

Not for Sale – Bible Study & Journal Companion
Series Six

First Encounter: Day 1 Reflections

This week we will explore the complexity of human trafficking, the inability to view every aspect of the issue as “black vs. white.” As we have previously examined, labels such as “good” and “evil” do not always apply as neatly as we might prefer. This week we will wrestle with the complexity of those labeled “children” and those likely called “heroes.” Start your journey by reading Chapter 4 of *Not For Sale*, where you will meet Lucy Borja.

It has been said that heroes are made, not born, and it is likely that many we call “heroes” sought not so much to perform heroic deeds but rather simply to do what was right. Such is the case with Lucy Borja, whose kindness in inviting two boys to spend the night at her office spawned an entire movement that has led her to challenge local authority, question the practices of her government, and face off with Peru’s President Fujimori. Her refusal to ignore the suffering and struggles of Lima’s street children led her life in a direction that she likely never envisioned.

Sandra’s life led in a direction she probably never envisioned either. We first meet Sandra as a child, an 8-year-old who quickly learns a harsh lesson about survival. Sandra is likely one of the individuals you find challenging to label.

Are these the words that come to mind when you think of a sex trafficker: big, ugly, mean, greasy, slimy, dirty, and male?

These, however, are the words that describe Sandra, a real sex trafficker living in Lima: petite, mother, teen, and female. Sandra was a victim who is now a trafficker.

Why do labels matter? This chapter deals with the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, children who have been labeled by their culture as “street children.” That label seems to make them less valuable somehow than other children. Labels matter, because we use them – sometimes subconsciously – to determine how we “see” people.

Let’s begin this week’s exploration by looking at God’s Word regarding eyes and sight.

Focus on the Biblical Text: Luke 11:33-36

³³“No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand so that those who enter may see the light. ³⁴Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. ³⁵Therefore, be careful, lest the light in you be darkness. ³⁶If then, your whole

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 2- edited

body is light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you **light**.”

Comment [ITS1]: John, this is NOT the NIV version. Please help me find the correct translation.

Day 1: Thoughts into Action

Seeking Healthy Eyes

Sandra’s story is just heartbreaking. Her own mother and grandmother sent her to the streets at eight years old. They were so absorbed with their own needs that they put upon this young child the burden of providing for herself. No wonder her heart grew hard. Survival became her motivation. A drive was instilled in her to get money, regardless of how her actions affected others. She is participating in a cycle of abuse that is replayed over and over. She is both victim and perpetrator, challenging to label or easily categorize as “good” or “evil.”

Consider the passage from Luke. How healthy are your eyes? What darkness is inside of you? Is there a drive that has been instilled in you that points you toward any harmful goal?

Allow the Spirit of God freedom to search your heart. The Spirit will gently reveal any darkness if you will only listen. “Your whole body is light, having no part dark.” Can you imagine yourself this way? What would that be like for you?

Activity: What is the first thing that comes to your mind when think of the label “prostitute”? What about “pimp”? Using the space below, list five adjectives each to describe these labels.

Do you find it odd that individuals dress up as “Pimps” or “Women of the Night” for Halloween? Do you find it odd that pimps are glorified in popular music and movies – and even honored at events like the “Pimps Ball”? Is it all just fun and games to glamorize the fashion, mannerisms, and language associated with pimps?

What about all of the euphemisms we use for prostitutes: working girls, women of the night, part of the oldest profession? Why don’t we use more accurate labels: women for sale, exploited females, or rape victims?

Write a prayerful response to your reflections on how labels, stereotypes, and euphemisms frame the individuals who are part of sex trafficking: those who exploit and those who are exploited.

Day 1: Prayer of Response

Lord, Creator of the Universe, You who brings light out of darkness, I ask that you make me an ambassador of light. Your light, God, can illuminate even the darkest of situations.

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 2- edited

Please help me to think about how I see people, how I label people, and how that impacts my willingness to reach out to them. I pray especially for Sandra, and all who are making similar choices. I lift up her life to You and pray that You touch the darkness inside of her. I pray for the boys and girls who are enslaved by such darkness. Amen.

