

Breaking the silence, breaking the chains!

Sermon inspiration by

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Proverbs 31:8-9 - *"Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."*

Today, during this Global Week against Human Trafficking, I want to challenge each of us with a simple yet profound question: When was the last time you opened your mouth?

Not to order coffee, not to complain about traffic—but to open your mouth for those who cannot speak for themselves. We find in Proverbs 31, 8 -9 a command that echoes through the centuries into our modern world: "Open your mouth for the mute."

The Silence of the Enslaved

Right now, as we sit in the comfort of this place, there are an estimated 50 million people trapped in modern slavery worldwide. That's more than the entire population of Spain. These are mothers forced into prostitution, children laboring in factories, men trapped on construction sites or on fishing boats, women and girls working in domestic slavery or forced to marry, many of them silenced by fear, trauma, and the overwhelming power of their oppressors.

They are the "mute" that the Proverbs speaks of—not because they cannot physically speak, but because their voices are systematically stripped away. Their cries to be heard, helped and respected are muffled by closed doors, by threats against their families, by the very systems that should protect them.

Isaiah 61:1 tells us that Christ came "to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners." But here's the challenging truth: God has chosen to work through us, His church, to fulfill this mission. *We are His eyes, His hands, His feet, and yes—His voice for the voiceless.*

More Than We Think

Perhaps you're thinking, "But I don't know anyone who's been trafficked. This isn't happening in my neighborhood." The uncomfortable reality is that human trafficking exists in every country across Europe and the world, in every major city, and likely closer to home than we realize. It's hidden in plain sight - it could be in hotels next door, massage parlors, restaurants, nail salons, construction sites, and suburban homes.



The young man working at that car wash, always looking down, never speaking—could he be trapped? The woman at the convenience store who seems afraid and never makes eye contact—is she free to leave? The girls selling items on the street corner—where do they go at night?

We pass by the "mute" every day, and often we don't even know it. But God is calling us to open our eyes before we open our mouths.

Our Biblical Mandate

Proverbs 31:8-9 isn't a suggestion—it's a **command**. "Open your mouth" appears twice in these verses because God knows our tendency to remain silent in the face of injustice. The Hebrew word for "mute" here doesn't just mean speechless; it refers to those who are unable to defend themselves.

This passage calls us to three specific actions:

First, to speak for those who cannot speak. Every time we raise awareness about human trafficking, every time we educate others about the signs, every time we share a story or statistic, we're opening our mouths for the mute.

Second, to judge righteously. This means we must discern between right and wrong, call sin what it is, and refuse to tolerate the exploitation of human beings created in God's image. We cannot be neutral when image-bearers are being bought and sold and exploited.

Third, to defend the rights of the poor and needy. Human trafficking preys on vulnerability—poverty, discrimination, homelessness, family dysfunction, and social isolation. When we address these root causes, we're cutting off trafficking at its source.

How We Open Our Mouths

So how do we, as ordinary Christians, open our mouths in this fight? Let me suggest several practical ways:

Educate yourself and others. Learn the signs of trafficking. Share this knowledge with your family, friends, and coworkers. Host awareness events in your home or community group. Knowledge is the first step toward action.

Pray specifically. Pray for victims. Be as specific as you can, by categories and names when possible, for their rescue and restoration. Pray for law enforcement agents working these cases. Pray for organizations that are on the front lines. Prayer is not passive—it's the most powerful action we can take.

Watch and report. If you see something suspicious, report it by contacting trafficking hotlines ([ROSA Norge](#)) or other trusted organizations or authorities in the field. Your call could save a life.

Buy ethically. Research the companies you buy from. Choose businesses that ensure their supply chains are free from forced labor or carry labels like Fair Trade, B-certified and Rainforest Alliance. Your purchasing power is your voice.

The Cost of Silence

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran theologian, once said, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

Every day we remain silent, more people are trafficked. Every day we fail to act, more lives are destroyed. The cost of our silence is measured in human suffering.

But there's another cost - the cost to our own souls. When we close our mouths and turn away from injustice, we become complicit. We lose part of our humanity, our ability to reflect the heart of God who "defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow and loves the foreigner residing among you" (Deuteronomy 10:18).

Our Hope and Calling

The beautiful truth is that God has already won this battle. Galatians 5:1 reminds us, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free." Christ's victory over sin and death guarantees that every chain will be broken, every captive will be freed, every voice will be heard.

But until that final day, we are called to be agents of that freedom. We are called to be the answer to the prayers of those trapped in darkness. We are called to open our mouths.

Dear all, human trafficking is not someone else's problem—it's our calling. The fight against modern slavery is not only a political issue—it's a **Gospel issue**. Speaking for the voiceless is not optional for followers of Christ—it's obedience. The question is not whether you have something to contribute to this fight. The question is: Will you open your mouth?

Prayer: *"Father, forgive us for our silence. Open our eyes to see those around us who live in slavery and in the shadows of others. Open our hearts to feel their pain. Teach us to see the signs and share them with others. And open our mouths to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. Use us, Lord, to proclaim freedom to the captives and to see Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen."*