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TOOLS FOR  
**WOMEN**

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**FAITH** **IN** **ACTION**



# FAITH IN ACTION

THE TOOLS WOMEN NEED  
**TO WIN THE BATTLE AGAINST  
THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**  
OF OUR CHILDREN

## **FIRST**

WATCH THE FILM *CHOSEN*,  
LOCATED ON THE FLASH  
DRIVE INCLUDED IN THIS KIT.

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## SEX TRAFFICKING: GOD'S PERSPECTIVE AND YOURS

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR WOMEN

#### + FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE...

*So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. —Genesis 1:27*

*And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person's life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in his own image. —Genesis 9:5-6*

What do these verses teach us of the value God places on every human life?

*Then the Lord told him, "I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt ... Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt."*

—Exodus 3:7-10

*Again, I observed all the oppression that takes place under the sun. I saw the tears of the oppressed, with no one to comfort them. The oppressors have great power, and their victims are helpless. —Ecclesiastes 4:1*

What do these passages reveal of God's heart for the oppressed?

#### + FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE AS A WOMAN...

How did Brianna's and Lacy's stories in the *Chosen* film impact you?

God's Word says, "Oppressors have great power and their victims are helpless." How did you see that truth play out between traffickers and their vulnerable young victims in *Chosen*?

What are some of the individual risk factors and vulnerabilities you recall from the video?

Take a moment to reflect back to when you were 13 to 17 years old. What were some of the things happening in your life during those years? If you were in Brianna's or Lacy's shoes, would you have been flattered by the same attention?

Think of the young people in your life today. What makes them susceptible to the tricks of predators?

What steps might you take to protect them?

**+ FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE...**

*And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. —Deuteronomy 6:5-9*

What does this passage teach you about communicating God's truth generation to generation? Where do you start? How and where do you carry it out?

*Charm is deceptive, and beauty does not last; but a woman who fears the Lord will be greatly praised. —Proverbs 31:30*

*Don't be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God. —1 Peter 3:3-4*

How would you restate these verses in your own words? How are they relevant in teaching young girls the truth and importance of inner beauty and strength of character, and in teaching young boys to value girls for their minds, skills, and talents?

How can we impart in girls from an early age that their value is not in their looks or how they dress, but is instead the strength of their character? Notice how often we say to little girls, "You're so pretty!" but to little boys we say, "You're brave. You're smart. You're strong." What steps can we take to change that in our culture?

**+ FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE AS A WOMAN...**

Today's youth are engaging in behaviors that put them at risk of falling prey to many different predators. How can we teach young girls to protect themselves and their friends? How can we teach young boys to be vigilant in protecting their friends and be watchful of threats against all victims, which include boys and girls?

Recalling the Deuteronomy 6, Proverbs 31, and 1 Peter 3 passages above, what steps can you take to address this matter, in your own life and circle of influence?

**+ FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE AND YOURS...**

*What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well!"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. —James 2:14-17*

You've seen *Chosen*. You've been made aware of this pandemic of human tragedy. How would your failure to act be akin to saying, "Good-bye, have a nice day, be warm and eat well," and walking away?

*Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. Rescue the poor and helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people. —Psalm 82:3-4*

*Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the cause of orphans. Fight for the rights of widows. —Isaiah 1:17*

What would God have us to do where the needy, oppressed, and victimized are concerned?

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice. —Proverbs 31:8-9*

How will you respond? What is ONE thing you can do to make a difference in the fight against sex trafficking? What will be your next move and when will you take this step?

## SMALL GROUP STUDY: LESSON 1

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

- What comes to mind when you hear the word *trafficking*?
- What do you know of sex trafficking today?

### Definitions

The root definition of *trafficking* is an illegal commercial activity—drugs or weapons trafficking, for instance. Trafficking is also used to describe the trading of human beings for purposes of exploitation—*human trafficking*.

*Sex trafficking* is human trafficking in which someone uses fraud, force, or coercion to cause a commercial sex act with an adult, or to cause **a minor** to commit a commercial sex act. Sex trafficking is a booming industry.

*Sex trafficking* does not require movement or transporting. Many minors are victimized right out of their own homes without parents or guardians being aware.

*Commercial sex acts* include pornography, prostitution, or sexual performance done in exchange for any item of value—things like money, drugs, shelter, food, or clothing.

As you can imagine, God's Word has much to say on these topics.

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll seek God's heart for the victims of sex trafficking and exploitation, and begin to piece together the framework for a Christian response.

### God's Heart

Read Psalm 72:12-14.

- What do you observe in this passage?
- What does this passage reveal of God's heart for the oppressed and victimized?

Read through some of these passages:

Exodus 3:7-10, Psalms 10:17-18, 68:5, 82:3-4, Ecclesiastes 4:1,  
Proverbs 21:15, 24:11-12, Matthew 18:12.

