

Jesus Joins Our Hearts as One in Worship



SABBATH—DECEMBER 8

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Revelation 4:8, 11; Matthew 4:8, 9; Daniel 3:8–18; Revelation 14:9–11; Revelation 14:6, 7; Acts 2:42; Acts 4:23–31.

MEMORY VERSE: “I saw another angel flying in the heavens. He was carrying the Good News that lasts [continues] forever. He was preaching to every nation and to every family group and to the people of every language and to all the people of [on] the earth. He said with a loud voice, ‘Honor God with love and fear [respect]. The time has come for Him to judge all men [people]. Worship Him Who made heaven and earth and the sea and the places where water comes out of the earth’ ” (Revelation 14:6, 7, NLV).



God chose the church to be a “house for worship” (1 Peter 2:5, NIV).

GOD Poured His Spirit on the Church (Acts 2:1–4). Then the church members spent much of their time worshipping God (Acts 2:42). The church felt joy from knowing that Jesus was their Savior. What a gift it was for them to know God’s wonderful truth! These first Christians felt the need to spend time with each other in friendship, Bible study, and prayer. They thanked God for giving them the truth about Jesus’ life, death, and His waking up from the dead. They thanked God for everything He did in their lives.

Jesus’ church is a community that worships God. God chose the church to be a “house for worship. There you will be holy priests [religious leaders]. You will offer spiritual sacrifices [gifts]. God will accept them [your gifts] because of what Jesus Christ has done” (1 Peter 2:5, NIV). This week we study worship. We will learn how our worshipping with each other helps us to have peace and be in agreement.

LET US WORSHIP OUR GOD WHO MADE US AND SAVES US (Revelation 4:8, 11)

When we talk about worship, we often talk about what worship is and how it is done. But what does worship really mean? What does it mean to worship God? Why do we worship? In Psalm 29:2, David says: “Praise the LORD and honor his name! Worship the LORD in all his holy beauty” (Psalm 29:2, ERV). This psalm helps us to start to understand what worship means. To worship the Lord, we must give Him the praise and the honor that He should have.

Revelation 4 and 5 tell us about what happens in heaven when Jesus goes there after He wakes up from the dead. These chapters tell us that the people who live in heaven worship God and Jesus, who is God’s Lamb. What reasons does everyone in heaven give us for their worshiping God and Jesus? For more hints, read also Revelation 4:8, 11 and Revelation 5:9, 10, 12, and 13.

Revelation 4 and 5 show us what happens in the throne room of heaven. Jesus is worshiped as the Lamb of God and the Savior for all humans. Worship happens when humans show God their love and thankfulness for everything He does for them. Worship happens when we thank God for making us and for saving us. At the end of time, the people that Jesus saves will have grateful hearts that will praise Him for saving them (Revelation 15:3, 4).

So, worship is our giving thanks to God for everything He does for us: first, for making us, and second, for saving us. When we worship God, we give to God the praise, love, and obedience that belong to Him. Of course, the Bible shows us how God made us and saves us. Jesus came to this earth to show us more about God (read John 14:8–14). That is why Christians worship Jesus as the One who made them and saves them. Jesus’ death and waking up from the dead are at the center of our worship.

When we Christians join in worship, we join together because we are filled with respect and thankfulness to God. Our worship of God should always start from these thoughts and feelings of respect and thankfulness.

Think about all that God gave us when He gave us Jesus. Jesus made us and saves us from sin. Why should these truths be the reason for all of our worship?



Worship happens when we thank God for making us and for saving us.

FALSE WORSHIP (Matthew 4:8, 9)

Matthew 4:8, 9 talks about Jesus' experience with the devil in the wilderness. The devil tries to get Jesus to sin three times. What is the third sin that the devil tries to get Jesus to do?

Satan's heart was full of pride. He told Jesus that he was the real ruler of this earth and owned all its glory and riches. Satan said he alone was worthy of praise and respect from everyone on the earth. Satan behaved as if he made the earth. Satan's words were an insult to God! Satan showed that he knew exactly what worship means: it means we must show honor and respect to God. God is the real owner of heaven and earth. God made the earth, not Satan.

