

EVERYONE MATTERS

HOPE for all



See our nation's history through different eyes, and take a fresh look at the future.



A diverse group of churches from throughout New Zealand have come together to give this booklet to every home. It contains remarkable stories from our nation's early bicultural past. It highlights the message that is still changing hearts and lives two centuries later... it's a story of hope.

Ever since Jesus lived on Earth, his teachings have been transforming our world in more ways than we can possibly imagine.

In this sixth 'Hope for all' booklet, we look at the way our culture cares for its sick, and why.



Matthew 25:35-40

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink... I was sick and you looked after me ...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." From a story in the Bible

STORIES OF HOPE FROM THEN AND NOW



Celebrating 200 years of the Christian message in Aotearoa

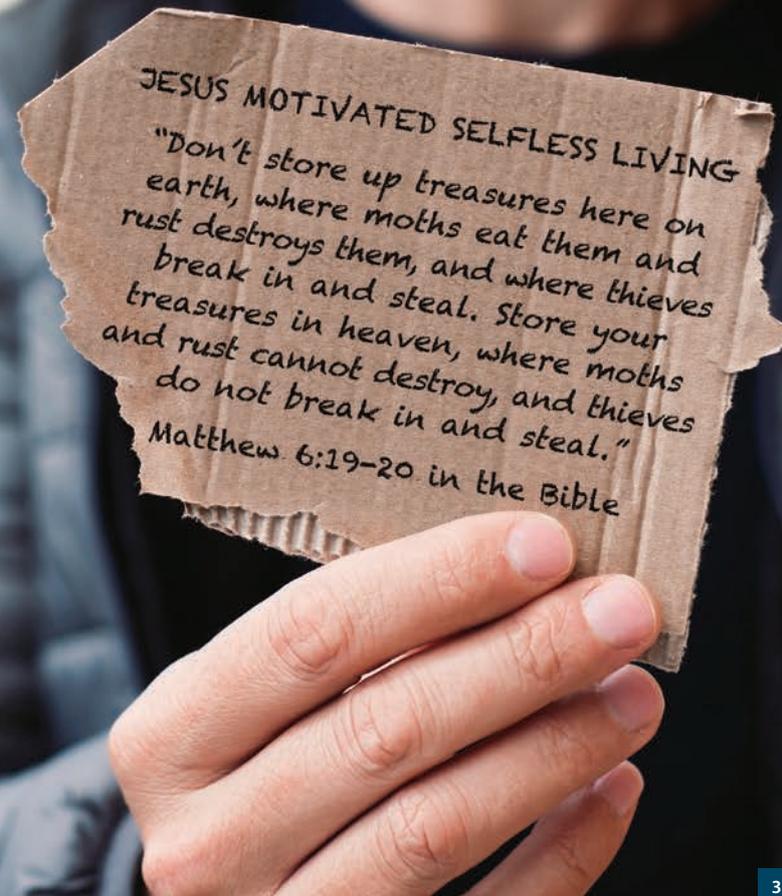
Health care for all:
Why does our society
care like it does?

Does anyone care about the poor?

It's hard for us to imagine how different life was in the ancient world. Healthcare was only available to the rich — and they were cared for in their homes. There were no hospitals like we know them — although the Romans sometimes had military hospitals for soldiers so they could recover to fight another day. Ideas of charity similar to those we have today did not exist.

Then came Jesus. Early Christian communities following him have been credited with introducing major changes that resulted in care for the sick around the world — including here in New Zealand.

From the 4th century AD onwards, when the official persecution of the Christian faith ended, Christians became overt agents of social reform. Gregory of Nyssa declared that “those with leprosy were made in the image of God, and therefore should be cared for”. Those present at a church leaders' gathering in Nicaea in 325AD responded by agreeing that wherever the Church was established, places of care for the needy should be also. Jesus' teachings were changing our world.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a piece of torn, brown cardboard. The cardboard has handwritten text in black ink. The text is arranged in several lines, starting with a title and followed by a quote and a reference. The background is a blurred image of a person's face and upper body, suggesting an outdoor setting.

JESUS MOTIVATED SELFLESS LIVING
"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal."
Matthew 6:19-20 in the Bible

The first hospitals — AD300

Basil of Caesarea (329–379) founded the first large-scale Christian hospital in 369AD. It had 300 beds and focused on care for the sick and disabled. Fabiola — a wealthy Christian woman — founded a similar hospital in Rome. These institutions were the start of a widespread movement.