- What are your initial and general impressions of these passages?
- After considering these passages, how would you characterize God's heart for the hurting, downtrodden, and oppressed—for victims?

### The Worth and Dignity of Every Human Life

Read Genesis 1:26-27.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What do you think "in His own image" means?
- How does this verse speak to the worth and dignity of every human life?

- Do you believe God was intentional in His use of the words “male” and “female” spoken together in verse 27 to speak of equality in worth and against the world’s objectification of women, or treating a person as a commodity or an object, without regard for personality or dignity?

### **+ SESSION WRAP UP**

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- What light has our study shed on God’s heart for the victims of sex trafficking for you?
- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we’ve discussed this topic and these passages?

### **+ TAKING THE STUDY HOME**

This week, prayerfully reread the verses we’ve considered. Ask the Lord to shape your perspective on human trafficking—to let His Word read you, as you read it.

The objectification of women is not a new thing—it’s as old as time. Prayerfully read ahead and consider Genesis 38: the story of Judah’s objectification of women. He saw a woman as something to be bought for his own pleasure without considering her value and worth as an image bearer of God.

## SMALL GROUP STUDY: LESSON 2

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

- What comes to mind when you hear the word *slavery*?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word *prostitute*?

### Realities

Sex trafficking thrives because there is serious demand. *Buyers* fuel the market with their money. *Traffickers* or *pimps* exploit victims for the buyer's money. *Victims* include boys and girls, men and women bought and sold for profit.

Sex trafficking is spoken of as “the new slavery,” but there's nothing new about it—it's as old as time. What is new, however, are the channels through which buyers partake, and the avenues through which traffickers find and lure their victims.

Social media, the Internet, neighborhood hangouts, malls, clubs, bars, schools—all of these are the places traffickers are *actively* recruiting and trolling for victims.

God's Word offers historical context and eternal wisdom on this matter.

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll look at the story of Judah and Tamar, an emotional account of a woman objectified, and the story of a woman caught in adultery, revealing Jesus' heart of compassion.

### Judah and Tamar: He Never Saw Her Face

Read or review Genesis 38:14-26.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What do you observe of Judah's “buyer's mindset”?
- How is it, do you suppose, that Judah never recognized Tamar?
- How does Judah's outrage in verse 24 affect you?
- How do you come away feeling about Tamar? How do you feel about Judah?

### The Woman Caught in Adultery

Read John 8:1-11.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- How does Jesus' admonition of “If any of you is without sin, let him be the first to cast a stone” affect your heart toward this woman?
- What was the cultural practice of the day in the way the buyer and the woman were treated? How can that be changed in our culture today?
- What do you think His words “Go now and sin no more” were meant to do and how did Jesus hope to affect this woman?
- How is this story similar to the practice of sexual exploitation today?

### + SESSION WRAP UP

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- What light has our study shed on the topic of viewing women as objects of self-gratification?
- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we've discussed this topic and these passages?

### + TAKING THE STUDY HOME

- How did Jesus view women? How did He treat them? How did they respond to Him? Prayerfully spend some time in the Gospel of Luke this week. Consider Luke 7:11-17, 36-50, 10:38-42, 13:10-17, and 21:1-4. Give some thought to Jesus' respect for and treatment of women in contrast with and compared to His culture and the majority of society today.

## SMALL GROUP STUDY: LESSON 3

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

- What comes to mind when you hear the word *emancipation*?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word *freedom*?

### Truths and Consequences

Sex trafficking thrives because there is serious demand. *Those buying sex can be anyone*—professionals, students, tourists, military personnel, a family member, even members of a church.

*Viewing pornography* may be a solo act; however, the production of the material and the social and relational consequences of the behavior extend far beyond the individual.

Children and adults endure abuse at the hands of pornographers. The effects of pornography produce *skewed perception of healthy sexual behavior and boundaries*, impacting the viewer's personal relationship with a spouse or significant other.

Some couples view porn together for stimulation in their sexual relationship. How does the effect of normalizing deviant sex acts through porn move our society further away from healthy sexual behaviors?

Trafficked women and children face *an increased risk of violence or degradation* due to the normalization of deviant sex acts propagated through pornography.

How would God's Word have *you* respond?

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll look at Jesus Christ—the source of our freedom.

### Jesus, in His Own Words

Read John 4:1-26.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What does this passage teach us about redemption? Mercy? Grace?

Read Luke 4:14-21.

- What do you observe in this passage?
- How would you put into your own words what Jesus said of Himself in these verses?
- What did He mean saying that "this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing"?

Read through some of these passages:

Psalms 91:14-15, 118:5, John 8:32, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 2:16-17.