Read the story about the three Hebrew friends in Daniel 3 (pay special attention to verses 8–18). Now read about the end-time power that Revelation 13:4 and Revelation 14:9–11 talk about. In Revelation 13 and 14, what is the disagreement about? What is the most important idea in the stories from Daniel and Revelation?



Satan's heart was full of pride. He told Jesus that he was the real ruler of this earth and owned all its glory and riches.

In Bible stories, Satan tries to move us away from our worship of God to false worship. We see Satan try to do that in the story of Cain and Abel, and again in the story of the three Hebrew boys in Babylon. Satan will try to do the same thing again at the end time (Revelation 16:2). Satan's false worship plan always tries to get people to worship him instead of God. Before Adam and Eve sinned, Satan wanted to be the same as God (Isaiah 14:14). Satan has not changed. The same thing that happened to the three young Hebrew men will happen in the end time to God's loyal people. They will be told that they will be put to death if they will not worship a false god.

"We have important lessons to learn from the story of the Hebrew young men on the plain of Dura. . . .

"An awful time of trouble lies ahead of God's people. During that time, we will need to have a strong faith that will not break. God's children must make it clear that they worship only God. They must show everyone that nothing will cause them to join other people in false worship. Not even the wish to save their own lives."—Ellen G. White, *Prophets [special messengers] and Kings*, pages 512, 513, adapted.

THE FIRST ANGEL'S MESSAGE (Revelation 14:6, 7)

Seventh-day Adventists believe that the Three Angels' Messages in Revelation 14:6–12 show them the work that God gave them to do in the end time. In Revelation 14:14–20, we can find the messages that God gave Seventh-day Adventists to share with people before Jesus comes back. God commands Seventh-day Adventists to preach these important messages with power to everyone who lives on the earth.

Revelation 14:6, 7 tells us the First Angel's Message. What is this message? What does this message tell us about God? Why does this message talk about worship?

The First Angel's Message is for everyone on the earth (read also Matthew 24:14). We get the feeling that the “angel” must act and work fast. The first message tells people to fill their minds with God because “ ‘the time has come for God to judge all people’ ” (Revelation 14:7, ERV). God must judge His people first before Jesus can come back.

“ ‘Honor God with love and fear,’ ” the angel says in Revelation 14:7 (NLV). Many people do not obey God or worship Him. So, this message will make them afraid. But Jesus' followers will hear this message and feel love and respect for God. Jesus' followers look up to God. They see that He will do everything He promises to do. Then they will be filled with a deeper feeling of love for God.

“ ‘Worship God. He made the heavens, the earth, the sea’ ” (Revelation 14:7, ERV). These words help us remember the Sabbath commandment and that God made everything on this earth in seven days (read Exodus 20:8–11). God made the Sabbath to help us remember that His power made everything. The Sabbath also helps us remember that God is the only One who is worthy of our worship and praise.

At the end of time, the big war between God and Satan will be about worship. That is why the First Angel's Message invites everyone to worship God who made them.

“The big war between God and Satan at the end of time will be about worship. No wonder God sends the First Angel's Message to warn everyone on the earth to worship God as the One who made them. He is the only one worthy of our worship.” —Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation [secrets made known] of [from or about] Jesus Christ: Commentary [explanation] on the Book of Revelation* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 2002), pages 444, 445, adapted.



As Seventh-day Adventists, we believe that the Three Angels' Messages in Revelation 14:6–12 show us the work that God gave us to do in the end time.

BIBLE STUDY AND FRIENDSHIP (Acts 2:42)

Acts 2:42 tells us some of the things that the New Testament Christians did when they worshiped together. What were some of those things they did?

“The believers listened to the teaching of the apostles [leaders and teachers]. They shared everything with each other. They ate together and prayed together” (Acts 2:42, ERV). From the time the church first started, worship in the New Testament church always included Bible study. The first Christians studied the Bible to learn more about Jesus’ work as their Savior. The new believers met together all the time to share with each other the blessings God gave them. They encouraged one another in their spiritual walk with God. They learned the holy truths from the Bible. These truths became their message to all the people on the earth.

What do the verses below teach us about how important it is for us to study the Bible with other believers?

