

# The End of God's Saving Work



## SABBATH—DECEMBER 23

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Revelation 1:1–7; Revelation 14:6–12; 1 John 4:8; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 21:1–4.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Since [because] all these things are to be destroyed in this way, you should think about the kind [type] of life you are living. It [your life] should be holy and God-like [serving and respecting God]. You should look for the day of God to come. You should do what you can to make it come soon. At that time the heavens [skies] will be destroyed by fire. And the sun and moon and stars will melt away with much heat” (2 Peter 3:11, 12, NLV).

The book of Revelation is about a God who wants us to help Him save people.

**THE BOOK OF REVELATION** shows us what will happen in the end times. This book tells us about the worldwide war between God and Satan. Satan lost his legal control over the earth. Now he attacks the people who are loyal to God. The book of Revelation also shows us Jesus' second coming. At that time, Jesus will save His people, both the living and all the people who lived and died after Adam and Eve sinned. The book of Revelation shows us, too, that God will destroy Satan, his evil angels, and evil people with fire. Then Jesus will start His everlasting kingdom on the new earth.

In this final lesson, we will see that Revelation is more than a book about what will happen in the end times. The book of Revelation is about a God who wants us to help Him save people. God commands His church to announce the Three Angels' Messages to everyone on earth. These messages are present truth. Present truth is the truth we need most for our time.

**GOD'S END-TIME WORK IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION (Revelation 1:1–7)**

The opening verses of the book of Revelation show the reader that this book is about God's end-time work.

**Read Revelation 1:1–7. What proof do you see in these verses that Revelation is about God's work to save people during the end times?**

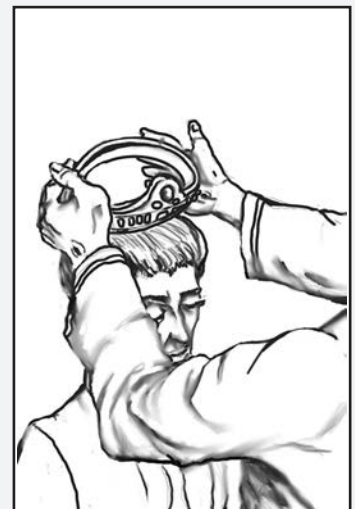
The first verses of the book of Revelation show us that Jesus is the reason for God's saving mercy. In Revelation 1:4, 5, we read about all three Members in the Godhead: God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Together, They work to save humans. The Father is the everlasting One "who is, who always was, and who is coming" (Revelation 1:4, ERV). Next, the Holy Spirit is named. Then John tells us about Jesus. "Jesus is the faithful [dependable; the One we can trust] witness. He is first among all who will be raised [wake up] from death" (Revelation 1:5, ERV). John now tells us that Jesus is the legal owner of planet Earth. Satan tried to set up his kingdom on this earth. His plan failed. John also tells us that Jesus' blood makes us clean from guilt and shame.

**Read Revelation 1:6 and 1 Peter 2:9. In these verses, what do the names for the saved mean?**

God's saving plan includes more than forgiveness and saving us from sin. God wants to make us new people, with new hearts and lives. God wants to live in our hearts. Then we will be holy as He is holy. God's saved people will become kings. Jesus spilled His blood for us. His blood makes us part of God's family. Because we are part of God's family, we are now the children of the King who controls everything in heaven and on earth. As royal family members, we join the Royal Family in heaven in Their work to save people on this planet.

In Revelation 1:7, we learn Jesus will come soon. The people on earth will cry when they learn, too late, that they are lost. God wants to save them before it's too late. So, the book of Revelation opens with God's saving plan.

**God made us and saved us. Why does this Bible truth give you hope?**



**God's saved people will become kings.**

**THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES (Revelation 14:6–12)**

The book of Revelation shows us the worldwide war between God and Satan. Revelation 12:12 shows us this Bible truth in a powerful way. John hears a loud voice announce from heaven: “ ‘So be happy, you heavens [the place where God lives] and all who live there! But it will be terrible for the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you! He is filled with anger. He knows that he does not have much time’ ” (Revelation 12:12, ICB).

**Read Revelation 14:6–12. What part do these verses have in our work as a church? How are they connected with the Good News about Jesus?**

The most important part of God's work is the Good News about Jesus. The message **is** the work. Everyone on earth needs to hear this message. They need to be warned about what is going to happen. Every person on earth who hears these messages will need to make a final choice: a choice for life or for death.

Jesus said, “ ‘If anyone is not with me, he is against me. He who does not work with me is working against me’ ” (Luke 11:23, ICB). What does Jesus mean? What is the connection between this Bible truth and our church's work?

God gave the Seventh-day Adventist Church important work. We must announce the Three Angels' Messages in Revelation 14 to everyone on earth. We must invite people to accept the Good News about Jesus (Revelation 14:6) and to worship God because He made us. Everyone will see that God's end-time people do both things: they live the Good News and they worship God. God's end-time people will be very patient. They will obey all of His commandments. They will have “the faith of [that comes from] Jesus” (Revelation 14:12, KJV). In all the work we do for God, we always must remember that we must warn the people on this earth about end-time happenings. We must give them the Three Angels' Messages. We must announce the hope that is in the Good News that continues forever.

