



# Home Group

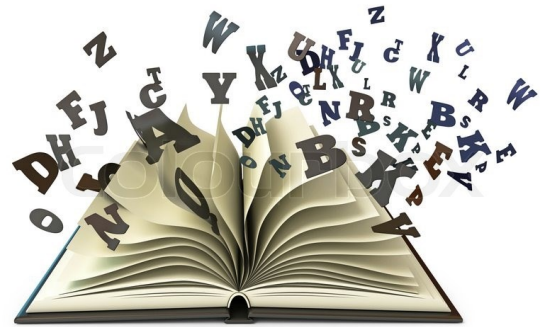
## '...Your rod and staff comfort me'

Week commencing 21st March

Mark Callaghan

During the service on Sunday we looked again at the 23rd Psalm. It always amazes me whenever I look at scripture because some days I just read the words and yet others the words jump off the page at me.

Is there one verse or passage of scripture that you have read recently been like that for you - jumping off the page?



As well as words and phrases jumping off the page I sometimes left with what, why questions over certain things we read in the Bible.

Are there any particular bits that you are left questioning?  
Are you willing to share? (perhaps they could form the basis of other topics of discussion in the future).

Many years ago I was told that you shouldn't take a verse of scripture and use it without first reading around the reason for the verse being where it is and in what context it has been used.

What are your thoughts on that?

Do you think that to fully understand a particular word, phrase, verse, account, chapter you need some background to it or do you just take it a face value?

By taking it at face value could you be missing out on a hidden treasure?

With that in mind looking at the words of Jesus what would you say this means...

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.

(Luke 14:26)

Is Jesus calling us to hate? CERTAINLY NOT! Looking at the meaning of the word hate in this passage it means 'to love less than'.

Looking at 'the rod and staff' in Psalm 23 I asked the question how do they comfort. Most references to a rod in the Bible are things to do with punishment or to hurt people/animals.

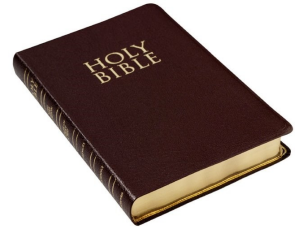
However if we consider it as a metaphor for the Word of God...

The rod



Has been likened to  
or is a metaphor  
for...

The Word of God  
the Bible



For we, just as the sheep pass under the rod daily, to do our work, daily tasks, school, job etc, need that close inspection by the shepherd, or the Lord who is our Shepherd, that comes from His rod, the Word of God, we can find comfort, safety, protection, healing as well as guidance, correction and discipline.

Just as the little lamb on the farm took every opportunity to feed in order for it to grow so we too show take every opportunity to feed on God's Word and feel the touch of the shepherds rod on our lives as it goes deeper and deeper into us.