Life Changing Community Group Discussion Questions

week of 11/1/26

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today, we ask that you open our hearts and minds just as you opened a door into heaven for John. We do not come with all the answers, and we do not pretend to fully understand the mysteries of your Word. But we come willing to listen and to receive whatever you have for us today. Holy Spirit, guide our conversation, soften any hardened places within us, and help us to see one another and ourselves through your eyes. May this time together draw us closer to you and to each other. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one memory you have of a person who has passed away that still brings a smile to your face or encourages you when you think about it?

Summary

This sermon drew from Revelation 7 to offer a glimpse into what is happening in heaven right now, even as God's people face suffering and hardship on earth. Pastor Mark acknowledged the weight and risk of preaching from Revelation, noting that even great reformers like John Calvin and Martin Luther approached the book with caution. Rather than speculating about prophetic timelines, the focus was on the pastoral heart behind John's vision: to comfort a persecuted church by showing them that those who have endured in faith are standing before the throne of God, sheltered by His presence, no longer hungry or thirsty, with every tear wiped away.

The sermon also carried a deeply personal and communal dimension. Pastor Mark reminded the congregation that the great multitude around the throne is not anonymous. It includes loved ones who have gone before us in faith. Because both the living and the departed worship the same Lord, we are in communion with all the saints every time we gather on the Lord's Day. Corporate Sunday worship is described as a foretaste of the eternal future God has promised, a visible proclamation to the world of what is inevitably coming. The sermon closed by inviting the congregation to receive Communion as a tangible participation in that shared table with all of God's people across time.

Key Verses

- Revelation 7:9-10
- Revelation 7:14-17
- Revelation 1:9
- Revelation 22:18-19

Questions

1. Pastor Mark mentioned that John Calvin and Martin Luther were both reluctant to preach or write commentaries on the Book of Revelation. Why do you think so many people are drawn to speculate about Revelation, even when the book itself carries a strong warning against adding to or taking away from its words?

2. John described himself as a 'partner in the suffering, kingdom and endurance that are in Jesus' (Revelation 1:9, NIV). What does it mean to you that suffering and endurance are presented as natural parts of following Jesus, not just exceptions to the rule?

3. The early Christians faced real and sometimes deadly consequences for their faith. In what ways do you think the vision of heaven in Revelation 7 would have brought comfort and courage to those believers? How does it speak to you personally today?

4. Pastor Mark shared a personal story about sensing his late grandfather's commendation during a hard season of ministry. How do you think about the relationship between those who have died in Christ and those of us still living? Does the idea of being 'in communion with all the saints' feel real to you?

5. The sermon described Sunday worship as a foretaste of eternity and a proclamation to the world of what the future looks like. How does that perspective change the way you think about gathering together for worship each week?

6. Pastor Mark named specific people from the congregation who have passed away and said they are among those around the throne. How does putting real names and faces to the 'great multitude' in Revelation 7 affect the way you read that passage?

7. Revelation 7:17 promises that 'God will wipe away every tear from their eyes' (NIV). What tears are you carrying right now that you need to trust God with, knowing that His ultimate promise is complete comfort and restoration?

Life Application

This week, take a few moments each day to intentionally remember someone who has gone before you in faith. Pray a prayer of gratitude for their life and their example. Then ask God to help you live with the same endurance and faithfulness they demonstrated, knowing that the same promise of standing before the throne belongs to you as well. If possible, write down the name of that person and one specific way their life pointed you toward Jesus. Let that be your encouragement to keep going.

Key Takeaways

- The Book of Revelation should be approached with humility and caution. Its primary purpose is not to satisfy our curiosity about the future but to comfort and strengthen God's people who are suffering in the present.
- Suffering and the need to endure are presented in Revelation not as failures of faith but as expected realities for those who follow Jesus Christ faithfully in a broken world.
- The vision of heaven in Revelation 7 shows a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne, sheltered, fed, and comforted by God. This is the certain future for all who remain faithful.
- Those who have died in Christ are not lost to us. Because we share the same Lord and the same worship, we are in communion with all the saints, and they are closer than we sometimes realize.
- Corporate Sunday worship is a foretaste and a proclamation of eternity. When we gather in Jesus' name on the Lord's Day, we are showing the world what the future of all God's people looks like.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for the glimpse through the door of heaven that you gave to John, and that through His words you have given to us. Thank you that the great multitude around your throne is not a distant dream but a present reality, and that it includes people we have loved and lost. Help us to live this week with that eternal perspective firmly in our hearts. When suffering comes, remind us that endurance is not a sign that you have forgotten us but a mark of those who belong to you. When we gather again on the Lord's Day, may we worship with fresh eyes, knowing we are joining our voices with all the saints across every age. Wipe away the tears we carry today, and lead us, your sheep, to the springs of living water. We pray all of this in the name of the Lamb who was slain and who lives forever. Amen.

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A Note About These Questions: These small group questions are developed from each week's sermon with the assistance of Sermonshots, which incorporates AI technology. The resulting questions and content are reviewed and edited by the pastor before being shared with the congregation.