

God's View About Life



SABBATH—OCTOBER 17

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Psalm 53:1; Revelation 14:6, 7; Ephesians 6:12; John 1:1–14; Deuteronomy 6:5.

MEMORY VERSE: “The Lord’s eyes see everything that happens. He watches both evil and good people” (Proverbs 15:3, ICB).

POLISH POET Czeslaw Milosz wrote a poem about make-believe animals: talking rabbits, talking squirrels, and so on. Then Milosz compared these fake animals with our ideas about life. Milosz said that “these animals are fake, not real. In the same way, our ideas about life are fake too.” Then Milosz wrote, “This idea should make us very afraid when we think about it.”—Adapted.

Many ideas that humans believe about life are wrong. Here is an example: for almost 2,000 years many smart and educated people had wrong ideas about the earth. They thought that the earth did not move in outer space. People also thought that the earth was at the center of all the stars and planets in outer space. We now know that this idea is silly. But are humans really different today? Today, many smart and educated people believe that human life started from one tiny cell.

As humans, we look at life in different ways and believe different ideas about it. Our ideas and experiences change our understanding of life. Our understanding of life also is known as our worldview. We must teach our young people and our older church members about the Bible’s teaching or worldview. This week, we will look at what the Bible teaches us about God’s view of life.



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IN GOD'S EYES (Psalm 53:1)

An Oxford University professor came up with this idea: nothing is real. That includes us, the earth, and everything around us. If we are not real, what are we then? Let us ask the Oxford University professor. His answer? We were really made by a group of super-powerful people from outer space with super-powerful computers. We really “live” in a computer and are only computer pictures!

That is a silly idea. At the same time, the idea asks us an important question: What is real?

There are two possible answers. First, there is the view that everything just “is.” No one made it. Everything is just here. There is no God. The only real things are the things we see, touch, and experience. This is not a new idea. As someone said 2,500 years ago, there are only “atoms, or the smallest parts, and nothing.” What he is saying is that the only things that are real are the things we can experience.

The second view is that some God or gods made everything there is. This idea makes much more sense than the first idea. The second view explains the reason for nature and everything around us. That includes “atoms, or the smallest parts, and nothing.” But this view also includes so much more. It is not limited to what we see. It also includes things we cannot see.

Read Psalm 53:1; Proverbs 15:3; John 3:16; Isaiah 45:21; and Luke 1:26–35. What do these verses have to say about the two views we just talked about?

An important teaching from Christian education is the idea that God is a person who loves us. God wants to be close to us too. He also is a God of miracles. God works with nature's laws. But God is not limited by nature or its laws. (An example is Jesus' birth. Mary has a baby, but no man on the earth is the father.) This teaching about God is important and needed today. We live during a time when so many experts and teachers say that science supports the view that life started on its own without help from God.

Think about the two views: the first view that says life started on its own and the second view that says that God made life. Why does the second view make more sense?



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LEIBNIZ'S QUESTION (Revelation 14:6, 7)

Many years ago, a German thinker and writer named Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz asked an important question: "Why is there something and not just nothing?"

Read Genesis 1:1; John 1:1–4; Exodus 20:8–11; Revelation 14:6, 7; and Job 12:7–10. How do these verses answer Leibniz's question?



No other Bible teaching makes sense unless we first accept the belief that God made us.

Do you see how Bible writers do not try to prove there is a God? God just is. Look at Genesis 1:1. This verse does not start out with a bunch of reasons for why there is a God. The writer of Genesis just accepts that God lives and made all things. (Read also Exodus 3:13, 14.) Genesis 1:1 starts out with the idea that God is the One who makes the earth and sky. This is the basic idea for all Bible truth.

Christian education teaches that God made the earth and sky. Everything we believe as Christians starts with the teaching that God made the earth in six days. The Bible does not start with the teaching about the cleansing blood of Jesus. Or the law. Or the Cross. Or the teaching that God will wake the dead. Or the Second Coming. No, the Bible starts with this announcement: God made everything in the earth and sky. Why? Because no other Bible teaching makes any sense unless we first accept the belief that God made us.