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 2- edited

Second Encounter: Day 2 Reflections

Batstone's research reveals that a common strategy emerges for those involved in child sex trafficking across the five continents he investigated:

- Recruitment
- Extraction
- Control
- Violence
- Exploitation

The poor and uneducated are the easiest targets. The traffickers know the wealthy and educated are more likely to rally resources to search for an abducted child. They move the children because they know the heart of humans; we are more empathic to a child we know than a child we don't know.

Yet, we must shout: *Children are NOT prostitutes!*

Day 2: Focus on the Biblical Text: Psalm 59:1-5

¹Deliver me from my enemies, O God; protect me from those who rise up against me.

²Deliver me from evildoers and save me from bloodthirsty men. ³See how they lie in wait for me! Fierce men conspire against me for no offense or sin of mine, O Lord. ⁴I have done no wrong, yet they are ready to attack me. Arise to help me; look on my plight! ⁵O LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, rouse yourself to punish all the nations; show no mercy to wicked traitors. Selah. [NIV]

Day 2: Thoughts into Action Deliver the Children

It would seem as though the statement "*children are NOT prostitutes*" would make common sense. A pre-pubescent child should not even be considered an option for sex.

In that regard, a line from *Not For Sale* really kicks the reader in the "gut": "Of course a child would not volunteer for the repeated trauma of ten (or more) grown men penetrating their bodies every evening. We have a word for exploiting minors that way: rape" (pp. 203-204).

Activity: Imagine the child abused in this way offering up this Psalm in prayer to the Lord. Imagine their heart as they cry out these words. Write your own prayer for these children. Don't forget to take this burden to the cross, and leave it there. Jesus can bear it. It was exactly for this that he died.

Comment [ITS2]: John and Wex: Are you bothered by this statement? I don't agree with it, and I'm not sure that is human nature.

Comment [ITS3]: John, I'm very uncomfortable with this section. I think it needs to deal more with how God delivers – how He delivers the Israelites from slavery or how He delivers David to safety when Saul is trying to kill him, or how He delivers somebody in the New Testament (running out of examples here!).

If we go with this theme for "delivering the children," maybe we could nix the Digging Deeper section and talk about Esther – her courage and strength leading to the deliverance of men, women and children alike. I'd like to draw a parallel to Lucy and Esther. Is that too big a jump to make?

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 2- edited

Day 2: Digging Deeper

Check out the Not for Sale Campaign website:

<http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/generacion.html>

Comment [ITS4]: WEX: Is this a permanent part of the website? If not, I'm hesitant to put it here.

There you can hear the voice of Lucy Borja's son as he tells the story of how they became abolitionists.

"A heroic path...begins with a humble act that opens a gate into a new universe" (p 99). Lucy didn't start out with a five-year strategic plan to have several micro-enterprise programs, a surfing program, and housing projects as refuge centers. But she had a heart of compassion and was willing to respond when confronted with a problem. She thinks creatively, searching for solutions, and, probably most importantly, acts on those ideas, regardless of obstacles.

Maybe you are asking yourself, "Sure, but what can I do?"

Check out this blog, <http://voluntourists.blogspot.com/2008/03/lima-peru.html>

The blog shares a tale of people who did *something*. What are you being called to do? We're not asking for a five-year plan. You don't need to develop a comprehensive strategy to eradicate slavery. (But, hey, we won't stop you if that is your calling.) You may not even be called to get on a plan tomorrow to volunteer. But right now, today, what step could you do that could lead someone to greater freedom?

Are you willing to act upon it?

Day 2: Prayer of Response

Lord, Great Redeemer and Divine Parent to us all! I cry out to You and ask that You give all children their rightful titles, their rightful names, and their rightful roles. Children are not prostitutes; they are precious dear people, created with dynamic personalities, gifts, and talents within them right from conception. They need safety, security, and freedom for these to develop so they can be launched into this world, offering their unique contribution to our society. Help me to never forget my own true name as one of Your children and help me to see all children through Your eyes, taking powerful steps to protect, nourish, and love them in your name. Amen.

