

Not for Sale – Bible Study & Journal Companion
Week Three

First Encounter: Day 1 Reflections

Much of this chapter deals with the story of how Gary Haugen founded IJM. Haugen is described as “a rare mix of talents: driven by big ideas yet acting with surgeon-like precision” (p. 73). This is an impressive description for a Harvard-educated Department of Justice lawyer who fights some of the greatest evil around the world with his own two hands. Yet, what is really amazing is that he is able to be completely and fully present in the moment with people. “He makes you feel as if your engagement with him is the most important thing on his calendar that day. The next person who meets him that day will leave with the same impression” (pp. 73-74). It takes just this sort of humility and ability to find value in all one meets to create a true abolitionist.

The region of the world that will hold our attention is South Asia concentrating on the problem of bonded labor, a less “famous” piece of the puzzle that is human trafficking.

Please read Chapter Two in *Not Sale Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade & How We Can Fight It*, pages 73-110.

Day 1: Focus on the Biblical Text: Luke 19: 1-10 (excerpts)

¹Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ²A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. ⁵When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” ⁶So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. . . . ⁸Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” [NIV]

Day 1: Thoughts into Action
Developing Your Presence

Are you able to be *present* with the people in your life? What does “being present” mean to you?

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Immediate positive response is not easy. Zacchaeus was a Hebrew, and his name meant “pure.” He was anything but pure, however. He defrauded his own Jewish people, acting unjustly in the handling of taxes. To the Jewish person, he was an odious enslaver. Yet, when Zacchaeus heard Jesus coming, he positioned himself for a good look at the Christ. Zacchaeus has a revelatory moment of presence when he encounters Christ: he recognizes something about his life and responds immediately with an honest and humble heart. When you encounter Christ are you able to respond immediately. His words were followed by action. Perhaps Zacchaeus heard about the conversation Jesus had with the rich young man (Matthew 19:16-22) and how they parted ways. Could it be that Zacchaeus positioned his body in the sight line of Jesus, determined to respond differently than the rich young man and act justly – by admitting that he has been unkind to the poor and violated many people? When invited into Christ’s presence his immediate response was “yes, I want Christ’s presence in my home and heart.” Therefore, “I [will] give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything I will pay back four times the amount.” Zacchaeus changed from unjust to just, from enslaved to free, and from someone outside of Christ’s presence to one practicing presence.

Do you want Christ’s presence in your heart and life? When you encounter Christ, are you able to respond immediately? If not, what is it that keeps you from responding immediately to Christ? What will you do about it?

Activity: Take a moment to sit in silence and really ponder this. Imagine Christ asking you to do something, go somewhere, to change your direction. Imagine yourself responding. Imagine your anxieties placed at his feet. See Christ tenderly caring for you and walking with you as you go forward with him. What does this look like for you? Take some time and write your prayerful reflections as you heard God speaking to you and determining what you are going to do about His whispers.

Day 1: Prayer of Response

Lord, my heart is torn over how to respond to you! There is so much to stand in my way, my fears, anxieties, the unknown, and what I do know about the painful realities of the world. Please keep my feet and heart still. I ask for Your peace to fill me. I cast my cares and anxieties to You. You care for me and will continue to care for me as I follow Your will. Continue to speak to me, Lord, and lead me to greater compassionate action for Your suffering children. I invite You to show me how to engage in the tragedy of human trafficking and work towards eradicating it in the world. Amen.

Second Encounter: Day 2 Reflections

“If I were trapped in a brothel, what would I want?” wonders Gary Haugen (p. ??). What an easy question to ask from the safety of our present location. Can you *really* imagine what it would be like? The smells, the spaces, the clients or the forced labor, the beatings, the abuse, the despair....

If you have access to the Internet, watch one of these YouTube videos in which the British actress Emma Thompson plays a starring role:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LWNJIYNhgA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=related&v=BdW05BC4emw>

(warning: distressing content)

Comment [ITS1]: Fia: Can we place the warning in some sort of box or other design element?