Throughout the so-called Dark Ages, monastic hospitals were built to care for the sick. Emperor Charlemagne even decreed that every cathedral should have a hospital attached.

However, medical knowledge was very limited. Centuries would pass before two significant developments in healthcare came about. These related to nursing, and an understanding of bacteria.

Skilled workers please?

A SOCIETY OF NURSES — AD1500

Out of concern for the sick, Catholic reformer St Vincent de Paul (1581–1660) co-founded a society in France called the Daughters of Charity. The sisters were instructed by Vincent to *“... find the sick and poor. You do what our Lord did. Jesus went from town to town, from village to village and cured all he met.”*¹

Instead of all being based in one hospital, these nurses travelled to serve others, and they ended up running nearly all the hospitals and charitable institutions in France!

¹ C Jones, *The Charitable Imperative* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), p.7.

THE PROFESSION OF NURSING IS BORN — AD1800

Florence Nightingale (1820–1910) is credited with the birth of nursing as a profession.



In 1854 Florence witnessed the Crimean War in which Britain and France fought against Russia. There were many unnecessary deaths due to untreated or infected wounds. She realised the need was greater than could be met by one religious community in one place — so she began to call upon women to see nursing as a career. Those trained were then mobilised to far-flung battlefields.

In 1860 Florence started the Nightingale Home and Training School for Nurses in London. Thousands were trained.²

***The Kingdom of Heaven is within,
but we must also make it so without.***

— Florence Nightingale³

But, no matter how good the nurses were, microscopic bacteria were still killing the sick.

² D.J. Kennedy, *What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?* (Nelson Books, 2001), p.148.

³ C.E. Rosenberg, *The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System* (New York Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1987), p.124.

Could someone kill those bugs?

Louis Pasteur (1822–1895) was one of the greatest biologists of all time. In his time many believed life could 'spontaneously generate' from non-living material (like insects forming from a pile of rubbish). Louis disagreed. His faith led him to expect a better explanation of living things than that. His systematic methods led to new understandings of bacteria, the need for sterilisation and the development of vaccines.

His discoveries transformed medical care — and have saved millions of lives!



What about everywhere else?

The average person in AD33 lived for 28 years. By 1990 the average lifespan was 62 years. Two key factors were involved.

Firstly, these advances in medicine enabled lives to be saved.

Secondly, Christians continued to be motivated to take this care to those less fortunate than themselves. To this day tens of thousands of Christian missionaries train in medicine to serve in the developing world.

“The ministry of missionary medicine during the twentieth century has been without a doubt the greatest humanitarian effort the world has ever known...” — Dr Ruth Tucker, Missiologist

The example and teachings of Jesus have influenced us more than we know.

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God... This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.”

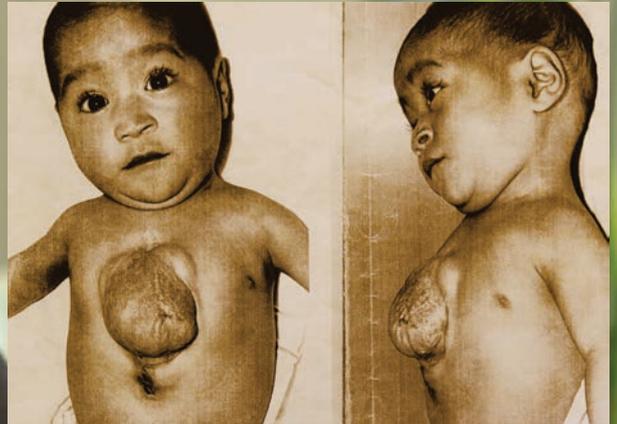
— 1 John 4:7–8 in the Bible

Aisha Te Kani – a hope greater than sickness



Aisha Te Kani is a medical survivor and her story can bring us hope. When Aisha was born, in Tauranga, her heart was on the outside of her chest and she had clubbed feet, amongst other challenges. She was not expected to live more than a day. But she did.

A skin graft was placed over her heart, and her parents visited her in hospital for nine months — because she wasn't supposed to live. But she did. 38 years later Aisha is still going, and is the only person living in New Zealand with this extreme condition.



