

SERMON / TALK OUTLINE

INTRODUCING MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Begin by introducing the topic of modern slavery and human trafficking. Don't assume that your congregation will have heard about it before; some people might be surprised to hear that these issues are prevalent in the UK, as well as across the world.

Resources you could use:

- [Introduction to modern slavery](#)
- Video: '[What do you see?](#)' by Unchosen, available from their website
- Explore modern slavery and human trafficking in your local area. Search online for news stories from your local newspaper. You could share a story you read about in your sermon.

HOW HAS THIS ISSUE BECOME SUCH A BIG PROBLEM?

There are many reasons why modern slavery and human trafficking have taken such a foothold in our world. Bishop Alastair Redfern, the Bishop of Derby, describes it as a 'perfect storm' of four different factors:

1. A competitive economy which prizes profits over people, and often relies on agencies to recruit workers, creating a bigger gap between the employer and the employees.
2. The huge numbers of vulnerable people across the world, including millions of refugees who have been forced to leave their homes and seek shelter elsewhere.
3. A black market business model which is flexible, and takes advantage of new opportunities to exploit people.
4. The globalisation of indifference – the biggest challenge for Christians.

WHAT IS 'THE GLOBALISATION OF INDIFFERENCE'?

The 'Globalisation of Indifference' is a phrase used by Pope Francis in his 2013 Apostolic Exhortation '[Evangelii Gaudium](#)'. This document is a call to mission for the Church, and it also has a lot to say about the way we live in our modern world. Paragraphs 53 and 54 decry our focus on money and material goods when all around us inequality is rising.

"How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case of exclusion. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of inequality."

This indifference means we are ignorant to the many people around us who are suffering. The victims of modern slavery and human trafficking are hidden in plain sight, they are in our communities, perhaps even in our churches, but we are blind to their situation. **They need us to see them, and speak out.** We would encourage you to read the document in full, or you could also read Pope Francis' [Lenten Message of 2015](#), which again explores the idea of 'the globalisation of indifference'. He refers to both **Luke 16:19-31** and **1 Corinthians 12:26**, either of which you could use as inspiration for your own talk.

WHAT CAN THE CHURCH DO? SEE IT, SPEAK OUT.

In his [Lenten message of 2015](#), Pope Francis prays that churches would “become islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference”. Bishop Alastair Redfern encourages churches to be catalysts for change, to use their networks and gifts to highlight the modern slavery and human trafficking happening in their community.

What would it mean for your church to be an ‘island of mercy’? What is your church already doing as part of that mission? Where are you looking outward, and what opportunities are you missing to engage with people who could be victims of this injustice? You could encourage people to think about where your church is in touch with vulnerable people, and see if you could get the word out about modern slavery and human trafficking to them.

Read about Christian organisations tackling modern slavery and human trafficking here:

- [The Salvation Army](#)
- [The Clewer Initiative](#)
- [International Justice Mission](#)

WHAT CAN I DO? SEE IT, SPEAK OUT.

Open your eyes! Our communities need us to be more aware of what is going on. Encourage people to learn how to spot the signs of modern slavery and human trafficking and then report their suspicions to the police, or to the Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700. Don’t encourage people to rush to the ‘rescue’, as they are likely to put themselves, and the victim, in more danger.

Resources you could use:

- [Spot the signs video](#) from Unseen
- [Spot the signs poster and cards](#) from The Clewer Initiative
- [Stop App](#) from Stop the Traffik

FURTHER THEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Acts 12:1-11
- Matthew 16:13-19
- [A Theology of Modern Slavery](#) by the Ecumenical Mission Theology Advisory Group, available from The Clewer Initiative website
- All of the resources from Freedom Sunday 2016 are still available, and can be found on our website: www.freedomundayglobal.org