We can't know unless we've been there and experienced the wide range of feelings and abuses for ourselves. Ask God to give you His empathy to motivate you and draw your heart into action and intercession for the slaves of the world.

Day 2: Focus on the Biblical Text: Various Passages

The Golden Rule: Matthew 7:7-12, NIV

7"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

9"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! 12So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

An Eye for an Eye: Matthew 5:38-42, NIV

38"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' 39But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Love for Enemies: Matthew 5:43-48, NIV

43"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46If you love those who love you, what

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reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? **47**And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? **48**Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Take a few moments and re-read these words of Jesus once again. Let your spirit soak in these words....

Day 2: Thoughts into Action

The Pain of Betrayal

The Golden Rule is about freedom, not obligation; it's about relationship, not responsibility. "Doing unto others what you would have done to you" is a way of maintaining freedom in your heart. We are not bound by the systems of evil and the cycles of abuse. We have been given access to a whole new world of freedom in Christ! In Jesus' day it was common for Roman soldiers to force their slaves to carry heavy loads for them, yet it was illegal for the slaves to carry the load for more than one mile. As Jesus is speaking He is directly subverting this system and calling people to greater freedom (as well as getting the Roman soldiers in trouble). In other words, He is declaring, "I am not bound to your rule! I will carry your load and put you in the shackles for your evil!"

Applied to the atrocities of human trafficking, how could the Golden Rule work? Have you heard about a proposal that law enforcement should use the money earned from fines levied against convicted pimps and traffickers to create safe houses for trafficking survivors? Now THAT'S subversive!

Comment [ITS2]: Wex, is this being discussed at the federal level? Can we really say this?

Annie Dieselberg's NightLight group allows former prostitutes to create beautiful pieces of jewelry to adorn their bodies and to sell their creations to others. Where once these women and girls were treated no better than trash, they are now working to create beauty!

Activity: Think of a creative way to describe or depict the Golden Rule. Add words to the design that explore both the freedom and the potential trap that the Golden Rule demands. Think about a time when you employed the Golden Rule. Did it feel like an obligation or a trap? How could that situation have been exchanged for one of freedom?

Day 2: Digging Deeper

Where in your life is Christ inviting you into freedom? How can you step into that space?

The Golden Rule is not wimpy; it is a strong stance of love, respect, and dignity for all. It takes a great deal of grace and strength to live it. When God's children live the Golden Rule, they reflect their heavenly Father's love. Reducing the Golden Rule to ethics minimizes its influence and power. Even the most ethical person cannot sustain the

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selfless, unconditional love of the Father. Christ-followers have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them, empowering them to live and respond like Christ in all situations.

Admittedly, Christ-followers' responses are not always reflective of the Father, but they can be because of Jesus. The Golden Rule is not intended to be a utilitarian tool preventing people from doing bad things to each other. Rather, it's a powerful enactment of generosity and love built upon the character of God and the belief in the dignity and value of humankind. We have all been created by God in His image. We have full capacity to love others, to live in freedom with others, and to lead others into freedom.

In your life is the Golden Rule measuring gold, silver, or precious stones? Or is it measuring hay, straw, and stubble (1 Corinthians 13:12)?

Take time to experience that love, respect, and dignity, asking Him to release the power of the Holy Spirit in you. You will then reflect the Father's love as you live out the Golden Rule.

Day 2: Prayer of Response

Lord, God of Freedom, You are continually inviting me into freedom in its many forms – freedom in relationships, freedom from guilt and shame, freedom from harmful patterns in my life. I know this is a constant battle, and I ask You to set me free from the things in my life that hold me captive. I invite Your Spirit to draw near to my heart, as I draw near to Your heart. Empower me with the Holy Spirit to help me reflect Your love as I live out the Golden Rule. Amen.

