

RESURRECTION LIFE: THE OTHER SIDE OF EASTER (Izwe Nkosi)

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

2 Corinthians 5:16-22 (NIVUK)

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jeremiah 18:1-6 (NIVUK)

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² 'Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message.' ³ So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. ⁴ But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.

⁵ Then the word of the Lord came to me. ⁶ He said, 'Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?' declares the Lord. 'Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel.'

The language Jeremiah uses about 'shaping' and 'forming' echoes the language of the creation account in Genesis 2:7 in which humankind is formed out of dust – the human from the humus – the red soil or clay. For Jeremiah the marred pot is reshaped in the hand of the potter. This passage from Jeremiah forms part of the Jewish liturgy for Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). In Christ 'the new creation has come' and we are created anew – reshaped in the nail-scarred hands of Jesus. Reconciled to God, we may 'approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may find mercy and grace to help us in our time of need.' (Hebrews 4:16).

- *In what ways has Jesus re-shaped you as a 'new creation'?*
- *Izwe spoke of spreading raw river clay out thinly in order to pick out the stones and imperfections. What 'bits' has God picked out of you?*
- *In what ways do we resist the ways in which God seeks to 'remould' us?*
- *What does it mean to have confidence to approach God's throne of grace? How confident are you? What might undermine your confidence?*
- *What does it mean in practice to be one of Christ's 'ambassadors'?*