- What did you observe in these verses?
- What can we learn of emancipation and freedom from these passages?

### **Part of the Problem, or Part of the Solution?**

Read Luke 10:25-37.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- How can we use this passage to assess our own ability to help, as well as the risk to our own person in doing so? What is the wise course of action to take? For instance, the others may have been able to help by sending someone back with a donkey and supplies to help the man, but only the Good Samaritan had a donkey to offer immediate help.
- What can you see here regarding those who look the other way?
- How does the Good Samaritan's commitment to help the victim challenge you to find your own capabilities, talents, and skills?

### **+ SESSION WRAP UP**

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we've discussed this topic and passages?

### **+ TAKING THE STUDY HOME**

This week, prayerfully read ahead: Proverbs 31:8-9, Deuteronomy 6:5-9, Philippians 4:8-9.

## SMALL GROUP STUDY: LESSON 4

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

Today's youth are engaging in behaviors that put them at risk of falling prey to many different predators. How can we teach young people to protect themselves and their friends? How can we teach young men not to think of women and girls as objects?

#### What We Know

Sex traffickers use *relationships (pseudo love), fear, violence, intimidation, and threats* to ensure victim compliance and to *make a profit by supplying what the buyer demands*.

The common age a child enters sex trafficking is *between 14 and 16 years of age*—too young and naïve to realize what's happening. This isn't a scourge happening worlds away—*these are children in your neighborhood*, at the malls where you shop and in the schools your children attend.

Because of social stigma, misinformation, and *people looking the other way*, victims remain unidentified—silenced by fear and the control of the trafficker.

What tools do you have from God's Word that enable *you* to respond?

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll consider the steps we can take to address this matter in your own lives and circle of influence.

#### Teach by Example

Read Deuteronomy 11:18-20.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What does this passage say concerning lessons taught by example?

#### Teaching the Next Generation

Read Proverbs 31:30, 1 Peter 3:3-4, 3 John 1:4.

- What are your initial and general impressions of these passages?
- What can they convey to our children that will help combat the possibility of being lured into danger?
- What sort of action points do they give us?

### + SESSION WRAP UP

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- What light has our entire study shed on the topic of sex trafficking and your response?
- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we've discussed this topic and these passages?

**+ TAKING THE STUDY INTO APPLICATION**

- I will love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, and strength.
- I will embrace God's commands in my heart; seize opportunities to share them with the next generation; and live my life as if God's Word adorns my hands, forehead, and the doorpost of my dwelling.
- I will speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves and seek justice for those being oppressed or abused.
- I will not be silent where I can speak.

## SEX TRAFFICKING: GOD'S PERSPECTIVE AND YOURS

### SMALL GROUP STUDY: LEADER'S GUIDE

**Sex Trafficking: God's Perspective and Yours** is a four-week Bible Study and Discussion Group curriculum for women. It is outlined to include:

- God's heart for the victims of sex trafficking and exploitation, and the framework for a Christian response.
- The accounts of two women in the Bible who were objectified, and God's heart for them.
- A study of Jesus—the Author and Finisher of Freedom.
- Steps we can take to address this matter in your own lives and circle of influence.

The study follows the same pattern each week so that leader prep is minimal . . . Leaders should only need to prepare themselves by prayerfully reading through the Bible passages and questions in advance of each small group meeting.

Each week's study begins with **Opening Discussion** talking points—a brief introduction of and segue into the topic.

*[Hint: A little silence as people ponder is not a bad thing! Don't be quick to fill all open "air space," but let the group warm up.]*

Each week the **Study Section** begins with a **Stated Aim** followed by **Readings and Discussion Prompts**.

*[Hint: Notice there is a mention of "observations" included with each Bible passage. These can be the real gems of Bible study and small group interaction.]*

*[Hint: Depending on time, where several passages are listed, you may choose to have individuals read some or all of them, or perhaps even assign different verses to different participants. Once again, cultivate each participant's "observations" and allow time for rich discussion to develop. Be mindful that all in the group have the opportunity to share their thoughts, not only the 'talkers.']*

Each week's study concludes with a **Session Wrap Up** section.

*[Hint: Be sensitive to the possibility that different group members may come away with different impressions from the study—that's okay. God is at work—His Word never returns void, but always accomplishes His intended ends!]*

Each week's study also includes an invitation to **Take the Study Home**.

## LEADER'S GUIDE: LESSON 1

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

- What comes to mind when you hear the word *trafficking*?
- What do you know of sex trafficking today?

*[Leader: After opening with prayer, invite participants into an opening conversation. Be sure to allow ample time and space for participation. Encourage rumination over the opening questions as well as material in the "Definitions" section.]*

### Definitions

The root definition of *trafficking* is an illegal commercial activity—drugs or weapons trafficking, for instance. Trafficking is also used to describe the trading of human beings for purposes of exploitation—*human trafficking*.

