



Small group discussion questions February 2016

Chapter & verse – Susan Durber (page 20)

Read Exodus 20:1-21 and Matthew 5:1-12; 6:9-13 followed by Susan Durber’s article.

1. Think about the interior of your church. What does it tell people about the kind of church you are, about your beliefs and priorities?
2. Susan describes two texts on the wall at the front of her church – the ones you have just read. Why do you think those texts were chosen to go on the wall?
3. In paragraph three, Susan says that putting the two texts alongside each other “does something interesting, dangerous even, to the way we read”. What effect does it have, and why might it be dangerous?
4. Susan says, in the next paragraph, that the Beatitudes “are not law, but Gospel”. What is the difference? If they are not rules to follow, what impact should the Beatitudes have on our lives?
5. Susan talks in paragraph five of the Jewish way of understanding the Commandments. Is this very different from the way you tend to understand them? Do you think it is a helpful way to understand them?
6. Do you, as Susan suggests in paragraph six, “find it hard to read either the Ten Commandments or the Beatitudes as gifts of grace”? Why can this be difficult for us?
7. Susan concludes by considering the practice in church services of reading several Bible passages side of side. Do you find that helpful in bringing out the full meaning? What other ways are there to be “good readers” of the Bible?

Chapter 8 verse

Susan Durber Chapter & verse
 "These texts do something interesting, dangerous even, to the way we read"



October 2012 and Matthew 8:12

The church where I worship has been reading the Book of James in the past few weeks. It's a book that's often overlooked in the Bible, but it's a book that's full of wisdom and insight. I've been thinking about it a lot lately, and I've been wondering how it might challenge the way we read the Bible. I've been thinking about the way we read the Bible, and I've been thinking about the way we read the Bible. I've been thinking about the way we read the Bible, and I've been thinking about the way we read the Bible.

'Faith is not a set of commandments'

...the text is. And I think there's something about the way we read the Bible that's dangerous. I think there's something about the way we read the Bible that's dangerous. I think there's something about the way we read the Bible that's dangerous. I think there's something about the way we read the Bible that's dangerous.

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For further reflection: "I long for your salvation, O Lord, and your law is my delight. Let me live that I may praise you, and let your ordinances help me." (Psalm 119:174-175)

Prayer: God who reaches out to us with a parent's embrace, help us to know and to trust that healing embrace of unconditional love. Help us to live in the light of it. Amen.