

Modern-Day Slavery

"It has been unanimously considered that it cannot be permitted in any wise by the church, that a member should or could purchase negroes, or keep them as slaves."

—Brethren Annual Meeting Minutes 1782

"We the Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren reaffirm our denomination's historic opposition to slavery. We understand the scriptures to reveal that God abhors slavery and that the gospel of Jesus Christ mandates our unwavering resistance to and action against all forms of slavery."

—Church of the Brethren Annual Conference Resolution 2008

What do you mean, “modern-day slavery”? For many of us the term “modern-day slavery” simply doesn’t make sense. When we hear the word *slavery*, we think of an institution that doesn’t exist anymore. After all, *chattel slavery*, in which human beings, mostly Africans, were kidnapped, bought, and sold like property, was outlawed in the United States in 1865.

Unfortunately, slavery is still a fact of life for some 27 million men, women, and children. Most of these people are in South Asia and Africa, but slaves can be found everywhere, including western Europe and the United States.

Slaves perform domestic and agricultural work. They weave rugs, make clothing and shoes, mine gems, produce charcoal and bricks, and harvest cocoa beans. They work in the fishing industry and in restaurants. They are forced to be prostitutes and soldiers, camel jockeys and landscapers.

Global population increase and rapid social and economic changes have made millions vulnerable to enslavement. Worldwide poverty creates desperation that assists those who trick others into slavery.

Kidnapping and human trafficking is a multibillion dollar enterprise.

- The Church of the Brethren Study and Action Guide on Modern-Day Slavery** is posted at www.brethren.org/slavery and includes pieces on:
- Modern-Day Slavery
 - Biblical Teachings on Slavery
 - Church of the Brethren Statements on Slavery
 - Resources for a Worship Focus on Slavery
 - Suggestions for Action on Modern-Day Slavery
 - Resources on Modern-Day Slavery
 - Bulletin Insert

What can we do? Use the Church of the Brethren Study and Action Guide to help educate yourself and others. Find it online at www.brethren.org/slavery.

“...Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40).

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