*Sex trafficking* is human trafficking in which someone uses fraud, force, or coercion to cause a commercial sex act with an adult, or to cause a **minor** to commit a commercial sex act. Sex trafficking is a booming industry.

*Sex trafficking* does not require movement or transporting. Many minors are victimized right out of their own homes without parent or guardians being aware.

*Commercial sex acts* include pornography, prostitution, or sexual performance done in exchange for any item of value—things like money, drugs, shelter, food, or clothing.

As you can imagine, God's Word has much to say on these topics.

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll seek God's heart for the victims of sex trafficking and exploitation, and begin to piece together the framework for a Christian response.

*[Leader: Introduce the aim for the week and commence the Bible study portion. Again, be sure to encourage discussion and allow ample time for everyone to read the Bible passages and participate. Depending on how your group feels, you may elect to have passages read aloud.]*

### God's Heart

Read Psalm 72:12-14.

- What do you observe in this passage?
- What does this passage reveal of God's heart for the oppressed and victimized?

Read through some of these passages:

Exodus 3:7-10, Psalms 10:17-18, 68:5, 82:3-4, Ecclesiastes 4:1, Proverbs 21:15, 24:11-12, Matthew 18:12

- What are your initial and general impressions of these passages?

After considering these passages, how would you characterize God's heart for the hurting, downtrodden, and oppressed—for victims?

*[Leader: Allow participants to freely share observations. All of these passages reveal God's heart for the downtrodden and oppressed. Ask participants what they saw that suggested this. Things like "I have seen their misery" or "father to the fatherless" suggest His care for them and their plight, and His heart for their needs.]*

### **The Worth and Dignity of Every Human Life**

Read Genesis 1:26-27.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What do you think "in His own image" means?
- How does this verse speak to the worth and dignity of every human life?

Do you believe God was intentional in His use of the words "male" and "female" spoken together in verse 27 to speak of equality in worth and against the world's objectification of women, or treating a person as a commodity or an object, without regard for personality or dignity?

*[Leader: Participants may observe different words in these verses—the plural "Let us" and "our" or perhaps the words "image" and "likeness." Some may note the "male and female" inclusion in this verse. Allow them to share observations and thoughts freely. There are no right and wrong answers here; you're simply asking "What did you see?" Encourage participants to contrast the two verses, noting the different value assigned to humans over that of animals. God gave mankind responsibility and the cognitive ability and physical capacity to "rule" over the earth. You might also allow conversation to drift into what it means to bear a "likeness," say a child bearing a likeness to his or her father and probe how we, as God's children, resemble our heavenly Father. God bestowed us with worth and dignity in creating human beings to be His "image bearers."]*

### **+ SESSION WRAP UP**

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- What light has our study shed on God's heart for the victims of sex trafficking for you?
- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we've discussed this topic and these passages?

*[Leader: The Wrap Up is essentially your "debrief" opportunity. Your goal here is to wrap back around to the start by asking, "What have you come away with from the Bible verses read, from one another, and the discussions of the passages shared.]*

### + TAKING THE STUDY HOME

This week, prayerfully reread the verses we've considered. Ask the Lord to shape your perspective on human trafficking—to let His Word read you, as you read it.

The objectification of women is not a new thing—it's as old as time. Prayerfully read ahead: consider Genesis 38, the story of Judah's objectification of women. He saw a woman as something to be bought for his own pleasure without considering her value and worth as an image bearer of God.

*[Leader: Encourage participants to take the study with them into their week. Take a moment to actually read through the "assignment," using it as a preview for next week, before you close in prayer.]*

## LEADER'S GUIDE: LESSON 2

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

- What comes to mind when you hear the word *slavery*?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word *prostitute*?

*[Leader: After opening with prayer, invite participants into an opening conversation. Be sure to allow ample time and space for participation. Encourage rumination over the opening questions as well as the material in the Realities section.]*

### Realities

Sex trafficking thrives because there is serious demand. *Buyers* fuel the market with their money. *Traffickers* or *pimps* exploit victims for the buyer's money. *Victims* include boys and girls, men and women bought and sold for profit.

Sex trafficking is spoken of as “the new slavery,” but there's nothing new about it—it's as old as time. What is new, however, are the channels through which buyers partake, and the avenues through which traffickers find and lure their victims.

Social media, the Internet, neighborhood hangouts, malls, clubs, bars, schools—all of these are the places traffickers are *actively* recruiting and trolling for victims.

God's Word offers historical context and eternal wisdom on this matter.

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll look at the story of Judah and Tamar, an emotional account a woman objectified, and the story of a woman caught in adultery, revealing Jesus' heart of compassion.

