



Pastor Packet



Contents

10 Preaching Points	1
Sermon Outline.....	3
7 Bible Principles.....	5
Guest Speakers.....	8
Why the Local Church.....	9
Additional Resources.....	10



Dear Pastors,

Nearly 1,000 forcibly displaced people are legally accepted into Tucson annually. Less than half of them will have an American friend. Fewer will ever be invited into an American home. Most will never have a conversation with someone who follows Jesus.

The nations are not far away anymore, confined to forgotten islands or forsaken bush country. Bringing hope and sharing truth with least-reached and unengaged people groups is no longer reserved for the valiant and few super-saints... the selectively "called" that we send overseas. God is now tapping "average" church members on the shoulder, inviting us to love God and love our neighbor.

Now is the time to raise awareness about refugees around the world and mobilize your church to be a key agent of hope and compassion internationally and here in Tucson.

On behalf of the refugees and displaced communities, thank you for your participation in raising awareness and mobilizing others!

Tucson Refugee Ministry is here to serve you and help engage, equip and mobilize your congregation. Together we can serve the nations whom God is bringing to our doorstep!

Sincerely,

Cherie L. Gray

Cherie Gray



Executive Director

www.tucsonrefugeeministry.com

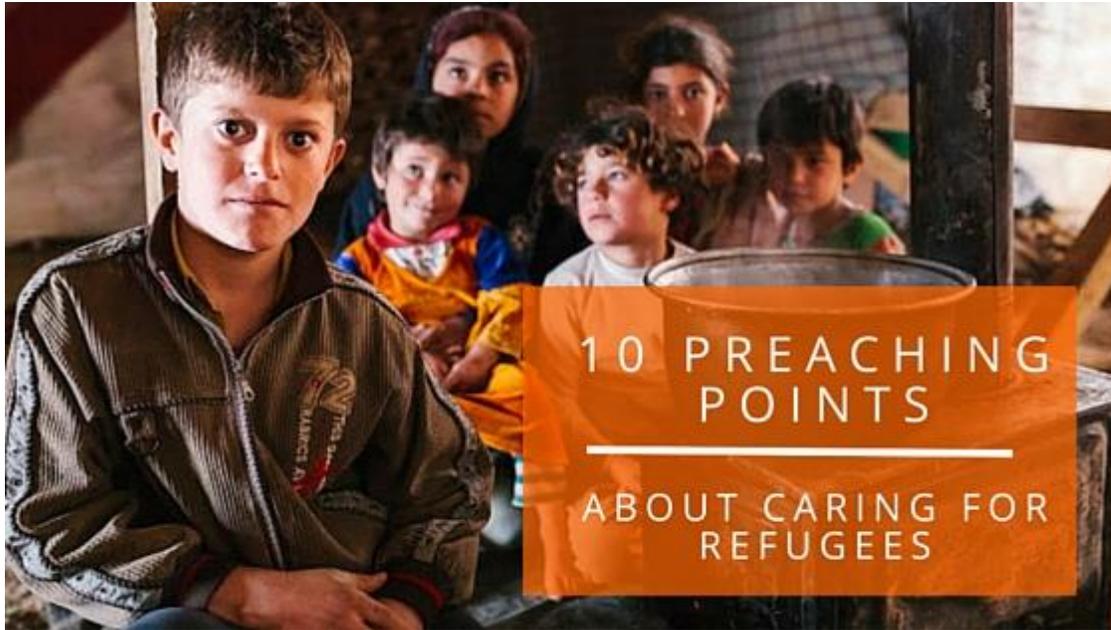
REFUGEE

One who is forced to flee their country because they have been persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group.

10 Preaching Points

10 Preaching Points to Talk about God's Heart for Refugees

BY CHURCH RESOURCE TEAM on October 16, 2015



There are now more refugees in the world than at any time in recorded history. More than half of these refugees are children. The Syrian Refugee Crisis is the greatest forced migration of people since World War II, the Church needs to stand in the gap, by demonstrating the love and compassion of Christ. We've developed these 10 preaching points you can use to teach your congregation about God's heart for the refugee and how He calls us to care about their needs.

