



## Small group discussion questions February 2015

### Chapter & verse – Susan Durber (p22)

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, followed by Susan Durber’s article.

1. In the first half of “Chapter & verse”, Susan describes a meal in India which made her feel uncomfortable. What was it about the meal that made her feel like that? Have you ever had the experience of feeling uncomfortable about the cultural traditions around eating a meal?
2. In paragraph four of “Chapter & verse”, Susan says: “I reflected of course on the ways in which food and eating also divide people in my own culture.” What ways does she mention? Can you think of others?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 11: 17-22. How would you describe the way the Corinthian church celebrates the Lord’s Supper?
4. In 1 Corinthians 11:20, Paul says: “When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord’s Supper”. How do you understand this statement?
5. In paragraph five of “Chapter & verse”, Susan describes the Lord’s Supper as “profoundly counter cultural”. What made the idea of eating everyone together so significant?
6. In verse 27 of the Bible passage, Paul says: “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord.” What do you think eating and drinking in “an unworthy manner” might involve? And how do you understand the idea of being “answerable for the body and blood of the Lord”?
7. Do social divisions of the kind Paul addresses in this passage occur in churches today? If so, how do they happen and what form do they take? What can we do about them?

**Columns of words**

**Susan Durber Chapter & verse**  
"It is a scandal that the people of Christ do not eat together around one table"



"When, my brothers and sisters, will you come together to eat, and to drink together?"

It is a scandal that the people of Christ do not eat together around one table. It is a scandal that the people of Christ do not eat together around one table. It is a scandal that the people of Christ do not eat together around one table.

**Jesus' supper was counter-cultural**

Jesus' supper was counter-cultural. It was a scandal that the people of Christ do not eat together around one table. It is a scandal that the people of Christ do not eat together around one table.

8. Do social divisions of the kind Paul addresses in this passage occur elsewhere (outside church contexts)? If so, how do they happen and what form do they take? What can we do about them?
9. In the last two paragraphs of "Chapter & verse", Susan imagines Paul confronting theological divisions like those that stop churches sharing Communion today. Where do you think those divisions come from? And, as Susan asks: "What then would [Paul's] judgement have been?"
10. Susan ends with a challenge to us as individuals and churches: "What could we do to renew the Church's unity with Christ, so that we can all sit down together at be table?" What is your response to that?

For further reflection: "I ask... on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." John 17: 20-21

Prayer: God who made every one of us in your own image, and devoted untold care and love to each of us as your precious children, forgive us when we have acted as if we were closer to you or more important to you than others. Teach us, we pray, to live as brothers and sisters in a family united in your love. Amen.