

## Discussion Questions January 20, 2013

### One Hope and Many Strange Vessels

#### Revelation 2:1-7

(Share about a time when you really hoped for something and then got what you hoped for.)

In Ephesians 4:1 Paul encourages the readers of his letter to “...live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”

- What do you think the phrase “walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called” means?
- What is your calling?
- Does knowledge of your calling affect the way you live?
- Does knowing that God plans to unite and reconcile all things in Christ change the way you relate to others in any way?

Then, Paul continues on in chapter 4:2 encouraging the readers of his letter to “...Be completely **humble and gentle**; be **patient, bearing with one another in love**. Make every effort to **keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace**.”

- Out of the above bolded words, which is the most difficult to apply in your life and why?
- How do you think participating in all of these actions might foster unity and peace?

Ephesians 4:4-10 says,

*There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it says, “When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.”(In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

Discuss the one hope that belongs to our calling. Look at the verses above. What does that one hope involve?

- Why is it ONE hope?
- Who is God and Father of ALL?
- Who is grace given to and how is it received grace?
- What will God fill?
- Looking closely at the scripture, do you think it is possible for God fill things even outside of our world? Where else might He be able to fill things?

How does recognizing God’s plan to unite and reconcile all things in Christ personally fill you with hope for yourself and others.

How have you experienced this life (especially the difficult times) as an opportunity to grow in hope and love?

God is Love. If love “*bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.*” Is there anywhere or any when that Love/God will not be victorious or where Love/God will fail?

If Scripture reveals that “*hope does not put us to shame*” (ESV) or “*hope does not disappoint*” (NAS), is there any chance that the One Hope—the hope that all will be reconciled in Christ—will not come to pass?

A common belief amongst some believers is that some will be punished forever and without end. If God is love, and love never fails, is it really possible that—in the end— for some, Love/God won't win?