

Reacquaint, Re-establish, and Revision

In Matthew 22 the Jewish religious leaders have been questioning Jesus trying to catch him out. Today I want us to join the conversation from verses 37 - 40. In these verses Jesus is responding to the question 'which is the greatest commandment?' *Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

As we come out of our enforced hibernation from COVID, I am encouraging both St Barnabas and St Paul's to reflect **and act** on three words - Reacquaint, Re-establish, and Revision. And these words, I hope, will help us to encompass all that Jesus is asking of us as he summarises the law in Matthew 22.

Reacquaint

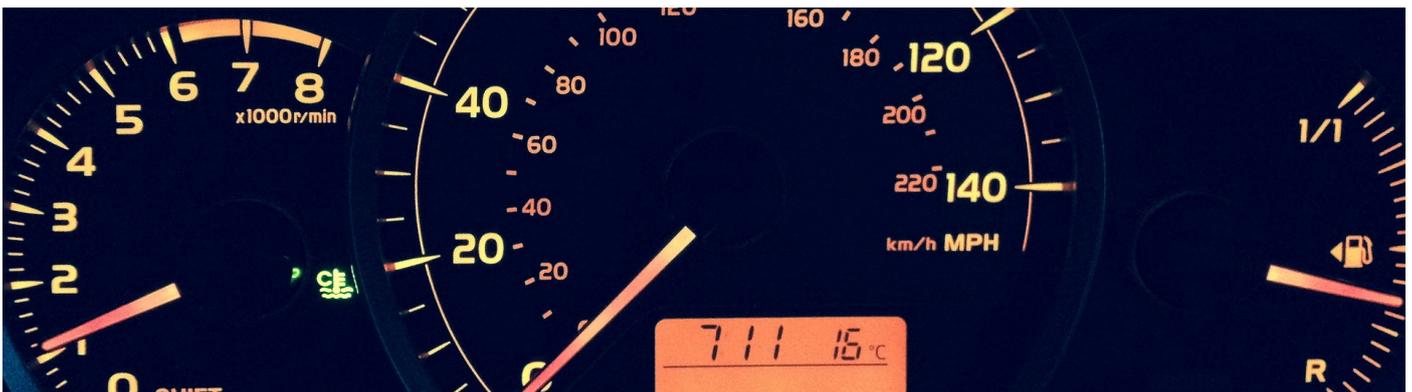
For many of our church members we just haven't seen each other for over a year. We miss each other. We enjoy chatting before and at the end of the services, and worshipping God. As we chat we open our lives up sharing our joys and sorrows and hopefully pray for each other or those we know - an example of loving our neighbour. Also, although loving the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and mind can be practised in many different ways, as we come together as a church family in worship, this is a truly beautiful expression of loving God fully as we collectively engage our hearts, souls and minds.

Re-establish

We have missed each other, but we have also missed time with those in the wider community. We have kept contact with our schools, and various groups who meet in our churches normally, but we are not seeing them in person, nor being as involved in their lives, or able to develop deeper relationships. Those connections with the community need to be re-established and I think that it is only as we do this, as a church, that we can start to love our neighbours outside our church walls afresh.

Revision

Don't worry there is no test - Jesus did that on our behalf! However, we do need to revisit why we are here as churches. If our primary purpose is found in Jesus' words in Matthew 22 above then what does that look like for each of us in a post-covid world? Over the next year, my hope, is we will revise what our purpose and vision is, so we can move into the new beginnings that God is calling us to.



As I think of the 3 'R's' I'm reminded of an episode from Blackadder goes Forth. *'I spy with my little eye something beginning with R.'* *'Motorbike', that begins with an "Rrr".*

As we Reacquaint, Re-establish, and Revise, though we need to need to be patient, we also should be prepared for some noise and speed as God takes us to where he wants us to be as churches. Please pray that we get the pace right as the PCC's discern His direction - Rrr Rrr!!