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NEW FOR CHRISTMAS
The Snowman and The Snowdog
Channel 4

It's the legendary double issue!
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
David Suchet: In the Footsteps of St Paul

9.00am BBC1

DOCUMENTARY Years ago, David Suchet read St Paul’s Letter to the Romans and became fascinated with the man who changed Western thought. Suchet doesn’t claim the moment as a Damascene conversion, but he seems genuinely engaged with his subject matter.

He starts in Jerusalem, where Paul crushed followers of the Jesus movement, a fledgling Jewish cult. Then it’s Tarsus, Paul’s home town, where locals believe his legacy lives on in a spirit of tolerance.

In the first of two programmes, Suchet is beginning to work out Paul’s character. In a grotto above Ephesus lined with Christian frescos, Suchet lingers by a painting of his hero and draws an unlikely, wistful conclusion: “He does look like me, doesn’t he?”

Emma Sturgess

Mr Stink

6.30pm BBC1

COMEDY David Walliams’s book about a homeless man who is befriended by a lonely young girl, Chloe, was written with kids in mind, so it’s stuffed with references to bottoms, belches, farts and smells. But there’s some subtle moralising and tackling of prejudices.

Sheridan Smith is fabulous as a potential MP whose politics are slightly to the right of Hitler, while it was genius to cast Hugh Bonneville as the odoriferous Mr Stink and BGT’s Pudsey as his canine companion. Funny and heart-warming, it even has a cameo from Walliams himself.

Jane Rackham

Ade’s Christmas Crackers

7.00pm ITV1

ENTERTAINMENT Christmas telly has changed a lot in the past 60 years – thank goodness. After a mercifully brief reminder of the ghastliness that was The Black and White Minstrel Show, Ade Edmondson wisely taps into a vein of more pleasurable TV nostalgia that skips through archive clips of chefs, soap and comedies. However, while he draws the line at showing us the chimp trained to cycle round the circus ring smoking a cigar, the black-and-white snippets from long forgotten shows are unintentionally hilarious and will make you appreciate today’s offerings.

JR