

Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery

This theological resource has been produced by the Mission Theology Advisory Group (MTAG). MTAG is an ecumenical group commissioned and supported jointly by the Church of England and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Chaired jointly by the Revd Professor John Drane and the Rt Rev'd Dr Brian Castle, Bishop of Tonbridge, the group contains theologians and mission practitioners. Membership is drawn from a range of Christian denominations and from the four nations of the UK. MTAG's task is to resource Christians to think about mission issues and to share their faith appropriately with others. Enquiries about MTAG and its work should be made to Dr Anne Richards at anne.richards@churchofengland.org. MTAG resources can be found at www.spiritualjourneys.org.uk and at www.dispossessionproject.org.

Introduction

She huddles on her bed waiting for the next one. She does not know any of them, the ones who come in the night, all night, the ones who beat her, rape her. She is theirs, bought and paid for. She can barely remember the hopefulness of the flight, the promise of work, the promise of more money than she could imagine, to set herself up, to send home to her family.

That hope is gone. The 'recruiters' took her passport and belongings. They have locked her in here and beat her if she resists. She must cook and clean and service the clients. There is little to eat and no pay. She cannot leave the house, but in any case she does not know where she is and she does not speak the language. She is powerless and vulnerable to random violence and the diseases her clients leave in her body. All the people who ever cared about her have no idea where she is and no idea how to start finding her. She has to hope that someone will notice, ask questions, or come to find her. But who that could be she does not know.

The story above is drawn from the similar experiences of a number of different people and points to some common themes in the phenomenon of human trafficking.¹ Men, women and children are deceived into believing people who befriend them will honour their promises to help them achieve a better life; those people betray them, remove their possessions, keep them captive or restrained, and use violence and threats against them; their victims are rendered powerless and vulnerable; trafficked people are commonly told they have a debt which they cannot repay; many are used for

¹ These stories were gathered by MTAG from conversations with both agencies involved in helping victims of trafficking and from personal stories entrusted to us. A list of agencies is provided in the appendix. In order to protect often severely traumatised individuals, we have not included details of identities or locations.

sex (79%)² although people are also trafficked for domestic servitude, other labour, adult and child begging, forced marriage, or compelled to be drug mules or to sell their organs.

In a globalised world in which international travel is commonplace, human trafficking is a global problem. However the scope and scale of the problem are difficult to assess and accurate statistics as to its extent are hard to come by as so many trafficked people are hidden or invisible. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime points to the limitations of data, given the differences in legislation concerning trafficking in different countries and speaks of a 'dark number' of undetected crimes.³ Legislation provides the basis for collecting data about the crimes and also drives the formation of agencies to assist and help victims who provide further evidence. Conviction, however, remains low even in countries which have comprehensive legislation⁴ and the true scale of the problem remains unknown.

We assume that all Christians will agree that human trafficking is a particular evil of our time and that we care about this issue as a matter of our common humanity. No one should need permission from theologians, or policy-makers, to feel that human trafficking is abhorrent. However, in asking what we can do and what difference we can make, we address three issues for Christian readers to think about:

- How do Christian perspectives give our opposition to human trafficking clarity?
- What theological tools do we have at our disposal to shape a response to the issue of human trafficking?
- What difference will our concern and our response make?

It is important that the answer to the third question should be positive, but we must also not minimise the scale of the problems involved or pretend that our Christian concern and values solve or make easier the work involved in detecting trafficking, bringing perpetrators to justice and helping those who have been trafficked.

We begin with a definition of human trafficking and set this against what we believe about God's will and purpose for human beings made in God's image and given physical bodies.

Following on from this, we look at the abuses of the human body associated with trafficking: organ transfer; sex; labour and modern-day slavery. We set these abuses against our understanding of right use of our organs, sex and labour, which also requires us to engage with biblical material that is often itself difficult and disturbing.

² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, February 2009, pp. 6; 11, online at www.unodc.org/documents/Global_Report_on_TIP.pdf, This statistic might be influenced by the relative visibility of the people in the sex trade or a bias in local laws towards a focus on sex crime.

³ *Ibid.* p. 18.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 8-9

We go on to look at theological themes which help us form a response, including how we behave towards our neighbours, the Lord's Prayer, issues of 'defilement' and the example of Jesus.

These explorations lead us to ways of making a difference: providing sanctuary through trust, ministering in 'the gap' between those most powerless and powerful institutions, and becoming more attentive and responsive to the 'hidden' people around us who need us both to notice and to intervene for them.

What is human trafficking?

The United Nations' Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons (2000) defines trafficking as follows:

- (a) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;
- (b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;
- (c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;
- (d) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

<http://www.osce.org/odihr/19223>

The UNODC report notes that outside this definition are other acts and behaviours, especially in domestic crimes, which are 'like' trafficking.⁵ For example, in November 2013 in the UK, three women were released from years of alleged captivity in a London house. After much initial speculation about whether the women had been trafficked, and speculation about 'cult' involvement, a complex story emerged about shared political and cultural interests which had brought the women and their alleged captors together in a collective. Whatever the background,

⁵ *ibid.* p. 11.

and whatever the crimes are called, we should care about what happened to the women and why their lives were effectively hidden for thirty years.⁶

Why should Christians speak and act?

Making a strong response against the abuse of others is an essential part of mission. All Christians are called by God to discern and to respond to God's mission of love to the world, the *missio Dei*. That activity of God, reconciling the world to God's own self, generates in Jesus Christ, and through the Spirit, the vision of a world in which human beings live in harmony and love towards one another, respecting each other and supporting one another. Christians are called to work towards the realisation of such a vision, to make the kingdom of God a reality for every human person. This means that human behaviour which values some people more than others, or which exploits or injures others, is not only contrary to God's will for human beings, but actively damages mission and creates a drag on the reconciliation of the world to God's own self (2. Corinthians 5.19). The presence of evil behaviour in the world, and the presence of human and institutional sin, is therefore to be resisted and redressed by all Christians as a matter of mission imperative. Human trafficking is one of these evils and we need to understand exactly why, theologically, trafficking is wrong, so that we can speak about it with confidence and also speak out against it; and secondly, what we should be doing to counteract it, so as to allow the reconciling activity of God to work unimpeded in our world.