Third Encounter: Day 3 Reflections

A beautiful meal, warm words, and kind treatment are seldom part of the life of a lower caste family in India. It was just this “ruse” that Mr. Vasu, a “holy” man, used to lure Narayan and Amar into his den of wolves. As a result, five couples agreed to work in Vasu’s brick kiln. What they didn’t know is that they would become slaves for the rest of their lives. What they didn’t know would eventually kill some of them.

Their entrance into the hell of Vasu’s facility was completely uneventful and anti-climactic. As they passed through the iron gates, they remained completely unaware of where they were headed. Isn’t that the way it is with evil – often discreet and unassuming, a wolf wearing sheep’s skin?

“Slowly it dawned on Maya that they had not landed a job. They had joined a prison labor camp” (pg 83).

Focus on the Biblical Text: Matthew 5:21-25 & 15:1-20

Murder (Matthew 5:21-25, NIV, excerpts)

²¹You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, “Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.” ²²But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment... anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell... Settle matters quickly with your adversary....

Clean and Unclean (Matthew 15:10-20, NIV, excerpts)

¹⁰Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. ¹¹What goes into a man’s mouth does not make him ‘unclean,’ but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him ‘unclean....’” ¹⁷“Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? ¹⁸But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart and these make a man ‘unclean.’ ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. ²⁰These are what make a man ‘unclean’; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him ‘unclean.’”

Day 3: Thoughts into Action Avoiding the Slippery Slope into Darkness

We are to be clean in the deepest, innermost places of our hearts. This, Christ declares, will ensure that our entire selves radiate with His glory.

It is a slippery slope into darkness, and the pit of hell does not discriminate. We have seen throughout history how easy it is to fall into this trap – Nazi soldiers were gradually indoctrinated with hatred; it didn’t spring up over night. A New York elected official who

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viciously attacked sexual trafficking from his office was himself ensnared in the very vice against which he fought.

So, how do we fight something so evil and yet remain steadfast in the Lord?

Activity: How do you avoid “unclean” aspects of life from taking root in your heart? Make a list of the five areas where you struggle with this. After each area, go back and write a note about how the Lord has been working with you. (For example, gossip may be an area of struggle for you, yet the Lord has been bringing those you gossip about into your mind during prayer time. You have now found yourself praying for those individuals rather than gossiping about them.)

Are there areas noted on your list that you need to ask the Lord to help you overcome? Are there areas that, left unchecked, could move closer and closer toward what you probably thought of when you read the Matt. 15: 10-20 passage? Is there a slippery slope to avoid?

Now imagine how others find themselves on the down side of other slippery slopes, descending into darkness. Imagine yourself entering this “brick kiln,” the reality of what has just happened washing over you like a tidal wave. Bring this sense of empathy to the “Sanctuary,” ask Jesus for His heart to lead you, and exchange your horror for a sense of His presence in the midst of this dark place. Isn’t the Lord with us whether we are in darkness or light?

Day 3: Digging Deeper

Where can you invite the Lord’s cleansing presence into your heart?

In Psalm 51:1-2, 7, David asked the Lord to “...blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.... Cleanse my with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.” David, the King of Judah and military leader, abused his power and position at the extreme cost of Uriah. The slippery slope of sexual lust led David to a decision to violate Bathsheba. The path of darkness included sexual immorality, murder, lying, and, indirectly, the death of an innocent child. All this resulted in great suffering and pain to Bathsheba and Uriah (2 Samuel 11:2-17). Personally, David carried shame and guilt and a broken relationship with God for what he did.

David repented of his sins and was wonderfully restored in His relationship with God. “Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me” (Ps. 51:12, NIV). Although David was able to overcome his sin and move forward in life with God’s favor (Acts 13:22), one might wonder if something inside Bathsheba *died* in that encounter; such was certainly the case with Uriah.

What matters must you settle quickly to experience freedom?

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What do your private thoughts look like? Are they wholesome, God honoring, pure, and just? How would you feel if they were printed on the front page of tomorrow's newspaper?

How do you treat those under your authority, like your children, employees, or animals?