HER JOURNEY TO HOPE

Relatives told her parents that they were being cursed for things they'd done wrong, and should forget their daughter existed. But their faith in God compelled them to believe that every life has value. They committed to love Aisha, no matter what.

At age five she started school with a fibreglass shield over her chest, and callipers on her legs to help her walk. People would stare. Joining physical activities was hard.

By age ten she decided she'd had enough. She prepared to end her life — but prayed before she did. A picture of her younger brother came into her head. She began to think about how her decision would affect him — and it caused her to choose life!

In that moment she felt that God spoke to her, saying, *"You know why I created you?"*

"Because when people see you, they will see me. You are my miracle. Every now and then I have to make someone like you to show people what life is truly about."

Her experience brought courage to her heart, and meaning began to flow into her life.

As is to be expected, the challenges have continued for Aisha. Yet every time she is in hospital enjoying the amazing healthcare our society provides, she finds herself a point of conversation, not only because her life is a miracle, but also because she lives it with such courage and joy!

"This life isn't all there is," says Aisha. *"All these temporary things aren't our greatest purpose. Finding God is, and then showing his love to others is!"* And Aisha is doing that. She works with young people, to help them live with hope.



Henare Taratoa — caring for sick enemies

Hone Taratoa was born around 1830 on Rangiwaea Island in Tauranga Harbour. He was baptised by Henry Williams — whose name he took, becoming Henare Wiremu Taratoa.

Embracing the Christian faith, he travelled for an education in Northland, which continued at the new St John's College in Auckland. Taratoa became a man of knowledge and faith, who could function well in both the Māori and Pākehā worlds.

A teacher of Māori

Taratoa became a respected teacher in missionary schools, and published a book called *The Teaching of Arithmetic*. He was the first Māori to travel with missionaries to teach in the Pacific⁴, then taught for many years at the mission school in Ōtaki.

Taratoa was highly regarded and highly connected, knowing missionaries, bishops, governors — and their families.

⁴ He did so on Maré Island at New Caledonia.



The call to war

Then in 1859 his mother wrote to him. War had broken out in Waikato. As Māori embraced the Christian faith they had turned away from the ways of war — but what about self-defence? The British were building a road across land in Waikato that Māori did not want to sell. Te Tiriti o Waitangi guaranteed them the right to keep their lands.

In Tauranga, those supporting Kingitanga (the Māori King) had likewise placed their land under the mana of the Māori King — to prevent any further sales. Taratoa told his co-worker, Missionary Hadfield, that he was going to return to Tauranga to die with his own people.⁵

⁵ P. Brooks, Henare Wiremu Taratoa — Noble Warrior, p33, quoting Hon. Sir R Stout, KCMG, 'The Fight at Gate Pa. A Māori version', Press, 2 November 1912, p.9.

Above: Horatio Gordon Robley's portrait of Taratoa — Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

Surprising rules for war

With war pending, Taratoa wrote up a code of conduct, which was sent to the British Colonel. In summary:

- Rule 1** A wounded soldier shall not be killed
- Rule 2** A soldier without a weapon will be captured
- Rule 3** A soldier fleeing to a church shall be safe
- Rule 4** All unarmed women and children will be spared.

These rules were very different from those by which Māori had behaved previously — and a higher standard than many British had.

When the British attacked the Māori at Pukehinahina⁶, 230 Māori defended themselves against 1700 well-armed British troops, including cannon fire. Superior tactics led to a remarkable Māori victory. However, equally surprising is what Māori did next.

Love beyond explanation

Taratoa decided to follow the teachings of Jesus by caring for wounded enemy soldiers. Others like Heni Te Kiri Karamu (a woman warrior) did also. A dying British soldier asked Taratoa for water — but he had none. Taratoa risked his life to help the man. When the British came to collect their wounded the next morning, they had cups of water next to them.

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.” Jesus’ teachings from Romans 12:20 in the Bible

⁶ Gate Pa — 29 April, 1864.

A life cut short

The British wanted a re-match, so Chief Rawiri Puhirake sent them an invitation to fight again at Te Ranga three days later. Seizing the opportunity, the British launched an attack immediately, to catch the Māori unprepared. Within minutes of the attack Māori walked calmly away from their posts, while still being shot at. 120 Māori lay dead. Henare Wiremu Taratoa was amongst them.