Being Human

He squats in a subway with a woman who is his minder, not his mother. She is not free either, but that doesn't mean she will stick up for him. Her job is to make sure the money he begs for is squirreled away and given to the gang who control them. She keeps an eye out for police or anyone who takes an unusual interest. His job is to beg for money, to cry when prompted, which isn't hard, the bruises are tender and his ribs hurt from the last time he displeased the people who tell him what to do. His job is to be enough of a child to prompt a sympathy donation and to learn when to fade back to the shadows. If he does this, he will be fed enough to do it again tomorrow. He does not know where his parents are; this is all the life he knows. He is six years old.

We may feel instinctively that the woman and the child in this story are not living as human beings are 'meant' to live, but how do we know how human beings are meant to live? What is the Christian perspective on being human and on human life?

⁶ See 'London 'Slavery' Case Women Interviewed', BBC News online at www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-25120045

Genesis tells us that human beings are made in the image of God, the *imago Dei* (Genesis 1.26-27). While this theological concept has been debated by different theologians down the centuries, we can use this powerful idea to understand that all human beings come into being in the same way under God and that God values, desires and loves each person equally. Further, every human being is called by God and cherished by God. It follows that all of us should value, cherish and respect the dignity of every other person, irrespective of their beliefs, ethnic background, economic status, gender or sexual orientation. The idea of *imago Dei* requires that we recognise our origins in the Other and seek to be in mutually respectful and loving relationships with other people. Such respect and recognition is at the heart of God's mission and reconciling work. To refuse to respect others or to treat them as less than fully human is an offence against the *imago Dei* and against God. So is any action which deliberately prevents people becoming who God created them to be.

That means that we should not exploit other human beings as property or treat them as commodities. Jesus tells us: love your neighbour as yourself (Mark 12.31). However, while it is easy to say that we would never treat people as commodities, in fact we often do not live up to what Jesus asks of us. We may not be involved in human trafficking, but we also may, in many different ways, contribute to a culture which does indeed both see human beings as commodities and creates the conditions where people in desperation offer themselves as commodities. Human trafficking does not happen in a vacuum but is part of an exploitative culture in which poverty, inequality, oppression, anxiety and fear all play their part. Many of those working to help victims of trafficking find their experiences symptomatic of deeper disease: 'What is beneath the surface of these bad guys exploiting vulnerable people? I'm sure we'll find poverty in all its forms.'⁷

Trafficking Bodies

Trafficking dehumanises people and reduces them to the status of bodies for sale. As Christians, then, we must not only care about the minds and emotions of people like us, made in God's image, but engage properly with a theology which tells why God has created us as embodied creatures. We have often engaged in social action on the basis of people as thinking, suffering individuals, but trafficking requires us to engage with what happens to people's bodies and to understand why what happens to them is wrong. Some Christians are not comfortable with thinking about these things and prefer to speak of human rights and privileges as if we lived exclusively in our heads, but we do not. What God wants for human bodies must also be addressed.

⁷ Kristina Misiniene, (CARITAS Lithuania) speaking at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 8th May 2012, online at cbcew.org.uk/CBCEW-Home/Departments/International-Affairs/Refugees-and-Migrants/Human-Trafficking/Rome-Trafficking-Conference/Reintegration .

Organs

In a back room, the dying woman's husband met three men. Money changed hands. A lot of money. The husband did not ask too many questions but he was worried about the person who would do the surgery and about who would look after his wife. And he was worried about the authorities. He knew it was illegal but he was desperate. He wondered if they would just take the money and never deliver the kidney.

Four and a half thousand miles away a young man was returning to his village with his goats when a battered truck came down the dirt track behind him. A few seconds later and there was no sign of the man on the road, just the goats nosing in the dust. It was as if he had never been.⁸

Many people think about trafficking as being about the movement of individual living people, but the World Health Organisation has also highlighted the issue of an illegal trade in human organs.⁹ Parts of people may also be trafficked, either through selling organs or through coercion and even murder. Hearts, lungs, livers and especially kidneys are harvested for sale to people requiring a transplant. Kidneys are especially prized because the donors can survive with only one, while losing the other. Such a trade requires not only a donor and a recipient but also medical staff and brokers. The WHO reports that vulnerable, poor and uneducated people are most at risk of being targeted for organ trafficking and that a kidney may sell for as little as \$1000. A study of organ sellers in India showed that nearly all sold their organs to get out of debt.¹⁰ Further, very little care is taken of those who are operated on, with many not given any sort of aftercare or being unable to afford prescriptions for pain relief afterwards.¹¹

There are two important issues here for Christians. First, human bodies are not just a collection of tissues and organs, but part of a person's wholeness of body, mind and spirit. The body is not just a vehicle or a collection of bits but is part of the way God knows us and interacts with us. The psalmist says: 'For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them (Psalm 139.13-17). God is involved in our flesh and in our becoming and so bodies are to be treated with respect and to be taken care of. Health matters. The injunction in Leviticus 19.28 not to cut or injure the body or to subject it wantonly to a practice that might cause infection or disease reflects this understanding that human beings have a duty to take care of the gift of their physical health. Paul tells the people

⁸ The sale did not complete. The traffickers made mistakes with transport and the organs were ruined.

⁹ Bulletin of the World Health Organisation, 'Organ trafficking and transplantation pose new challenges', 1st September 2004, online at www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/82/9/feature0904/en/

¹⁰ Aronowitz, A., (2009) *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: The Global Trade in Human Beings*, (Praeger Publishers: Westport, CT) p.119.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

of the church at Corinth that they too must do this: 'Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body' (1 Corinthians 6.19-20). Trafficking organs means pressuring vulnerable and disadvantaged people to put their physical health at risk or even to die.

The second issue for Christians is that the market for trafficked organs could not exist if there were not sick people desperate enough to seek to pay for a transplant through this means, which the story above also shows. There is a shortage of donated organs and many people survive with reduced quality of life waiting for a transplant. If no donated organ becomes available, then many of those people will die. This is not just a local issue, but a global one with people in rich nations seeking to obtain organs from the poorest.¹² So it is not enough to set out a theological understanding of human beings as embodied creatures which says that pressurising people to give up their organs for money is wrong. The other side of the issue is a need for more donated organs.