1. Even though you will not find the word “refugee” in the Scriptures, God’s People are sojourners. We all are refugees in a land to which we don’t ultimately belong. We are citizens of a Kingdom whose King is God (“Metoicos” – Resident Aliens). (see Gen. 3:22; Gen. 37-46; 1 Chron. 29:15-16; Heb. 11; Acts 7; Phil 3:20-21)
2. A common theme of Scripture is God’s care for the foreigner, widow and orphan. (see Lev19:32-34; Deut 10:18-19; 27:19; 24:17-22; Psa 9:9; Psa 105; Psa 146:9; Prov 28:27; Isa 25:4; Isa 58:6-11; James 1:27)
3. Conflict that often preempts mass or solitary migration does not have the last word. God often uses the movement of people to His good purpose. (Acts – the life of the early Church)

4. God identifies with the refugee (in Egypt after his birth). He understands the life of the sojourner. They are made in His image (see Gen 1:26,28; Psa 107; Matt 2:19-21; Matt 8:20, Matt 12:1; Matt 25:31-46)

5. There are no boundaries in reaching out to the foreigner and sojourner in our midst. (See Isa 58:6-9; John 4:4-42; Luke 10:25-37)

6. God expects the nations to treat refugees/foreigner just like their native born, as they themselves wish to be treated. (Lev 19:34; Num 15:16; Deut 23:15; Is 16:3-5)

7. In Christ we are no longer strangers, but beloved children and heirs according to His promise. (see Eph 2:11-22, 19; Gal 3:29)

8. The stranger affords God's people the opportunity to show hospitality. We are to stand up for the refugee, sharing of our resources even to the point of selling our possessions in order that they may have enough (see Gen 18; Ex 2, Deut 24:19-21; 14:28-29; 26:12; I Kings 17:7-16; Josh 20; Jer. 5:5-7; Luke 9:3-5; Luke 12:33; Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2, 1 Pet 4:9)

9. God's people are deemed obedient followers and blessed when they show compassion to the foreigner and stranger. (Josh 20; Heb 13:1-2; Deut 24:19-21; Deut 27:19; Is 58:6-11; Matt 25:31-46; Luke 14:13-14)

10. Hospitality is a sign of a grateful and obedient heart (Luke 14:12; Acts 4:32; Rom 12:13)



Sermon Outline

Sermon Outline: Rise and Flee to Egypt



Main Text: Matthew Chapter 2

Big Picture: Consider Mary, Joseph and Jesus as refugees and how we should respond to refugees in our community and around the world

Introduction: Refugee Statistics

- Almost 60 million displaced people in the world. 1 out of every 122 people on the planet.
- Almost 20 million are refugees (have crossed a border) and the other 40 million are essentially refugees in their own country (IDPs – Internally Displaced Persons)
- Half of Syria's population is displaced (22 million total population)
 - 4 million refugees
 - 7 million IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons)
- 85,000 refugees will come to America this year (less than 0.5% of the world's refugees).
- 1,000 refugees will come to Tucson this year.

Matthew 2 Story Arch

- Wise Men arrive in Herod's court seeking Jesus (2:1-8)
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- Wise Men worship Jesus (2:9-12)
- Herod wants to destroy the child (2:13)
- Mary, Joseph and Jesus flee as refugees to Egypt (2:13-15)
- Herod kills all boys under 2 around Bethlehem (2:16-18)
- Mary, Joseph and Jesus return after Herod's death, settling in Nazareth (2:19-23)

Main Points

What the Bible Says about Them-

- Scripture References
 - "Do not oppress a foreigner," God commands, "you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt" (Exod 23:9).

- “Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor” (Zech 7:10)
 - “The Lord your God... defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing” (Deut 10:17-18).
 - “And he answered them, ‘Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.’” (Luke 3:11)
 - “Show hospitality” (Romans 12:13 and Luke 14:13)
- Examples of Immigrants and Refugees in the Bible
 - The Bible is full of stories about immigration and many are refugees. Here are some examples of immigrants: Abraham, Joseph, the people of Israel fleeing Egypt, Ruth, David, Daniel, Nehemiah, Jesus, etc.
- What the Bible Says about Us
 - We too are aliens and strangers and often live as outsiders in this world. We can identify with those who are also foreigners in our community. 1 Peter 2:11-12
 - As aliens, our worldview should not be shaped by the political party we vote for or the news channel we watch, but we should be transformed by the scriptures and the power of the Holy Spirit. How should we view immigrants as Christians? (Romans 12:2)
- What Does This Mean for Us Today
 - Good Samaritan – As a contemporary example, the Samaritan might be a Muslim refugee and the Jew might be one of us. Who is our neighbor and what might Christ be calling us to do? (Luke 10:25-37)

