



Q: What does slavery look like today?

GARY: Experts tell us that there are about 27 million people who are held as slaves in our world today and they're not metaphorical slaves. They're not people who live in slave-like conditions; they're not people who are so underpaid as to be slave-like. These are people who are owned by others and are forced to labor as literal slaves in our world. And my colleagues and I have met thousands of them. And all those sort of old pictures you might have had of slavery of where there's somebody picking cotton, driven by a whip, or ancient slaves being driven to make bricks, I have seen people making bricks by hand that are forced to do that, and if they don't they're going to get beaten. I've seen people breaking rocks, day after day, 12 to 14 hours a day breaking rocks with little hammers, the things we used to force prisoners to do under what they called hard labor. I've seen children doing this for 12 to 14 hours a day, seven days a week in rock quarries of slavery. I've seen men and women working on plantations just as they did 150 years ago—those pictures in our minds of slavery. Those same pictures exist today; slavery may take a little bit different form. It may have a different disguise today; it might have a different lie behind it, but it's always the same thing. It's people being forced to labor by coercion and violence and it's massive.

Q: What will it take to put an end to slavery?

GARY: For those of us who are trying to fight slavery it's worth pausing for a moment over the word *fight*. In other words what the word implies is there's somebody on the other side of slavery, specifically the slave owners, the slave masters, the slave traffickers; they're prepared to actually fight you in this. In other words, they're committed to what they're doing and especially a struggle that involves violence is going to be a test of who's more committed. And the slave owners, they're very committed to what they're doing. Number one they've got money on the line and number two if we actually are successful in enforcing the laws against slavery they're going to go to jail. So they are going to press us very, very hard on our own level of commitment and what they've learned so far is that the do-gooders, they arrive late and they quit early, right, because what happens is the do-gooders are sort of late to believe that people could really be this bad or that people could really hold slaves in this era. But then once they do and they charge in they find out oh this is a fight and the bad guys are a little scary, and the bad guys are committed to violence and they're used to violence because they've been using it against people for a long time. They're used to intimidation and they're used to fear and those are their tools, so we're going up against people who are used to the world of violence and they're used to a fight. And do-gooders a lot of time they're not used to a fight; so they arrive there a little late but then also it's quite easy to get intimidated to see the violence, to see the evil that lies behind slavery and to all of the sudden--all of the sudden find a number of good reasons why it's necessary to quit or a reason to walk away from the problem.

Q: There are so many perpetrators. Is it really possible to win this battle?

GARY: It turns out you don't have to actually go get all the bad guys; you just need to send enough of them to jail so it changes the calculation about what they can get away with, because right now

slavery is a crime of opportunity. The slave owners get away with it because they can. They prey upon poor people because they think they can do that and get away with it. And as soon as they stop getting away with it they stop doing it; they leave poor people alone. So for instance in places like Cambodia or Philippines or India we have seen that not only will we be able to rescue the individual victims from slavery but then as the perpetrators go to jail they send out a signal to the rest of the community that this won't be tolerated anymore. And mostly slave owners are businesspeople; right they're trying to make money. They're trying to prosper and when they find out that the price of slavery is now going to jail they just stop doing it. So the actual leveraged impact of Rule of Law is miraculous. All is you need to do is establish a credible deterrent and the people who once were slave masters decide they need to get out of that business.

Q: The statistics are overwhelming. What can ordinary people do to make a difference in the fight against slavery?

GARY: I think many times common Americans have a sense that well what could I possibly do about the problem of slavery in the world? And yet many times we go into the offices of governmental power, especially here in Washington, DC and we find out that the thing that members of Congress or people at the State Department or in the White House or the Senate, what they care about really is the things that their constituents back home care about. If common Americans make this a priority then their leaders in Washington, DC will make it a priority and then that can be a lynchpin as to whether or not it's a priority for leaders in other countries who are wrestling with the problem of slavery. So it is very much common Americans who end up tipping that balance in favor not of the slave master, but of the slave who needs to be free today.

Q: What has history taught us about slavery?

GARY: The world actually can move from a place of great darkness and a place of oppression to actually a place of justice and a place of freedom and it can take place within your own lifetime. In the lifetime of others here in the United States we've seen that when African Americans could not vote, they'd get beaten up for trying to attend proper schools or trying to ride on the same bus; that was once the reality in America but a tipping point of history was arrived at and that changed. At one point in America, one out of every eight Americans was a slave. At one point in America, women just couldn't vote at all. At one point in America there was about 100 lynchings, public lynchings and burnings that took place every year. There were millions of children in child labor; there were tens of thousands of women and girls taken into forced prostitution in the logging camps and the mining camps of our country. Well all those great evils have now passed from our national life. There are still some new injustices and some deeply rooted ones that we need to attack but a day when--when one out of every Americans was a slave or when women couldn't vote or when children were forced to labor, those days are gone because history moves. And when good people do what they can then there's great triumph over evil.