*[Leader: Introduce the aim for the week and commence the Bible study portion. Again, be sure to encourage discussion and allow ample time for everyone to read the Bible passages and participate. Depending on how your group feels, you may elect to have passages read aloud.]*

### Judah and Tamar: He Never Saw Her Face

Read or review Genesis 38:14-26.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What do you observe of Judah's “buyer's mindset”?
- How is it, do you suppose, that Judah never recognized Tamar?
- How does Judah's outrage in verse 24 affect you?
- How do you come away feeling about Tamar? How do you feel about Judah?

*[Leader: Participants may or may not have read this before this week's gathering. Allow time to revisit the passage. Guide the observation section with the questions above. Judah didn't recognize Tamar because he was looking at her in only a sexual way—to him she was a faceless body, a prostitute to be used. He never asked her name or where she was from, but he entered into what was intended to be an*

*intimate act without even recognizing she was the widow of his own son. Contrast Judah's treatment of Tamar with God's heart in caring for widows from last week's study. Judah's outrage upon hearing his daughter-in-law had prostituted herself, yet seeing himself as guiltless for having bought sex from a prostitute, should provoke thought, conversation, and even reflection.]*

### **The Woman Caught in Adultery**

Read John 8:1-11.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- How does Jesus' admonition of "If any of you is without sin, let him be the first to cast a stone" affect your heart toward this woman?
- What was the cultural practice of the day in the way the buyer and the woman were treated? How can that be changed in our culture today?
- What do you think His words "Go now and sin no more" were meant to do and how did Jesus hope to affect this woman?
- How is this story similar to the practice of sexual exploitation today?

*[Leader: Participants will have different observations to share—someone may ask where the man is in this account, for instance. That's a great question! But the response of Jesus is the powerful point to develop. Emphasize observations shared which illuminate His love, compassion, grace, and mercy.]*

### **+ SESSION WRAP UP**

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- What light has our study shed on the topic of viewing women as objects of self-gratification?
- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we've discussed this topic and these passages?

*[Leader: The Wrap Up is essentially your "debrief" opportunity. Your goal here is to wrap back around to the start—asking, "What have you come away with?" and not just from the Bible verses read, but from one another and the interactions over the passages shared.]*

### **+ TAKING THE STUDY HOME**

How did Jesus view women? How did He treat them? How did they respond to Him? Prayerfully spend some time in the Gospel of Luke this week. Consider Luke 7:11-17, 36-50, 10:38-42, 13:10-17, and 21:1-4. Give some thought to Jesus' respect for and treatment of women in contrast with and compared to His culture and the majority of society today.

*[Leader: Encourage participants to take the study with them into their week. Take a moment to actually read through the "assignment," using it as a preview for next week, before you close in prayer.]*

## SMALL GROUP STUDY: LESSON 3

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

- What comes to mind when you hear the word *emancipation*?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word *freedom*?

*[Leader: After opening with prayer, invite participants into an opening conversation. Be sure to allow ample time and space for participation. Encourage rumination over the opening questions as well as material in the Truth and Consequences section.]*

### Truths and Consequences

Sex trafficking thrives because there is serious demand. Those buying sex can be anyone—professionals, students, tourists, military personnel, a family member, even members of a church.

*Viewing pornography* may be a solo act; however, the production of the material and the social and relational consequences of the behavior extend far beyond the individual.

Children and adults endure abuse at the hands of pornographers. The effects of pornography produce *skewed perception of healthy sexual behavior and boundaries*, impacting the viewer's personal relationship with a spouse or significant other.

Some couples view porn together for stimulation in their sexual relationship. How does the effect of normalizing deviant sex acts through porn move our society further away from healthy sexual behaviors?

Trafficked women and children face an *increased risk of violence or degradation* due to the normalization of deviant sex acts propagated through pornography.

How would God's Word have *you* respond?

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll look at Jesus Christ—the source of our freedom.

*[Leader: Introduce the aim for the week and commence the Bible study portion. Again, be sure to encourage discussion and allow ample time for everyone to read the Bible passages and participate. Depending on how your group feels, you may elect to have passages read aloud.]*

### Jesus, in His Own Words

Read John 4:1-26.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What does this passage have to teach us of redemption? Mercy? Grace?

*[Leader: In the story of the woman at the well, we get a glimpse of Jesus' gentle interaction with a woman with a bit of a checkered past—demonstrating Jesus gentleness, kindness, compassion, mercy, and grace.]*

Read Luke 4:14-21.

- What do you observe in this passage?
- How would you put into your own words what Jesus said of Himself in these verses?
- What did He mean saying that “this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”?