What does God want for our human bodies? Such a theological enquiry suggests that the body must be kept from harm, respected and treated with reverence as a temple of the Spirit, but that in itself does not mean that organs cannot or should not be donated. Scripture is clear that after death the physical body rots and does not need to be preserved intact. God says in Genesis 3.19 'You are dust and to dust you shall return' and Paul writes that our flesh 'is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body' (1 Corinthians 15.44). It can be argued that a natural outworking of the requirement to seek physical health and respect for the body is to make a gift of that body after death to enhance the physical health of others. Because human beings should behave with mutuality, respect and relationship towards each other, as a mirror of the Trinitarian relationship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so donating organs after death, where that is possible, is a reconciling and indeed missionary act, showing love and generosity to others.¹³ Similarly, voluntarily donating blood and other cells during life, where it is medically safe to do so, shows love for neighbour and social responsibility. In order to speak out against trafficking in organs, we must also be willing to do more to stop the underground market for such organs.

Sex

Much human trafficking involves the exploitation of women, men and children for sex. Maya's story has many typical elements:

'Once I came to Mumbai, the dalal sold me to a malik [brothel boss] in Kamathipura. The malik told me I owed him thirty-five thousand rupees [\$780], and I must have sex with any man who chooses

¹² The World Health Organisation cites the case of organ trafficking from Brazil to Israel. See www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/82/9/feature0904/en/

¹³ See comments by the bishop of Carlisle in the Church of England at www.churchofengland.org/our-views/medical-ethics-health-social-care-policy/organ-transplantation/promoting-awareness-about-organ-donation.aspx

*me until this debt is repaid. I refused, and his men raped me and did not feed me...The malik put chili paste on a broomstick and pushed it inside me. Then he broke my ribs with his fist.*¹⁴

The idea that a person owes a debt which must be repaid through sex is a typical scenario in sex trafficking, making the trafficked person into someone who is both owned and who owes. Often the person must comply in order to receive food or medical treatment, while disobedience to the demands is met with violent punishment. This sequence of events is as true in the UK as it is in India. Often women come into the hands of traffickers by being promised employment or opportunities in another country which will benefit themselves or their families and find themselves then exploited for sex in a country where they neither speak the language very well or have any idea whether they can trust anyone, including the police or other authorities, to help. In such situations they may simply agree to be used for sex in the forlorn hope that they will be allowed to take up the promised employment and may also come to rely on their abusers.

The prophecy of Joel indicates that the sexual exploitation of other human beings in order to have power over them attracts God's anger and judgement: 'I will enter into judgement with them there, on account of my people and my heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations. They have divided my land, and cast lots for my people, and traded boys for prostitutes, and sold girls for wine, and drunk it down' (Joel 3.2-3). The Bible also has other descriptions of uncontrolled lust leading to rape. Perhaps one of the most violent episodes in Scripture is the rape of the Levite's concubine in Judges 19 where a mob come to house where the Levite is staying and demand sex with him. The host offers up their female property – his own daughter and the Levite's concubine.¹⁵ The concubine is given to them whom they rape so ferociously that she dies, confirming, as does Maya's story, that such acts are about power and indiscriminate sexual violence.¹⁶ Even today, people continue to be treated as property to be sold.

The Levite's response is to cut up the ruined body and send it as evidence of outrage to other tribes of Israel, with a message about the woman's dismembered body: 'Consider it, take counsel, and speak out' (Judges 19.30). This triggers inter-tribal war and extreme, bloody revenge.

Our understanding of a need to respect the body discussed above necessarily also applies here, but in addition, Christian teaching about sex suggests that it must be consensual and flows from, and enhances loving relationships (Genesis 2.24; Mark 10.8-9). In Scripture, the rapes of Dinah (Genesis 34.34ff) and Tamar (2 Samuel 13.22ff), highlight male power and violent force against women who do not reciprocate and who say no. In both cases, the rape is followed by the shame of the woman, a

¹⁴ Kara, S., (2009) *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery* (Columbia University Press: NY) p.2.

¹⁵ Compare the situation of Lot in the story of Sodom and Gemorrah, where Lot similarly offers his daughters to those who come to his door demanding to have access to his guests (Genesis 19.1-11).

¹⁶ In modern sex trafficking, the scale of offence against a single person can be enormous. For example, the Centre for Social Justice reports a case in which a child was raped by 90 men over the course of a weekend. Centre for Social Justice (2013) *It happens here: Equipping the United Kingdom to Fight Modern Slavery*, p. 17 online at

[www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/UserStorage/pdf/Pdf%20reports/CSJ_Slavery_Full_Report_WEB\(5\).pdf](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/UserStorage/pdf/Pdf%20reports/CSJ_Slavery_Full_Report_WEB(5).pdf)

condition of powerlessness much like the condition of debt in Maya's story. In both cases, as with the Levite, the response is the need to avenge the shame with further violence; male sexual violence begets further violence leading to nothing that is life-affirming, only death and destruction. We learn from this that raping the bodies of men, women and children, as is common in sex trafficking, not only goes up against God's intention for human sexual behaviour but, in propagating acts of sexual violence, creates a revenge cycle of even more violence and destruction.

Forced marriage is another issue related to trafficking, as the UK government's description makes clear:

'The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.'¹⁷

Shame, coercion and violence are again often symptomatic in forced marriage, and, as the biblical examples show, reduce people to sexual property or commodities whose dehumanisation and powerlessness is demonstrated by things such as having to hand over wages. Forced marriage, unlike mutually negotiated and agreed arranged marriages, often involves deception, such as telling a young person that they are going to the parents' home country to visit relatives only to have their passports taken away until they marry. Such a marriage may have been contracted in order to secure rights to enter another country or to conclude a financial transaction. People in this situation, their use at an end, may find themselves stranded in a country they barely know, or end up ill-treated or abandoned. As Christians, we can conclude that this has nothing to do with the picture of mutuality in marriage offered by Jesus, referring to Genesis 1.57 (also Genesis 5.2): "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female'", and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

In replying to the Pharisees in this way, Jesus combines the integrity of the two marriage partners as persons with the consent in the giving of their bodies to one another as 'one flesh'. Despite the context, in which the Pharisees are trying to test Jesus's theology on matters of divorce, there is no mention of property being taken and then disposed of, but of mutuality and equality, which prevents one from acting on the other from a position of power. This vision of what is meant by marriage is entirely at odds with what happens in forced marriage which undermines and distorts what God intends for loving human relationships.

This distortion of sex in human relationship is also seen in trafficking men, women and children for pornography. This raises another issue for us, because such trafficking reaches into our homes

¹⁷See www.gov.uk/forced-marriage

through the internet. In a society where the media often relays the sexualisation of children and the easy availability of, and right to sex, pornography becomes just another commodity we can opt into if we choose and is no more than a click away. In a society such as ours, where sex is ubiquitous in entertainment and advertising, it can be all too easy to forget that such an environment requires a continuous supply of new bodies, many of whom belong to individuals who have had no choice but allow them to be used in this way. When our environment is saturated with sexualised images, we can become inured to them, and may forget those whose sexuality is abused for the entertainment of others.

