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Introduction

“And Worship¹ Him . . .”

Some of the best known verses among Seventh-day Adventists are these: “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel [good news] to preach to those who dwell [live] on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear [respect] God and give glory [praise] to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of waters’ ” (Revelation 14:6, 7, NKJV). And we know that these verses speak about last-day events. But they are also the basis for this quarter’s topic, which is worship. God asks us to worship Him. But we also can find important themes in these verses to help us to understand what true worship should be about.

First, John sees an angel who has the “everlasting gospel.” It is the gospel of the everlasting covenant.² It is the good news that Jesus Christ would come and become a man. Then in human form He would die as a Substitute³ for the sins of the world. So, Jesus’ death on the cross in our place is basic to all our worship. Worship should depend on how we feel about, and act on, Christ’s work as our Substitute. His work includes both the Cross and His continuing work for us as High Priest in heaven (Hebrews 8:1).

Next, John tells us to “fear God.” Fearing God and loving God are two sides of the same coin. To fear God means to show our deep respect for Him as Creator and Savior. Meanwhile, we are just the people who are created and saved. When we act as if God is only a kind of buddy or pal, we insult Him. Worship should come with a deep respect for our God. This attitude (feeling) will help us to feel humble, a feeling that is very important to have in true worship.

We are also told to “give glory to Him.” What is so important here is that worship is about God and not about ourselves. We have to make sure that worship is not people-centered or culture-centered. We need to understand that worship is always God-centered. We worship God, not ourselves. So, worship must be about Him. Worship must be about giving glory to Him. Worship must not be about music, culture, or worship styles.

We are told to fear God and give glory to Him. Why? Because “the hour of His judgment has come” (NKJV). Christ is not only the Savior. He is also the Judge. He knows all our deepest and darkest secrets. He knows what is inside the deepest corners of our hearts. As we worship, we need to sense our respon-

1. worship—having love and honor for God.

2. covenant—promise or agreement between God and His people.

3. Substitute—someone who takes the place of another person; in this case, Jesus took our place on the cross.

sibility to God for what we do. We also need to understand that we can hide nothing from Him. This understanding should bring us to the Cross, our only hope in this judgment.

Finally, we are told to worship the Creator. Creation is also basic to all worship. This is because all that we believe is based on the fact that God is Creator. We worship Him because He is Creator, because He is Savior, and because He is Judge. Creation, salvation, and judgment are closely tied. So, all true worship needs to be firmly rooted in these truths. It is interesting that in Revelation 14:7, we find language showing the Sabbath commandment (Exodus 20:11). This means that this day is forever connected to the true worship of God.

As we study worship this quarter, we will learn that the Sabbath commandment is central to what true worship should be about. Worship is a very important part of “present truth.” We would do well to learn what it means to truly worship the only Creator God, who is worthy of that worship.

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