*[Leader: In this text, Jesus took the passage from Isaiah 61:1-2 and applied it to Himself. Allow participants to paraphrase the passage to help discover what Jesus was saying. What he was saying is that He is the One sent to fulfill God's redemptive plan. Words like “freedom” and “release,” terms like “preach good news” and titles like “the oppressed” and “the blind,” should all be thought-provoking and contextualizing—God cares! Jesus is His love, revealed.]*

Read through some of these passages:

Psalm 91:14-15, 118:5, John 8:32, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 2:16-17.

- What did you observe in these verses?
- What can we learn of emancipation and freedom from these passages?

*[Leader: Participants may note phrases like “he will call upon me and I will answer him” and “I will be with him in trouble,” or testimonies like “in my anguish I cried out to the Lord and He answered” as they relate to His heart for the hurting, victims of sex trafficking, as well as those enslaved to sexual addiction. Ours is a God of freedom, emancipation, redemption, and renewal.]*

### **Part of the Problem, or Part of the Solution?**

Read Luke 10:25-37.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- How can we use this passage to assess our own ability to help, as well as the risk to our own person in doing so? What is the wise course of action to take? For instance, the others may have been able to help by sending someone back with a donkey and supplies to help the man, but only the Good Samaritan had a donkey to offer immediate help.
- What can you see here regarding those who look the other way?
- How does the Good Samaritan's commitment to help the victim challenge you to find your own capabilities, talents, and skills?

*[Leader: Observations of all the individuals in this story are appropriate. Those who walked away, what might their motives have been? What risks and dangers might the Samaritan have faced in rolling up his sleeves to help? In the greater context of this story lies the question: Who is my neighbor? Allow participants to ponder the relationship of that question to those involved in the sex industry and our call to care...and help.]*

### + SESSION WRAP UP

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we've discussed this topic and these passages?

*[Leader: The Wrap Up is essentially your "debrief" opportunity. Your goal here is to wrap back around to the start by asking, "What have you come away with?" and not just from the Bible verses read, but from one another and the discussions of the passages shared.]*

### + TAKING THE STUDY HOME

This week, prayerfully read ahead: Proverbs 31:8-9, Deuteronomy 6:5-9, Philippians 4:8-9.

*[Leader: Encourage participants to take the study with them into their week. Take a moment to actually read through the "assignment," using it as a preview for next week, before you close in prayer.]*

## SMALL GROUP STUDY: LESSON 4

### + OPENING DISCUSSION

Today's youth are engaging in behaviors that put them at risk of falling prey to many different predators. How can we teach young people to protect themselves and their friends? How can we teach young men not to think of women and girls as objects?

*[Leader: After opening with prayer, invite participants into an opening conversation. Be sure to allow ample time and space for participation. Encourage rumination over the opening questions as well as material in the What We Know section.]*

### What We Know

Sex traffickers use relationships (*pseudo love*), *fear*, *violence*, *intimidation*, and *threats* to ensure victim compliance and to make a profit by supplying what the buyer demands.

The common age a child enters sex trafficking is *between 14 and 16 years of age*—too young and naïve to realize what's happening. This isn't a scourge happening worlds away—*these are children in your neighborhood*, at the malls where you shop and in the schools your children attend.

Because of social stigma, misinformation, and *people looking the other way*, victims remain unidentified—silenced by fear and the control of the trafficker.

What tools do you have from God's Word that enable *you* to respond?

### + STUDY AIM

In this week's study and discussion, we'll consider the steps we can take to address this matter in your own lives and circle of influence.

*[Leader: Introduce the aim for the week and commence the Bible study portion. Again, be sure to encourage discussion and allow ample time for everyone to read the Bible passages and participate. Depending on how your group feels, you may elect to have passages read aloud.]*

### Teach by Example

Read Deuteronomy 11:18-20.

- What are your initial and general impressions of this passage?
- What does this passage say concerning lessons taught by example?

*[Leader: This passage is akin to Deuteronomy 6:5-9 (part of last week's Taking it Home), and highlights the responsibility we have to teach by example. Observations may include the difference between "do as I say, not as I do" sorts of parental lapses. Philippians 4:8-9 (also part of last week's Taking it Home assignment) offers a most desirable challenge: as parents, to be able to look at our children and say, "Whatever you've heard me say AND whatever you've seen me do—you just do that!"]*

### Teaching the Next Generation

Read Proverbs 31:30, 1 Peter 3:3-4, 3 John 1:4.

- What are your initial and general impressions of these passages?
- What can they convey to our children that will help combat the possibility of being lured into danger?
- What sort of action point do they give us?

*[Leader: These are lessons we need to instill in our children, in the children of future generations—by word and deed; they learn by hearing it from us, and seeing it in us.]*

### + SESSION WRAP UP

Briefly revisit our opening discussion.