Labour

The book of Isaiah tells us that God's vision for human beings is that 'They shall build houses and inhabit them;/ they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit./They shall not build and another inhabit;/ they shall not plant and another eat;/for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,/ and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands./They shall not labour in vain,/or bear children for calamity' (Isaiah 65.21-23). Raymond Fung tells us that this is the 'Isaiah agenda',¹⁸ God's will for human beings in a reconciled and peaceful existence. It is significant that this aspect of the *missio Dei* sees people benefitting from their labour and enjoying the fruits of their work. No one works just to profit another, or works without getting something back.

Human trafficking of people for their labour is therefore contrary to God's intention for the world and in fact inverts it.

'I was brought up by travellers although I don't know who my parents were. They were kind to me and looked after me. When I grew up I couldn't get any work. People don't like travellers and they don't like people who are different, like me. I couldn't read or write so I tried to get labouring jobs. One day a group of men turned up and said they wanted some strong people for casual labour, bricking and that. They seemed to like me. The boss said he'd take me on so I was really glad. But what we basically did was go to another town in the boss's truck and then go from house to house offering to do things like lay driveways for cheap prices cash in hand. Thing is the boss would set us to work and tell us we had to get the job done by a certain time. We weren't to speak to anyone or talk about the job – that's why I was useful. We had to work until dark and sleep in a garage. The boss took all the cash and gave us nothing except some food and cigarettes. When I tried to ask a householder for food and drink I got beaten by the boss, he slapped me and yelled at me. I work all day to lay the bricks really fast, but I get nothing. And now I am a long way from my home and I have nowhere else to go.'

In a time where many people have very little spare money, the offer of a cheap job done cash in hand can seem very tempting, especially when the labourers seem both extremely hard working and

¹⁸ See Fung, R., (1992) *The Isaiah Vision*, (WCC: Geneva), p. 5.

fast. In such times, there are quite a few small companies which try to undercut each other and may turn up on the doorstep with special offers. Many of those are entirely genuine enterprises, but others may be exploiting people through trafficking. It may seem prudent not to ask too many questions about whether the people who have been hired are being properly paid or given adequate safety protection and proper breaks and it may be difficult to challenge the bosses. In the case above, when a householder became worried about the workers, the boss threatened her and told her to keep her nose out. The problem is that when we succumb to having cheap paved driveways or exterior house painting or repairs without checking who the people are who are working for us, we collude with the very conditions that make trafficking people for their labour so lucrative for those who are exploiting them. Traffickers rely on a conspiracy of silence: we benefit from the labour of others and the bosses benefit most of all. The people who need help cannot get it while we turn a blind eye to their conditions. Yet the Isaiah agenda tells us clearly that we should all be bothered about whether people get to enjoy the fruits of their labour and whether people are being treated fairly and without coercion.

Some forms of human trafficking as in the case above amount to modern-day slavery. This does not just apply to labourers but also to people who are 'employed' as cleaners and housekeepers, often from abroad. In some cases those people have their passports and identity papers taken away from them and are threatened unless they work for little or no pay. Such people are effectively invisible and can also be trafficked for forced begging or forced marriages, often to pay 'debt' which they are told they owe for food and shelter or for not being deported by the authorities.

In August 2013 the UK Home Secretary, Teresa May, announced a bill to tighten laws on human trafficking. This would establish a 'modern slavery' commissioner. In November 2013, it was reported that three women had contacted the Freedom Charity alleging that they had been kept in domestic servitude against their will in the UK for more than thirty years.¹⁹ In 2010, a French couple was prosecuted for keeping a Senegalese housekeeper on little pay after confiscating her passport and telling her that if she tried to leave she would be deported.²⁰

It is a distressing fact of human history that slavery has been a common and accepted practice in human power relations, so accepted in fact, that moral questions in theological writing have often focused on an imperative to treat slaves well rather than consider whether the concept of slavery was itself contrary to God's intention. Although over time, different authorities in many countries have variously forbidden the taking or keeping of slaves, in the UK the Abolition of Slavery Act 1833 was repealed in 1998 and replaced by article 4 of the Human Rights Act.²¹

¹⁹ BBC News online: 'Women "held as slaves for 30 years"' 22nd November 2013 at www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-25040741

²⁰ Reuters France, 'Un couple condamné pour traite des êtres humains' 16th December 2010, online at fr.reuters.com/article/topNews/idFRPAE6BF0JR20101216

²¹ Human Rights Act 1998 online at www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/schedule/1/part/I/chapter/3

Debt bondage was common in Old Testament times but the concept of the sabbatical year and the Jubilee was also set against this, creating a time and space during which debt could be written off and bonded slaves released. Against this background, the gospel of Luke says that Jesus read from the passage of Isaiah which proclaims 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,/ because he has anointed me/ to bring good news to the poor./He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives/and recovery of sight to the blind,/to let the oppressed go free,/to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour' (Luke 4.18-19). Having read this passage, Jesus, at the start of his public ministry proclaims this activity of the Spirit to be present in him. His ministry is precisely about the release of captives and freedom from debt bondage, thus freeing people to become part of the Isaiah agenda which is the desire of God for human beings. Consequently, if Christians are to follow Jesus and participate in God's mission of love to the world, then we are required not only to pursue this vision, but actively to work for it. In the New Testament, there is one important example of this active intervention at work:

In Philemon 1. 10-18, Paul writes:

'I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account.'

Paul appears to be appealing to Philemon to consider a change in the power relations between master and slave and to regard Onesimus as a brother not only as a fellow Christian but also as a fellow human being. Christian faith places a different perspective on the integrity and equality of all human beings and Paul seems to want Philemon to recognise this for himself. In order to make this even more possible, Paul offers to pay Philemon compensation so that any debt can be repaid. Paul may also be acutely aware of what a slave's lack of freedom and autonomy means, given that he writes this from prison. Christian faith, then, must be transformative in investigating inequalities of power and getting others to recognise that the persistence of such inequalities in human relations is not what God intends for the kingdom. The Church then, as now, has the opportunity to model something to society and culture that is radically different for human relationships and human living.

As Christians then, Paul's example, actively intervening for the worth of a human being whom he has got to know and appreciate as a brother, asks us also to find out more about those people who are being trafficked and to work to make sure that such injustice is both exposed and stopped. Our

communities should model the equality of fellowship that is expected of disciples: 'There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3.28).