So again, the Bible's view on life must show that God made the earth in six days. Today, this idea has been attacked by many thinkers and scientists who believe in evolution. Evolution, as we know, is an idea that life we see today started because of changes that happened in plants and animals over a very long time. Evolution has destroyed many people's faith in the Bible. It is hard to think of a teaching that goes against the Bible and Christian faith more than evolution does. Some people think that evolution can fit with the Bible teaching about God as the One who made the earth. But this idea is worse than the idea there is no God at all. We cannot blend Bible truth with false ideas. If we do, we make the Bible and our Christian faith a joke.

Every week, God asks us to remember that He made us. Why does this commandment show that the teaching that God made us is so important to our Christian view about life?

THE BIBLE'S VIEW ABOUT LIFE (Ephesians 6:12)

As we said on Sabbath, we look at life in different ways and believe different ideas about it. How does an atheist look at life? An atheist is someone who believes there is no God. When an atheist looks at a rainbow in the sky, what does he or she see? He or she sees an object in nature. It is only water and light working together. The only meaning the rainbow has is the meaning that humans decide to give it. But someone who believes in the Bible sees the rainbow as a sign of God's promise not to destroy the earth again by water (Genesis 9:13–16). "God lowers Himself in a big way and shows His love for sinners when He puts His beautiful rainbow in the clouds. The rainbow is a sign of God's promise and agreement with humans. . . . In the future, children will see the rainbow in the sky. Then they will ask their parents what the rainbow's wonderful beauty means. This is part of God's plan. Then the parents will tell their children of the Flood. They will tell them that the Most High God bent the bow and put it in the clouds as a promise. It shows God's promise never to destroy the earth again with a Flood."—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 106, adapted.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we believe that the Bible is the support for all our beliefs. The Bible teaches us our worldview, or the way we must see and understand life. Life on this earth can be very difficult and confusing. The Bible helps us to understand our lives better and to make sense of the mess we are in.

Read Ephesians 6:12; Mark 13:7; Romans 5:8; Romans 8:28; Ecclesiastes 9:5; and Revelation 20:5, 6. What Bible truths do these verses show? How can they help us to understand this life better?

As Seventh-day Adventists, we must stand strong for Bible truth. The Bible is the truth that God has shown to humans. Bible truth explains for us many things about life that we cannot understand or know on our own. So, all Christian education must have its roots in the Bible. We must throw out any teaching that goes against the Bible.

What are some Bible teachings that go against the popular beliefs today? Why must we obey the Bible alone?



The rainbow shows God's promise not to destroy the earth again with a Flood.

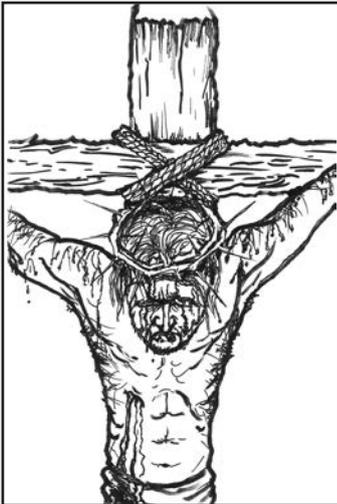
WORSHIP THE SAVIOR (John 1:1–14)

The Bible teaches that God made the earth in six days. This teaching is named Creation. This Bible teaching is very important to our faith. Often, we teach Creation with God's plan to save sinners. That is because we live on a planet filled with sin and death. So, the Bible teaching about God as the only One who made everything is not enough. We live, suffer, and then what happens next? We die. We end up the same as a dead animal on the side of the road.

Do you like that sad story?