While searching the bodies the British soldiers found on Taratoa a Bible verse on paper: *“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body... but rather be afraid of him who is able to destroy both body and soul. Matthew 10:20”*.

Faith in Christ produced courage to stand for justice, and also a spirit of care — even for wounded enemy troops. Greed, pride and unforgiveness continue to produce oppression and war.

THE FIRST HOSPITAL IN NEW ZEALAND

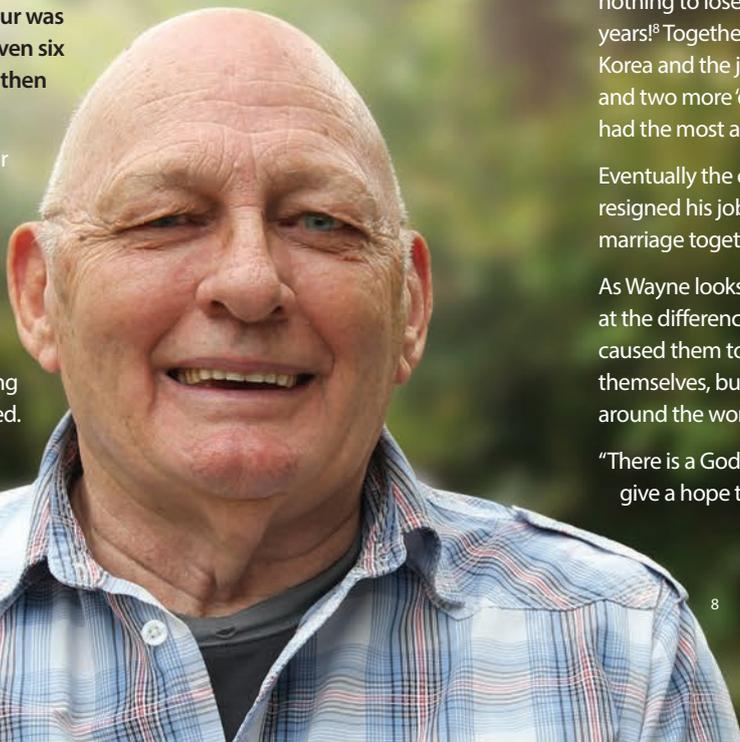
When the building of the new St John’s College in Auckland commenced, priority was given to the building of a hospital “... where treatment was given to all patients irrespective of the ‘station or religious persuasion”’. Arthur Purchas, who had trained at Guy’s Hospital in London, became the physician and surgeon. This was New Zealand’s first hospital.⁷

⁷ Ibid, p20. Auckland and Wellington hospitals were built shortly afterward, relieving pressure on a full St John’s.

Wayne Curham — hope greater than life

Married with children, Wayne awoke one day to find his wife, Mary, in the middle of a seizure. An aggressive cancerous brain tumour was found, and she was given six months to live — and then just six weeks.

The hardest day of their lives was telling their children. In a state of shock Wayne picked up the Bible and said they had to believe God could turn this to good. Even in just saying this he felt strengthened.



They asked their pastor for prayer — and as a group prayed for them, they felt something happen. At the next check it was found that the tumour's growth had slowed. A risky 'debulking' operation was arranged. Every morning Wayne would awake and thank God Mary had another day.

A full year passed and Mary turned 40. Wayne asked her, "Is there anything you want to do?" She replied, "I want to help people who are persecuted for their religious beliefs." So, with nothing to lose, they did — and Mary lived for another 23 years!⁸ Together they visited 32 places including Iran, North Korea and the jungles of Burma. Mary had various treatments, and two more 'debulking' operations — yet amongst it all they had the most amazing adventures!

Eventually the cancer came back with a vengeance. Wayne resigned his job to care for his wife. They enjoyed 43 years of marriage together, and she died with hope!

As Wayne looks back, he considers their decisions, and marvels at the difference a bit of hope can make. Despite challenges it caused them to live life to the full, and this benefited not only themselves, but also their families — and thousands of others around the world too!

"There is a God of love," says Wayne, "and faith in him really can give a hope that's greater than life!"

⁸ They joined 'Open Doors', and Wayne eventually became its Director. Open Doors advocates on behalf of Christians persecuted for their faith. Most Westerners are unaware that Christians are the most persecuted group in the world.

My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words... for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body.