Closing Thoughts

The Bible is full of stories about immigrants and refugees. We can imagine how Mary and Joseph felt as they fled with Jesus to an unfamiliar land. Did they speak Egyptian? Did they know anyone or have any community in Egypt? How long did it take Joseph to find work as a carpenter? Christ reminds us that when we welcome the stranger, the hungry, the thirsty, the least of these, we are welcoming him (Matthew 25:35-40). This idea takes on even greater significance when we remember that Jesus was in fact a stranger in foreign land. There are 60 million people in the world today fleeing violence or persecution, facing many of the same struggles Mary, Joseph and Jesus faced. Nearly 100,000 of the refugees in the world will be coming to our country as refugees this year. How might God be calling each of us to welcome the stranger?

7 Bible Principles

Seven Bible Principles: For the Care and Nurture of Refugees



You won't find the word "refugee" in the Bible. But you will find refugees!

Some of the most important people in scriptures were refugees.

Jesus and his parents slipped into Egypt to escape Herod's infanticide. Moses and the Israelites were delivered from Egyptian tyranny into the promised land. Early church believers poured out of Jerusalem to save their lives and consequently the gospel reached new corners of the world. The Apostle John was exiled in Patmos and wrote the book of Revelation. All fled their homeland because they were singled out by leaders within their own country as targets for persecution. In other words, they were refugees!

Time after time, God has taken the tragedy of forced migration and used it to work out His purposes. He took extraordinary interest in refugees. He still does today. He's working out plans and purposes for Cambodians, Burmese, Sri Lankans who have been fleeing their country for the last twenty years, for the Mozambicans, Sudanese running for their lives in Africa, and for the Cubans who fled Castro and made it to the shores of Florida.

God has not left us to guess as a nation or as His people how we are to treat these people so close to His heart. The crowning passage that declares God's concern is in Matthew 25. When we stand before our Lord on the day of judgment, He'll ask us how we treated people who graphically fit the description of a refugee. Strangers, the hungry and thirsty, those in need of clothes, those who are in prison, and those who are sick - each characteristic strikingly parallel to a twentieth century refugee.

Then the King will say to those on the right, "Come you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25;34-36,40

Numerous Bible passages describe how God wants us to treat refugees -the strangers, the poor, the aliens, and the sojourners in our midst. Seven key principles describe God's abiding concern for refugees:

1. God loves, protects, and provides for refugees.

- He watches over them. Ps. 146:9.
- He provides refuge for them, a shelter from the storm, and shade from the heat. Ps. 9:9, Is.25:4.
- He shows no partiality to natives of a country. Refugees and natives have equal status in His sight. Deut. 10:16-19, Num.15:16.
- He defends their cause, providing food and clothing for them. Deut. 10:16-19.
- Jesus announced that the essence of his ministry was to help and serve people in refugee-like situations. Luke 4:16-2

2. God expects his people to love refugees and to give freely of their resources to help them.

- Love refugees as you love yourselves. Lev. 19:34, Deut. 10:16-19.
- Treat refugees fairly and stand up for them when others mistreat them. Ps. 82:4, Ex. 22:21, Lev. 19:33, Zech. 7:9-10, Deut. 23:15.
- Share your food, clothing, and shelter with them. Is. 58:6-11, Lk. 3:10, Mt. 25:31-46.
- Invite them into your homes. Heb. 13:2. Is. 58:6-11, Luke 14:12-13.
- Set aside part of your income to help them. Lev. 19:10, 23:22, Deut. 24:19-21, 14:28-29, 26:12, Gal. 2:10, Ja. 1:27.
- Sell your possessions to help them if need be. Lk. 12:33, Mt.19:21.
- Encourage them. Is. 1:17.

3. God views our compassionate treatment of refugees as a fundamental indicator of true Christianity.

- When believers stand before Him on judgment day He will ask them how they treated refugees. Luke 14:12-13, Mt 25:31- 46.

