



# Sex Trafficking

## Session 2

| *Exploring the power dynamics in sex trafficking*

### Goal

Explore the role gender discrimination plays in sex trafficking.

### Preparation

- Continue to display the definitions of trafficking from the session 1 Participant Handout where they can be easily seen.
- On newsprint, print the statistics listed in today's Participant Handout.
- Also print the following statement from the Participant Handout:

The U.S. State Department estimates that human trafficking is second only to drug trafficking (and tied with the arms trade) in the amount of money to be made on an annual basis.

- Prepare a sheet of newsprint with two headings: "Men" and "Women."
- In advance recruit a good reader to be prepared to read aloud the Scripture passage.
- Make copies of appendix 1, "Comparing Trafficking and Smuggling," appendix 2, "Suggested Questions and Messages to Use with Victims of Trafficking," and appendix 3, "Turn Mourning into Dancing."
- Obtain newsprint, felt-tipped markers, and tape.
- Bring in Bibles for the Scripture reading.

### Teaching Tip

Nowhere are gender differences more obvious than when a group is discussing gender discrimination. Putting gender discrimination in the context of a highly charged topic like sex trafficking may make the differences all the more apparent. Use exercise 3 to help defuse potential conflicts. It may also open the eyes of participants to see the difference one's perspective makes to what he or she can perceive.

### Opening (5 minutes)

#### 1. Read Scripture

Invite a volunteer to read aloud Psalm 51:1–12.

#### 2. Pray Together

Lead the group in the following prayer:

God of mercy,  
 You know us better than we know ourselves,  
 And still you love us.  
 Wash us from all our sins,  
 Create in us clean hearts,  
 And strengthen us by your Holy Spirit  
 That we may give you praise;  
 Through Jesus Christ Our Savior. **Amen.**

*from Daily Prayer: Supplemental Liturgical Resources 5, as altered for the Book of Common Worship<sup>1</sup>*

## Exploring (25 minutes)

You will not have time for all these activities. Please read through them and determine which will be most helpful for your group.

### 3. Examine Perspectives

Give each person a sheet of drawing paper and a pen or fine-line felt-tipped marker. Say that each of us brings to any situation or experience a set of unique perceptions that shape how we perceive. Invite participants to draw two circles side by side on the page. This represents the lenses through which we view our lives. Ask them to draw radiating lines out from the lenses and on the lines to print any identifiable categories that shape their perspectives, as many as they can think of. Some examples may be “mother” or “college degree.” After allowing a few minutes for them to work, invite them to name the categories they printed on their sheets. Ask:

- Which of the categories that you recorded do you think have the most influence on how you view things?

Recall for participants the recent popular book *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, by John Gray, which talks about gender differences. Ask:

- Do you think your gender has a great influence on your perspective? Why or why not?

Say that in this session, the group will be examining the relationship between gender discrimination and the enslavement of women and children in sex trafficking. Encourage participants to keep in mind how their own assumptions about gender may influence the discussion.

### 4. Explore Gender in the Bible

Say that although one of the Scriptures they will be reading is sometimes used as the basis for a sermon, the second rarely is. Both passages tell painful stories. Divide participants into two groups. Invite one group to read 2 Samuel 11:1–12:15 and the other 2 Samuel 13:1–21. Ask that when they have read the assigned Scripture passage, they respond in their small group to the following prompt:

- When I hear this story, as a woman (as a man) I feel . . .

Call the groups together and ask for a volunteer from each group to summarize the passage the group read. Then discuss each story, using some of the following questions:

- Who holds power in each story? Who is powerless?
- In the story of the rape of Tamar, what do you think influences the response of David to what his son has done to his daughter?
- How do you suppose the peers of Bathsheba and Tamar viewed the women? Were the women blamed for their sexual exploitation? Who is held accountable?
- Who holds the power in today’s world? Do you believe there is an imbalance in power based on gender? Why or why not?

Say that we will explore gender discrimination more fully in this session.

### 5. Explore the Facts

Call the attention of participants to the statement from today’s Participant Handout that you posted. Ask:

- How do you respond to this statement?
- Were you surprised to find that trafficking is so lucrative?
- Who profits? Who pays the price?

Call the attention of participants to the list of statistics about women that you posted. Invite them to quickly read over the statistics and then to volunteer a fact or two that they find particularly striking.

