



## Anastasis - Resurrection

Over the past few weeks, I've been thinking a little bit about 'new life'. It's kinda natural, seeing as it's Easter season, as well as everything going a bit crazy with the weather - daffodils poking through the snow and all that!

There's something a little bit weird about the phrase 'new life'... if we have life already, why do we need 'new' life? It's the same question, really, that this guy Nicodemus asked Jesus back in the day, when Jesus told him he needed to be 'born again': 'If a person is already old, how can he be born again? He cannot enter his mother's body again. So how can a person be born a second time?'

I can empathise with Nicodemus's confusion. Sometimes the things that Jesus said were massively confusing... What do you think Jesus meant by being 'born again'?

A few years ago, I worked with an organisation that had a section of it's mission devoted to 'Mercy Ships' - basically, they've bought up a few old cruise-liners that nobody wants any more, and turn them into floating hospitals. These Mercy Ships travel around the world's coastlines, and offer treatment to the poorest people



who would otherwise not be able to receive medical help.

Originally, the organisation wanted to get these ships up and running as quickly as possible, and threw all their attention into buying and renovating a boat called 'Maori'. It drew so much of their time and focus, though, that the project soon became all about the boat, and not so much about God or the people the boat was meant to be helping. In a bold move after recognizing their mixed up agendas, the group of leaders decided to walk away from the project, sell the boat for scrap, and let the project die. This freed them up to refocus on what the organisation was all about, and put their energies into working with young people.

Some years later, though, the possibility to buy another ship called 'Victoria' seemed to

appear out of nowhere, and it was almost as if God was breathing 'new life' into the project. The ship was bought, and the Mercy Ships began to develop from there. In recognition of the new life that was brought where the project had 'died', the group renamed the ship 'Anastasis' - the Greek word for 'Resurrection' or 'Rising Again'.

This true story might help us to glimpse a little bit about what this season of 'new life' is about. Jesus's challenge to Nicodemus to be 'born again' perhaps speaks to some of the times when Nicodemus has put other things before following God, and is offering him a new opportunity to follow God afresh. Like when the Mercy Ship group realized they had made a mistake, and let go of what they were clinging on to. In the long run, although that letting go was difficult, God blessed them with a 'rising again' - a new opportunity.

Where in your life might you be able to 'let go' of something this Easter, so that you might receive a rising again, a new opportunity, a new life?