It’s easy to take things for granted, particularly things we have always known or experienced. How easy, for instance, for young children to take their parents for granted, whom they have known all their short lives? How easy for us, too, to take for granted the sun, the sky, the air, and the ground beneath our feet.

However, have you ever stopped to think just how much we take existence itself for granted? How often do we stop and ask the famous philosophical question “Why is there something instead of nothing?”

Why does our universe and all the majesty and grandeur and astonishing things in it exist to begin with? According to the latest scientific theory (they tend to change), our universe once did not exist. In other words, ours is a contingent existence; it’s a miracle that we are here at all. And despite all sorts of myths about the universe arising from absolutely nothing or from some kind of mathematical equation, our universe exists because God, the Creator, has made it and everything in it.
Write out Revelation 4:11 from the translation of your choice. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map it.
BEYOND ISLES AND SUNS

After His ascension to heaven (Acts 1:9), Jesus visited the last of the living apostles, John, on the island of Patmos, where he had been exiled by the ruthless Roman emperor Domitian.

Even though he was separated from the support of his family, friends, and the Christian community, John was not left alone in the tribulations and trouble he faced as a follower of Christ. His ministry was not over. His witness was not complete. An angelic visitor of dazzling brightness visited John on that lonely isle and brought him a message directly from the throne of God. This message from Jesus was to echo through the centuries down the corridors of time. It is a message of hope for every generation, but especially for God’s last-day people. It is a serious message of warning as well as one of encouragement as we prepare to face the trials of the final days (or any trials we might be facing now) and anticipate Jesus’ second coming.

If you were to enter the cave where it is purported that the heavenly angel brought Revelation’s prophetic vision to John, you would immediately notice these words, placed on a plaque at its entrance, that summarize the entire book of Revelation: “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Rev. 14:7).

The central issue in the book of Revelation is worship. We were created as worshipping beings. Every one of us worships something or someone. True worship, the worship of the Creator, enables us to discover life’s true purpose. It gives us a reason for living. It gives us not only something to die for but also, even more significantly, something to live for and, if need be, to endure tribulations for. Indeed, as the final crisis arises, we will better understand the words that “we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

Revelation 14:7 ends with a clarion call to worship the Creator. This call is especially important now, when most of the scientific and even the Christian world has accepted evolution, a teaching that strikes at the very core of all things biblical and Christian. If evolution were true, our faith would, of necessity, be a lie. That’s how stark the issues are.

Revelation’s final appeal, then, is rooted in the Bible’s first book, Genesis. We will never fully understand the issues in this cosmic battle over worship unless we understand the significance of Creation. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). This verse is the foundation of all of Scripture. “In the beginning God created.” The Hebrew word for “create” in this passage is bara’, a verb that is used exclusively with God Himself as the subject.

To get just a small idea of how unlimited God’s power is, let’s consider just one object of His creation: the sun. The sun produces more energy in one second than humanity has produced by oil, gas, coal, or fire since the beginning of time.

The sun has a diameter of approximately 865,000 miles and could hold 1 million planets the size of earth. But the sun is just one of at least 100 billion stars in our galaxy, the Milky Way. One star, called the Pistol Star, gives off as much as 10 million times the power generated by our sun. One million stars (cont. on p. 61)
THE TRANSCENDENT AND IMMANENT CREATOR AND REDEEMER

The God of Creation, who brought the sun, moon, and stars into existence, whose awesome power created this planet and filled it with living things, is also a God who is interested in each one of us. He is the God who delivered His people from Egyptian bondage, who guided them in their wilderness wanderings, who rained manna out of heaven, who caused the walls of Jericho to collapse, and who defeated Israel’s enemies. The same God who unleashed His infinite power to create the universe unleashes that infinite power to defeat the forces of evil that wage the battles for our souls.

Theologians talk about the transcendence of God, the idea that God exists above and over all of creation. But they also talk about the immanence of God, which is the idea that God somehow also exists within our world and, as biblical history shows, is intricately and intimately involved in it. Though the Lord dwells in a “high and holy place,” He is also “with him who has a contrite and humble spirit” (Isa. 57:15). As Jesus Himself said when speaking of His faithful followers: “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (John 17:23). It doesn’t get closer and more intimate than that.

The great news about our God is that His greatness and power are so vast that they reach across the cosmos and into each of our lives. He promises to remake us, mold us, transform us into the likeness of His image. Think about what that means. The God who created and sustains billions of galaxies is the same God in whom we not only “live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28), but who also works in us to give us new hearts, to purge us of sin, and to make us into new creatures in Christ. What a powerfully comforting thought to realize that our God, a God of such power, loves and cares for us.