- What light has our entire study shed on the topics of sex trafficking and your response?
- How have the thoughts and observations of others challenged you as we've discussed this topic and these passages?

*[Leader: The Wrap Up is essentially your "debrief" opportunity. Your goal here is to wrap back around to the start by asking, "What have you come away with?" and not just from the Bible verses read, but from one another and the discussions about the passages shared.]*

### + TAKING THE STUDY INTO APPLICATION

- I will love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, and strength.
- I will embrace God's commands in my heart; seize opportunities to share them with the next generation; living my life as if God's Word adorns my hands, forehead, and the doorpost of my dwelling.
- I will speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves and seek justice for those being oppressed and abused.
- I will not be silent where I can speak.

## ACTION ITEMS FOR WOMEN

1. Host a screening of the film *Chosen* in your home for your neighbors and friends. Show it to your teens and their friends, and then have an open discussion afterward. Ask questions like, “What would you do if your friend was doing this? If this was happening to you?” “Has anything like this ever happened to you or a friend? Describe the instance.” (You’d be surprised how common these things are in our children’s lives.)
2. Read the book *Renting Lacy* to learn more about control tactics and coercion used by traffickers. Use the discussion guide questions in the back to share it with your son or daughter and their friends.
3. Bring Shared Hope International in to help! Request a training event or presentation for community members, your church group, your neighborhood, friends, or professionals. We can work with you to equip all individuals with the necessary skills to identify potential victims and provide appropriate responses.
4. Join the Shared Hope team by becoming an Ambassador of Hope at [sharedhope.org/aoh](https://sharedhope.org/aoh). Training is online and gives you the tools to be able to talk to anyone about the basics of sex trafficking; who the victims, buyers, and traffickers are; and how they operate.
5. Coordinate a fundraising drive or event for Shared Hope to help victims of trafficking throughout the U.S. and the world. Maximize the relationships and activities you are networked in, as well as your social media and online presence.
6. Ensure your community is protected with the right laws:
  - Review your state’s Report Card on the Shared Hope website ([sharedhope.org/reportcards](https://sharedhope.org/reportcards)) and send an email to your legislators asking that they review the analysis and recommendations for policy changes.
  - Contact Shared Hope if you are interested in setting up a meeting with your representative to discuss how he/she can strengthen your state laws. Shared Hope’s policy team can give you talking points and tips to be more effective.

## + LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

"My children are still young. How can I help protect them?"

- Talk to your kids about being safe and being aware of their surroundings.
- Teach your children early to have power over their own bodies and that their bodies are special.
- Teach them not to allow anyone to cross the boundaries they set. "If you aren't comfortable you can say 'STOP THAT!'"
- Don't force young children to hug or kiss anyone. Even their parents or grandparents. They need to know they have control.
- The book "**Good Pictures/Bad Pictures**" was created for a comfortable read aloud story with mom and dad to explain what pornography is, why it's dangerous, and how to reject it.

"My youngsters are always on their phones or on the Internet. What can I do to keep them safe?"

- Get Internet safety tips from professionals. Start early and be sure they understand you are only protecting them, not robbing them of their fun.
- If they are online, make sure it's in a public part of your home where you can see what they are viewing/doing.
- Talk with your kids! Speak with them about safe social media practices, the dangers of starting a conversation with someone they don't know, or only think they know, and why sharing too much personal information can be dangerous.
- Check their mobile devices and laptops regularly. Interact with them to explain any new apps they have loaded and their use. Be aware of privacy settings and check them regularly.

"As my children get older they resent my interference in their lives. How can I make them feel good about talking to me?"

- Talk openly with your kids, in a non-judgmental way, especially about relationships and healthy boundaries.
- Teach them how to respond to various threatening situations, including online threats.
- Teach them that you will always listen. Put away your phone or set aside other distractions, make eye contact, and *be present* no matter what they want to talk about.
- Teach them not to keep secrets and to tell you immediately if someone tells them NOT to tell.
- Bring them to a showing of *Chosen*. Sometimes they will listen to someone else.
- Create a "safe word" that they can use if they are ever feeling unsafe (for instance, "I'm hungry for pepperoni pizza."). Let them know you will immediately go pick them up without repercussions if they aren't where they are supposed to be. Always give them an out and confidence that you will be their ally.

"My child is very trusting, friendly, and obedient to authority. How do I protect them from being taken advantage of without scaring them?"

- Teach them to talk to you and not be afraid that you won't believe them. You will always listen to them.
- Lead by example that no one should ever be disrespectful, use physical force, or threaten them.
- Teach them their value and how they deserve to be treated. Build their esteem and confidence in something besides their looks and how they perform.
- Build them up as a smart, caring, hard-working, honest, amazing person (not just pretty or attractive physically).