Proverbs 4:20–22 in the Bible



Things that matter

WHAT MAKES ALL PEOPLE IMPORTANT — AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

A Christian society believes that human life holds unique value. To consider the logic, if God exists this means humans aren't the product of random or unknown forces. We are made with purpose, known and loved!

But if we remove God from this picture, isn't this idea that 'all people matter' just cultural opinion — which history shows can change?

WHAT ARE 'RIGHTS' — AND WHY DO THEY MATTER?

In our society people are being encouraged to stand up for their various 'rights'.

But what are 'rights' if we can't even establish together why human life is truly valuable? If we remove God from this picture, aren't rights also just a matter of cultural opinion — which can be changed?

WHAT IS THE 'FEAR OF GOD' — AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Almost all religions believe in an afterlife. Post-death experiences are also common to people of all cultures, and most religions also believe we will be judged in the afterlife for deeds done on this Earth. The 'fear of God' means we live each day with this awareness that we will be judged.

But if there is no God, who will enforce good standards? Also, what reason is there to obey them when no-one is looking?

Many do not realise that most of our ideas of equality between races, religions and genders, and also our ideas about the 'rights' of people, came to us from our Christian past.

Belief in a good God is at their foundation.

Might a good God exist — and might this be an important question?



Jesus' offer of hope

GOD?

Does it make sense to say everything came from nothing with no cause?

Does it make sense to suggest that the huge complexities of the first living cells came about, and came to life, by chance?

Might the idea of an **Intelligent Creator** be a fair conclusion when we see design, information and complexity?

WHAT OF GOOD AND EVIL?

Many struggle to understand how suffering, evil and judgement fit with a good God of love. Consider these questions:

If God wants a world with **love**, doesn't it follow that **free will**, with which we choose to love, needs to exist?

If people are given free will, isn't it possible they might choose to do **wrong**?

If God is **good**, doesn't that mean he must also be **just** — and therefore **punish** wrongdoing?

WHAT OF JESUS AND HOPE?

If God is also **loving**, might he not have put **a plan** in place from the beginning to enable those who do wrong to be **saved** from their coming consequences?



This is the Christian belief!

God came to Earth in Jesus to show us his ways, and to die for our wrongs — after which he rose back to life. God intervened within history — because he does loves us, and has a plan!

The question of faith is, how will we respond? A gift is offered that we all need: it is God's forgiveness — enabling restored friendship with God. We are then also restored to God's good purpose for us on Earth, and then to the hope of eternal life beyond.

It is a hope-filled belief!

God loves each of us, and offers us a new start.

This message has significantly changed our world and brings hope to millions of people's lives!

How will you respond?

Thank you for reading this booklet.

There is an optional prayer on the next page, and some weblinks if you want to find out more.

Please freely visit a church near you.

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A PERSONAL PRAYER

“ God, our creator, in spite of all I have done wrong, and all the good I have failed to do, I thank you for providing for my needs, and for giving me life.

Thank you, Jesus, for taking my punishment when you died and for inviting me into friendship with you. Today I choose that friendship.

Please forgive me for the selfish and wrong things I have done.

Please help me to live a life that pleases you.

Help me to understand the Bible, to find friends for this new journey, and to love others as you have loved me, for I know this is what you want.

Thank you.

”

SOME OPTIONS FOR YOU:

Take the 10 Day Challenge
(a simple introduction to the Christian faith)

This is a series of 10 short devotional videos, with reflective questions. Go to 10DayChallenge.co.nz or download the app by searching 'Why Jesus?' at the app store.

You could also:

Visit a church near you.
Find one on the map at 10DayChallenge.co.nz/churches

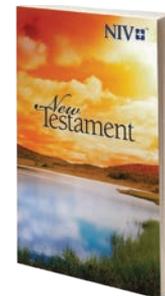
View stories about hope at HopeProject.co.nz

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Request a hard copy of the New Testament — which is all about Jesus, his teachings, and the early Christians who applied them.

Email: admin@hopeproject.co.nz

Post: Hope Project, PO Box 6078, Brookfield, Tauranga 3146



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Supported by a diverse group of Christian churches from throughout New Zealand, who came together to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in New Zealand and the beginning of a 'hope-filled' bicultural partnership with Māori.

In this spirit, let's make New Zealand a more hope-filled place.