Are your feet planted firmly on God's Word? Or are you on a slippery slope of sin, sliding toward disaster? Have you given consideration as to how your decisions for freedom in your life affect the ability to bring about freedom in the lives of others?

Jesus came to set the captives free. That includes you. You are to be like Christ. Jesus has anointed you with the Holy Spirit to set the captives free (Luke 4:18-19).

Day 3: Prayer of Response

Lord, have mercy on me and forgive me for my sins. I ask that you deliver me from evil and keep me from temptation. I seek Your light toward freedom. Help me to partner with You to help bring freedom to the captives.

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God....These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the multitude, leading the procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng. Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God for I will yet praise Him, my Savior and my God (Psalm 42, NIV). Amen.

Fourth Encounter: Day 4 Reflections

Gary Haugen and his team at IJM recognized the need for an organizational strategy in combating trafficking of persons. Review the four steps below:

1. Victim Relief
2. Perpetrator accountability
3. Victim aftercare
4. Structural prevention

There are too few places of safety and restoration in the United States for trafficking survivors. A case in Las Vegas illustrates this painful reality. Five young girls were picked up by law enforcement for prostitution, three foreign and two domestic. All three foreign girls were given T-Visas and good, safe aftercare. Both domestic girls ended up in prison, for lack of alternative shelter. This often happens to young “prostitutes” (more appropriately called “victims of sexual exploitation”) in the USA, and it’s a tragic reality of the imperfect system.

Comment [ITS3]: WEX: Any idea where this information originated? I’d like to cite the newspaper article, SlaveryMap documentation, or TV program that brought the Las Vegas case to light.

Day 4: Focus on the Biblical Text: Psalm 12

¹Help, Lord, for the godly are no more; the faithful have vanished from among men.

²Everyone lies to his neighbor; their flattering lips speak with deception. ³May the Lord cut off all flattering lips and every boastful tongue ⁴that says, “We will triumph with our tongues; we own our lips – who is our master?” ⁵“Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise,” says the LORD. “I will protect them from those who malign them.” ⁶And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times. ⁷O LORD, you will keep us safe and protect us from such people forever. ⁸The wicked freely strut about when what is vile is honored among men. [NIV]

Day 4: Thoughts into Action **God Our Protector**

The battle we fight is both physical and spiritual. The Lord says, “I will now arise” (Ps. 12:5). He is our protector, and He surely hears the cries of the oppressed. Cry out for them, knowing that the Lord will arise and protect them.

Do you really believe the Lord is your protector? Do you really believe that the Lord is the protector of those who are enslaved?

Activity: List five synonyms for the concept of protection or for the word “protector.” Out to the side of those, list at least one example of how the Lord has protected either you or someone you know. Now go back and list ways He can protect those who are enslaved in your local community, within the United States, or around the world.

Conclude this activity by spending some time in the “Sanctuary,” exchanging your “unbelief” for the gift of faith to believe God is all that God promises to be.

Day 4: Digging Deeper

The physical pain and suffering the enslaved experience is most horrific. In many cases their scars can be seen on their bodies, felt by their emotional brokenness, and smelt on the breath of their desperation. Many perpetrators roam freely, seeking whom they may devour. It is hard to face the physical battles of human trafficking. We are troubled by the inequities and why such evil is allowed to enslave people.

God created humankind in His image, and in His image is the freedom of choice. People have the ability to choose moral good or evil. Human traffickers and those who exploit the innocent and vulnerable use their free will for evil and selfish gain. If God takes away all evil, humankind’s free will is removed. Without free will, people are reduced to robots, puppets. They do the will of the one whom pulls the strings. There will come a day that God brings all people to account for what they’ve done or didn’t do while on earth – what choices they exercised with their free will.

Can you trust in God’s justice and timing for vindication?

One must never discount these physical realities – ever. We must also have eyes to see beyond the physical condition of the enslaved, both the exploited and exploiter.

