

# Thought for the Month

June 2020

## **Love your neighbour as yourself**

Is the pandemic over? Will there be a vaccine? How will we get back to normal? What will be the new normal?

These questions and many others like it are swirling around in our world now, indeed it might seem that we have more questions than answers at this time. Undoubtedly time will provide the answers to some of them, and probably raise new questions to be answered. After the initial shock, confusion and sheer worry of the situation some degree of order has emerged, and we now begin to look seriously at how we might restore 'normality' and what that might mean.

Many people are suggesting that despite the tragedy of the situation there are some good things that have come out of this. A renewed sense of community and responsibility has arisen, a clearer vision of what our world might be like with less pollution and a feeling that we have an opportunity to change things for the better.

The key question is how?

I cannot pretend to have all the answers; as I said I am not sure what all the questions are! However, I would like to say two things.

Firstly, as Christians we can be confident in God. He has our ultimate destiny in his hands. We can turn to him in prayer for guidance, courage and the strength to move forward. As Ian reminded us last month, Jesus was always challenging the 'normal' way of living and pointing to a new way of living. We should take courage from this and speak up for a new 'normal'

Secondly in this age of Internet memes, slogans and messages to Stay at Home and Stay alert, can I suggest that as Christians we speak up for a new yet well-known message. Jesus told us 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind.' (Matthew ch22 v37) and 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'

Not the catchiest of slogans certainly, but as a message and a standard by which to judge our new normal it is, I suggest, powerful.

It our need to honour and steward God's Creation and to live captures together in love. If we hold fast to these two principles, we can dare to work towards a new better normal.

*Alan*