

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the trade in people and according to the UN has three parts:

The act: recruiting, transporting, receiving people...

The means: ... through force, fraud, lies, bullying, false promises...


The purpose: ... for the sex trade, the drug trade, forced labour, domestic servitude, illegal adoption, sham marriage, organ removal.


Human trafficking can be any of these: a girl promised a job as a cleaner but forced into prostitution; a woman forced into marriage; a jobless young man lured into street dealing of drugs; a domestic worker having her identity documents taken away and forbidden to leave the house.


The International Labour Organization counted 25 million people in forced labour and 15 million people in forced marriage on any given day in 2016. Of these modern slavery victims, 71% were women and girls.

Human trafficking has become a more lucrative trade than arms or drug trafficking, and the penalties for being caught are generally less. As a result, there is strong incentive for traffickers to deal in humans rather than weapons or drugs.



 Pray that the Christian movement will live out the gospel command to 'set the oppressed free' (Luke 4:18). Part of this is raising our own awareness of the exploitative practices around us; part is responding to what we learn.

 Pray for God's blessing on local, national and international initiatives to tackle human trafficking. Some Christian groups, such as the Salvation Army, have a distinguished history in this fight, stretching back more than a century.

 Pray for discernment in law-enforcement agencies. Often they catch low-level criminals (prostitutes, drug sellers or cannabis farmers for example) while missing the powerful networks who trafficked them into crime.

The Korean peninsula was divided at the end of WWII into a Communist North and a capitalist South. Christianity has been present in the Korean peninsula since Catholic missions entered in the 17th century.

NORTH KOREA

North Korea (population 25.6 million) is a famously bellicose, reclusive and repressive state, propped up by China, and ruled by generations of the Kim family. According to North Korea's own website it is 'a genuine workers' state in which all the people are completely liberated from exploitation and oppression.' According to the UN, 'The gravity, scale, duration and nature of the unspeakable atrocities committed in [North Korea] reveal a totalitarian State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world.'

North Korea has been for decades the world's worst persecutor of Christians. According to the agency Open Doors, out of an underground Christian population of 200,000 to 400,000 people, around 50,000-70,000 Christians are imprisoned, in dreadful conditions.





SOUTH KOREA


South Korea – in contrast – has seen the gospel produce a great harvest. The Church grew powerfully in the second half of the twentieth century, alongside a rising tide of national prosperity, to around 30% of the 51 million population. It was blessed by fervent prayer and revival. South Korea is home to some of the world's largest churches. It is second only to the USA in sending missionaries overseas. Christians are prominent and influential in politics and business.

These harvest years may have passed unless God intervenes. Church growth has stagnated since the 1990s, and the Church struggles with scandal, wealth, splits and power struggles.



 North Korea: Pray 'for protection for secret believers, for comfort for imprisoned believers, and that one day soon the people of North Korea will be free to follow Jesus without fear' (Open Doors).

 South Korea: Praise God for this remarkable, indigenous Asian Church. Pray that South Korean Christianity will regain its first love for Jesus.

 Pray for the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula through Christ.