# Walking through treacle 1. Know who you are

# 2 Corinthians

## One of the more difficult NT letters to unpack

## Historical background is needed

### Paul went to Corinth from Athens (Acts 18:1-7 (2nd journey)

### On his 3rd missionary journey Paul went back via Ephesus

#### The church at Corinth send a letter to Paul

### Paul writes 1 Corinthians

#### Most things sorted but… Paul needs to visit

### Paul’s visit does not go well

#### He sends Titus with a ‘severe letter’

### His detractors at Corinth say bad things about him

### He writes 2 Corinthians

# God called me

## This is me

### I am called by God in Christ to be an apostle to the gentiles

#### It doesn’t mean he’s perfect or that he has everything sorted in his life

##### Acts shows Paul as a man who is driven and quite abrupt

##### Galatians 2 tells us he stood up to Peter

### At his calling Ananias was told that it would be revealed to Paul how much he would suffer for the name of Christ (Acts 9:16)

# God gave me a message to spread

### Paul had gone away for a number of years and rethought everything

## Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

### A chiasm

#### It’s grace through Christ!

#### It’s the active peace of the Father

# God has a plan

## It’s about grace and peace, but it’s spread through you living your life not just opening your lips

### You will experience the rejection Christ received

### You will experience pain

### You will encounter people in pain

## You are part of that plan

### Using your experience to bring comfort

# Homegroup/Private study questions

# Sharing your experience

## Paul wants the Corinthians to know about the troubles he’s had (1Co1:8-11)

### What does this tell them about the Christian life?

### What did this teach Paul about God and himself?

### What did it tell him about his future? (10b)

### What does he think will happen in the end? (11)

# Difficult times

## Emotional pain is more difficult to handle than physical pain

### To what extent do you agree with this?

### Why do you think that?

## We have all had difficult times and in those times we have learned things about God

### He doesn’t always answer prayer

### He doesn’t give in to our demands

### He doesn’t change the bad news

#### So what do we learn?

#### How does this help us in dealing with others?

# Know who you are

## To what extent is being a Christian an ‘anchor to the soul’ in difficult times?

### Do you have personal experience of this?

## To what extent does God manage the dangers we face like a parent does with a child?

### Why do you think Paul went through so many dangers?

# God has a plan

## To what extent do you agree that God’s plan is not just to redeem the world but to bring comfort and blessing in hard times?

### Is this only for other Christians?

### What comfort can we bring those who mourn who are without a faith in Christ?

#### How can we do this without appearing smug?