



Sermon outline

Introduction

The issue of human trafficking doesn't make for an easy sermon topic. There are no handy passages listed for it in the average concordance, and very little awareness of it amongst the average congregation.

But with over one million people being trafficked around the world each year, this is an issue which we need to find a 'Christian response' to, and that response has to be deeply rooted in the Scriptures, in who God has revealed himself to be, and in what he expects of us, his people.

We don't act to stop human trafficking because it is the latest craze, or even because it is something that needs doing. We do it because it is a preoccupation of God's heart. We take the lead from him.

1. What is God like?

Our motivation to act and pray on matters of injustice should always come from an understanding of who God is.

- He is gracious, compassionate, loving and just (Exodus 34:6-8)
- He is in the process of restoring his broken world; the momentum of his Kingdom is towards freedom, healing and salvation (Jeremiah 31)
- He does not leave his creation to its own devices; he actively works on behalf of those who suffer (Isaiah 42)

If our motivation is rooted in God's character, it will be both deep and long-lasting.

2. What are we like?

Despite God's goodness, humankind has ignored his intentions and distorted his creation.

- The sinful nature has a tendency to be selfish and corrupt (Galatians 5:17-21)
- 'Outward' sin is born in our attitudes (James 1:15-16)
- Even the godliest people sometimes get tempted to treat other human beings as objects (i.e. David and Bathsheba, 2 Samuel 12)

3. How does God react towards human trafficking

The Bible doesn't provide a nice, compact discourse from God on the subject, but his nature and character leave us in no doubt as to how he feels about the trafficking of human beings.

- Rescuing and caring for the poor and oppressed is intrinsic to God's very nature (Psalms 94 and 146)
- This desire to rescue characterises his interaction with humanity; Jesus' mandate was all about reaching the poor, the deceived and the enslaved (Luke 4:16-20)
- So strong is God's compassion for the used and abused that he chooses to identify completely with them; Jesus himself was trafficked (Matthew 26:1-16)

4. How should we react towards the issue of human trafficking?

A 'Christian response' to this issue is a response which takes the issue as seriously as God takes it. What grieves him should also grieve us — and cause us to be different.

Amos 5:

- Move it! — We must be ready to change, and to let God reset our agendas (vv4-6)
- Speak it! — We must be different in our attitudes: not allowing prejudice, arrogance or selfishness to creep into our speech and actions (vv14-15)
- Pray it! — We must be ready to let God's compassion move us to deep, heart-felt prayer (vv16-17)
- Stop it! — We are called upon to do whatever it takes (with our time, energy and finances) to bring about justice for those who need it (vv21-24)