

## 6. Worship the Creator (3Q 2019—The Least of These)

**Biblical material:** Ps. 115:1–8, Deut. 10:17–22, Ps. 101:1, Isa. 1:10–17, Isaiah 58, Mark 12:38–40.

### Quotes

- The whole earth is a living icon of the face of God. ... I do not worship matter. I worship the Creator of matter who became matter for my sake, who willed to take His abode in matter, who worked out my salvation through matter. Never will I cease honoring the matter which wrought my salvation! I honor it, but not as God. Because of this I salute all remaining matter with reverence, because God has filled it with his grace and power. Through it my salvation has come to me. *John of Damascus*
- I am called to worship a God I cannot see, but not to submit to a God I cannot know and prove. *David Shepherd*
- Worship changes the worshiper into the image of the One worshiped. *Jack Hayford*
- Worship is a way of seeing the world in the light of God. *Abraham Joshua Heschel*
- There can be but little liberty on earth while men worship a tyrant in heaven. *Robert Green Ingersoll*
- If the Bible is mistaken in telling us where we came from, how can we trust it to tell us where we're going? *Justin Brown*

### Questions

Why is it important to worship the Creator? How does this impact our view of ourselves and our place in the universe? What does it matter where we came from? How do we find meaning and purpose without God as Creator? How do views of our origins change the way we see issues, particularly spiritual ones?

### Bible summary

Ps. 115:1-8 points to the true God, the God of heaven, in contrast to worthless idols. “The Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome (Deut. 10:17 NIV). Our God is a God of love and justice (Ps. 101:1). God rejects pointless worship and meaningless sacrifices (Isa. 1:10–17). Isaiah 58 is a criticism of ritual worship without true commitment, and a call to repent. Jesus condemns those who make a great show of religiosity.

### Comment

The central point here is not only that God is the Creator of the universe and of our world, but that he cares deeply and intimately for his creation. Our familiarity of Genesis 1 can lead us to miss the point. In the description of Creation we see the goodness of God at work. Why is it that after every day's creation God sees that “it was good” and at the end “it was very good”? God sounds very self-congratulatory, almost proud about his creative work. In counter to this mistaken view, we should see God as

identifying the good expression of his goodness, that there is no imperfection and that creation is indeed a representation of who he is.

God's character is seen in all he does, especially as he lovingly forms matter out of nothing, and then forms every galaxy, star and planet—and us from the dust of the ground. For Genesis is as much a prime aspect of the cosmic conflict as any other biblical book. The means and perfection of creation assume even greater importance as we understand the background to God's incredible creative acts.

It could well be that God initially created the world at a previous time, and then returned to a world that was “without form and void” to complete his creation of our Earth. The key point is the Creator who delights in each day of the creation of our world, step by step bringing it to completion. The creative delight in forming the myriads of birds and animals in their many forms and colors speaks to a Designer who loves to use the whole palette he has made!

This creation week is the foundation for the weekly cycle. There is nothing in nature or in astronomy that gives rise to the week. The day is based on the rotation of the Earth. The month on the orbit of the moon. The year on the orbit of the Earth around the Sun. But the week? There's nothing in the sky above or the earth beneath to explain this seven-day period. Except the explanation from the Bible: “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made...and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.” The week comes from creation.

Why was Creation declared “good” and “very good”? Because there was harmony throughout the universe, in which each component part relating in accord with every other part. The fundamental principle of God's universe is that of the other, first demonstrated by God himself. In this way there is no selfishness and egotism—all seek the best of the whole, thinking not of themselves but of the wider aspect of all the other parts of divine Creation.

The self-centeredness that is at the heart of sin breaks the whole system. The Fall was not the issue of eating the “wrong kind of fruit,” as someone once told me. It was choosing the lies of the Devil over the truth of God. It was refusing to believe what God both said and stood for—the integrity of the whole of his Creation. Most of all it was to think that God was the kind of person the Devil said he was—wanting to keep good things from them, unwilling to allow them to truly “know.”

### **Ellen White Comments**

The Eden home of our first parents was prepared for them by God himself. When he had furnished it with everything that man could desire, he said: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.” We have here revealed to us the truth concerning the origin of man. These words prove how false is the invention of Satan, which has been reiterated by man, that the human race has been developed, stage by stage, from the lowest order of animals. This is one of the deceptions by which Satan seeks to lower in the eyes of man God's great work of creation.

God said, “Let us make man in our image.” He gave to the work of his hands not only a form resembling his own, but a mind capable of comprehending divine things. His understanding, his memory, his imagination,—every faculty of man's mind,—reflected the image of God... He possessed a right understanding, a true knowledge of his Creator... {YI, August 10, 1899}

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