So, the teaching about a Savior is very important to our Christian worldview. As you will remember, a worldview is the way we look at life and understand it. And Jesus Christ, His death on the cross, and His waking up from the dead are very important to everything we believe.

Read John 1:1–14. What do these verses tell us about who Jesus was and what He did for us?



Jesus and the Cross must be the center of everything we teach.

Also, look at the first angel's message: "Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. The angel had the eternal [everlasting] Good News to announce to the people living on earth—to every nation [country], tribe [family group], language, and race [group] of people. The angel said in a loud voice, 'Fear [honor] God and give him praise. The time has come for God to judge all people. Worship God. He made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the springs [places where water comes out of the earth] of water' " (Revelation 14:6, 7, ERV). Do you see that the "eternal [everlasting] Good News" is connected to God as the One who made everything? This same God took our place on the cross. He was punished for our sins. Now we understand why we must worship Him!

Jesus and the Cross must be the center of everything we teach. This teaching about Jesus also must include the Second Coming too. The first coming of Jesus does not really do us a whole lot of good without the Second Coming, right? Jesus' first and second comings are two parts of one plan: God's plan to save sinners from sin and death.

Think more about the idea in John 1: God who made everything is the same One who died on the cross for us. Why should we worship Him?

THE LAW OF GOD (Deuteronomy 6:5)

Years ago, the people in France argued about the answer to this question: Is it right to put people to death who are guilty of a crime? And should the government end the law that allowed guilty people to be killed for their crimes? People who wanted to get rid of the law talked with a famous French writer and thinker named Michel Foucault. This group asked Foucault to write an article explaining their view. Foucault agreed. But his views were stronger than the people who asked him to write. Foucault said that France needed to get rid of the law that allowed the government to kill people for their crimes. Foucault also said France needed to get rid of all the jails and prisons in France and let all the prisoners go free.

Why? Because for Michel Foucault, all laws about right and wrong were made by humans. Laws were made by people in power who wanted to control everyone. So, for Foucault the rules about right and wrong made no sense and had no power.

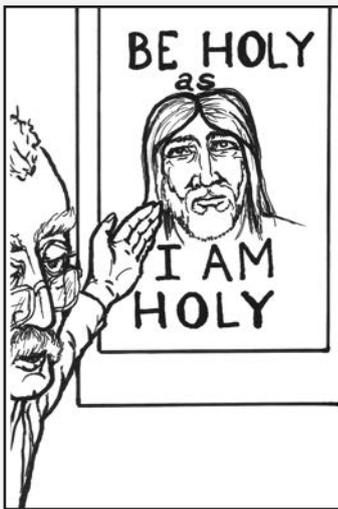
Foucault's view may go too far for most people. But really, his view is nothing new. Moses had the same problem to solve in Israel thousands of years ago. " 'You must not continue to worship the way we have been worshiping. Until now each of us has been worshiping God any way we wanted' " (Deuteronomy 12:8, ERV; read also Judges 17:6; Proverbs 12:15). So, how do we know the right thing to do? The Lord who made us gave us a law to live by. Maybe our eyes do not "see" things in the right way. But the eyes of God always do.

Read Deuteronomy 6:5; Mark 12:29–31; and Revelation 14:12. What do these verses teach us about the correct way to behave and act?

The Christian view of life includes being saved and God's law (Romans 3:20). The Good News makes no sense without God's law. Yes, the law cannot save us. But God commands us to obey His law. That is why we need the Good News. So, Seventh-day Adventist education must show that the law is important and "continues to have power over our lives." —Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 63, adapted. The law includes the Sabbath. Remember, God's plan is that education will help make us holy as Jesus is holy. That is why God's law must be an example that shows us what is holy and right in His eyes.



God's law shows us what is holy and right in His eyes.



“What is God’s plan for Christian education? He wants [us] to become holy as He is.”

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “What is God’s plan for education? He wants to help people to become holy as He is.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 595, adapted.

