

# Respect God and Praise Him



## SABBATH—APRIL 15

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Revelation 14:7; Deuteronomy 6:2; Matthew 6:33; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; Hebrews 4:14–16.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “God’s people must learn to endure [be patient]. They must also obey his commands and have faith in [the faith that comes from] Jesus” (Revelation 14:12, CEV).

**WRITER SØREN KIERKEGAARD** tells a picture story about the end times: A fire started backstage in a big theater. A clown from the show came out to warn the audience about the fire. The clown shouted, “Get out! Get out! The place is on fire!” The audience thought the clown was just acting. They thought his warning was part of the play. So, they thought he was only joking. That’s all. So, they clapped their hands. The clown warned the audience again: “Get out! Get out!” But the more the clown warned the people, the more the people clapped. Kierkegaard used this story to show how the end times will be. Most people will think the warning about the end times is a funny story to laugh at.

We know that the end times are no joke. The most awful time since the Flood is coming. Peter uses the Flood as a word picture to show what will happen during the end times. Peter warns, “The day when the Lord comes again will surprise everyone like [the same as] the coming of a thief. The sky will disappear with a loud noise. Everything in the sky will be destroyed with fire. And the earth and everything in it will be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10, ERV). The Bible warns about what’s coming. So, we need to get ready now.



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**RESPECT GOD (Revelation 14:7)**

Jesus is coming soon. The book of Revelation helps God's people get ready for Jesus' Second Coming. The book of Revelation also shows God's people the special work they must do. God's people must join with Jesus in sharing His end-time message with other people on this earth. The book of Revelation shows God's plans and shows us Satan's evil plans, too. The book of Revelation shows us God's final message and warning for everyone on earth.

**Read the end-time message in Revelation 14:7. (Then also read Genesis 22:12; Psalm 89:7; Proverbs 2:5; Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; and Ephesians 5:21.) What does Revelation 14:7 tell us we must do?**

The Greek word for “fear” in Revelation 14:7 is “**phobeo**.” Fear in this verse does not mean we should be afraid of God. Fear means we should honor and respect Him. We also should be loyal to God. We should give our lives fully to Him and do what He wants. We should live for God and not for self. Compare this feeling to Lucifer's behavior. Lucifer told himself, “ ‘I will go up to heaven. I will raise [put] my throne above the stars of God. And I will sit on the mount [high hill] of meeting in the far north. I will go much higher than the clouds. I will make myself like the Most High’ ” (Isaiah 14:13, 14, NLV).

When we “fear” God, we will live the way Jesus did. Jesus “was in every way like [the same as] God. . . . And when he was a man, he was humble [had no pride]. He was even [also] willing to die, yes, to die on a cross” (Philippians 2:6, 8, WE).

The worldwide war between God and Satan is about how we will answer one question: Will we obey God? Lucifer was selfish. He refused to respect anyone but himself. Lucifer refused to bow down to God on His throne. Lucifer wanted to push God off His throne and then sit there himself. When we “fear” God, we put Him first in our thoughts. We will say no to selfishness and pride. We will live fully for Jesus.

To “fear God” is very important because these words are the first words that the First Angel's Message says.

So, we must obey.

**What has been your experience with “fearing” God? How will you explain to someone that “fearing” God is good?**



**God's people must join with Jesus in sharing His end-time message with other people on this earth.**

**RESPECTING AND OBEYING GOD (Deuteronomy 6:2)**

What else does the Bible teach us about “fearing” God? As we saw yesterday, to “fear” God means to respect Him.

**Read Deuteronomy 6:2; Psalm 119:73, 74; and Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. What do these verses show us happens when we “fear” or respect God?**



**When we “fear” God,  
we will respect Him.  
Our respect for God  
will lead us to obey Him.**

These verses show us that “fearing” God is connected with keeping His commandments. When we “fear” God, we will respect Him. Our respect for God will lead us to obey Him. God wants His children to obey His commands (Ephesians 2:8–10). Yes, God’s mercy saves us because of our faith in Jesus. Even when we have God’s mercy, we must obey God’s commands. The Good News only makes us free from the punishment for breaking God’s law.