Responses:

If we understand that trafficking in human organs, sex, labour and slavery is entirely wrong and against God's intention for the lives of human beings in God's kingdom, then what response should we make?

To answer this question we have to decide whether we are willing to own the problem. Are we really willing to stand up for these people? Further, we have to acknowledge that we may be complicit in the conditions that lead to trafficking, - a need for cheap goods, an easy acceptance of a sexualised society, a blind eye for people who are not like us and therefore not our problem. Further, we may have little real understanding of what it means to live in a globalised society in which people can be transported quite easily from any part of the globe to any other. Trafficking takes advantage of technology and economic and power relations between nations. Many people in the UK are concerned about free migration in terms of their own immediate environment and the impact on their lives, but another consequence is the formation of communities where there are many closed groups of people and many languages and cultures present on the same street. Living in such communities has the power to create lively, vibrant, ever-changing and exciting urban environments, but equally, in some areas, people become isolated within gated communities, afraid of speaking out for fear of retribution, while those who are trafficked get lost in the fast turnover of population and eventually become invisible. Some of these people who live among us may simply disappear. It is in those situations that people learn to exploit the weaknesses of the vulnerable and do so without us noticing. We may rely on other authorities, such as the police, to do the watching for us, unaware that because of the complexities of policing, the need to gather evidence and the interconnectedness of crime, they may not be automatically intervening for the trafficked women in the local brothel. What theological tools do we have, as Christians, which equip us to be more aware of trafficking in our communities?

Neighbours

Trafficking is often a hidden crime: 'a large proportion of cases are never recognised or reported, and do not appear in any statistics or measures of the size of the problem. There is no consistent grip on the numbers; agencies charged with such responsibility are groping in the dark for a sense of

scale'.²² Forced labour, in particular, is often extremely hard to detect. For this reason, it is important that Christians take seriously the call to know 'who is my neighbour?' and to be better neighbours.

Aneeta Prem, founder of the Freedom Charity which was contacted by women who had been kept in forced labour and servitude in London, made the point for us clearly:

'If we think about our lives, where we're so busy rushing around - do we know our neighbours? Do we know what's happening next door? It's an ordinary street in an ordinary place in London; there's nothing extraordinary about where they were held, and nobody seemed to know anything about it.'

²³

Jesus offers the parable of the Good Samaritan to teach others about how to be a neighbour even towards people who are most unlike us and yet most in need of our help. In one of his speeches, Martin Luther King put his finger on one of the contentious issues of the parable – our own deep fear of the consequences of getting involved:

'And so the first question that the priest asked, the first question that the Levite asked was, 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?'"But then the Good Samaritan came by, and he reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'"²⁴

Reframing the question is the only way to answer Jesus's question 'who is my neighbour?' Our neighbour is the Eastern European teenager who comes to the UK expecting to work as a secretary but ends up being used for sex and beaten when she asks what is going on. Our neighbour is the Thai bride who is groomed through a dating service and used as a sex and domestic slave. Our neighbour is the Somalian boy who is sold to a paedophile ring. These people are all loved and desired by God and they may be very nearly invisible so we must develop sharper eyes in order to detect their needs and respond to any concerns we may have about them. Trafficked persons need friends but they are not in a position to make any. Yet not all trafficked persons are out of sight and some may be coming into contact with us; we just don't recognise them. For example, unlike the many people rushing past, Christians may take the time and trouble to respond to someone begging, but without realising that the money or food given may go only as a profit to the person controlling them. It takes even more time and effort, 'the extra mile', to talk to them, to see if they will share their story and to detect what *else* may be behind their having to beg.

For this reason it is important to be aware of the indicators of trafficking set out by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime²⁵ and to use them to sharpen our sense of Christian

²² Centre for Social Justice (2013) *It happens here: Equipping the United Kingdom to Fight Modern Slavery* p.16.

²³ Legge, J., (2013) 'London "slaves" case: Aneeta Prem asks "do we know what's happening next door?"' *The Independent*, 22nd November 2013.

²⁴ Martin Luther King 'I've Been to the Mountaintop' speech, Memphis, Tennessee, 3rd April 1968 online at www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm

responsibility towards our neighbours. Jesus asks us continually to be on the alert for what God is doing (Mark 13.33-37); it may well be that what God is doing right now, is calling out through these kinds of crimes against those whom God loves.

The Lord's Prayer

The prayer which Jesus gives us sets out a model of behaviour which impacts directly on the conditions which give rise to trafficking. We ask God that God's kingdom come so that God's will, the vision of the *missio Dei*, be established 'on earth as it is in heaven'. We must commit ourselves to that vision of mutuality, respect and reciprocity which is characterised by the Trinity in heaven.

A particularly important line in the Lord's Prayer is 'forgive us our trespasses/sins'. In some liturgies, the word 'debt' is used since in Matthew, the word ὀφειλήματα means debts in the sense of something owed or an obligation and so can also be used metaphorically for that which is owed to God.²⁶ Yet perhaps we would do well to think about forgiveness from debts, since debt can be at the heart of the experience of the trafficked person. The Lord's Prayer continues a vision of mutuality where we seek to release others from debt, just as we ask God to forgive and release us too. In addition to this, Jesus tells us to pray for protection from the evil and ordeal of the world. Not only is this particular resonant for the victims of trafficking, but some are subjected to rituals or curses which bind them psychologically and spiritually to those who abuse them. For them deliverance from evil is particularly significant.

Jesus therefore actually gives us a template for a world without trafficking while making us aware of the conditions under which trafficking can exist. No Christian can therefore pray the Lord's Prayer without being prompted to remember the suffering of those, like Maya, whose debts are not forgiven, but who are being trapped in evil situations by others who claim they 'owe' them their bodies or their labour.

Where does the evil come from?

Disgust and fear are powerful emotions in people's lives and often visited on those we think can contaminate or threaten us. It is no surprise that the word 'dirty' is often visited as a term of abuse on beggars and prostitutes.

We see exactly the same reactions in the Bible where the laws governing the behaviour of the people of Israel spelled out how to become and remain pure and how to avoid or recover from

²⁵See www.unodc.org/pdf/HT_indicators_E_LOWRES.pdf These are given in Appendix A at the end of this paper.