This idea helps us to see why a Bible worldview, or understanding about life, is so important for Adventist education. Earlier we said that education is not always a good thing. People can have a lot of education. But they may have learned the wrong ideas. They may have learned and accepted teachings that go against Bible truth. That is why, as Adventists, our schools and colleges must teach Bible truth and have a Christian worldview. So, science, history, right and wrong, and everything else we teach will be taught from the Bible. We also learned that everyone’s understanding about life comes from their worldview. So, all of our teachings must support the Bible’s view about life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① What examples can you think of from history that show teachings and education plans that destroyed lives? Where did this happen? What were students taught? What can we learn from these false teachings? How can we protect our own schools from these teachings?
- ② This week, we looked at some important parts of a Christian worldview: (1) God lives. (2) God made the earth in six days. (3) The Bible shows us God’s truth. (4) God is our Savior. (5) God’s law is important. What other important teachings should we include in our Christian worldview, or understanding about life?
- ③ A thinker in the 1800s wrote: “Oh, my mind! My mind! You have God’s power and skill to know what is right and wrong. You are a sure guide for a human who, at times, acts foolish even if he is born intelligent and free. You, my mind, you are the perfect judge. You know how to choose between good and evil. You make a human the same as God Himself.” What is right or wrong about this view?
- ④ Look at the Ellen G. White quotation again. What does it mean that God wants us to be holy? How does this plan show us why Adventist education must be so different from much of the education on earth?

A VOLUNTEER BIBLE WORKER'S DARKEST NIGHT

One dark night God shows me His wonderful light.

Heavy rain wakes me up at 12:45 A.M. There is no light in the one-bedroom house I share with another volunteer Bible worker in Eastern Samar. We serve God there for almost a year. We have only two weeks left before our year is over. At that time, a big earthquake hits Samar and cuts off the electricity.

I cannot see anything in the dark room. But I hear strange noises. I grab a flashlight and turn it on. I shine the light at the door. I cannot see anyone. But I feel that someone has entered into the house. I shake with fear as I kneel under the mosquito net that covers our beds. I pray for my friend and me. "Lord, please save us as You saved Daniel and Joseph. We are here because of You."

I lie back on my bed and say Psalm 23:1, ERV: "The LORD is my shepherd. I will always have everything I need." I pick up the flashlight again. What I see in the beam of light is awful: a man with red eyes and wet hair. He holds a large knife. He is kneeling inside our mosquito net.

I scream as loud as I can. My friend wakes up. We both shout for help. The man jumps at us with his knife. We try to kick him away. Something hard hits me. I fall to the floor. Pain fills my body. *Lord, am I going to die?* I think.

I hear someone outside trying to open the door to the house. I cry, "Open the window!" When my friend and I hear the window open, we run to it and jump out. A neighbor sees my beaten face. She asks what happened. When she hears about the attacker, she rushes home to her children to protect them.

My friend and I walk barefoot in wet, empty streets. We cry for help. Everyone is asleep. Finally, someone comes and takes us to the hospital at 3:00 A.M. My friend has some cuts on her hand and foot. Her cuts are not as deep as mine. I have a deep cut from my left eye to my mouth. A doctor sews up the cut and gives me many shots.

The happiest time in that dark night comes when the morning sun rises. I feel as if the sun shines just for me. I smile as I feel Jesus' deep love. Jesus is with me from the start. He will be with me until the end the same as a Shepherd watching His sheep. The police catch the attacker that morning. They put him in prison. I do not lose courage. Eight months later, I start to serve God again with the 1000 Missionary Movement. This time, I serve God in South Korea. I am now in my third year of serving God. I thank Him for the experience. The Lord says, " 'Pray to me, and I will answer you. I will tell you important secrets. You have never heard these' " (Jeremiah 33:3, ERV). My life is not mine; it is God's.

INSIDE
Story
by MERRY GRACE BALORIA



Jesus will be with me until the end. He takes care of me the same as a Shepherd watching His sheep.