Beyond the physical is the spiritual, an area not easily identified. The Scripture instructs us that we are in a spiritual battle. “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4, NIV). No one is suggesting that those who exploit have no choice because of the “devil-made-me-do-it” syndrome. However, the spiritual reality is that the devil is the ultimate evil, and behind all humankind’s evil is the devil. He has come to steal, kill, and destroy physical and spiritual life (John 10:10). The battle

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against human trafficking cannot solely be to stop the perpetrators but also to stop Satan's spread of evil. Christians must pray against the devil and his work of evil.

In other words, both exploited and exploiter need to be rescued from their sin, by Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Therefore, our war against human trafficking needs to be fought on two plains – physical and spiritual.

The very reason and commissioning of Christ to the Apostle Paul in Acts 26:16-18:
¹⁶“Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”

Comment [ITS4]: John, this is what you typed, but I don't understand it.

Physical freedom from the bondages of sexual and labor exploitation is imperative – just ask the enslaved. However, spiritual freedom from the bondages of sin is non-negotiable – just ask Christ, the original abolitionist. Physical life is temporary; spiritual life is eternal.

What would help you to see past the physical and into the spiritual world? How can you continue to be physically active in the fight against trafficking as well as engaging in the spiritual fight? How do you know when you've “over-spiritualized” something, used God as an excuse for inaction?

³“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. ⁶And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete. ⁷You are looking only on the surface of things” (2 Cor. 10:3-7, NIV)

Day 4: Prayer of Response

Lord, I want to follow Your calling and commission to use my gifts and passions to combat the suffering of this world. I also ask You to draw me into Your heavenly places that I might see the spiritual war that is waging. I call upon the Holy Spirit to infuse my very being with Your strength and courage, Your insight and wisdom as I move into the front lines. Thank you for keeping my heart safe with You, Lord, Father and Protector. Amen.

Fifth Encounter: Day 5 Reflections

Are you ready for a REALLY deep question? How do we transition slaves to their true selves and revive in them the dignity that has been buried under heaping mounds of dirty abuse? How do we see past the hurt and anger, the despair and confusion, the rejection and isolation? How do we provide gentle, nurturing care for the poorest of the poor and the least of these?

“[The] solution probably will not be as simple as ‘sending them back home.’ In some cases, enslaved individuals were trafficked across borders, perhaps from even an ocean away. Even if the brothel owner or pimp can be brought to justice, the victims may be ongoing targets for the original traffickers who extracted them from their home village” (pg. 92). Let’s keep this information from *Not For Sale* in mind as we turn our attention today to God’s Truth regarding the restoration of dignity.

Day 5: Focus on the Biblical Text: Matthew 15:22-28

²²A Canaanite woman from the vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.” ²³Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away for she keeps crying out after us.” ²⁴He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.” ²⁵The woman came and knelt before him, “Lord, help me!” she said. ²⁶He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to their dogs.” ²⁷“Yes, Lord,” she said, “but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸Then Jesus answered, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed from that very hour. [NIV]

Day 5: Thoughts into Action **Restoring Dignity**

Has this passage ever confused you? Does it sound like Jesus? It would seem that Jesus is actually pointing out a lack of dignity or worth in the Canaanite woman. He basically calls her a dog, right?

Read Matthew 15:21-28 again, but this time, read it as though Jesus is teaching His disciples a lesson – an eternally valuable lesson on the dignity of all peoples. “We don’t give food to dogs, right guys?” Jesus might say. “Yeah, she’s a dirty Canaanite woman, worships the wrong gods and everything!” may have been the disciples’ retort. At first, Jesus doesn’t even answer the woman directly; He speaks only to His disciples until she kneels at His feet. The disciples have missed the fact that a woman is crying out to Jesus, that she is placing herself at His mercy in great vulnerability. All they see is filth, ironically, right after Jesus teaches them about what truly is clean and unclean.

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Imagine their surprise when Jesus says that she has great faith, that her daughter is healed!