2 Kings 22:8–13 _____

Acts 17:10, 11 _____

2 Timothy 3:14–17 _____



When we come together to worship, the Bible gives us words from God.

“Anywhere God’s people preach the Good News, there will be people who hear it and want to do what is right. God will lead these people to study the Bible carefully. People who hear the truths for the end time should do the same thing the Bereans did. The Bereans studied the Bible every day to see if the message they heard was true. What will happen when people follow the example of the Bereans? Then there will be many more people who are loyal to God’s law than there are now.”—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles [leaders and teachers]*, page 232, adapted.

Our truths join us as one people. Bible study is at the center of our worship of God and our agreement as His people. When we come together to worship, the Bible gives us words from God. These words lead our lives and help us get ready for Jesus’ Second Coming.

How deep is your knowledge of Bible truth?

EATING AND PRAYING TOGETHER (Acts 4:23–31)

At times, the New Testament church had problems. But God joined the members as one in their faith in Jesus. They agreed about the work God gave them to do. They believed that God wanted them to share the Good News about Jesus with everyone on earth. God joined them as one people in the truth. The church also showed that they were joined as one in many other ways.

“They ate together and prayed together” (Acts 2:42, ERV). During a meal, a church member blessed the bread and the drink. The bread and the drink helped Christians remember Jesus’ death and resurrection. The resurrection was the time when Jesus woke up from the dead. The believers expected Jesus to come back soon. The first Christians spent their time remembering Jesus’ life and His work. They loved to talk about Him with each other at their meals. The meals they shared became part of their worship time. “Day after day they went to the house of God together. In their houses they ate their food together. Their hearts were happy” (Acts 2:46, NLV). “The believers praised God and were respected by all the people. More and more people were being saved every day, and the Lord was adding them to their group” (Acts 2:47, ERV). No doubt this time of friendship helped the church to grow stronger.

What examples of Christians praying together do we find in the book of Acts? What did they pray for?

Acts 1:14 _____

Acts 4:23–31 _____

Acts 12:12 _____

The church members in New Testament times loved to talk to God. They never failed to ask Him for what they needed when they got together to worship. In Paul’s First Letter to Timothy, Paul tells him that it is very important for Christians to pray when they get together (1 Timothy 2:1). In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul also talked about the need for prayer (Ephesians 6:18, 19).

How can our praying together for people help us join more closely with each other in the church?



The bread and the drink helped believers remember Jesus’ death and resurrection. The resurrection was the time when Jesus woke up from the dead.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Read the articles “Prayer,” pages 1044–1046, and “Worship,” pages 1290, 1291, in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*.

“The Sabbath is important. God made the Sabbath to help us remember that He made heaven and earth. The Sabbath always helps us to remember the real reason why God is worthy of our worship: because God made us, and we are His. The Sabbath is a very important part of our worship of God. The Sabbath teaches us the truth about why we worship God. We worship God because He is different from all the things that He made. This truth is at the center of all our worship. We must never forget this truth.”—J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27, adapted.

“God always wanted humans to remember that He made them. So, He made the Sabbath in Eden. God made us. That is the reason why we should worship God. The Sabbath always will help us remember this truth. When we keep the Sabbath, we worship God with our hearts and minds. We show our love and respect for Him. . . . Our keeping the Sabbath shows everyone that we are loyal to the true God. God is the one that made heaven, earth, and sea and all the waters on the earth. The [First Angel’s Message] commands humans to worship God and obey His commandments. This same message commands people to keep the fourth commandment too.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great [worldwide] Controversy [war between God and Satan]*, pages 437, 438, adapted.



“God made the Sabbath to help us remember that He made heaven and earth.”—J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① How can the Sabbath become God’s “medicine” to help heal us from false worship? What part does the Sabbath have in the end times? How does Revelation 14:6, 7 help us answer that question? Why does the First Angel’s Message talk about the Sabbath?
- ② Many times we talk about the things we do and do not do during worship. Is there more to worship than this list of what we can do and cannot do? What does worship mean? What is it really for? How does your church worship?
- ③ In some countries, Christians no longer meet together to worship. What can your church do to help encourage members to meet together in worship?