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 2- edited

Third Encounter: Day 3 Reflections

If this chapter of *Not For Sale* teaches us one thing, it is this: Things are not always what they initially appear to be. Just as Sandra is not what you would expect in a local sex trafficker, Lucy Borja learns the hard way that the clientele who keep child prostitution in business are not what you would expect, either.

We are all guilty of Lucy's mistake. We can all think of someone we misjudged. We thought one thing to be true about a person only to be completely surprised when something different, whether better or worse, emerged as truth. We must be firmly grounded in the most present reality to fully and adequately engage the suffering associated with human trafficking.

Comment [ITS5]: This last sentence seems to come out of nowhere. Thoughts on how to conclude this section?

Day 3: Focus on the Biblical Text: Psalm 46:9-11

⁹He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, he burns the shields with fire. ¹⁰“Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” ¹¹The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. (NIV)

Day 3: Thoughts into Action Be Still

Lucy exhibits a rare human quality: the ability to exist peacefully in what most would consider a stark reality and work with hope towards a better future. She doesn't try to pretend something exists that isn't really there. She doesn't pretend children aren't exploited so that she can be more popular or live easier. She doesn't use any illicit means to exploit or condemn those with whom she comes in contact. Lucy has incredible integrity.

“Be still and know that I am God.”

Let yourself be still, listen to some soft music. Let yourself just sit in the present with the knowledge of the world before you. Take at least 10 minutes to simply be still.

Activity: Make a list of all the tasks you engaged in yesterday. (If your list does not fit in the space provided, please write it on a separate sheet of paper.) At the moment of the list, note how many hours you were awake yesterday. Convert the hours to minutes by multiplying your number by 60. Now write the total number of minutes you spent yesterday being still and quiet.

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 2- edited

Day 3: Digging Deeper

Why is it so challenging for us to be still? Why does God demand that we are to be still and know that He is God?

When asked why they struggle with being still, many individuals respond with a statement that includes the word “busy.” Books have been written about *The Hurried Child*; teens and college students speak honestly about their need to multitask and their skills in doing so; and adults flock to workshops on time management skills. Seemingly every member of our society is stressed out over lists of activities that cannot be completed in a 24-hour period.

Can “busy” become an excuse for us – an aspect of pretending? Do we stay busy with tasks so we don’t have time to think of weighty, difficult issues? Do we use our to-do lists as excuses for inaction? Should we be “busy” but with different tasks? Reflect on 2 Thessalonians 3:13: “And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.”

God wants us to be still in His presence, hear His whisper, and then engaged in “doing what is right.” It’s a two-step process. We must slow down to hear His direction and then focus on His to-do list for our lives. Take another 10 minutes to focus only on Him, not the list of things you want to accomplish today. Be still.

Day 3: Prayer of Response

God of all Creation, I honor you. Fix my eyes steadfastly upon You as my Maker, my Prince of Peace, my Comforter. Let me be still in the face of even the greatest evil, knowing deep in my soul that You are God and in You I find my purpose. Give me the courage I need to see reality and live in hope as I take the next step that becomes clear from spending time with You. Amen.

Fourth Encounter: Day 4 Reflections

Oh, the dangerous games adults play.

“...Kanashiro proudly announced to a television audience that the national government had set aside \$5 million to resolve ‘the problem of street children’.... [Lucy Borja] proposed that rather than use government funds to punish exploited children, the money should be used to open ‘healthy homes’ for them.... Kanashiro was livid at being upstaged...” (p. 213).

It’s so easy to see how Kanashiro missed the mark, how she reacted poorly and exposed herself as self-interested more than child-interested. It’s much harder to see in ourselves how we also seek our own selves before the “other-centered” causes we’re surrounded by. Much harder.

Day 4: Focus on the Biblical Text: Psalm 25:1-11

¹To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me. Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long. Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies. For your name’s sake, O Lord, pardon my guilt, for it is great.