Place yourself into this story, first as one of the disciples, as a curious observer, and then as the woman and, finally, as the daughter. Imagine the discussion that took place just after the woman went away rejoicing. Imagine the Canaanite woman crying and pleading for Jesus to heal her daughter. Imagine the freedom to play, hug, laugh, and love the daughter now has because of Jesus' merciful healing. Wouldn't you like to observe that first hug between mother and daughter?

Activity: How does Jesus restore this woman's dignity? How does Jesus set the daughter free? Briefly explain your response.

Now consider Narayan, Amar, Maya and their families. When four generations have been enslaved for a small loan, what does restoration look like for them? Write out your impressions.

What are the challenges they face in reintegrating into a society that they no longer are familiar with, a society that no longer knows them?

Day 5: Digging Deeper

The conversation between the Canaanite woman and Jesus demonstrates the importance of faith. Jesus was called to the "lost sheep of Israel" – Jewish people. Although He occasionally ministered to Gentiles, His primary work was with the Jews. Focused ministry on the Gentiles came later.

Jesus was testing this Gentile's woman's faith. First, He didn't answer her. She pleaded with Him for help. Second, He began to bring the clash of cultures into view. "I'm a Jew and you're a Gentile, I've been called to the Jews and they despise and abuse you, calling you a dog (term of contempt). Are you willing to receive help from Me, a Jew? Are you willing to associate with One who associates with a nation at odds with you?" In her response great faith emerges. "Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table" (Matt, 15:27, NIV). In other words, what You've said Jesus is true: "I am unworthy of You and Your mercy, but if I could just have a few morsels of Your mercy and ministry, my world would change." In response, Jesus said something like this: "Because of your trust and confidence, your faith and humility in Me, I will give you My healing grace. Your daughter is set free, and both your lives will never be the same again."

Allow Jesus to minister to your own heart in this moment as He ministered to the Canaanite woman's heart. The Canaanite woman comes to Jesus in a moment of incredible need. Her daughter is tormented, and she is desperate for help. She has heard that Jesus is a great healer, maybe even that He is the Messiah, so she finds Him acknowledging her pagan lifestyle and lifeless religion and pleads with Him for His

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mercy on behalf of her daughter's life and her personal salvation. This is great faith, as Jesus says in the story.

Great faith is not measured in this story by volume. Rather, it is measured by a woman who did not have the knowledge of the Scripture and the light of Christ but exercised so much faith in Him.

What about your faith? Which answer most approximates where would you say you are?

Dead Weak Common Working Abiding Great

Ask Jesus this simple question: *Why* is your faith at that spot?

Ask God to increase your faith.

Day 5: Prayer of Response

Jesus, I ask for the courage to really *see* people – to see the beauty of your created and beloved people, no matter where they are from or where they have been. Lord, let me begin with others in my Bible study; let me begin by seeing your created beauty in each of them as we all seek to draw out Your truth around us for the sake of Your kingdom. I need great faith, Lord, for this to be done, and, though it sounds really good, *great* faith is a little bit scary because it puts me at Your mercy. Lord, Your mercy is where I need to be and where I will begin to live the life You have created for me! Give me Your courage, Lord, and revitalize me with Your life. Amen.

Sixth Encounter: Day 6 Reflections

The realists tell Haugen to give up (see pg 104). It's just too corrupt, they say. And for good reason – it's a scary and dark world out there, dealing with corrupt governments whose evil bleeds through countless police officers, high-level officials, and other powerful persons. When an entire system is corrupt, why would you bother trying to change it? Where does one even begin? After all, you're just one person.

“Gary does not accept that argument. When he reads political history, he appreciates that Western democratic societies are the result of a long experiment to restrain violent behavior. Our public justice systems aim to ensure that citizens do not sort out their disputes through the exercise of brute physical power.... Though far from perfect, it offers a better solution for violence” (p. 104).

“As Gary's feet sank in the mud of the mass grave and his nostrils filled with the stench of rotting bodies, he was tempted to sink into despair. What could *justice* mean here? And what good would it do to convict the perpetrators now that the violence had ended?

