisions and actions is taken from them. Because of this, many become dependent on their traffickers for basic personal care, food and safety; all the while, they are fearful of violence, being sent home with nothing, and harbor feelings of "...isolation, shame, and betrayal" (Bales, Fletcher & Stover, 2004, p. 37). Stockholm Syndrome can be a common experience among human trafficking victims.¹ "All of these conditions can cause forced labor victims to lose their sense of control and become increasingly dependent on

those who hold them captive, if merely to survive" (Bales, Fletcher & Stover, 2004, p. 37). Typically, VOTs will not readily come forward about their trafficking experience as many have been conditioned to believe that legal authority and social service providers will deport them as their immigration status is tied to their trafficker.

Finally, Joseph's story reveals that human trafficking should be examined on a mezzo and macro level (groups and communities). Trafficking usually occurs due to family stressors. In modern day human trafficking usually the economic conditions of the family contributes to their motivation to sell their children into slavery, likewise, the jealousy of Joseph's brothers caused them to sell him into slavery (Genesis 37:12-36).

¹ Stockholm Syndrome according to Wikipedia is defined as: "...a psychological response sometimes seen in an abducted hostage, in which the hostage can show signs of having feelings of loyalty to the hostage-taker, regardless of the danger (or at least risk) in which the hostage has been placed".

Kevin Bales on the Free the Slaves website (2006) cites three distinct events that have contributed to the increase in human trafficking which are all on the mezzo and macro level. The first event is the recent population explosion around the world. With six billion humans on earth the world's resources are stretched to provide adequately for everyone; including employment. In many places around the world, people struggle daily to find necessary elements for survival (food, shelter, safety). In some cases, one unfortunate event in the family's or individual's life results in an appeal to a rich landholder and turns into debt bondage form which the family will never escape. Some people are willing to go through extraordinary lengths to escape from their current conditions and are extremely vulnerable to becoming enslaved. In the United States, one can see evidence of this through the migratory patterns of undocumented immigrants who reach their peril in the Arizonan deserts. Humans will fight for survival, even if it means their enslavement with the promise of a better outcome.

The second modern event that has lead to an increase in modern slavery is changes in social and economic situations. As the world's population grows and people's ability to find resources become more scarce and urbanization grows. People seek more opportunities in larger cities; however, many of the people who have newly settled in urban centers lack job security and power as they typically remain on the outskirts of urban centers and cannot assimilate easily into the urban culture.

Government corruption is the third event that has lead to an increase in human trafficking. Though slavery is illegal everywhere, different governments react to slavery in different ways. Some governments pretend that human trafficking does not exist, while others have created anti-trafficking laws and taskforces to combat its existence.

The US State Department has created a monitoring tool to hold governments accountable for how they deal with human trafficking. The monitoring tool is a 3 tier system that evaluates each nation's commitment to creating anti-trafficking laws, taskforces, or other anti-trafficking activities. Tier 1 countries have extensive anti-trafficking laws and systems in place; Tier 2 nations have created some laws but still need some improvement on what they are currently doing. Tier 3 states lack substantial anti-trafficking measures or have none. The higher the tier the more funding is available to that country to support their anti-trafficking efforts.

Blaming the Victim: Not Biblical

Despite these governmental efforts, it is difficult to compel the average person to see that trafficking is not only a problem, but also not the fault of the victim. The Old Testament provides an example of how circumstances can cause someone to act outside of respected behavior, but be redeemed despite it. Tamar was never trafficked but she did place herself in a situation in which she sold herself. Tamar was married to one of the sons of Judah. He was wicked and was killed by his father. Tamar was promised one of Judah's other sons, but never received one in marriage. Therefore, she devised a scheme in which she prostituted herself to her father-in-law. She gave birth to twins and is recorded as one of the few women in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Judah in realization of his wrong doing indicated that, "She is more righteous than I" (Genesis 38). Tamar prostituted herself to gain what was denied her. In the same way women and children sometimes voluntarily agree to leave their lands and do unthinkable acts because they have been denied the basic freedoms and rights that every human is entitled. They perhaps live in poverty, see the suffering of their families, have no access to education

due to their gender and are, thus, hopeless. Another example in the Bible comes from II Kings 4 when a widow comes to the prophet Elisha asking for help because her husband has died and the creditors are coming to take her two sons as their slaves. Elisha through a miracle is able to help the women produce enough jars of oil to pay off her debt. However, this once again reveals that uncontrollable circumstances can disrupt lives and lead people into slavery.

