



PROSTITUTION AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

FOR HIGHSCHOOL
STUDENTS

ARPACANADA.ca

SUMMARY

This lesson is intended to get students to do something proactive in response to the societal problems associated with prostitution. Further, it provides opportunities for students to think about their own attitudes toward the sins that contribute to the terrible sex industry.

For more information or to give feedback, contact info@arpacanada.ca

PROSTITUTION AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

OVERVIEW

Human trafficking is one of the major social justice issues of our time.

There are millions of men and women, boys and girls who are victims of this crime today. Despite this, many people aren't aware that it is going on. Many activists say that one of the most important ways to deal with this problem is to educate ourselves about it.

The purpose of this lesson plan is to introduce the issue of human trafficking and its connection to prostitution in an age-appropriate manner to high school students. This knowledge can motivate them to be advocates against human trafficking and prostitution as well as be able to identify behaviour that may be linked to human trafficking in the real world.

When people think of human trafficking and the sex trade, they often think of Eastern Europe and South-East Asia. Although issues with human trafficking are deep and serious in these regions, Canada is also a part of this industry. Canada is both a destination and transit country for victims of human trafficking. Even more people are

trafficked entirely within Canada, with Indigenous women being the most likely to be trafficked.

The most common reason for human trafficking is for prostitution. For decades, prostitution was all but illegal in Canada, but the Supreme Court struck down Canada's anti-prostitution laws in 2013. The government's response was Bill C-36. This bill puts the criminal focus on those who buy the services of a prostitute. In effect, it is a crime to purchase, but not to sell, sexual services. There are strict restrictions on the advertisement of these services as well. This is intended to reduce the demand for prostitution, protect the prostitutes, and also protect communities from the harm caused by prostitution.

This law is currently under review by the courts in Canada to see if the law is constitutional. Other laws backed by Christian morals – laws prohibiting abortion, euthanasia, and same-sex marriage, for example – have been repealed. Will Canada's laws on prostitution be the next to be eliminated or will they withstand the pressure to change?

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How does prostitution and human trafficking affect Canada?

This question is intended to get students to do something proactive in response to the societal problems associated with prostitution. Further, it provides opportunities for students to think about the underlying sinful desires that underlie prostitution and human trafficking and equips them to be able to identify and resist behaviours that start the trafficking process.

EXPLAIN THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND PROSTITUTION

Distribute *Handout 1 – Introduction* and have the students read through the article to familiarize themselves with the topics of prostitution and human trafficking. Give opportunity for discussion and questions.

ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

Watch the film *Priceless* as a class. (The movie may be found on streaming services like Amazon Prime, Netflix, or YouTube, and potentially at your local library.) *Priceless* is a film made by Christian filmmakers revolving around *For King and Country's* song *Priceless* that conveys the horrific nature of prostitution and human trafficking in a non-graphic way. The film is rated PG-13 primarily because of the overall topic; the movie is clean when it comes to language and depictions of sexual content. Teachers are still encouraged preview the movie or check its review on [Plugged In](#) to ensure age-appropriateness and classroom suitability.

EVALUATE THE FILM

After watching the movie, lead a class discussion on the themes of the film. In particular, consider:

- How were Antonia and Maria trafficked?
- What lie was told that convinced them to consent to be smuggled over the border?
- How did the blonde female assistant to Garo say that she was trafficked?
- What lie was told that convinced them to consent to be smuggled over the border?

ENGAGE THE STUDENTS TO WRITE TO THEIR MP

- How did Garo and his assistants control Antonia and Maria?
- How might this experience of being trafficked affect Antonia and Maria for the rest of their lives?
- Why did the policeman and even Dale for so long turn a blind eye to the prostitution and human trafficking that was going on?
- How might law enforcement be better equipped to prevent prostitution and human trafficking?

Have the students visit <https://www.parl.ca/legisinfo/en/bills>, which lists all the bills currently being considered by the House of Commons and the Senate. Have the students search the list of bills for ones dealing with prostitution or human trafficking. (Hint: have students search the page by hitting *Ctrl + F* and searching for the terms “trafficking,” “sex,” or “prostitution.”) Have the students read through the title of any current relevant bills and perhaps the contents of the bill to see whether they think it is a good or bad bill.

Have each student write a persuasive letter or email to your MP that addresses prostitution and human trafficking from a biblical perspective or from a public health and safety perspective. If there is a current bill being considered, have them frame the letter in support or opposition to that bill. If no relevant bills are currently being considered, have the students write a generic letter about the evils of prostitution and human trafficking.

Note that [ARPA's EasyMail system](#) has several pre-formatted letters that can be used to provide assistance in writing a letter or an email to MPs.

INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is one of the major social justice issues of our time.

There are millions of men and women, boys and girls who are victims of this crime today. Despite this, many people aren't aware that it is going on. Many activists say that one of the most important ways to deal with this problem is to educate people about it. So, what is human trafficking?

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, harbouring, and/or exercising control over the movements of a person in order to exploit that person, typically through sexual exploitation or forced labour. It is often described as a modern form of slavery. It happens most commonly to women and girls who are forced into prostitution, but others are affected as well.

