

Las Vegas Liberator

For 16 years, Annie Lobért was known at various times as a  prostitute, high-class escort and stripper. At the age of 18, Lobért willingly entered the sex industry as a rebellious and curious teenager, only to be sex-trafficked later into a life of coercion and threats—and utter misery.

“Ninety percent of prostitutes are sex-trafficked,” says Lobért, who finally broke free from the industry, became a Christian and now lives to help others who want to get out.

She says people don’t understand that although many women enter the industry on their own free will, they eventually lose control of their lives: “In the end, you’re trafficked.”

In 2005, Lobért began reaching out to those victimized by the sex industry and eventually founded her Las Vegas-based organization, Hookers for Jesus, with the intention of aiding the children, teenagers and women used in sex slavery.

“I’m fighting for these girls,” she says. “I can’t see these girls dying anymore. I can’t take it.”

Lobért and her team take their ministry to the streets, casinos and nightclubs, offering those who are willing a chance for physical, emotional and spiritual healing.

The organization’s Destiny House, a safe transitional home, is one way the team offers assistance. “Once we feel [the women] are ready ... they start looking for jobs, and they start integrating back into society,” Lobért says.

In December, Lobért’s ministry was featured on the Investigation Discovery channel in a three-part series titled “Hookers: Saved on the Strip.”

Your Turn

10 ways you can help end sex trafficking

1. Pray: Jesus prayed, "Your kingdom come." God has ordained His kingdom to operate in conjunction with human participation. He will avenge our cries and bring speedy justice when we cry out day and night for these women and children.

2. Be compassionate: Open your heart to the plight of the oppressed and allow yourself to be moved by the things that move God's heart.

3. Stand in purity: Lust fuels slavery. Activism begins with a commitment to personal purity; otherwise, we will find ourselves in partnership with the very spirit that keeps the sex trade booming.

4. Spread the word: Become informed. Tell others in your sphere of influence about the realities of modern-day slavery.

5. Volunteer: Be a servant. Offer your time, talents and passions to organizations in your community that serve victims of trafficking.

6. Watch: Slavery thrives in shadows. Ask the Lord to shed light on the underworld of trafficking and give you eyes to see. You can play a vital role in keeping watch in your community. To report human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 888-373-7888.

7. Reach out: Touch one life. Women and children are being sexually exploited in every city in America. If you look for them, you'll find them. Whether it's a woman being sold on the

street or dancing in a strip club, get to know them, love them through their struggles and believe with them for the full restoration that comes through Christ.

8. Speak up: Be a voice for the voiceless. Let your voice be heard by contacting local politicians and community leaders about your concern for those victimized in the commercial sex trade.

9. Adopt a child: Who will father the fatherless? Ninety percent of women in domestic prostitution were at one point in the foster-care system. Trafficking is an exploitation of vulnerability. Adopting a child who is lost in the foster-care system can prevent another young life from slipping into the tentacles of forced prostitution and human trafficking.

10. Invest: Sow into freedom. Join the abolitionist movement by giving financially to ministries that partner with the heart of Jesus to bring liberty to the captives and healing to the broken.

–**Blaire Pilkington**, director of philanthropy for Exodus Cry, a prayer movement to end sex slavery