

What Does God's Word Say?

The abuse of one's identity and freedom is a justice issue. The biblical mandate for justice is spread throughout scripture. The following passages are provided to assist in your journey of understanding God's heart for justice and you are invited to prayerfully meditate on the texts below.

Psalm 10 (11 and 17, NRSV) | "They think in their heart, 'God has forgotten, he has hidden his face, he will never see it.' O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek, you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear..."

Psalm 82:3-4 (NRSV) | "Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

Isaiah 58:6 (MSG) | "This is the kind of fast day I'm after: to break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts."

Isaiah 1:10-17 (verse 17, TNIV) | "...learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow."

Micah 6:6-8 (verse 8, TNIV) | "He has shown all you people what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Luke 4:14-21 (verse 18, TNIV) | "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, **to set the oppressed free.**"

Luke 11:37-44 (verse 42, MSG) | "I've had it with you! You're hopeless, you Pharisees! Frauds! You keep meticulous account books, tithing on every nickel and dime you get, but manage to find loopholes for getting around basic matters of justice and God's love. Careful bookkeeping is commendable, but the basics are required."



January 11 is Human Trafficking Awareness Day, a time to pay attention to the realities of what is often referred to as modern day slavery. During the month of January, you are encouraged to learn about trafficking in persons and become an advocate for those victimized by such human rights abuse. Use the Sunday closest to this date to focus on the issue during worship.

1. Plan a **worship service** with a human trafficking theme.
2. Plan a **community awareness event** in your community. Speaker ideas: local coordinator of a human trafficking awareness organization, police department, Salvation Army, domestic abuse shelter.
3. Host a **Human Trafficking Mission Fair** for local churches in your community. Invite local organizations to have a table and display; make displays on the “Set Them Free” campaign; have a speaker; have a dinner with a free-will offering to benefit the “Set Them Free” projects; host a Fair Trade Marketplace (visit Ten Thousand Villages website (www.tenthousandvillages.com) or Thistle Farms website (www.thistlefarms.org) for information on how to host a party.
4. Ask your local **library to have a display** in the month of January on books in their library on the issue of human trafficking. Make a display board to place with the book display.
5. Write **letters to the editor of your local newspaper** on the issue or write a guest commentary on the issue for the paper.
6. Have an **awareness/action event** to support a local human trafficking abolitionist or outreach organization.
7. Invite women in your community to a **Human Trafficking Awareness breakfast** with a speaker.
8. Hold a **book discussion** using a book on the topic of human trafficking. *Redeeming Love* by Francine Rivers is a great book for this. You might want to do this in conjunction with your local library.
9. **Movie Night** – show a movie and have a discussion afterwards.
10. **Prayer Walk/Candlelight Vigil** – plan a prayer walk in your community bringing awareness that human trafficking happens in every community. End at your town center or a church with candles and a time of prayer.
11. **Decorate the outside of your church** with lights, purple ribbons, and a Set Them Free banner so that your church will be a beacon of light on this issue in the month of January.
12. Organize an **Offering of Letters** during the month of January. Write, call, or email members of Congress asking for their support on human trafficking legislation.

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National Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888