4. God expects the nations to rescue refugees, to take them in, and to treat them just like her native born.

- Rescue refugees from persecuting nations. Is. 16:3-5.
- Give shelter to them from their destroyers. Is. 16:3-5.
- Never return refugees to their oppressors. Let them live with you. Deut. 23:15.
- Give them a choice as to where they can live among you. Deut. 23:15.

- Treat refugees just like you do your own citizens through your laws and regulations. Treat them fairly. Lev. 19:34, 24:22, Num. 15:16.
 - Set aside part of your income to help them. Deut. 14:28-29, 26:12
5. God promises to bless the family and nation who take care of refugees.
- He blesses them and the work of their hands. Deut. 24:19-21.
 - He answers their prayer. Is. 58:6-11.
 - His glory is their rear guard. Ps. 41:1-3, Is. 58:6-11.
 - He strengthens them physically. Is. 58:6-11, Ps. 41:1-3.
 - He satisfies their needs. Prov. 28:27, Is. 58:6-11.
 - He protects them. Ps. 41:1-3.
 - He will repay them at the resurrection of the righteous. Lk. 14:12-13, Mt. 25:31-46
6. God promises to curse the nation and people who mistreat refugees.
- The judgment and curse of the Lord is on a nation that withholds justice from the refugee. Deut. 27:19, 24:17, Ez.22:9f, Mal 3:5, Ez. 16:49f
 - The Lord will not answer their prayers. Pr. 21:13
 - He who closes his/hers ears to refugees will receive many curses. Pr. 28:27
 - You show contempt toward God if you oppress the poor. Pr. 10:31.
 - A nation's right to its land is predicated upon treating refugees well. Jer. 5:5-7
7. God views our care for refugees as a concrete expression of love and service to him.
- When we take care of refugees, we take care of the Lord. Mt. 25.

Source: Exodus World Service

Guest Speakers

Guest Speakers



Another way pastors and local church leaders can better inform their congregations about refugee realities and our biblical mandate to love and welcome the foreigner, is by inviting a guest speaker with expertise concerning these issues.

Tucson Refugee Ministry can help arrange for any of the following guest speakers to come to your church:

1. Invite a **refugee** to come and share his or her own personal story
2. Invite a **volunteer** who works with refugees to come and share his or her experiences and interactions with refugees here in Tucson
3. Invite a **TRM representative** to do a presentation about a refugee's journey and how to build bridges with our refugee neighbors

Please contact TRM at cherie@tucsonrefugeeministry.com if you are interested and we will coordinate the speakers for you.

Why the Local Church



WITH A WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF 2.3 BILLION PEOPLE,
THE CHURCH IS THE LARGEST, MOST DIVERSE SOCIAL
NETWORK ON THE PLANET.

In the book of Psalms, God declares, *“Because of the groaning of the needy and the cries of the vulnerable, I will now stand.”* Churches stand for the vulnerable and rise with God to be an agent of hope and bring transformation to a world in need.

THE CHURCH

SOCIAL NETWORK

The worldwide Church is made up of 2.3 billion people.

CALLING

“The local Church is the only institution on the planet that exists for the benefit of its non-members.”

~ Archbishop William Temple

Following the example of Christ, churches teach and live out the message of forgiveness, reconciliation, service and love. As God’s love is manifested in tangible ways, relationships are strengthened and communities are refreshed.

The local church gives Christian believers an avenue to express their faith in practical ways and give its members opportunities to live out what they learn from the study of the Word and hear from the pulpit each week.

Additional Resources

Media Resources:

<https://vimeo.com/24886084>

A 60 second look at some biblical texts related to forcible displacement set to music without commentary.

<https://vimeo.com/141460217>

A refugee pastor describes life in a refugee camp - and how refugee churches are helping people transcend their circumstances.

<https://vimeo.com/132997834>

An introduction to the Refugee Highway

<https://vimeo.com/61831695>

Former refugees from Iran and Ivory Coast share how valuable it is for us to take time and initiative to pray for and with refugees.

<https://vimeo.com/17651246>

A beautiful song with photos that remembers the forcibly displaced people in the world

Information and Additional Resources:

www.wewelcomerefugees.com

www.iafr.org

www.refugeehighway.net

www.tucsonrefugeeministry.com

Refugee Vetting Process Info:

[FAQ's](#)

[Screening Process Infographic](#)



**BUILDING A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE CHURCH
AND THE NATIONS AT OUR DOORSTEP**