²⁶ Matthew 6.9-13. In Matthew 18.21-35 a question from Peter about forgiveness is answered with a parable about debt. And compare Matthew 22.21.

defilement (eg Leviticus 11-15). To come into contact with disease, death, or body fluids (especially related to sex and menstruation) would render a person unclean and require purification. These kinds of laws did not in themselves create the fear and shunning of sources of contamination, but codified human instincts and attempted to make conditions whereby a tent-dwelling community could continue to live together. Yet, despite our modern societies, fear and disgust still attaches to people who are vulnerable and damaged and the knowledge of our attitudes contributes to the depths of their 'defilement' and the loss of their humanity. Despite our best intentions, while we may feel happy about giving a beggar money or making cups of tea for the cheap labourers, we may feel less goodwill towards befriending them or finding out their story. Yet, as we have seen, all of them have stories.

Matters of purity and defilement are also concepts which Jesus turns on their heads. Not only does he deliberately seek out and heal people with disease, when asked about defilement, he makes it clear that it is not the body which defiles but the evil intentions within the mind which defile those who perpetrate them: 'what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person' (Matthew 15.18-20). In teaching this, Jesus switches the focus from the powerless to the powerful, the people we have no problems associating with. These are the people we should fear will defile us. Lying, deception and the attempt to exercise power over others for one's own gain, which is typical behaviour by traffickers, leads to such defilement. To pretend to be something you are not to gain power over another is both sinful and damaging.

This reminds us that as Christians we should develop a careful attentiveness to see beyond the circumstances of the trafficked people we may encounter and not judge them unfairly for what they do or the conditions in which they find themselves. Indeed, if no one else will, Christians should be at the forefront of finding them and going out to them, as Jesus did for those shunned in his own community. Further, we should not be solely concerned with the victims of trafficking, but also for the traffickers, whose spiritual damage to themselves also needs addressing, - both at the level of our prayers for their change and repentance but also at the level of our work for a world in which trafficking is of no benefit and the Isaiah vision is available to everyone.

Our response to Jesus as 'slave'

Jesus demonstrates his solidarity with those who have no power by himself becoming 'a slave' ($\delta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$)²⁷ and giving up his body to be used by others for their frustration and sense of superiority: it is not just that Jesus is crucified, he is first spat upon and abused for sport by being forced to wear the crown of thorns. Such humiliation is routinely endured by victims of trafficking: 'Christ Jesus,

²⁷ This word is sometimes translated 'servant' but there are stronger ties intended: the word used refers to a (male) slave, a bonded person, someone who belongs to another.

who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross’ (Philippians 2.5-8). Jesus makes the point that those who love him would take care of him when he was sick and clothe him if he were naked, yet we so often do not do this for those with whom he identifies (Matthew 25.31-46) ‘just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me’ (v.40).

What difference can our concern and theological response make to victims of trafficking?

Sanctuary

Speaking on BBC Radio 4’s PM news programme 21st November 2013, Aneeta Prem said that the three women her Freedom Charity had helped escape from thirty years’ of forced labour had finally contacted someone in the outside world for help because they had seen her on TV and felt they could trust her and that she would help them. For many victims of trafficking, part of the problem is that they trust no one and believe no one can be trusted. So even if they are allowed out or escape their situation they may say nothing or simply return to the traffickers as they only people they can rely on for food and shelter. Those who are illegal immigrants or asylum seekers may be too afraid of being arrested or abused by the authorities to seek help or even know how to go about doing so. In addition, victims of trafficking may need someone of the appropriate gender to talk to and need to feel that they will not be judged or condemned for the things which have happened to them. In the Church of England, every parish priest has a duty of care for the people who live in the parish and all Christians as well as the clergy of the denominations should reflect a pastoral concern for our neighbours. The Church needs once again to be a place where any person of any background, faith or culture can ask for help and protection and be confident of receiving it. What does it take for people to learn to trust us? Does our faith sharing and outreach stop short of people like the victims of trafficking? What does it take for such people to risk contact with us? What messages must we send out that we are a people who can and will help?

She was working in bedroom above a tobacconist’s shop in the city. Other girls used the other upstairs rooms. They weren’t supposed to talk to each other. Clients would come into the newsagent, buy something and then ask to go upstairs. The person on the till pressed a buzzer and a man came and took the money.

After a particularly violent episode she felt she couldn’t stand it any more. Her minders told her she would go to prison, but she didn’t care. Sometimes, if they saw how cut and bruised she was, the minders gave her alcohol or drugs, but mostly they just threatened her. If she craned her neck looking

out of the window she could just see a church at the end of the street. She saw women and children gathering outside it. She wondered what they were doing and wished she could be like them.

She limped down the stairs and told her minders that she needed some antiseptic from the shop. When they went to get it, she slipped out of the back door and ran to the end of the street and over to the church. She expected someone to call the police and to be arrested and beaten as she had been told.

But loving hands took her in and took care of her. Two sisters from a local religious order were running a group for young mothers and children. The sisters and the mothers talked kindly to her and promised to help. They dressed her injuries and took care of her and later she was able to trust the sisters to liaise with the authorities. While her papers were being sorted out the religious order found her accommodation and support. The other women from above the tobacconist were found and taken in as well.

One concept which might be used in the effort to care for the victims of trafficking today is the concept of sanctuary. From about the 4th century to the 17th century, people who were pursued by the law could be protected by the church if they asked for sanctuary on its premises. The point about this is that people understood to be a place of safety and trusted the minister and church community to protect them, no matter what trouble they were in or what they might have done. This is important because it places Christians between the accused and their accusers in order to create a breathing space for reconciliation and finding a path to a better outcome. This is what Jesus does in the case of the woman taken in adultery (John 7.53-8.11). Victims of trafficking are desperately in need of sanctuary, not as an alternative to medical care, legal advice or access to social welfare, but as a breathing space where they can feel safer and as a first step to being freed from their situation. The Freedom Charity provided such sanctuary for the women and it is perhaps often the case that it is these kinds of charities which provide sanctuary for those in need. Such charities certainly need our support. Yet surely all Christians should be involved in making it known also that the Church is a place of sanctuary, where people can be helped without conditions being placed on them.

In Scripture, trust is built up by the witness of those devoted to God, through acts of generosity, healing, and care. Such witness through loving service is one of the most important marks of mission because it gives those who need our protection the confidence that if asked, we will provide it. Yet too many people believe that Christians, along with others collude with powerful structures and institutions for our own ends and to preserve our own privileges. If that view is to be challenged, Christians must also work even harder to build up faithful, trusting relationships, and the Church demonstrate effectively that it keeps its promises to the vulnerable and those in need.