**“ ‘If anyone is not with me, he is against me’ ” (Luke 11:23, ICB). Read Jesus' words and look into your heart. Ask yourself, where am I with God? Am I with Him?**



God gave the Seventh-day Adventist Church important work. We must announce the Three Angels' Messages in Revelation 14 to everyone on earth. That is our job.

## THE FINAL TEST (1 John 4:8)

Before Jesus went back to heaven, He gave His followers His Important Command: “ ‘So go and make followers of all people in the world [on the earth]. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have told you to do. You can be sure that I will be with you always. I will continue with you until the end of time’ ” (Matthew 28:19, 20, ERV). Today, the Three Angels’ Messages also must be preached to all the people on the earth. These messages are present truth. Present truth is the Bible truth that we need most for our time.

**Why does God care about everyone? Read 1 John 4:8; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4; and Genesis 12:3 for the answer.**

Jesus loves everyone. Some Bible thinkers teach that Jesus died only for a special few. The Bible tells us that Jesus died for all people. If you are a human, Jesus died for you. The only question is, Do you accept, or reject, what Jesus did for you?

When Jesus comes back, only two groups of people will be alive on the earth: (1) people who honor Satan and the religious powers and governments he controls (Revelation 13 and 17), and (2) people who honor Jesus and keep His commandments (Revelation 14:12).

Since the beginning of human history, God has shown humans who He is. God gave people proof of His love (Romans 1:18–21). So, God will judge everyone from the past on how they worked with God and lived their lives. God will not judge them for what they didn’t understand or know about Him (Romans 2:11–16).

In these end times, people are dividing more and more into the two groups we talked about. Soon, people will not respect the freedom of other people to believe what they want to believe. People will be pressured to join Satan’s party. So, we need to share the Good News about Jesus so that everyone will know about Satan’s evil plans and about God’s mercy. That’s what the Three Angels’ Messages are all about.

**Jesus died for you. Is there anything you’ve done that He can’t forgive? Explain why His death is enough to pay for your sins.**



**The Bible tells us that Jesus died for all people. If you are a human, Jesus died for you.**

**SUCCESS IN GOD'S WORK (2 Corinthians 11:2)**

How do we have success in our work for God? Some people say that success is the number of people you baptize. Other people may say that success is building big churches or a church that grows fast and has lots of members. Or maybe we think that success means sharing the Good News with people everywhere on earth. All of these ideas are good. At the same time, we must remember what Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: "I planted the seed and Apollos watered it. But God is the one who made the seed grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6, ERV). Our job is to do the work. God will bless our efforts. He is the One in charge.

We already saw that God wants to save lost people in every group on earth. God wants to make them loyal followers of Jesus who will work together with Him in His work to save more people.



We must remember what Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: "I planted the seed and Apollos watered it. But God is the one who made the seed grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6, ERV).

**Read the following verses. What do they tell us about the people who became followers of Jesus?**

**2 Corinthians 11:2** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Isaiah 30:21; John 10:27; John 16:12, 13** \_\_\_\_\_

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**2 Thessalonians 2:9–11; Hebrews 3:12, 13; 1 John 1:8** \_\_\_\_\_

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**1 John 1:9; Revelation 7:14; Revelation 19:8** \_\_\_\_\_

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Jesus' followers are loyal. They follow Jesus and His Holy Spirit in their lives. The Spirit teaches Christians to work with God to save people. We can trust Jesus' followers. They don't lie or pretend to be holy. They are holy. They are not fake Christians. Jesus' followers don't doubt the Bible or accept false teachings. They don't break His law. They don't behave as if they are better than other people. Yes, they understand they aren't perfect. They know they need God's mercy and forgiveness. So, they let God or other Christians correct them when they are wrong. When we behave this way, we will have success in God's work.



**WHEN OUR WORK IS DONE (Revelation 21:1–4)**

**Read Revelation 21:1–4 and Revelation 21:22–22:5. What picture of the future life do these verses show us?**

The new earth will be perfect and beautiful! Death and sin will be gone. Satan and sin will be destroyed. We will meet our loving Savior and see our loved ones again. The new earth will be filled with people from every different family group and people group who lived on the earth.

The General Conference has a special way of figuring out if a people group knows about the Good News. A people group that knows about Jesus has enough churches, Bibles, and other religious books in their own language. So, this group doesn't need any outside help. This group also has religious church leaders who can share Jesus with people in their own language. So, they don't need someone to translate their sermons for them.

A group that doesn't know Jesus is one that doesn't have enough Seventh-day Adventists in the area to share Bible truth. This group also doesn't have enough Bibles or other religious materials. So, they need outside help.

