

DATE - w/c 19th Nov

THEME - As In Heaven - Part 3

We all know that when visiting different places such as a theatre, restaurant, concert or even a church service, that there is one word that either makes or breaks that experience. This word can be a little ethereal and difficult to explain. In fact, it is better experienced than explained, this, of course, is the "atmosphere".

The atmosphere (how it looks and how it makes us feel) so often determines if we want to return to that place again.

So as we consider our series, "As in heaven", it is important for us to think about what the atmosphere of heaven will be like and how we can bring the atmosphere of heaven here to earth?

I have discovered that one way for me to encounter a foretaste of heaven now is through the experience of prayer and worship.

**Psalm 22:3 "God inhabits the praises of his people."** - What an incredible promise that when we come to worship God, then we can be assured that God is right there amongst us by his Holy Spirit. True worship allows us to experience the atmosphere of heaven right now.

Worship is both vertical and horizontal.

## Vertical

- We humble ourselves and give God his rightful place
- We please God with true worship
- We join with the angels to bring an anthem to our God

## Horizontal

- We make space for the miraculous
- Our lives are transformed
- It brings freedom to our lives

This has been my personal experience for the last 20 years, that when I worship God, I become so aware of His presence and His power in my life, and it changes me from the inside out.

## **As a church...**

When we worship corporately and get beyond the idea of singing songs, then we too make space for God to move, and also, make a way for those without faith, to connect to the living God.

Worship is very powerful and transformative.

Therefore, it is no surprise that there are so many other things that try to distract from giving God his rightful place in our lives through worship.

You too can encounter the atmosphere of heaven in your life through true worship and prayer.

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## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Write down an occasion recently when you went out for a meal or to a concert and how the atmosphere in the place impacted you? What five words describe your experience?

## INTO THE BIBLE

One way we can encounter the atmosphere of heaven right here on earth is through the experience of worship.

Write down and share in your group what worship means to you and how it has helped you to encounter God?

What type of worship should be brought to God, read John 4:23 and Isaiah 29:13 for the answer?

Read Acts 16:25 - 34 and write down what happened when God's people worshipped Him using songs of worship?

## Digging Deeper

Read 2 Chronicles 20 and reflect on what happens in this story when God was worshipped.

## APPLICATION

It is important for us to consider that we can encounter the atmosphere of heaven every day through prayer and worship. With this in mind, do you have a daily routine when you pray and worship God?

Singing worship songs before God can allow us to experience His presence so why not give it a go. If you don't have a routine when you do this why not take your next step and write down a time and a place when you will make this happen. Practice it for a week and let someone in your group know how you got on.

Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

## Prayer Points

Pray for people to encounter God as they join us in our worship experience each Sunday.

Pray as we worship that our community/town and city will be transformed.

Pray for our guest Sunday service with Pastor Paul Bengner on 26th Nov.