Say that one way to see the disparities more clearly is to chart the differences between men and women. For each fact, print under the column “Women” the phrase that relates to women, and ask participants to say what corresponding fact to print under the column “Men.” For example, for the first fact you would print, “Women work two-thirds of the world’s working hours.” Under the column “Men” you would print, “Men work one-third of the world’s working hours.” You might highlight the numbers or fractions by using a different color of marker to record them. Obviously for a few facts, such as the one about maternal deaths, there will be nothing in the corresponding column. Then ask:

- What would account for these disparities?
- Can you think of reasons other than gender discrimination that would contribute to the way women experience poverty?

Again ask participants to respond to the following prompt:

- When I read these statistics, as a woman (or as a man) I feel . . .

## 6. Explore Cultural Gender Expectations

Ask participants to respond to the following, popcorn style, and jot down their responses:

- In our society, I think a woman should . . .

Call the attention of participants to the section in the Participant Handout titled “Power and Traditional Understandings about Gender.” Ask:

- What are some cultural expectations about sexuality that you are aware of?
- Which ones might exacerbate the problem of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation?
- What are some religious expectations about sexuality that may influence how we respond to a problem like trafficking?

Invite the group to turn to the section titled “Forced Marriage.” Remind participants that in the current political and social milieu, defining marriage and protecting its sanctity remain a hot-button issue for liberals and conservatives alike. Ask:

- Many people insist that marriage is between one man and one woman and that anything else violates the sanctity of marriage. Are there any other parameters you might place on marriage?
- How would you define a healthy marriage?
- How might forced marriages threaten the concept of marriage?

## 7. Explore Immigration and Trafficking

Say that when exploring the relationship between trafficking and immigration, it is important to make a clear distinction between trafficking and smuggling. Give each participant a copy of appendix 1, “Comparing Trafficking and Smuggling,” and go over each category.

Remind participants that in some cases it may be difficult to ascertain easily whether a person has been trafficked or smuggled. But key elements that will always distinguish trafficking are the elements of coercion, deception, and force. Also, under U.S. law, if the person

is under eighteen years old and is induced to perform a commercial sex act, then it is considered trafficking regardless of whether coercion was involved.

Discuss the following:

- In order to get a T visa, a trafficked person must be willing to testify against his or her abuser (children are the exception). What is the rationale for this requirement? What are the problems? Do you agree or disagree that this should be required?
- The Participant Handout observes that there may be some assumptions about gender and power that play into this requirement. Do you agree? The same requirement is in place for men as well as women trafficked for forced labor. If gender is not a factor, what about other kinds of power?

## Responding (10 minutes)

### 8. Consider Responses

Invite participants to look over the suggested action responses in the Participant Handout. Distribute copies of “Suggested Questions and Messages to Use with Victims of Trafficking” (appendix 2), and invite comments from the group. What categories of people might be likely to encounter possible victims of trafficking?

## Closing (5 minutes)

### 9. Pray for Healing

Distribute copies of appendix 3, “Turn Mourning into Dancing.” “A Prayer for Domestic Violence Healing” was part of the background rationale of the 2001 PC(USA) policy statement on domestic violence, “Turn Mourning Into Dancing!” (<http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications/dancing.pdf>). Since trafficking for sexual exploitation is an abuse of power, as is domestic violence, the prayer is also appropriate in considering that issue.

### 10. Prepare for Next Session

Distribute copies of Participant Handout 3, and encourage participants to come to the next session having read it.

## Teaching Alternatives

- Watch a DVD. *Lives for Sale: A Documentary on Immigration and Trafficking* is available at <http://www.livesforsale.com> and includes a study guide.

- *Research a workers' group.* The Coalition of Immokalee Workers is a community-based worker organization whose members are largely Latino, Haitian, and Mayan Indian immigrants working in low-wage jobs throughout the state of Florida. The CIW has won the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award (among others) for its work against modern-day slavery and its innovative consumer campaigns that call on corporations to leverage their considerable resources to ending rather than fostering conditions that produce slavery. Learn about the CTW's antislavery work at <http://www.ciw-online.org>.
- *Make a mobile.* Divide participants into small groups to make a mobile of the facts about women and poverty.

They can print each fact on a separate strip of cardboard or poster board and then use words, phrases, drawings, or magazine pictures to graphically represent the fact. Assemble the mobile by punching holes in the tops of strips and tying them together with yarn.

## Resources

Groups who want to explore immigration further may want to use The Thoughtful Christian study "Give Me Your Tired and Poor: U.S. Immigration Policy."

## Endnote

1. *Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 671.