Comment [ITS6]: John, not NIV. Not sure where to put verse numbers.

Day 4: Thoughts into Action What’s Your Job?

Do you ever feel like your “guilt...is great” like the Psalmist expressed?

Activity: Read Psalm 25 three times following these directions:

- First Time: Draw a triangle around the words that describe who God is and what God is like.
- Second Time: Draw a circle around what God does.
- Third Time: Draw a square around what it is that we are to do, what our role is.

Invite the Spirit of God to lead you to know God better through this passage. Ask for wisdom to know the difference between what is God’s job and what is yours. How has the Lord recently instructed you?

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 6- edited

How have you found yourself humbled before God? In prayer declare your trust that God will do God's part; commit to God what you are willing to do your part and ask Him for strength to enable you to follow through.

Day 4: Digging Deeper

Re-read the section entitled "Lucy Borja -- The Dangerous Games Adults Play" (pp. 212-215). Have you ever been misunderstood or misrepresented like Lucy experienced? Does fear of being misunderstood ever stop you from acting on something you feel you are being led to do?

Consider the roller-coaster of emotions Lucy must have felt when first a "famous" reporter expressed interest in her project. What would seem good and exciting about this? What do you think Lucy learned from this experience?

Day 4: Prayer of Response

Thankfully, Lord, I am not perfect and am in need of Your healing touch. Let me receive Your grace in humility, using what You have given me to find redemption and inspiration. Humble me before You, Father, that I might find my true safety in You. Amen.

Comment [ITS7]: John: Any Biblical characters who were misunderstood/misrepresented?

Any thoughts on adding to this section?

Fifth Encounter: Day 5 Reflections

Lucy now has a very large family, one she was not expecting to have. This family has many needs, greater needs than most. Could there be only one mother for the masses of hurting and lonely children of Lima who desperately want to be loved for who they are as children?

What are some words that come to mind when you think of family (in its ideal form)? Are they words like generosity, welcoming, acceptance, support, warmth, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

Did you recognize those last ones? The fruits of the spirit are a good place to start. (See Galatians 5:22.)

As we continue exploring simplistic labels versus complex issues, we will spend some time with the label of “family” and reflect on Lucy’s redefinition.

Day 5: Focus on the Biblical Text: Matthew 12:46-50

While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. But he replied to the man who told him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

Comment [ITS8]: Not NIV. Shall I just change it to NIV?

Day 5: Thoughts into Action

Defining Family

Is family really about those who share the same DNA? Obviously not, or adoption would never work. So what does make a family?

A pastor once preached, “There are the sweet words of Jesus and the **nasty** words of Jesus. You never know which one you are going to get.” For most Christians, this passage of Jesus relating to his family is shocking. Jesus? How can you say that about your mother? You’re hitting on some of what makes our faith fly here!

Comment [ITS9]: Seems a bit harsh, and there’s no attribution. A pastor once said is an exceedingly vague statement.

After reading this passage, what do you think Jesus may say to you about the meaning of “family”? As He invites you to “expand” your understanding of who is “in” your family, what is your reaction to that thought? Bring that reaction to God in prayer.

Why is family so important? What makes family so potentially hurtful?

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 6- edited

Activity: What “value rating” (on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being “no value” and 10 being the “greatest value”) would you say your personal nuclear family has in your life?

- Extended family?
- Church family?
- Your local community?
- Your Judea?
- Your Samaria?
- The outer-most parts of the Earth?

Day 5: Digging Deeper

What are some of the implications of what Jesus says in the passage from Matthew? He calls “anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven” his brother, sister and mother. This is not a simple phrase to toss around. The labels of “brother,” “sister,” and “mother” all inspire feelings of great closeness. How is Jesus inviting you to stretch your current understanding of family?

How do you honor and love your immediate family? Are there ways you feel Jesus is asking you to do this more fully?

With whom are you in contact (or could you be in contact with) that is without family of their own? How could you invite them into a family, be it your own or another?