There is a tendency to blame victims for their actions, when in actuality we should examine the strengths that these victims hold and assist them. The blame should be placed on the mezzo and macro level issues in communities and economies. It should also be placed on the traffickers themselves who profit from the exploitation of the most vulnerable.

Human Trafficking: The Victim's Rights

In an attempt to place blame where blame is due, trafficking legislation has been created to assist not only in the prosecution of the traffickers, but also to rehabilitate the trafficked. A partnership has been established through the state department and the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB). During "Testimony before the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations" on March 9, 2005, Julieanne Duncan, Ph.D., the Director of the Office of Children's Services for USCCB Migration and Refugee Services states:

The Catholic bishops of the United States and the church community throughout the nation have placed combating human trafficking as a top priority in their public advocacy, educational outreach, and in providing service to trafficking victims. From the Catholic perspective, human

trafficking represents a scourge on the earth which must be eradicated. It

is indeed troubling that in the twenty-first century human beings are being

sold into bondage as prostitutes, domestic workers, child laborers, and

child soldiers.

These are intense words spoken by a representative of the organization. This sentiment

has trickled down into the Catholic Charities agencies which provide direct services to the victims of human trafficking.

The mission statement of Catholic Charities is to “provide service to those in need, to advocate compassion and justice in all structures of society and to call all people of good will to do the same” (Catholic Charities Of Fort Worth, n.d., Get to Know Us). This mission of the agency drives it to serve victims of trafficking and to educate parishes and communities about the problem. The mission is rooted in a faith in Jesus Christ. Through this faith, such values become part of the work of the agency and guide it to serve the most vulnerable in the community. One of the most vulnerable populations, in this case human trafficking victims, is provided

an array of services. Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth, Inc. provides case

management, financial assistance, employment assistance, English as a Second

Language, civics classes, immigration assistance (for adjustments of status; application

for residual T-Visas), and counseling. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

also provides funds for similar assistance to other faith-based organizations and non-

- ✓ Can you leave your work or job situation if you want?
- ✓ When you are not working, can you come and go as you please?
- ✓ Have you been threatened with harm if you try to quit?
- ✓ Has anyone threatened your family?
- ✓ What are your working conditions like?
- ✓ Where do you sleep and eat?
- ✓ Do you have to ask permission to eat, sleep or go to the bathroom?
- ✓ Is there a lock on your door or windows so you cannot get out?

profits. An example of another Victim of Trafficking serving agency is Mosaic family services. Since services and shelters are readily available, the task of identifying victims of trafficking is now essential.

It is important that as social service providers we inform them of their rights in the United States. Many victims will not speak English or understand U.S. culture or customs. Therefore, it is important that appropriate language and cultural sensitivity be exhibited. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it is illegal to discriminate against people based on their national origin which includes language (DOJ, 2003, Coordination and Review Section). Because of the sensitive nature of the victim's situation, providing professional language services is essential. To initiate immediate services to the survivor it is important to gain their trust as much as possible. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families' "Look beneath the Surface" training, there are some communication techniques that may assist the social service provider gain the survivor's trust. Please see the illustration box. Once it seems as if the person is a survivor and after discussing it with the survivor, immediately call (888) 428-7581, or 911 to get the survivor connected to the appropriate resources.

Human Trafficking: Agency Vulnerabilities

The U.S. NASW's COE tells us that we have ethical principals, of which, there are 6 (NASW, 2007, COE). Though all of them are equally important, there are 4 that particularly stand out in relation to social workers working with this population. We are called to serve all those in need and address social problems. We are also called to advocate for social justice particularly on behalf of those most vulnerable in our society.

Our trustworthiness is called upon to ensure quality services to individuals, which usually means that clients feel that they can trust their social worker more than other people in their lives. Maintaining our competency to be able to ethically serve our clients is paramount in our work, especially when dealing with VOTs as this field is fairly new and understudied. The treatment of VOTs is constantly evolving and people are learning new techniques everyday. These ethical principals are what guide us through our code of ethics standards. They are what compel us to do our jobs. However, occasionally they can present some sticky situations for the professional social worker.