"I hear about kids sending inappropriate pictures to one another. Is this a normal part of growing up?"

- Sexting is very dangerous because on the Internet those photos NEVER go away and you never know who is viewing them.
- They can never know who will see that photo, so don't send something you don't want everyone to see.
- You may like the boyfriend today but not like him next week. You don't want someone to have a photo of you that's very private.
- It's never appropriate to send a photo of yourself unclothed. EVER.

"I make sure my kids' phone has privacy settings on. Isn't that enough?"

- There are ways to hack into information that can easily bypass standard privacy settings. General rule: don't post anything that you don't want everyone to see/know.
- Teach your child to NEVER post personal location information, such as home address, school name, daily routine or schedule, or anything that would allow a predator to come find you.

"Sometimes my teenager dresses up her younger sister to look like she's a teen. It feels like it's a little too sexy. Am I just being old-fashioned?"

- By dressing her to look older, she may want to act older and do what older kids do; that could put her into a crowd that she's not emotionally mature enough to handle. Let her be a child and dress her appropriately for her age.
- Be sure your teenager is finding her worth in the things she does, and not how she looks. If she is completely obsessed with looking the way she perceives boys want her to look, she will be more vulnerable to traffickers' lies.
- Our culture objectifies women; making them objects to sell everything from cars to hamburgers. Teach your children that women and men are to be respected for who they are and their abilities, not their looks.

“My five-year-old loves to dance to all the latest hip-hop music. Sometimes it looks too sexual. Should I be alarmed?”

- Listen to the lyrics of all the songs your youngsters listen to, all the way up to young adults. You may be alarmed at some of the messages your kids are getting.
- Movements that are sexualized will condition your child to think that's normal.
- Protect your daughter from being culturally groomed to be valued for her sexy looks or moves; teach her that her body isn't for attracting others but for strength, grace, and fun. When she is older, anyone who values her solely for her body is not going to be a healthy relationship.

**+ FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**

HAVE A SAFE PASSWORD with your children of all ages.

- If anyone ever shows up and says they are to come with them (“Your mom has been hit by a car and she sent me to bring you to the hospital”), your child asks, “What is the password?” If that person doesn’t provide it correctly, the child knows to run and scream for help and not to go with them, no matter who it is.
- Keep passwords very simple (for instance the color Blue), but change it periodically.
- Make it a special occasion when you create the password so they remember it.
- Tell them this password is not to be shared with anyone but the immediate family. The parent will give it to anyone they send to pick up that child.

Give your kids OWNERSHIP of their body.

- As young as 18 months tell your children “Your body is all yours!”
- By 2–3.5 years old they know that their bodies belong to them and they can reserve certain parts as ‘private.’ Even if it’s something like holding hands or having a friend hug or kiss them, they have the right to say no if they don’t like it.

Consider and adapt the SWIMSUIT RULE.

- It used to be common to tell a child that no one should touch them in the private areas that a swimsuit covers.
- Research tells us that about 65% of sexual encounters with children happen with those who have an ongoing relationship with the child, so *Stranger Danger doesn’t work anymore*.
- Many predators begin with familiar back rubbing, stroking hair, sitting on the lap to make the child comfortable with them so they can move the boundaries of touch. By the time the abuser moves to sensitive “swimsuit” areas, it may be too late because the grooming process is fully underway.

EMPOWER THEM TO SAY “NO” loudly and repeatedly.

- Train your child that they can refuse any touch or space intrusion that makes them uncomfortable.
- Always stress that if someone touches them in a way that they don’t like, to tell that person to stop and always tell you about it.
- Keep the lines of communication open, and especially with talk about the private areas of our bodies. Be sure they know you will always believe them.

HELP THEM TRUST THEIR FEELINGS.

- Kids are safe when they are taught to trust how they feel.
- If touch from anyone makes them feel bad or uncomfortable, it is a bad touch.
- Respect their refusal to be tickled and don’t tease the child. If they say “stop,” even in the home, respect it.
- Have conversations about how they feel and their reactions.

## WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN IN SOMEONE ELSE'S CARE:

- When you ask your child in front of another adult upon pick-up: *"Did you listen? Were you good?"* or you ask that adult: *"Did she obey? Did he behave?"* you send the message: *"You are supposed to do whatever you are told by the person watching you while I am gone."*
- Wait until you are in the car, and then ask the correct questions privately after your child has been in someone else's care:
  1. "How did you spend your time?"
  2. "What was your favorite part of the day?"
  3. "What was your least favorite part of the day?"
  4. "Did anything make you sad?"
  5. "Did you feel safe?"
  6. "Is there anything you wish I knew?"











Shared Hope International | P.O. Box 65337 | Vancouver, WA 98665

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