Ministry in the gap

Just as Jesus went out of his way to befriend and to help those beyond the fringes of society, so we must be prepared to find and care for those who like the Gerasene demoniac, are being kept in chains out the sight of 'decent' people (Mark 5.1-20). Jesus was prepared to give love to those deemed unclean by his own religious friends and make himself unclean in ministering to them. Such ministry liberates the person who is suffering and gives the person's integrity and autonomy back to them. Such ministry is also not without risk, so it is worth showing that there is a difference between entering a power-struggle which leads only to revenge, violence and destruction, and acts which liberate, enable and re-create.

The job he was promised turned out to be films and photographs while he was abused by a variety of men. But he was told his family would be killed if he didn't comply. Every time he was abused he thought as hard as he could 'I have not agreed to this. I don't want this.' Eventually, when the gang were done with him, they bundled him in a car and left him on a road, miles from anywhere he recognised. He slept rough for a week before being picked up. But he refused to say what had happened to him or how he came to be there. He was too ashamed, too confused and mistrustful of everyone. In the end volunteers from a Christian agency met him and guessed that something too traumatic to speak of had happened. They gave him the time he needed to trust them and to begin to explain what had happened. They believed him when he said he had not consented to the abuse and acted as mediators with the authorities.

Pamela Cooper-White talks helpfully about the difference between 'power-over' and 'power-within'. 'Power-within' is 'the power of one's own inner wisdom, intuition, self-esteem, even the spark of the divine'.²⁸ As such, 'power-within' relates back to the *imago Dei*. Cooper-White says that people in Scripture such as Tamar, are ruined by 'power over' her, but even in this story there is evidence of Tamar's 'power-within', the person who resisted the violation done to her, even if she could physically do nothing about it. Tamar 'respected herself with acts of resistance'. Christian tradition recognises such 'power-within' in honouring the lives of saints and martyrs, who may have been overpowered by evil actions but whose example and voice endure. We see this 'power-within' manifesting itself throughout Scripture, where the poor and vulnerable cry out to God, not in helplessness and despair but in the expectation and faith of a God who saves. If we are Christians, living in obedience to Jesus' request to all of us to feed his sheep (John 21.17) then that expectation rests with us. It requires us to minister in the gap between those trafficked and the authorities they fear; to be their voices, and the agency which allows their 'power-within' to become and to be seen as acts of resistance, so that those men, women and children can emerge from the shadows into places where they can be found, helped, restored and enabled to tell their story.

²⁸ Cooper-White, P., (2012) *The Cry of Tamar: Violence Against Women and the Church's Response*, (Augsberg: Fortress Press) p. 55.

Conclusion

Working to combat trafficking is the responsibility of all of us. There is the need to educate others why trafficking is a crime, not just against our communities, but also against God's desire for human beings. There is also a need to be more aware of our God-given responsibilities to be people who can be trusted, people who are aware of the sufferings of others and ready and willing to give voice, and assistance to those who are invisible even in plain sight. It is also a mission imperative, not just to work for justice, but to change the world; to create a world of equity and enough as envisioned by Isaiah, in which the misery of trafficking is impossible.

References

Aronowitz, A., (2009) *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: The Global Trade in Human Beings*, (Praeger Publishers: Westport, CT)

BBC News online 'London "Slavery" Case Women Interviewed', www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-25120045 accessed 12/11/13

BBC News: 'Women "held as slaves for 30 years"' 22nd November 2013 www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-25040741 accessed 22/11/13.

Bulletin of the World Health Organisation, 'Organ trafficking and transplantation pose new challenges', 1st September 2004, www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/82/9/feature0904/en/ accessed 12/11/13.

Cooper-White, P., (2012) *The Cry of Tamar: Violence Against Women and the Church's Response*, (Augsberg: Fortress Press).

Fung, R., (1992) *The Isaiah Vision*, (WCC: Geneva).

Home Office and Foreign Office, 'Forced marriage Information and practice guidelines for professionals protecting, advising and supporting victims' www.gov.uk/forced-marriage accessed 12/01/14.

Human Rights Act 1998, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/schedule/1/part/1/chapter/3

Kara, S., (2009) *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery* (Columbia University Press: NY).

King, M. L., 'I've Been to the Mountaintop' speech, Memphis, Tennessee, 3rd April 1968 online at www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm accessed 10/01/14

Legge, J., (2013) 'London "slaves" case: Aneeta Prem asks "do we know what's happening next door?"' *The Independent*, 22nd November 2013.

Newcome, J., (2011) 'Organ Donation' www.churchofengland.org/our-views/medical-ethics-health-social-care-policy/organ-transplantation/promoting-awareness-about-organ-donation.aspx accessed 12/11/13

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 8th May 2012, online at cbcew.org.uk/CBCEW-Home/Departments/International-Affairs/Refugees-and-Migrants/Human-Trafficking/Rome-Trafficking-Conference/Reintegration. accessed 14/01/14

Reuters France, 'Un couple condamné pour traite des êtres humains' 16th December 2010
www.fr.reuters.com/article/topNews/idFRPAE6BF0JR20101216 accessed 22/1/13.

Slavery Working Group, Centre for Social Justice (2013) *It happens here: Equipping the United Kingdom to Fight Modern Slavery*
[www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/UserStorage/pdf/Pdf%20reports/CSJ_Slavery_Full_Report_WEB\(5\).pdf](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/UserStorage/pdf/Pdf%20reports/CSJ_Slavery_Full_Report_WEB(5).pdf) accessed 11/11/13.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2009) *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* online at
www.unodc.org/documents/Global_Report_on_TIP.pdf accessed 13/12/13

United Nations (2000) 'Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against transnational organized crime' online at www.osce.org/odihr/19223 accessed 13/11/13

Resources

www.allpartygrouphumantrafficking.org/appg.../charities-and-allies

www.antislavery.org

www.caritas.org/what-we-do/migration/human-trafficking/

www.dhs.gov/topic/human-trafficking

www.freedommatters.org.uk/Trafficking

<http://www.freedomcharity.org.uk/>

www.globalfreedomcenter.org

www.harvestofhope.org

www.hopeforjustice.org.uk

www.humantrafficking.org

www.humantraffickingfoundation.org

www.notforsalecampaign.org

www.stophetraffik.org

www.tinyhandsinternational.org

www.womensaid.org.uk

Appendix A

INDICATORS OF TRAFFICKING http://www.unodc.org/pdf/HT_indicators_E_LOWRES.pdf

GENERAL INDICATORS

People who have been trafficked may:

