



# **THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT:** MINISTRY PRACTICE IN HARD TIMES 2 CORINTHIANS

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[vimeo.com/showcase/9176481](https://vimeo.com/showcase/9176481)

## **SERMON: LIFE & GLORY**

2 Corinthians 2:12-3:18 – Simon Flinders

### **1. The Quest for Life & Glory**

### **2. Life & Death (2:12-3:6)**

- the open door
- the procession and the aroma
- two different kinds of ministry
- competence in the Spirit

### **3. Glory & More Glory (3:7-18)**

- different covenants
- difference in glory
- boldness in the Spirit

### **4. The Gift of Life & Glory**

- the God who spreads
- the God who transforms

# **SEMINAR: PREACHING WITH PASTORAL INTENT**

Simon Flinders

## **Preliminaries:**

### **1. Preaching & Shepherd**

Acts 20:17-35

2 Timothy 4:1-2

Titus 1:9

John 10:4

- awareness
- acuity
- application

### **2. Preaching & Circumstance**

#### **2.1 Principle**

- context
- culture
- crisis

#### **2.2 Preaching 2 Corinthians**

#### **2.3 Workshop - 2 Corinthians 1:3-11**

### **3. Preaching & People**

#### **3.1** Principle

#### **3.2** Preaching 2 Corinthians

#### **3.3** Workshop - 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

### **4. Preaching & God**

#### **4.1** Principle

#### **4.2** Preaching 2 Corinthians

#### **4.3** Workshop - 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

# **SERMON: WHAT CAN PAUL TEACH US ABOUT MINISTRY IN HARD TIMES?**

2 Corinthians 6:3-13 – Kirk Patston

## **Introduction:**

**a.** Paul as super-apostle

**b.** Paul's reason for writing 2 Corinthians

## **A more complete picture of Paul:**

cruciformity, vulnerability, resurrection, glory

Cruciformity: Paul suffers like Jesus who went to the cross

Vulnerability: Cruciformity in creation itself

## **Resurrection and Glory:**

Paul's transformed character

Paul's ability to notice the good and the bad

Paul's ability to serve out of weakness

# TALK: HOW I MINISTER IN HARD TIMES

Pip Russell

## Introduction:

1. The Bible is honest about the tough times

2. This life is not all there is

3. Suffering leaves a mark

4. Listen well and be God's love with skin on

5. Be ready for tough times ourselves

## Books:

Sally Sims – *Together through the Storm*

Nancy Guthrie – *What grieving people wish you knew about what really helps and what really hurts*

## Books for 'seniors':

*Mr Eternity*

Billy Graham – *Nearing Home*

John Chapman – *Making the most of the rest of your life*

## Navigating assistance for over 65s

- ACAT (Aged Care Assistance Team) – through GP
- MAC (My Aged Care) – government organisation portal for packages/support
- Choose a provider – e.g. Anglicare
- Vimeo – How Anglicare at Home can Support you

## **SERMON: GRACE SUFFICIENT**

2 Corinthians 12:1-10 – Simon Flinders

### **1. Paul & God**

- the first experience: revelation
- the second experience: humiliation

### **2. Paul & Corinth**

- playing along with the false apostles
- undermining the false apostles

### **3. Paul & Us**

- ignorance and confidence
- prayer and trust
- weakness and strength
- suffering and delight
- inadequacy and grace

# **SEMINAR: PASTORAL CONVERSATIONS IN HARD TIMES**

Kirk Patston

## **'I am having hard thoughts about God'**

- Whether first fostered from painful childhood experiences, heavy handed preaching, or something else, we often imagine God in deeply problematic ways.
- God is tyrannical, demonic, cruel, brutish...
- *"We are 'apt to have very hard thoughts of him – to think he is always angry, yea, implacable; that it is not for poor creatures to draw nigh to him."* Owen, Works, 2:34.
- These become temptations because they do not help us to draw near to and communicate with God
- What happens if empathy distorts into further hard thoughts about God?

## **'I want to know why God is doing this'**

- Theodicy adds to the evil in the world by offering a false view of God
- We compromise either God's love or his sovereignty

## **'Should I really tell God about my struggle'**

- The Biblical practice is an expression of faithfulness

## **'I am in pain all the time. Why do I even have a body?'**

- Christians are not Enlightenment dualists
- Christians need not become obsessed with the beautiful body
- Our body grounds us in creation
- Our body gives scope for relationship
- God's plan is not escape from the body. It's resurrection!

## **'I've decided not to think about my pain anymore.'**

- Denial

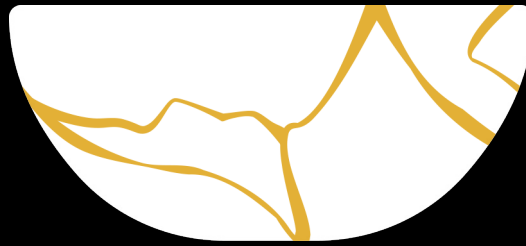
## **'I think God has something wonderful for me in my pain.'**

- Naïve optimism

## **'I'm feeling small and lost.'**

- This may be valid, faithful posture
- The wrestle is real





*"The Japanese have an artform called Kintsugi. It's the gluing back together of pieces of broken pottery, and it makes no attempt to disguise damage. The artist regathers the pieces and puts them together with lacquer and luxuriant gold powder. This artform is a way of saying that things falling apart is actually what we expect – and an opportunity to mend redemptively. Just as broken fragments can be held together with lacquer and gold, we can be held together by the faithful promises of God. God is at work – there is a vein of gold running in our lives as he carefully glues us together with luxuriant grace."*

Kirk Patston