He came to a profound conclusion: the pursuit of justice creates a social legacy... Holding perpetrators accountable for their crimes against humanity not only dignifies the suffering of the victims, it instills in the survivors a confidence in the rule of law... 'Never again' must be the motto that guides future generations, and it begins with enforcing justice today” (pg 103-4).

Systemic freedom is the answer to systemic corruption and injustice. Our lives must be the embodiment of freedom and justice from the smallest to the largest things. No society will be perfect, but in Christ's footsteps we must walk the long road of freedom. It is the only way we will *all* be truly free. The heart of Jesus is for freedom for all of us, not just the enslaved.

Day 6: Focus on the Biblical Text: Matthew 16:13-20 and Psalm 22

Peter's Confession of Christ (Matthew 16:13-20, NIV, excerpts)

¹³When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ... ¹⁵“But what about you, who do you say I am?” ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And, I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it...”

Psalm 22, NIV, excerpts

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1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? **2** O my God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer by night and am not silent.

3 Yet You are enthroned as the Holy One; You are the praise of Israel. **4** In You our fathers put their trust; they trusted and You delivered them. **5** They cried to You and were saved; in You they trusted and were not disappointed.

6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. **7** All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads:

8 "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him.

Let Him deliver him, since he delights in Him."

9 Yet You brought me out of the womb; You made me trust in You even at my mother's breast. **10** From birth I was cast upon You; from my mother's womb You have been my God. **11** Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

13 Roaring lions tearing their prey open their mouths wide against me. **14** I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. **16** ... a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. **17** I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me.

18 They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

19 But You, O LORD, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me.

20 Deliver my life from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs.

22 I will declare Your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise You.

23 You who fear the LORD, praise Him!

24 For He has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one; He has not hidden His face from him but has listened to his cry for help. **25** From You comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear You ^[e] will I fulfill my vows. **26** The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the LORD will praise Him—may your hearts live forever! **27** All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before Him, **28** for dominion belongs to the LORD and He rules over the nations. **29** All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before Him— those who cannot keep themselves alive. **30** Posterity will serve Him; future generations will be told about the LORD. **31** They will proclaim His righteousness to a people yet unborn—for He has done it.

Day 6: Thoughts into Action

The Danger Zone

Jesus brings his disciples to a place good Jewish boys were forbidden to go: Caesarea Philippi. According to the *Bible Exposition Commentary*, this area had been a center for pagan worship as well as a secular temple to Augustus Caesar. It was *here* that Jesus took His disciples and told them that He would build his church "on this rock." No matter what you believe about what "this rock" meant, one thing is clear: This was a dangerous place to be. The "realists" of Jesus' day would have told Him to stay far away because it

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was just too dangerous. His disciples were most certainly amazed that their rabbi would take them here!

What was David's situation when he wrote Psalm 22? Review verses 13-18 as you discern another "danger zone"? Did your thoughts turn to Jesus when rereading those verses?

Activity: Return to the passage in Matthews and put yourself in the disciples' position, being asked to go to a place that you have been taught is "too dangerous." What would be your Caesarea Philippi? Living in the inner city? Serving the poor? Having a conversation with a stranger? Take a moment to reflect honestly and openly then write out your description of your Caesarea Philippi.

How do you feel when you think that Jesus may be asking you to go to a dangerous place? What kind of anxiety rises up with you? Where inside of your heart do you feel "unsafe?" How can you bring that to Jesus? Write it out so you can make that a focus on your prayer time.

Take this anxiety and present it to Jesus, allowing Him to answer your fears from His perspective of His love and care for you.

Day 6: Digging Deeper

Focus on the evil in the world and it will bring you down low; it may even feel as if it will consume you. Focus on God's character and God's promises that are true for all His people and you have begun to engage a spiritual battle that must be waged and yet has already been won. Psalm 22, one of lament, is an honest cry from the Psalmist's heart, grieving with a sense of being abandoned. Yet it is also a declaration of trust in the promise of a hope-filled tomorrow – a beautiful picture of what we bring to the Lord as we intercede for those who are seemingly abandoned and enslaved.