One of the biggest areas of vulnerability for social workers and social service agencies is with respect to confidentiality and client privilege. Social workers are bound by confidentiality unless the client is a threat to themselves or others or the social worker needs to report child abuse. Breaking confidentiality requires written consent from the client. Breaking confidentiality without consent has severe consequences for the social worker and the client. What should one do in a situation in which the client divulges to the social worker intimate details about his or her trafficking? In many states there is no social worker/client privilege to protect that information. Technically, if the client tells his or her story to the social worker that information cannot be confidential as the case notes that the social worker is required to maintain can and will be subpoenaed, and thus, may help the defense to discredit the client's testimony. The level of protection of the client's records depends on the level of professional credentials the social worker possesses, the level of expectation of the client for confidentiality, and the purposes for the communication (Seltzer, et al., 2005, p. A-7). The fact that client privilege is not well established in many states presents a complicated and unclear matrix for providing

services to clients. “Therefore, social workers, and social service organizations need to take every precaution to protect client's communications, and/or to advise clients that such communication may not be confidential” (Seltzer, et al., 2005, p. A-7).

Interpreters are one of the few exceptions to this rule. If the social worker or another assistant is acting solely as an interpreter in this context, a third party may be present (Seltzer, et al., 2005, p. A-7). It is essential that interpreters be used when dealing with VOTs. Not only is it their right under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but it is important to understand how to best serve the client. They will have extensive medical issues ranging from malnutrition to sexually transmitted diseases that need immediate attention. They will have psychological needs to be promptly addressed. And they have their stories to tell if they so choose. The facilitation of all of this may require a professional interpreter. Using professionally trained interpreters ensures that they will abide by a COE very similar to the NASW’s and ensures quality services. If one is not available to you, ATT Language Line is also available.

The competence of the social worker is challenged with regards to professional privilege. One way to ensure that the client’s information is protected is to ensure that another professional privilege is available such as the client’s attorney or their therapist. However, these privileges are only protected between the client and the attorney or therapist. If a third party is in the room, confidentiality can be considered broken (Seltzer, et al., 2005, p. A-7).

If your client is at a point when they can tell their story, explain to them that you want to protect their interests and their integrity, so you need them to tell their attorney.

From the first session with the client, explain to them the limits of your professional duties, obligations and privileges so that they will not feel that you are undermining their trust with you. By doing this, you are giving them their rights back to decide what is best for them, and telling them that you value them as a person.

Realize the limits of your professional licensure and responsibility to ensure that quality services are afforded to the survivor. There are many resources available to providers involved with VOT cases, if you need help or have questions, ask. If you are unsure of what your professional responsibilities and/or limitations are, call your state licensure board and seek-out local anti-trafficking taskforces with which to get involved.

Your files and case notes can and will be subpoenaed; thus, may help the defense to discredit the client's testimony. The files should be kept in extremely secure locations. Try to ensure that your files are secure from every angle. Keep only essential information that you need in the file—try to have the intakes done with an attorney present. Case notes should be clear and explain exactly what happened in the session.

Traffickers are extremely adept at getting information about the client. When the client is in a safe location awaiting their continued presence or T-Visa, they may still be in contact with their traffickers. It is extremely important that the client understand that they cannot under any circumstances divulge their location to anyone. The creation of a safety plan is essential at the beginning of services to ensure that the client is safe and that others around the client are safe as well. Safety planning is something that the client needs to develop for themselves. They also need to have an understanding of their responsibilities to the agency and others around them. It is also an opportunity for the

agency to develop a trusting relationship with the individual so that independence can be gained more quickly.

Working with VOTs while there is still a trial going on means that their traffickers are still at large and it is therefore extremely important that you continually review the safety plan, labor rights and laws, and that you are acting well within your professional duties. Never talk about or give out information about the VOT to people unless you personally know them and know that they are legitimately involved in your client's case—the person may be the VOTs trafficker trying to locate them. Because of the trial situation, your case notes will have a higher probability of being subpoenaed.

Human Trafficking: A Call to Act

Now that we have given you tools to identify traffickers, it is essential to take a look at what the Christian faith compels us to do about it! The Old Testament gives us a glimpse of the problem of slavery, while the New Testament through Jesus Christ proclaims freedom for the slaves or prisoners. Isaiah 61 is a prophecy about Christ which tells us that His goal or purpose was “to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from the darkness for the prisoners” (Isaiah 61:1). It is also a calling to us to help in the abolition of slavery. In Galatians, Paul writes that “there is neither Greek nor Jew, slave nor free, we are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). Because of Christ, there is no hierarchy of power or control. In His eyes we are equal. We are to look at the victims as being equal to ourselves. Not only are we to consider trafficking victims as equals, we are to go much further and in Philippians Paul urges the church to, “in humility consider others better than yourselves.” (Philippians 2:3) In doing this as Christ describes in Matthew 25:40, we will be assisting Christ himself. “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to

one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” From this it is evident, that as believers in Jesus Christ we are called to participate in the freeing of slaves, to give to meet their needs and to be of service to them.

