# Walking through treacle 7. Keep the goal in mind

## 2 Cor4:7-5:21

# Life can be harsh

## Natural disasters

## Suffering in the body, physical decay

## Judgment

### By society

### By individuals

### By God

# There is a Christian answer!

## In chapters 4 & 5 of 2 Cor Paul tackles the common problems of life:

### Suffering and physical decay (4:7-18)

### Death (5:1-9)

### Judgement (5:10-21)

## Paul grabs all of these issues and puts them under the light of Christ in us, the hope of glory

### His answer is not to exercise more or to make ourselves more useful or volunteer more to try to stave off the evil day

# God wants you to see it how it is

## 5 contrast themes to describe the Christian life and outlook

### Light in darkness

### Power in weakness

### Life in death

### Faith in silence

### Glory in suffering

#### All of these things remind us that this world is not our home

# The glory is yet to come

## This is living with eternity in mind

#### This world is not my home – I’m just passing through!

### Age will get to me, but it doesn’t define who I am

### The world may judge me on what I am worth to them but God loves me unreservedly because of the treasure within

# One day…

## We’ll see…

## We’ll understand…

## We’ll value…

### Until then we live with this in mind

# Homegroup/private study questions

# The mess of human existence

## Paul takes wide issues (suffering, death and judgment) and shows that there is now a different way of looking at them

### How does looking at these through the incarnation change our perspective on them?

### How does looking at them through the resurrection change our perspective?

### How does looking at them through the cross change our perspective?

# Treasure in jars of clay (4:7ff)

## What is the treasure Paul alludes to?

### What does he assume happens to every Christian? (v6?)

## What is expected to happen to the clay jar in the end?

## How does this picture separate you from your body, your family and your community?

### How do you think the treasure protects us?

## How does this view help us not to lose heart (16)?

# The waiting game (5:1ff)

## What do you think about having a new body?

### What needs improving???

## To what extent do you agree with Paul when he says I’d rather be in heaven than here (8)?

### To what extent is he saying he’d rather be dead?

## What is Paul urging his readers to do while they wait?

### Why does he do this?

# The Ministry of reconciliation ((5:16ff)

## How can the world be reconciled to God?

## What did the world do to be reconciled to God?

## What is our part in this service of reconciliation?

### How do we go about it?