God’s mercy frees us from the guilt of our past sins. His mercy also helps us live obedient lives right now. That’s why Paul says, “Through [because of] Christ [Jesus], God gave me the special work of an apostle [teacher and leader]. This [special work] was to lead people of all nations [countries and people groups] to believe and obey. I do this work for Christ” (Romans 1:5, ICB).

Some people have a strange idea. They believe that their being saved with God’s mercy means they don’t need to obey God’s law. These people believe that obedience is the same as trying to save yourself by your own good behavior. They say, “All I want is Jesus.” The question is, “Which Jesus is that?” The Jesus from the Bible? Or a Jesus they invented? The real Jesus is from the Bible. The real Jesus never causes us to think that His law or teachings aren’t important. Bible truth shows us who Jesus is and His plan for people. The real Jesus is Bible truth. So, we can say that Bible truth is a Person. That person is Jesus. When we follow Bible truth, we are living as Jesus lived.

The book of Revelation commands us to accept Jesus and to have faith in everything He offers. When we “fear” God, we show we have faith in God to save us and to help us be obedient.

**Jesus said, “ ‘Do not fear people who can kill the body. They cannot kill the spirit. But fear the one who can destroy both spirit and body in hell’ ” (Matthew 10:28, WE). How do these words help us understand what it means to “fear” or respect God?**

## LIVING FOR GOD (Matthew 6:33)

What is the most important thing in your life? For some people, money is the most important thing in life. For other people, the most important thing is pleasure or having control. Other people may love sports, music, or entertainment more than anything else. Revelation's message to us is an invitation to respect and honor God more than anything else in life.

**Read Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:1, 2; and Hebrews 12:1, 2. What do these verses teach us about why God should be the most important part of our lives?**

What is the worldwide war between God and Satan really about? This war is a fight for the control of our minds. Who will we be loyal to? God or Satan?

So, the final fight in the worldwide war between good and evil is for the control of our thoughts. What can we do to win the fight? The Bible gives us the answer: "Think the same way Jesus Christ thought" (Philippians 2:5, WE). The word "think" shows us we must make a choice. We must choose to think the same way that Jesus thought. When we make this choice, we allow Jesus to fill our minds with good thoughts about everlasting life. Our behavior shows other people what is in our hearts and minds. When we fear or respect God, we put Him first in our lives.

So, how do we control our thoughts? The problem is that it's easy to think bad thoughts when we don't think about good things. So, we must try to think about the things God promised us. These good things wait for us in heaven. Our minds will think about the things of this earth if we let them. That's only natural because we are sinners. So, we must train our minds to think about the things God promised us in heaven.

**Paul says, "Here, my brothers, are some things I want you to think about. Think about things that are true, honest, right, clean [without sin] and pure [holy], things that are lovely, and things that are good to talk about. If they [thoughts] are good, and if they bring praise to God, think about these things" (Philippians 4:8, WE). How do we learn to do what Paul tells us to do here?**



The final fight in the worldwide war between good and evil is for the control of our thoughts.



**PRAISING AND HONORING GOD (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17)**

The First Angel's Message tells us to respect God and to praise Him (Revelation 14:7). We should praise and honor God (Joshua 7:19; 1 Samuel 6:5; Jeremiah 13:15, 16; Malachi 2:2) because He is our Judge. We see this same idea in Revelation 19:1, 2: " 'Thanks to our God, the One Who saves. Honor and power [control] belong to Him. For the way He punishes people is right [holy] and true [correct]' " (NLV).