Victims are commonly 'recruited' by traffickers with the promise and hope of reward. Sometimes traffickers spoil young girls with all kinds of gifts, only to trap them by eventually forcing them to pay back their 'debt'. Some victims move to Western countries hoping for a better future, only to come under the control of traffickers. It is hard for victims to leave because they are afraid they or their families will be injured or even killed if they attempt to escape. When victims are trafficked to a country with a different language they feel, and are, even more isolated.

Human trafficking is a big and growing problem. The UN estimates that this industry generates \$32 billion annually for its perpetrators, and it is only growing. Over the past two decades, the trafficking of women and girls was the fastest growing criminal activity in western Europe. This trend has direct links to the legalization of prostitution. In the five years after prostitution

was legalized in the Netherlands, the number of child prostitutes increased by 300%! Women who are victimized in the sex trade are under the control of their handlers or pimps. They are abused, mistreated, and forced to live in horrible conditions.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CANADA?!

When people think of human trafficking and the sex trade, they often think of Eastern Europe and South-East Asia. Although issues with human trafficking are deep and serious in these regions, Canada is also part of this industry. Canada is both a destination and transit country. This means that people are trafficked to and from Canada, as well as within Canada. Indigenous women are the most likely to be trafficked.

Human trafficking occurs most commonly in larger urban areas for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Since the government and RCMP have started gathering information and looking more closely for cases of human trafficking, incidents have been uncovered all over the country. It is easy to find news stories about human trafficking across Canada.

In many of these cases, victims were kept in subdivisions and regular homes. It can be hard to tell which people are victims of trafficking because they are forced to act 'normal' and can face serious consequences if they even hint that something is wrong. This knowledge is chilling and emphasizes the need for urgent action.

DEEPER ISSUES

Perhaps the biggest issue is the high demand for human slaves. Our culture is driven by self-seeking and self-gratifying behaviour. Greed drives the trade of forced labour. Lust drives the sex trade. The desire for money leads some to

coerce others into slave labour. The desire for sex drives men to treat women and children as objects of their pleasure. These desires are so strong that the value of human life is totally disregarded.

Some countries have legalized prostitution in hopes that it could serve as a solution to many of these problems, but as we pointed out earlier, this backfired badly in Amsterdam.

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

What does the Bible say about all this? We confess in the Heidelberg Catechism that we are inclined to hate God and our neighbour (Q&A 5). Humanity is depraved. God gave us His holy law as a guide to our actions. We confess with David in Psalm 19 that the law of the LORD is perfect. Yet it seems as if sexual sins are now acceptable, considered normal, and even celebrated in our society. We must not forget the reality that people's enslavement to sin and lust causes the enslavement of young women to pimps and traffickers. To deal with the problem of human trafficking, it will be necessary to control our own desires, greed, and lust. God is the only good master. He knows what is good for us because He created us. Through Christ we are no longer slaves to sin, but slaves to righteousness (Romans 6).

WHAT IS OUR GOVERNMENT DOING?

In 2012, the Canadian government launched the "National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking." This action plan created a law enforcement team with a mandate to specifically target human trafficking. It aimed to train law enforcement officials, raise awareness in communities, and provide more support for victims. This action plan also aimed to improve coordination between Canadian and international agencies to better deal with cross-border human trafficking.

Two amendments to Canada's Criminal Code have also been enacted: Bill C-268, in 2010, created a new offence for child trafficking with a five-year mandatory penalty. Bill C-310 in 2012 allows the Canadian government to prosecute Canadian

citizens and permanent residents who engage in trafficking outside of Canada and enhances the definition of exploitation in the "trafficking of persons" offence. Activists welcome these changes, but more can be done to free and protect people from human trafficking.

Some have suggested that prostitution be legalized. They argue that if it is regulated by the government, "sex workers" would have more protection. It would give prostitutes more power in choosing their clients and controlling their working conditions. If prostitution is illegal, they argue, prostitutes are afraid to go to the police and report abuse since their livelihood will be taken away from them and they could be charged themselves. However, there are many who oppose this view, believing that prostitution should always be illegal because it is wrong to commodify human bodies.

At the end of 2013, the Supreme Court struck down Canada's anti-prostitution laws. The government's response was Bill C-36. This bill puts the focus on the buyers of the services of a prostitute. So, in effect, it is a crime to *purchase*, but not to sell, sexual services. There are strict restrictions on the advertisement of sexual services as well. This is intended to reduce the demand for prostitution, protect the prostitutes, and also protect communities from the harm caused by prostitution. This law is currently under review by the courts in Canada to see if the law is constitutional.

Some courageous Christians and politicians are doing their best to combat prostitution and human trafficking. Member of Parliament Arnold Viersen successfully led efforts to have Pornhub, an online pornography company based in Canada, remove the majority of its content, content that was often extracted from victims of human trafficking. MP Viersen has also introduced the Stopping Internet Sexual Exploitation Act (the SISE Act) twice in recent years in an effort to ensure that human traffickers cannot profit from pictures of their trafficked victims online.

