

FOREWORD

THE SHOCKING FACTS THAT lie behind this book are that, first, there are more people enslaved in our world today than ever before, and, second, that human trafficking continues to be a blight around the world and particularly in Europe, ruining the lives of vulnerable people, especially girls and young women.

In the ten years of the Anti-Trafficking Project of the European Baptist Federation our member Unions and their churches have made a lot of progress in understanding these issues and, with other partners, taking action on human trafficking in our region. Yet there remains ignorance and prejudice, and in some cases a continued lack of willingness to face up to these evils of our time in the name of the God who created each woman, man, and child in His own image.

Marion Carson is uniquely qualified to address these issues. She is a recognized biblical scholar who has also long been passionately committed to countering the evils of trafficking and slavery in our time. She has been a key member of the EBF Anti-Trafficking Group since its inception, often leading us in profound biblical reflections on different aspects of human trafficking.

Her book does not make comfortable reading. The facts that she puts before us about the extent of slavery and human trafficking speak for themselves. But perhaps even more challenging to us is to take seriously and interpret anew the biblical witness, which has often been seen as, at best, ambivalent on the subject of slavery. By bringing as witnesses the biblical Christians who were at the forefront of the campaign for the abolition of the Slave Trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Dr. Carson helps us understand the need for an interpretive “key” to unlock the meaning of the Scriptures, rather than a literal reading on its own—the key here being the

over-arching faithful love of God for his creation and humanity, and the redemptive purposes of God as seen in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. She also conducts a careful evaluation of the biblical material regarding prostitution, encouraging us to use it to inform our contemporary attitudes as churches.

I warmly commend this book, and its discussion questions at the end of each chapter, to our EBF member Unions and their churches. May it better enable us to be effective in word and action in speaking up for those enslaved and trafficked in our world today, who cannot speak for themselves. In this way may we continue the ministry of Jesus, to “bring release to the captives.”

Tony Peck
General Secretary
European Baptist Association
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