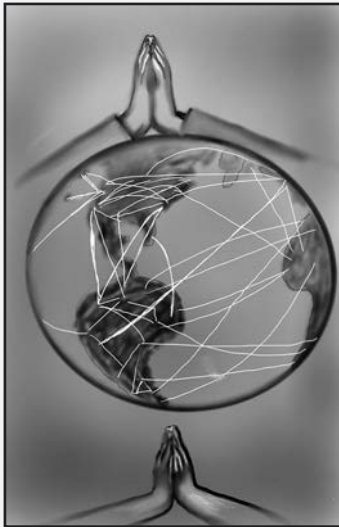
Each local church must decide who the people groups are in their community. Then they need to ask, "Do these people know about Jesus?" We must use the time and money that we have now to share Bible truth with people. We can do our part to help Jesus come back soon. Then we can live forever in the new heaven and the new earth with the people we helped Jesus save.

**Task #1: What are you doing to help Jesus come back soon? Are you filling the hearts of people with hope? Are you sharing with them the Good News? Are you helping new Christians to learn what it means to live obedient and loyal lives for Jesus? Pray that Jesus will help you share the promise of the new earth with people on your daily prayer list.**

**Task #2: Some of your "followers" may be ready to accept Jesus. Maybe they're ready to come to church for the first time. What experience will they have in your church? How ready is your church to welcome new people? Make a plan for welcoming visitors and share it with your church leaders. Work with your leaders to put the plan into action.**



**A people group that knows about Jesus has enough churches, Bibles, and other religious books in their own language.**



**“Christians must join together as one to give God’s final warning to everyone on earth.”**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** “God’s saving plan allows Him to accept humans and give them His favor. We will get everything back that we lost because of sin. Humans are saved, and the earth is made new. Then the people that God saved will live on the earth forever. That is their reward because they were obedient to God. For 6,000 years, Satan has fought for control of this earth. Now God’s first reason for making this earth will finally happen: ‘God’s holy people will receive [get] the kingdom, and they will have the kingdom forever and ever’ [Daniel 7:18, ERV].”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 342, adapted.

Before Jesus can give us the kingdom, we need to work with God to save people. We need to warn everyone on earth so that each person will have a chance to accept God’s promise of a new life and a new earth to come.

“I want to see more workers helping God to save people who don’t know Bible truth for this time. Many people have learned about the Three Angels’ Messages and accepted them. Now, they should announce these messages to people everywhere on earth. I want to do my part and help other Christians share this Bible truth with people. May the Lord help us to put on His battle suit [Ephesians 6:10–18]. Christians must join together as one to give God’s final warning to everyone on earth.”—Ellen G. White, Letter 390, 1907 (not published), adapted.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① What is the Good News that continues forever? Why is this news everlasting? Why must this Good News be part of everything we as a church teach and share?
- ② Why does our church believe that the Three Angels’ Messages are so important? What if someone said to you, “We need to talk only about Jesus and not about the warnings in the Three Angels’ Messages. These warnings are ‘too strong.’ People may feel bad and reject Jesus because of these messages”? How would you answer this person?
- ③ How has this quarter’s Bible study guide helped you better understand more about God’s work? How important is His work to save people? How has our study helped you better understand the part you and your church have in this plan?

## DREAMING DREAMS—PART 3

Joseph Delamou didn't know which church he should go to in Conakry where he lived. Conakry is the capital city of the country of Guinea in West Africa. After Joseph studied the Bible with his English teacher, he learned things that showed him his church wasn't following the Bible. So, Joseph asked God to show Him the Lord's church.

Then Joseph had a dream. In this dream, Joseph was locked in a prison. One of his family members was a prison guard. Joseph asked him for freedom. The family member said, "Yes, we come from the same family. But I can't free you."

Joseph tried to escape. But his family member caught him.

The family member scolded Joseph, "If you try that again, I will punish you in a way you will always remember!"

Joseph heard someone in the prison announce the punishment he would suffer if he tried to run away again: "Someone will bring straw into the prison. They will put the straw under you and set the straw on fire."

Joseph understood that the punishment was a word picture for hell after Jesus' Second Coming. Joseph prayed, "Lord, I'm not better than the other people in this jail. Please don't let me die here. I want to do something wonderful for You with my life before I die."

After Joseph prayed, some guard took him to meet with three soldiers. One soldier said, "Joseph, you must pay the price for your freedom."

Joseph answered, "God made me free, not you. Jesus paid the price for my sins on the cross. I owe you nothing."

The soldier frowned. "If you don't pay, we will put you back in prison."

Joseph said, "My freedom didn't come from you. You can't go against God, who made me free. My life depends on God. If you hurt me, you hurt God."

The soldiers left the room. Joseph turned around and saw his English teacher, Fortunate. Fortunate said, "Your freedom is from God."

Then Joseph woke up, sweating. It was 3 a.m. The dream felt so real. He prayed, "Thank you, God. Every time I ask for help, You answer me. I thank You for your answers and Your love."

Today, Joseph is 24 and a loyal Seventh-day Adventist.

Joseph says, "When I was a child, I asked God to lead me. God answered this prayer when He led me to the Adventist Church. I'm ready to serve God."

Your 13th Sabbath Offering this Sabbath will help church workers share the Good News about Jesus in West Africa, which includes Guinea. Thank you for your offering.

INSIDE  
*Story*  
by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**"Jesus paid the price for my sins on the cross."**