**Read 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; and 1 Corinthians 10:31. How do these verses help us understand how we may praise God and honor His name?**



**When we put God first, we will want to honor Him with the food we eat, with the clothes we wear, in our entertainment, and in our friendships.**

Paul says that our bodies are the same as temples. The Holy Spirit lives in our temples and makes them holy. The Bible commands us to praise and honor God in every part of our lives. When we put God first, we will want to honor Him with the food we eat, with the clothes we wear, in our entertainment, and in our friendships. We give God praise and honor when we show His love to other people. We show His love by serving Him. We now live in the end times when God does His work as Judge. So, our showing God's love to other people is very important work.

**Read Romans 12:1, 2. In these verses, what does Paul ask Christians to do? Why does he ask us to do this?**

Do you see the word written as "bodies" in Romans 12:1, 2? The Greek work for "bodies" in these verses is "**somata**." This word means "everything you are," which includes your body, mind, and heart. When we choose to praise God and honor Him, we give Him everything. We choose to serve Him with all of our thoughts, feelings, and life. When we serve God in this way, we worship Him. Our worship also includes obeying God.

**Think about everything you do with your body. What can you do to make sure you are praising God and honoring Him with your body?**

**THE ONES WHO WIN (Hebrews 4:14–16)**

Revelation 14 shows us a picture of God’s loyal people in the end times: “God’s people must learn to endure [be patient]. They also must obey his commands and have faith in [the faith that comes from] Jesus” (Revelation 14:12, CEV). The only way anyone can obey God’s commandments is with the faith that Jesus gives us. Some Bibles name this faith the “faith in Jesus” (CEV). But a better way to write this verse is “the faith of Jesus.” The faith of Jesus is something more than “faith in Jesus.” The faith of Jesus is the faith that Jesus had. This faith helped Jesus win the war against sin and Satan. God wants to put this same faith in our hearts. When we show our faith, our faith grows. We win the fight against sin with Jesus’ help. He lives in us and works in our hearts. We win the fight not because of who we are but because of who Jesus is. We can win because Jesus won. We say no to sin because Jesus said no to sin.

**Read Hebrews 4:14–16 and Hebrews 7:25. How do we win the fight against sin? Also, how do we praise God and honor Him in our lives?**

Jesus is God’s Son. Jesus won the fight against Satan’s lies and tricks. What is the secret to Jesus’ success against sin? Jesus trusted in Bible promises. Jesus gave His life to the Father. Jesus trusted in the Father’s strength to help Him say no to sin. Jesus trusted God. Jesus looked to God. Jesus believed in God. When we do the same, we will win the fight against sin, too. Jesus is everything to us. The Three Angels’ Messages are all about Jesus. The message in the book of Revelation is all about winning, not losing. Revelation tells us about how God’s people win the fight against sin because they trust in God’s mercy and strength.

The word “wins” (Revelation 21:7, NLV, WE) is used 11 times in the book of Revelation. Christians from John’s time to our time have won the fight against sin. At the end time, the ones who win will get everything God promises (Revelation 21:7). They do not win because of their own good behavior. They win because they have faith in God’s mercy and everything that Jesus does for them.

**What sins in your life do you wish to win the fight against? What can you do to help win that fight?**



**Jesus trusted God.  
Jesus looked to God.  
Jesus believed in God.  
When we do the same,  
we will win the fight  
against sin, too.**



We show our ‘fear’ with the joy we feel when we obey God’s law.

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** Think about Paul’s wonderful words in Hebrews 7:25: “So Christ [Jesus] can save those who come to God through [with the help of] him. Christ can do this forever, because he always lives and is ready to help people when they come before [to] God” (ERV). Do you see the words “can do this forever”? These words show us that Jesus can save us fully. Jesus’ job is to save us. Our job is to give our lives to Him so He can save us. We must accept His strength to fight against sin. We must trust in Him, not in ourselves. Then we will win the fight.

