

## Relationship

- Acts 18
  - from Athens to Corinth (from Edinburgh to Glasgow!)
  - preached first to Jews, then moved on to speaking to Gentiles
  - threat - Acts 18:9-10 "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city."
- Letters
- Concern for their well-being above our own
- Mutual affirmation (v.14)
  - History of visits - a painful visit, a planned visit put off, a previous letter (7:8) "Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter...", plainly not 1 Corinthians!
- Miscommunication

## Suffering

- To be expected
- God helps us with
  - prayer important
  - grows character - patient endurance, reliance on God
- Do we want out of suffering when it comes? Or do we want God to work through our circumstances for his glory and the benefit of others?

## Foundations

- God, Father of the divine Christ
  - sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives...
- God of grace and peace
  - God of comfort and compassion

## Conclusion and Application

- Church - which is God's people - matters
  - God's people matter
  - communication, truth, clarity, concern for the other, selflessness are critical
  - will we treat one another as the precious bride of Christ, not disparaging or putting down or dismissing even the weakest brother or sister in Christ?
- Suffering for the sake of the gospel will come
  - indeed, if it doesn't, should we not be worried?
- Our confidence is built on solid foundations:
  - on our Heavenly Father
  - on his Son who died for us, and from whose sufferings the benefits of salvation flow
  - on his Spirit, who lives within us, a deposit, a seal of ownership, guaranteeing our future hope...