



The Time is Now  
Orientation  
5<sup>th</sup> February 2017



## Overview

Sunday was the start of a new series entitled "The Time is Now." The idea behind the series is that in Nehemiah's day, Israel had lost its voice, its influence and its place in the world. The church in New Zealand has also lost its voice, its influence and its place. What will it take to rediscover it?



## Getting to Know You

What is the closest you've ever come to experiencing a "revival," either personally or in a group? What happened? What led to the revival and what came from it?



## Digging Deeper

### 1) What is the state of God's people?

Read Nehemiah 1:1-4

- a) Why do you think Nehemiah cared so much about the state of Jerusalem?
- b) Do you agree with Pastor Steve that the "state of God's people" in NZ is a mess? ("apathetic," "luke-warm," "uncaring" were some of the descriptive words used.) Why / why not?
- c) What do you think Christians in NZ look like to secular NZ society? Why do they see us this way?

### 2) How did this situation come to be?

Read Nehemiah 1:5-8

- a) What does Nehemiah see as the main causes of the poor state of Israel at this particular point in their history? Do you agree with him?
- b) What do you see as the main causes of the state of NZ Christianity at this particular point in our history?
- c) To what extent do you think Christians and Christianity in NZ should have an influence on the big issues of today's society? (e.g. immigration, global warming, homosexuality, etc.)



## Taking it home

### 3) What is the right response?

Read Nehemiah 1:9-11

- a) Why do you think God chose a “cupbearer” to bring about a change in Israel’s fortunes?
- b) What kind of response do you think we should make to the current state of NZ society ...
  - As a church?
  - As a life group?
  - As an individual?
- c) Take some time to brainstorm some ideas of what we could actually do? (As a church, as a life group, or as an individual) You don’t have to choose anything at this point, just come up with some good ideas about what might actually be achievable.



## Prayer

Here are some lines from the National Anthem of NZ. Use them as themes and ideas as you pray together for our nation and for the current place of Christians and Christian society within it.

- Men of every creed and race, gather here before Thy face,
- From dissension, envy, hate, and corruption guard our state,
- Make our country good and great,
- Let our cause be just and right,
- Let our love for Thee increase,
- From dishonour and from shame, guard our country's spotless name,
- Make us faithful unto Thee, God defend our free land.
- Preaching love and truth to man, Working out Thy glorious plan,
- God of Nations at Thy feet, In the bonds of love we meet,
- God defend New Zealand

God of Nations at Thy feet,  
 In the bonds of love we meet,  
 Hear our voices, we entreat,  
 God defend our free land.  
 Guard Pacific's triple star  
 From the shafts of strife and war,  
 Make her praises heard afar,  
 God defend New Zealand.

Peace, not war, shall be our boast,  
 But, should foes assail our coast,  
 Make us then a mighty host,  
 God defend our free land.  
 Lord of battles in Thy might,  
 Put our enemies to flight,  
 Let our cause be just and right,  
 God defend New Zealand.

May our mountains ever be  
 Freedom's ramparts on the sea,  
 Make us faithful unto Thee,  
 God defend our free land.  
 Guide her in the nations' van,  
 Preaching love and truth to man,  
 Working out Thy glorious plan,  
 God defend New Zealand.

Men of every creed and race,  
 Gather here before Thy face,  
 Asking Thee to bless this place,  
 God defend our free land.  
 From dissension, envy, hate,  
 And corruption guard our state,  
 Make our country good and great,  
 God defend New Zealand.

Let our love for Thee increase,  
 May Thy blessings never cease,  
 Give us plenty, give us peace,  
 God defend our free land.  
 From dishonour and from shame,  
 Guard our country's spotless  
 name,  
 Crown her with immortal fame,  
 God defend New Zealand.