- Believe that they must work against their will
- Be unable to leave their work environment
- Show signs that their movements are being controlled
- Feel that they cannot leave
- Show fear or anxiety
- Be subjected to violence or threats of violence against themselves or against their family members and loved ones
- Suffer injuries that appear to be the result of an assault
- Suffer injuries or impairments typical of certain jobs or control measures
- Suffer injuries that appear to be the result of the application of control measures
- Be distrustful of the authorities
- Be threatened with being handed over to the authorities
- Be afraid of revealing their immigration status
- Not be in possession of their passports or other travel or identity documents, as those documents are being held by someone else
- Have false identity or travel documents
- Be found in or connected to a type of location likely to be used for exploiting people
- Be unfamiliar with the local language
- Not know their home or work address
- Allow others to speak for them when addressed directly
- Act as if they were instructed by someone else
- Be forced to work under certain conditions

- Be disciplined through punishment
- Be unable to negotiate working conditions
- Receive little or no payment
- Have no access to their earnings
- Work excessively long hours over long periods
- Not have any days off
- Live in poor or substandard accommodations
- Have no access to medical care
- Have limited or no social interaction
- Have limited contact with their families or with people outside of their immediate environment
- Be unable to communicate freely with others
- Be under the perception that they are bonded by debt
- Be in a situation of dependence
- Come from a place known to be a source of human trafficking
- Have had the fees for their transport to the country of destination paid for by facilitators, whom they must payback by working or providing services in the destination
- Have acted on the basis of false promises

CHILDREN

Children who have been trafficked may:

- Have no access to their parents or guardians
- Look intimidated and behave in a way that does not correspond with behaviour typical of children their age
- Have no friends of their own age outside of work
- Have no access to education

- Have no time for playing
- Live apart from other children and in substandard accommodations
- Eat apart from other members of the “family”
- Be given only leftovers to eat
- Be engaged in work that is not suitable for children
- Travel unaccompanied by adults
- Travel in groups with persons who are not relatives

The following might also indicate that children have been trafficked:

- The presence of child-sized clothing typically worn for doing manual or sex work
- The presence of toys, beds and children's clothing in inappropriate places such as brothels and factories
- The claim made by an adult that he or she has “found” an unaccompanied child
- The finding of unaccompanied children carrying telephone numbers for calling taxis
- The discovery of cases involving illegal adoption

DOMESTIC SERVITUDE

People who have been trafficked for the purpose of domestic servitude may:

- Live with a family
- Not eat with the rest of the family
- Have no private space
- Sleep in a shared or inappropriate space
- Be reported missing by their employer even though they are still living in their employer's house
- Never or rarely leave the house for social reasons
- Never leave the house without their employer
- Be given only leftovers to eat

- Be subjected to insults, abuse, threats or violence

People who have been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation may:

- Be of any age, although the age may vary according to the location and the market
- Move from one brothel to the next or work in various locations
- Be escorted whenever they go to and return from work and other outside activities
- Have tattoos or other marks indicating “ownership” by their exploiters
- Work long hours or have few if any days off
- Sleep where they work
- Live or travel in a group, sometimes with other women who do not speak the same language
- Have very few items of clothing
- Have clothes that are mostly the kind typically worn for doing sex work
- Only know how to say sex-related words in the local language or in the language of the client group
- Have no cash of their own
- Be unable to show an identity document

The following might also indicate that children have been trafficked:

- There is evidence that suspected victims have had unprotected and/or violent sex.
- There is evidence that suspected victims cannot refuse unprotected and/or violent sex.
- There is evidence that a person has been bought and sold.
- There is evidence that groups of women are under the control of others.
- Advertisements are placed for brothels or similar places offering the services of women of a particular ethnicity or nationality.
- It is reported that sex workers provide services to a clientele of a particular ethnicity or nationality.
- It is reported by clients that sex workers do not smile.

LABOUR EXPLOITATION

People who have been trafficked for the purpose of labour exploitation are typically made to work in sectors such as the following: agriculture, construction, entertainment, service industry and manufacturing (in sweatshops).

People who have been trafficked for labour exploitation may:

- Live in groups in the same place where they work and leave those premises infrequently, if at all
- Live in degraded, unsuitable places, such as in agricultural or industrial buildings
- Not be dressed adequately for the work they do: for example, they may lack protective equipment or warm clothing
- Be given only leftovers to eat
- Have no access to their earnings
- Have no labour contract
- Work excessively long hours
- Depend on their employer for a number of services, including work, transportation and accommodation
- Have no choice of accommodation
- Never leave the work premises without their employer
- Be unable to move freely
- Be subject to security measures designed to keep them on the work premises
- Be disciplined through fines
- Be subjected to insults, abuse, threats or violence
- Lack basic training and professional licences

The following might also indicate that people have been trafficked for labour exploitation:

- Notices have been posted in languages other than the local language.
- There are no health and safety notices.
- The employer or manager is unable to show the documents required for employing workers from other countries.

- The employer or manager is unable to show records of wages paid to workers.
- The health and safety equipment is of poor quality or is missing.
- Equipment is designed or has been modified so that it can be operated by children.
- There is evidence that labour laws are being breached.
- There is evidence that workers must pay for tools, food or accommodation or that those costs are being deducted from their wages.

BEGGING AND PETTY CRIME

People who have been trafficked for the purpose of begging or committing petty crimes may:

- Be children, elderly persons or disabled migrants who tend to beg in public places and on public transport
- Be children carrying and/or selling illicit drugs
- Have physical impairments that appear to be the result of mutilation
- Be children of the same nationality or ethnicity who move in large groups with only a few adults
- Be unaccompanied minors who have been “found” by an adult of the same nationality or ethnicity
- Move in groups while travelling on public transport: for example, they may walk up and down the length of trains
- Participate in the activities of organized criminal gangs
- Be part of large groups of children who have the same adult guardian
- Be punished if they do not collect or steal enough
- Live with members of their gang
- Travel with members of their gang to the country of destination
- Live, as gang members, with adults who are not their parents
- Move daily in large groups and over considerable distances

The following might also indicate that people have been trafficked for begging or for committing petty crimes:

- New forms of gang-related crime appear.
- There is evidence that the group of suspected victims has moved, over a period of time, through a number of countries.
- There is evidence that suspected victims have been involved