

## Discussion Questions

### The Successful Christian Life—Ephesians 3:1-13

(Share about a time when you felt like an outsider. In the midst of that feeling was there someone who helped you feel welcomed and wanted? If so, share about that experience. If not, share about that experience.)

- Why do think people tend to build walls (create situations in which they feel “in” and so separate themselves from others who are “out”)?

It seems that throughout Scripture, God has little by little been unveiling His plan of inclusivity but it wasn't fully revealed until Christ and even then we've missed it at times. “God had promised to save *Israel*, even all of Israel, even the dry bones (Ezekiel 37:12). Even the dry bones He would raise from *Sheol* and bring into the land.”—Peter Hiatt

- Is the idea that *all* Jews will be saved a new concept for you?
- Is the idea that God will “raise” and “bring into the land” Jews who are dead—“dry bones” from *Sheol* a new concept for you?

In the following passage Paul explains the mystery of Christ: “*This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs; members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel*” (Ephesians 3:4b-6). Not “*SOME* Gentiles” but “*THE* Gentiles.”

- Is the idea that *ALL* people will be saved a new concept for you?
- Do you believe this idea is biblical? Why or why not?

(For more scriptures that reveal God is saving *all* check out [thebvbs.com](http://thebvbs.com) and to explore scriptures that seem to contradict the idea check this out: [relentless-love.org/sermons-addressing-verses-seem-question-relentless-love/](http://relentless-love.org/sermons-addressing-verses-seem-question-relentless-love/))

(Ephesians 4), Paul tells us Jesus descended into the depths of the earth and “led a host of captives free...” In Corinthians, Paul talks about baptizing people on behalf of the dead. Peter writes, “Jesus preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly did not obey...” Then in I Peter 4:6: “The gospel was preached even to those who were dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.” And Jesus said something even more amazing: “The gates of Sheol—the gates of Hades—the gates of Hell will not prevail against my church.”—Peter Hiatt

These scriptures seem to reveal that God will one day even save all those who are in Hell or have already died.

- Is the idea of God that God will save *everyone—even the dead* a new idea for you?
- What kind of emotions does it stir in you?

For a Jew, “the Gentiles” are “the others”—the people on the other side of a dividing wall. The Gentiles were the “not chosen.” They were the people that God had “not chosen for his own possession.” They were the people God had “not chosen to save and bring into the Promised Land.”

- Is there anyone that you currently think of as “not chosen” or that you struggle thinking of as “chosen.”

Currently, the salvation of *all* is not preached widely in the American church. Why do you think that is?

- Looking at Ephesians 3:1-13, do you see a vastness and expansiveness in the love and mercy of God?
- How do you feel about it?
- In your own life, what wall(s) might God be wanting to break down?
- With whom might He be inviting you to share and extend His mercy and love that you haven't before?
- If you like, take a moment to confess some walls you might have built to God. Then invite God to let the reality that He has already broken down the wall of hostility fill your heart and flow out to those around you.

*\*These questions were prepared by Kimberly Weynen*