There are men and women of faith who understood this calling to participate in the movement of abolition. Some of them were former slave owners and some slaves themselves, but the common denominator in their abolition efforts were their understanding that God had called them to do something.

One of the greatest names in Great Britain for the abolition of the African Slave Trade is William Wilberforce. John Piper in his *Reflections on the Life and Labor of William Wilberforce*, wrote, “One year after his conversion God’s apparent calling on his life had become clear to him. On October 28, 1787, he wrote in his diary, ‘God Almighty has set before me two great objects the suppression of the Slave Trade and the Reformation of Manners.’” Wilberforce used his position in the Parliament to take on the cause of Abolition. After 20 years of treacherous work the African Slave Trade was abolished; and 26 years after that, three days before Wilberforce’s death, slavery itself in Great Britain was abolished. Wilberforce never gave up the fight. It was his life’s calling. The battle was not only long, but treacherous as many obstacles were set before him. Similarly, to abolish human trafficking today, the road will be long and treacherous. The life of Wilberforce rings truth into the verse in Esther 4:14 which says, “And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”

Another life that is marked by faith is that of Sojourner Truth or Isabella Baumfree, a former African slave in the United States. Isabella Baumfree changed her name after she felt a calling on her life to travel around the United States, reveal to people

their sin and proclaim the truth to them. During this time, she became involved in the abolition movement and became infamous for the words, “Fredrick, Is God dead?” It was these words that silenced a crowd who had just heard from Fredrick Douglass who was encouraging the group to take up arms and fight to end slavery. It was Sojourner’s words that turned people to God for help and gave them hope that violence did not have to be the answer at that time. “She consistently pointed her audiences to God—knowing that the only way people can solve such complex problems is to turn to Jesus Christ for the answer” (Mac and Tait, 2004, p. 174). She fought not only for the end of slavery, but also for civil rights and for women’s rights. Her words were profound and always left an impact.

Finally, there is Angelina E. Grimkè, who grew up in a family who owned slaves and later became one of the greatest abolitionist and advocates for slaves. Mac and Tait (2004) say, “When she spoke of the sound of the lash, the cry of the slave, those images came not from a neighboring plantation but from her own upbringing” (p. 226). Angelina’s sister Sarah after traveling north, is the person who revealed to Angelina the evil of slavery. Angelina soon realized its inhumanity and joined the Female Anti-Slavery Society. “For Angelina, her abolitionist views were not just an emotional feeling or a reasoned opinion; they were fully derived from her faith as a Christian woman. Slavery was appalling to God, a sin from which our country needed cleansing and possibly even saving (Mac and Tait, 2004, p. 227). Angelina felt so strongly that slavery was against God’s desires that she wrote and spoke to women across the country to take action. In a paper entitled, “Appeal to The Christian Women of the South” (1836), she wrote pages and pages describing the scriptures that dealt with slavery. Because the

South was using the Christian faith as a means to promote slavery, she used the very Word of God to denounce it. Her appeal was for Christian women to search the Scriptures and see for themselves that slavery was wrong and not from God. She then encouraged them to pray and act in the movement. From her paper, there can be found four ways in which people can begin to act based on their faith to “free the captives” and end modern day slavery, human trafficking.

First, she encourages people to “read on the subject” (Grimke, 1836, ¶ 31) The first place that she encourages reading is in the scriptures. Search whether human trafficking or slavery is biblical based on the teachings of the Old Testament and that of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. After studying the scriptures, read more about human trafficking. There are several internet websites such as [www. Humantrafficking.com](http://www.Humantrafficking.com) www.freetheslaves.org and www.acf.gov/humantrafficking. There are also several books that maybe helpful such as *Disposable People* (2004) by Kevin Bales, and *Newton: The Liberator* (1981) by J. Pollock.

After reading on the subject, she encourages people to “pray over this subject” (Grimke, 1836, ¶ 32). The Bible says in Ephesians 6:18, “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” Angelina talks about praying for the slaves, for the slaveholders, for those who are currently fighting against slavery. This is a good start to begin praying. Several agencies also provide prayer guides for those who want to get a congregation or small group involved in praying. These organizations include the Salvation Army, the Evangelical Alliance, and Make Way Partners Corporation. Prayer on an individual and corporate level begins to align individual’s hearts with God’s.