Do you see these children of Peru, and all of the other slaves mentioned in *Not For Sale*, as your family? Honestly. Are they more of a distant “out there” or are they in your heart as family? What is Jesus asking of you?

Day 6: Prayer of Response

Jesus, open my heart to Your family. Let me not store away the things I have for myself. Let me give of them freely to my brothers and sisters and mothers and fathers, just as my Heavenly Father has freely given so much to me. Expand my understanding of family and let me experience all the goodness of being in my family. Let me abide in You, resting as Your children. Amen.

Sixth Encounter: Day 6 Reflections

Lucy's commitment to justice starts with a heart that furiously fights against even a hint of corruption. Her actions reveal that she places relationships with the outcast "street kids" as a high priority in her life and refuses to let the societal corruption that she encounters daily become a distraction. Her role is important in the lives of the kids, but she longs for a change. "Nothing will change for street kids until we put justice at the center of our society," she declares. "At the moment, we are ruled by corruption and greed" (p. ??).

She presents an enormous challenge to us as regular citizens of any country: the challenge to love and see every person as equally valuable. "To say that the poor have rights means to accept that street children hold the exact same value as our own children. Our society is not yet ready to affirm this truth" (p. 224).

Day 6: Focus on the Biblical Text: Isaiah 61:1-3

For this encounter we will revisit a passage we have already looked at in this Study Guide. It's just that beautiful. There are many passages that refer to justice in Scripture, but this passage holds particular significance for many abolitionists who are followers of Jesus.

Isaiah 61:1-3

¹The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor. [NIV]

Day 6: Thoughts into Action Spiritual Strength for the Battle

Lucy presented us with a challenge in the quote mentioned in the introduction. Are you ready to affirm that truth? Can you look at a dirty, homeless child with the same compassion and see the same value as you would your own child or a child you know and love?

What is your reaction to Lucy's statements? Do they seem radical to you? Do you think they express truth? Or is she to be discounted as an extremist?

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 6- edited

What place does justice have in your own personal life, in your relationship with God?

Those words from Isaiah 61 are incredible. No wonder the people were amazed when Christ quoted them about himself – this is no small statement!

Think of a beautiful, old oak tree. The large, sturdy trunk is immovable; its expanse of branches provides shade, cover, and protection. This tree has seen all of life go by and has remained. It's not a small, flimsy tree; it is an oak.

Activity: To be an Oak of Righteousness, what qualities would be present? Create a visual representation of an Oak of Righteousness. Draw an oak tree with a large trunk; fill the drawing of the trunk with the words you would use to describe an oak. Meditate upon this picture and take this picture to God's "Sanctuary." Let yourself to be moved and inspired. Find yourself growing steady in God.

How is Jesus asking you to become more "Oak"-like? What action is He inviting you to take? When will you take that action?

Day 6: Digging Deeper

[I had to full the part about the oak up to the earlier section, so we need something here. Seems like it is crying out for some discussion of the oak that was cut down and made into the cross. That would conclude the week's journey of how it is difficult to label things: Sandra is a victim and a trafficker, and the oak is a true of beauty and stature that becomes a cross of tortuous pain. Remember, I'm not the trained theologian, so these are just my suggestions.]

Day 6: Prayer of Response

Thank you, Jesus, for being the One who was anointed to bring freedom. Thank you for searching out the depths of my soul and leaving no stone unturned. I trust You to bring peace and justice to the center of my life. Give me Your heart to be an agent of justice and peace in the world. I long to see Your justice spread throughout the earth. Let your freedom reign. Amen.

Day 7 Ideas:

We are bombarded with the reality that many people see children as tools to be used to gratify their twisted urges. It's hard to even imagine an innocent child forced to perform acts that take away their dignity.

Genesis Word Study

Comment [ITS10]: Wex, none of this is edited. Just choose any of it you want to use, and I'll edit your version of Day 7.

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 6- edited

Through doing a word study we may get a sweeping view of God's thoughts on a subject. How does it work?

- 1) Find a Exhaustive Concordance or go to www.biblegateway.com
- 2) Look up (or type in) the word that you want to search; so today it would be "children"
- 3) Read through the verses as listed; as many as you have time for or when you think you've had a glimpse of God's perspective on the word.

