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Being 'Church'

10. Church is an everlasting community

Key idea

What did you think was the most important point made in the sermon on this topic?

Clarifying the message

The sermon associated with this study focussed on Revelation 21-22. Today we are going to reflect on a related passage, Revelation 4-5. Here the curtains of heaven are pulled back to reveal the hidden reality of the church. The scene in the throne-room of heaven is one that stands above time in the present: it is a reality that is hidden to our eyes.

Read Revelation 4-5.

Initially, the scene seems strange. It makes more sense when we identify each of the players. As a group, try to fill in the gaps in the table below:

Character	Reference	Real identity	Related verses
Person sitting on throne	4:2-3		Ps 103:19; Eze
The Lion/Lamb	5:1-6		John 1:29
The 4 Creatures	4:6-8		Ezek 1:4-14; Isaiah 6:1-4
The 24 Elders	4:4,10-11; 5:8-10		Matt 19:28
The Angels	5:11-12	The Angels of Heaven (The Heavenly Host)	Heb 1:22

1. What do you think this passage tells us about the heavenly life of the church?
2. What is the subject matter of the songs of heaven? What might this tell us about the kind of songs we ought to sing when we are gathered as church?
3. What do you think is the significance of the golden bowls of prayer (cf 5:8)?
4. What do you understand about heaven from this passage?

See over the page

Heavenly Church



Local Church

How would you describe the connection between the local church and the heavenly church to a friend?

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Living the message today

5. Imagine you were to visit a person dying in hospital. What hope might this passage bring to that person?
6. Where in this passage do you see evidence that the 'local' church matters?
7. How might this passage creatively shape a time of prayer?

Take time to read through this passage individually before turning to group prayer.

8. Reflecting back on this series on 'being church' what you have learned or been challenged in that has really brought transformation to your life?