In the midst of the wrestle with suffering, David says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you" (Psalm 22: 22). Can we honestly say we would come to this conclusion in the midst of a season of suffering and despair?

David comes to a place of praise and then recounts the promises of God. His body and soul are revived through connecting with the Father and by remembering who God is; what he has done. Why is this so hard to do? What blocks or distorts our view of God?

Is there a time when you were able to be in this place of honesty in suffering and praising God?

Day 6: Prayer of Response

Lord, Comforter, Counselor, Protector, I long to experience true safety in You. I acknowledge that life isn't always safe, so help me trust You and follow Your will. I cry

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out to You, as Your beloved child, knowing You are gazing upon my heart in love and gentleness. I am exposed and vulnerable, looking to You to bring order from the chaos. Speak into my heart, Lord, with Your healing words of truth. I need You, Lord, to bind up my heart, give me courage to step into the dark places on Your loved planet so that I may be an agent of healing for others. Amen.

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Seventh Encounter: Community Gathering

[Wex: Here is various stuff from parts of this week's study and what the authors called "Seventh Encounter" that doesn't fit anywhere else. I thought you might be able to use some of it like the YouTube and a return to Psalm 22. (Maybe they could go around the circle reading a verse of the psalm out loud as part of Day 7.) Anyone, thought I'd keep all this here – in no particular order – for your perusal. Just delete anything that you don't want to use.]

Take a moment as a group to spend some time listening to a song and slide show *Living Dangerously in the Hands of God*, performed by Steve Camp:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vbmsq1soVio>

Spend some time while in each other's presence journaling about this feeling of being unsafe. Let your feelings come out as they are, uncensored even though others are with you. Ask Jesus to come into them and speak truth. Jesus is not afraid of them, no matter how intense or "negative" they may seem. Try not to place judgment, just notice what's going on inside of your heart.

What kinds of people do "dangerous" things for Jesus? (Gary Haugen is a great example.) How are you different from Gary Haugen?

How are you and Gary the same?

Right after he confesses Jesus to be the true Messiah, Jesus calls him Satan! Peter's desire for Christ to avoid suffering and death got in the way of him seeing clearly. Jesus knew that his path included pain, but he was willing to face it because he knew it was the only way to bring about freedom from sin and salvation.

Have you ever felt like Peter, asking Christ not to suffer?

Have you begun to engage this battle on human trafficking on a spiritual level? Have you felt brought down low or consumed?

Admit before God, who is so very receptive in hearing your true heart, how you feel about the darkness and evil of human trafficking. Allow God's Spirit to bring your soul to the place of declaring hope in God's promises in due time. There is no need to rush from grief, just let it try to consume you. Remember that there is always more God than there is grief.

Now focus on the portion Psalm that lists the promises. Pick the promise that brings the deepest level of joy to your soul. Unleash praise on the God of this promise.

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As you gather together, you are a ‘congregation’. Take some time together to recount God’s promises to one another. Build one another up as you soak in the truth of who you know God to be. Recount the work that God has done in the past, as well as what God has promised for the future.

Challenge: ask your family, friends or those who know you well in this group if they see you as one who is honest before God with the pain and suffering in life? Are you one who in the midst of pain is able to declare praise to the King of the Universe?

Pray for one another personally, that you would be people who courageously face suffering in truth, and still rest in the promises of God in the midst of pain. Feel free to allow the Spirit to lead you in prayer for one another and then shift to a time of intercession, standing in the gap, for those who are currently enslaved.

Celebrate Completing Series 3

It may seem strange to think of having any sort of party in the midst of interceding... But remember, we ARE free! It is our privilege to be people of freedom. Celebration is a way we can express our gratitude, our depth of joy in this gift.

Pick a song that brings joy to your heart, maybe one that makes declaration of freedom. Play it loud and stand up and dance!