



# A NEW THING

## Talk summary:

### **God prepares His people for a new home [Ezra 1:1-11 & 2:68-70]**

#### 1. God prods King Cyrus's generosity (Ezra 1:1-4)

- a. God 'stirs the heart' of King Cyrus - the new king of Persia who had conquered the Babylonians and then inherited God's captive people. God prompts this non-Jewish king to set them free and send them home with money and resources for the rebuilding of the temple. In verse 3 Cyrus's proclamation says: 'may your God be with you' - Nothing else in life competes so fiercely with God for that place in our heart that desires a secure future more than money. A biblical view of money is something useful but potentially ensnaring, and that God is the only true place of our future security.
- b. By giving away a portion of the amount we get in each month rather than waiting to see what we have left, we are making a prophetic declaration that we are trusting in God's provision for our life.

#### 2. God prods the leaders and peoples' generosity (Ezra 1:5-11& 2:68-70)

- a. We see how Cyrus's generosity leads to the leader's generosity. And then in the following chapter we read 'and each leader gave as much as he could.' This isn't someone saying - 'what's the minimum I can get away with giving' - it's a group of people who are excited to get to join in the adventure of taking part in God's mission through financial giving. And while in Ezra the focus of giving is for the physical temple of God, we are now in a time after Jesus has come where the focus shifts from God's presence being in a building to a people - so our financial giving today is ultimately sowing into God's purposes to bring hope and transformation to our community.

## Questions:

### **Conversation Starter**

- *Do I think money talk can be spiritual? Do I find it hard to trust God with my finances? Where might God want me to be growing in faith in relation to my money? How can we support one another in this?*

### **What might God be saying to me about this theme/situation?**

### **What have I learnt that I want to hold on to?**

### **How am I going to put it into practice?**