Thirdly, Angelina encourages followers of Christ to “Speak on the subject” (Grimke, 1836, ¶ 33). She says that, “It is through the tongue, the pen, and the press, that truth is principally propagated” (Grimke, 1836, ¶ 33). One would imagine that she meant speak to the masses, gather the people and proclaim the truth. However, she just meant to speak among one’s everyday acquaintances. Speak to family and friends. Bring up human trafficking; see if they have heard about it. Teach them what you have studied and read. Inform them on the prevalence of the matter and let your heart be known to them.

Finally, Angelina encourages everyone to “Act on the subject”. In acting, she meant immediate action. Free the slaves if you own them. Take care of former slaves if they are in your midst. And in the same way, Christians should take the stand against modern day slavery and act to end it. Grimke (1836) says, “You must take it up on Christian ground, and fight against it with Christian weapons, whilst your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (¶ 48). There are many ways in which someone can act today in the abolition of modern day slavery. Writing and informing one’s representatives on the issues and needs of trafficking laws and services to victims is one step. Another is to volunteer in a non-profit or faith-based organization that is helping victims of trafficking rebuild their lives here in this country. There are several organizations working in the abolition of slavery that could use financial support such as an organization known as Loose Change to Loosen Changes which was started by a young boy. The opportunities are endless. The question is what will you do to act?

Conclusion:

As people of faith, we are called upon to expose one of the world's most heinous exploits—human slavery. Following Angelina Grimike's example, we have learned more about what human trafficking is, where it is, and what to do about it. With nearly one million people in transit every year and 27 million people currently enslaved, we as God's children cannot sit idle. Love your neighbor as you love yourself—simple words that remind us of our responsibilities as global citizens.

The author's close this discussion with a challenge: How much would you pay for your freedom? Now, what will you do for the freedom of others?

References:

- Bales, K. (2004). *Disposable People: New Slavery in the global economy*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- Bales, K., Fletcher, L. & Stover, E. (2004, September). Hidden Slaves: Force Labor in the United States. Free the Slaves, Washington, D.C. and Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkley.
- Buller, C. (2006). *Human Dignity versus Human Trafficking*. Retrieved September 19, 2006, from Salvation Army: http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www_usn.nsf/vw-sublinks/5F25C4FD342C33358025718E00653E51?openDocument
- Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth. (n.d.) Information retrieved February 21, 2007 from: http://www.ccdofw.org/get_to_know.html.
- Free The Slaves (2006). Information retrieved November 2006-Janurary 2007 from: <http://www.freetheslaves.net/>.
- Grimkè, A. (1836). *Appeal To The Christian Women of the South*. Retrieved from <http://history.furman.edu/~benson/docs/grimke2.htm>
- Mac, T. and Tait, M. (2004). *Under God*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers.
- NASW. (2007). *Code of Ethics*. Retrieved February 21, 2007 from: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>.
- Piper, J. (2002). *Peculiar Doctrines, Public Morals, and the Political Welfare: Reflections on the Life and Labor of William Wilberforce*. Retrieved December 6,

2006, from <http://desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/>

[1492 Peculiar Doctrines Public M](#)

Pollock, J. (1981). *Newton: The Liberator*. Eastborne, England: Kingsway
Communications Ltd.

Seltzer, S., Stewart, C., Thukral, J. & Tomatore, S. (2005, March). *Identification and
Legal Advocacy for Trafficking Victims* (2nd edition). New York: Dechert LLP.

Testimony before the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and
International Operations (March 9, 2005). Retrieved September 19, 2006, from
<http://www.nccbuscc.org/mrs/tvpra2005jd.shtml>

<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/>.

The NIV Study Bible (1995). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House

Thompson, L. (2006). *Let My People Go, That They May Serve Me*. Retrieved
from Salvation Army: [http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www_usn.nsf/vw-
sublinks/5F25C4FD342C33358025718E00653E51?openDocument](http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www_usn.nsf/vw-sublinks/5F25C4FD342C33358025718E00653E51?openDocument)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (n.d.) *Trafficking Victims Protection Act
of 2000 Fact Sheet*. Retrieved on February 21, 2007 from:
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/TVPA_2000.pdf.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2007). Rescue and Restore Campaign.
Information retrieved November 2006-February 2007 from:
[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/campaign_kits/tool_kit_social/social_service.p
pt](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/campaign_kits/tool_kit_social/social_service.ppt).

U.S. Department of Justice (2003). Civil Rights Division. Information retrieved on
February 21, 2007 from: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/coord/titlevi.htm>.

U.S. Department of Justice. (2007). *Domestic Sex Trafficking of Minors* (CEOS).

Retrieved on January 22, 2007 from:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/ceos/prostitution.html>.

U.S. Department of State (2006), Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Information retrieved November 2006 through January 2007 from:.