# Appendix 1

## Comparing Trafficking and Smuggling

Trafficking	Smuggling
It must contain an element of coercion, force, or fraud (actual, perceived, or implied) unless the person is under eighteen years of age involved in a commercial sex act.	Person being smuggled is generally cooperating.
Forced labor and/or exploitation is involved.	There is no actual or implied coercion.
Persons trafficked are victims.	Persons smuggled are violating the law and are not victims.
Persons are enslaved, are subjected to limited movement or isolation, or have had their documents confiscated.	Persons are free to leave or change jobs.
It need not involve actual movement of the victim.	It facilitates the illegal entry of persons from one country to another.
There is no requirement to cross an international border.	It always crosses an international border.
Person must be involved in labor/services or commercial sex acts, that is, the person must be working.	Person must only be in the country or attempting to enter illegally.

Adapted from "Differences between Human Trafficking and Smuggling," Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center, HSTC@State.gov. [http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/crim/smuggling\\_trafficking\\_facts.pdf](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/crim/smuggling_trafficking_facts.pdf).

## Appendix 2

### Suggested Questions and Messages to Use with Victims of Trafficking

(This appendix shares some helpful information that health professionals and those trained in working with trafficking victims use. It is not suggested that people not trained use this as a manual. It is provided only to stimulate thinking about what professionals consider when they work with trafficking victims.)

Most victims of trafficking are extremely fearful, both of their traffickers and of being deported. When interacting with persons who may have been trafficked, it's important to reassure them that they are safe. Gaining their trust is an important first step that must occur before you can assist them. Here are just a few messages that may help you establish trust:

- We are here to help you.
- Our first priority is your safety.
- We will give you the medical care that you need.
- We can find you a safe place to stay.
- You have a right to live without being abused.
- You deserve the chance to become self-sufficient and independent.
- We can help you get what you need.
- We can help to protect your family.
- You can trust us.
- We want to make sure what happened to you doesn't happen to anyone else.
- You have rights.
- You are entitled to assistance. We can help you get assistance.
- If you are a victim of trafficking, you can receive help to rebuild your life safely in this country.

### Screening Tool for Victims of Human Trafficking

The following are sample questions health care providers can ask in screening an individual to determine whether he or she is a potential victim of human trafficking. As with domestic violence victims, if you think a person is a victim of trafficking, do not begin by asking directly if the person has been beaten or held against his or her will. Instead, start at the edges of his or her experience. If possible, you should enlist the help of a staff member

who speaks the person's language and understands the culture, keeping in mind that any questioning should be done confidentially. Screen interpreters to be sure that they do not know the victim or the traffickers and do not otherwise have a conflict of interest.

Before you ask the person any sensitive questions, try to get the person alone if he or she came to you accompanied by someone who could be a trafficker posing as a spouse, other family member, or employer. However, when requesting time alone, you should do so in a manner that does not raise suspicions.

### Suggested Screening Questions:

- Can you leave your job or situation if you want?
- Can you come and go as you please?
- Have you been threatened if you try to leave?
- Have you been physically harmed in any way?
- What are your working or living conditions like?
- Where do you sleep and eat?
- Do you sleep in a bed, on a cot, or on the floor?
- Have you ever been deprived of food, water, sleep, or medical care?
- Do you have to ask permission to eat, sleep, or go to the bathroom?
- Are there locks on your doors and windows so you cannot get out?
- Has anyone threatened your family?
- Has your identification or documentation been taken from you?
- Is anyone forcing you to do anything that you do not want to do?

If you think you have come in contact with a victim of human trafficking, call the Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

This hotline will help you determine whether you have encountered victims of human trafficking, will identify local resources available in your community to help victims, and will help you coordinate with local social service organizations to help protect and serve victims so they can begin the process of restoring their lives. For more information on human trafficking, visit <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking>.

Adapted from information at The Campaign to Rescue & Restore Victims of Human Trafficking at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking>.

## Appendix 3

### Turn Mourning into Dancing

#### A Prayer for Domestic Violence Healing

We are the church.

We offer ourselves to you, O God, our Creator.

We offer our hands.

May we use them to extend a healing touch to comfort sisters and brothers and children, youth, and elderly who are afraid.

We offer our eyes and ears.

May we see and hear the signs and stories of violence so that all may have someone with them in their pain and confusion.

We offer our hearts and our tears.

May the hurt and sorrow of the abused echo within us.

We offer our own stories of violence.

May we be healed as we embrace each other.

We offer our anger.

Make it a passion for justice.

We offer all our skills.

Use our gifts to end violence.

We offer our faith, our hope, our love.

May our encounters with violence bring us closer to you and to each other.

All this we ask through Jesus Christ, who knows the pain of violence. Amen.