Not all verses listed will bring a deeper understanding, and it helps if you are familiar with the general flow and message of that portion of the Bible so the verses serve as reminders to your brain of the larger context.

Here are a few passages from BibleGateway just in case you don't have easy access to the resources we recommended.

1. **Genesis 11:30**
Now Sarai was barren; she had no **children**.
2. **Genesis 15:3**
And Abram said, "You have given me no **children**; so a servant in my household will be my heir."
3. **Genesis 16:1**
Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no **children**. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar;
4. **Genesis 16:2**
So she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having **children**. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said.
5. **Genesis 18:19**
For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his **children** and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."
6. **Genesis 20:17**
Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife and his slave girls so they could have **children** again,
7. **Genesis 21:7**
And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse **children**? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."
8. **Genesis 21:23**
Now swear to me here before God that you will not deal falsely with me or my **children** or my descendants. Show to me and the country where you are living as an alien the same kindness I have shown to you."

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 6- edited

9. **Genesis 29:31**
When the LORD saw that Leah was not loved, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren.
10. **Genesis 29:35**
She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "This time I will praise the LORD." So she named him Judah. Then she stopped having **children**.
11. **Genesis 30:1**
When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any **children**, she became jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, "Give me **children**, or I'll die!"
12. **Genesis 30:2**
Jacob became angry with her and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having **children**?"
13. **Genesis 30:3**
Then she said, "Here is Bilhah, my maidservant. Sleep with her so that she can bear **children** for me and that through her I too can build a family."
14. **Genesis 30:9**
When Leah saw that she had stopped having **children**, she took her maidservant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife.
15. **Genesis 33:5**
Then Esau looked up and saw the women and **children**. "Who are these with you?" he asked. Jacob answered, "They are the **children** God has graciously given your servant."

What do you learn about the value of children even just in these verses that come up in Genesis? What were these characters willing to do to have children? Why were children so important to these biblical characters?

Keep reading for as long as you can, but make sure you still have time to meditate and reflect on what the Spirit of God has to tell you about the value of children.

Breaking God's Heart

Sometimes we pray that God would break our hearts over the things that break God's own heart. The poor, women and children, the marginalized, are on the heart of God. Do you agree with this statement; if not, why?

What do you think is on the heart of God? Is that supported by what scripture reveals?

Now take a moment and silently reflect upon your own heart for children – your own and/or others. What is the attitude you generally take? Be really honest here. Even if

Not For Sale – Journal Companion Session 6- edited

your heart doesn't reflect what you'd "like" it to...dig deep to truly understand what your attitude is.

Think back to the very familiar passage of Jesus and the children when the disciples were "hindering" them from coming to him. What is Christ's attitude? What attributes does he display with children?

Another Activity Option

Create a vertical list of words and/or phrases that describe *children* to you. Draw an arrow to the right of each word. Next to that arrow write a word that describes society's view of *street kids*.

Now, draw another arrow next to each of those words. Next to them, write a word that communicates God's vision for children. How would they be seen through God's eyes? What words would God use to describe them?

This would be a great activity to do with your whole group.

Closing Prayer? Can't remember if we even have those.

Our Heavenly Parent, we are all your children! We all have started out as tiny seeds growing inside the womb of our mothers. Even you, Lord Jesus, grew this way. We have gone through the trials and tribulations of being children and have maybe even had children of our own. We know children are often seen as inconvenient, dirty, rude, loud and wild. Heavenly Parent, we ask that your great love for your children wash over our false lenses through which we see them. Wash our hearts clean and give us new hope, joy, love and laughter. Let us make a beautiful way for the children to come to you! Amen.

Celebrate Your Completion of Series 6

Take this opportunity to have an "anointing" time together. Find some olive oil, put it in a container of some sort and begin to pray for each member of your group one at a time, listening carefully for how Jesus is anointing them for this work.

Celebrate the freedom we have to share and pray.