“The Bible tells us to ‘fear [respect and honor] God’ in Revelation 14:7. This command is God’s final invitation to us to choose Him. . . . Satan fights against God’s plan to save the human family. Then God will help us win the fight against evil (also read Revelation 14:9–11). How do we fear God? Does ‘fear’ mean we are scared of Him now the same as lost sinners will be at the Second Coming? (Read Revelation 6:14–17.) No. We show our ‘fear’ with the joy we feel when we obey God’s law. We ‘fear’ God when we love Him and worship Him. We shouldn’t worship anyone or anything else but God. The only other choice in the worldwide war between God and Satan is death. The demons will suffer this punishment (Revelation 16:13, 14; Revelation 17:14; Revelation 20:11–15). So, when God asks us to fear Him, He invites us to join Him in the fight against Satan. God invites us to stand in front of His beauty. God invites us to be filled with happiness because we will enjoy everlasting fellowship with Him.”—Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages” (from an unpublished paper), page 27, adapted.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① God is so much bigger and more powerful than we are. This same God will judge us. How do these ideas help us understand what it really means to fear or respect God?
- ② Why must we understand that we are saved only because of Jesus, and not because of our own good behavior?
- ③ Why do we often fail to win the fight against sin? What mistakes do we make that stop God from doing the work in our hearts that He promised to do for us?

## PRAYING FOR NEW FRIENDS

**E**lena Bagal moved to Kochel, Germany, from Russia. Elena was born in Siberia. She didn't know anyone when she and her husband moved to Germany. Elena also didn't speak German very well. So, Elena felt lonely. She missed the life she had in Russia. Elena cried to God for a new friend. She prayed, "I really need a friend to spend time with."

Elena didn't know that she wasn't the only Russian mother praying for friends. Snezhana was another Russian woman who moved to town a year earlier. On the same day that Elena prayed for a friend, Snezhana cried to God. She said, "Lord, I have no more strength! How can I go on living? Help me to meet someone who can be my friend."

Snezhana had two children, ages 7 and 9. The children didn't go to the playground very often. But on the day that Snezhana prayed, she and her children went to the playground.

Elena took her baby girl to the same playground. Elena said hello to Snezhana in German. But soon Elena was surprised to learn that she and Snezhana both spoke Russian! At first, Elena thought that Snezhana and her children were visitors from Russia who were on vacation in Germany. But Snezhana said that she and her children lived in the town and were looking for new friends. Now Elena's family and Snezhana's family have become close friends.

Later, Snezhana told Elena, "God let me meet you so I would have a friend." Now Elena sends songs and sermons to Snezhana to encourage her. Elena prays that Snezhana will agree to Bible studies.

Elena kept praying for new friends. Soon she met Natasha. Natasha also was a Russian woman. Natasha needed to feel encouraged. Soon, the two women became friends. Today, Elena sends Bible promises to Natasha.

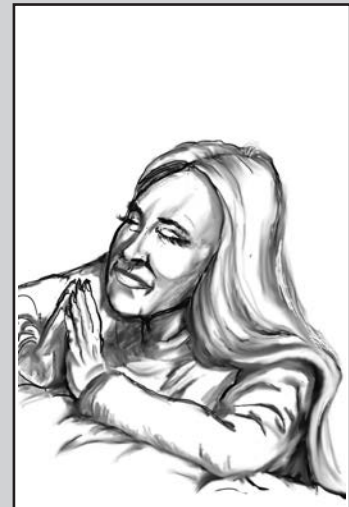
Elena continued to pray for more new friends. When she went shopping, Elena met Irina. Irina was another Russian-speaking woman. Elena invited Irina to her home for a visit. The two women now meet every other week. Elena prays for her friend when they meet. At their last meeting, Irina prayed for the first time. Elena learned that Irina sometimes visited an Adventist church in Russia before she moved to Kochel, Germany.

Elena says, "God's ways are wonderful!"

Elena prays that Irina will want to study the Bible with her. Elena also wants to start, at her house, a small-group Bible study in the Russian language. Meanwhile, Elena keeps praying for new friends.

Do you pray for new friends, too?

INSIDE  
*Story*  
by DMITRY BAGAL



**Elena kept praying for new friends.**