Now reread the first angel’s message. Everlasting gospel. Hour of judgment. Worship the Creator. Look at how closely related these ideas are. When we stand before our Creator in judgment, it’s only the gospel that gives us any hope at all. “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1). No condemnation now, and certainly not in the judgment.

The message of God as Creator is central to present truth, especially when evolution, even when dressed up in “Christian” garb, threatens to destroy the entire foundation of the Christian faith.

Yet amid the onslaught of evolutionary thought, God has raised up a church, a people whose very name itself is a witness against the idea of evolution—a people who are to proclaim the foundational truth of God as our Creator and Redeemer.

Look at how closely tied Jesus as Creator is to Jesus as Redeemer in Ephesians 3:9, Colossians 1:13–17, Revelation 4:11, and Romans 5:17–19. The moment His role as Creator is diminished, as evolution inevitably does, His role as our Redeemer comes into question as well. Why would Jesus redeem us from sin, death, suffering, and violence when sin, death, suffering, and violence are, as evolution teaches, the very means of creation itself? God redeems us from the very process He used to create us to begin with? It’s a dangerous lie.

(Cont. on p. 61.)
What relationship do the following verses have with Revelation 4:11?

2 Corinthians 5:17  
Psalm 139:15–18  
Acts 17:26–29  
Colossians 1:15–20

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 4:11?

(Cont. from inSpect, p. 59):

InSpect

the size of our sun could easily fit within the sphere of the Pistol Star. How do we even begin to wrap our minds around the enormity of creation?

Creation reveals a God of awesome might and unlimited power. His creative power not only brought the heavens and earth into existence but has also worked on behalf of His people through the centuries. He is the God who began this world, who is ever-present in this world, and who will never forsake His people in this world.

(Cont. from inTerpret, p. 60):

And what makes it even worse is that evolution mocks the very idea of Jesus’ death on the cross. Paul (see Rom. 5:17–19) inseparably links the introduction of sin by Adam to the death of Jesus. There’s a direct link, then, between Adam and Jesus. In any evolutionary model, however, no sinless Adam could have introduced death, because death—millions of years of death—was supposedly the force and power needed to create Adam to begin with.

Right from the start, evolution destroys the biblical foundation of the cross. In contrast, Seventh-day Adventists, by calling the world to worship the Creator, stand as living witnesses against this error.

(Cont. from inSight, p. 61):

the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”  
Exodus 20:10, 11. Concerning the Sabbath, the Lord says, further, that it is “a sign, . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.” Ezekiel 20:20. And the reason given is: “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:17.

“The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God”—because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. “The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.”—J. N. Andrews, History of the Sabbath, chapter 27. It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man’s thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, “Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 436–438.)
THE CREATOR ON THE CROSS

However much we can and do marvel and worship the Lord as our Creator, there’s more to His nature. As we have already seen (but what is worth looking at again), our Creator is also our Redeemer. The God who created us is the same God who redeemed us. The God who said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” (Gen. 1:26) is the same one who, on the cross, cried out, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” That is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46). Talk about a reason to fear God and, even more so, to give glory to Him and to worship Him!

How can we, as fallen human beings, adequately respond to such an amazing truth as this? What can we possibly do in response? We are told, in the first angel’s message, what to do: “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Rev. 14:7).

Read John 19:16–30, John’s account of Jesus on the cross. As you read it, think of the Bible texts that we have looked at about Jesus as Creator, as the one by whom “all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him” (Col. 1:16).

The first angel’s message to worship the Creator came after the cross—after it had become known to the onlooking universe and to Christ’s followers that the One who “made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” is the same One who, though being God, took “the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:7, 8).

“Worship addresses the most fundamental aspect of human existence in that it has to do with what humans as living creatures should do when confronted by the presence of the Creator. . . . Only those who are alive can worship the Lord; the dead cannot praise and worship Him. . . . The One who created us invites us to surrender our lives in the act of worship in order to receive them back from Him enriched, to be used for the benefit of others. Worship has to do with the very nature and purpose of our existence and with the need for having a center outside of ourselves that frees us from selfishness. Not to worship God is to lose our reason for existence; it is to exist in a state of disorientation and therefore to be dying, heading to total extinction because we are disconnected from the very source of life” (Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages,” unpublished manuscript, 42).

What an amazing spectacle that must have been to those who knew Jesus before He came to earth as a human being. No wonder heavenly beings worship Him as well. As for us, redeemed by His blood, what else can we do but worship our Creator and Redeemer?
CREATORSHIP

Did Christ die to let loose the whole of humanity to worship idols instead of God, when the commandment said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve"? And "the Lord made heaven and earth," and what then? "And rested the seventh day" and "sanctified it," and gave it to you to observe as God's memorial—a memorial that He is the living God who created the heavens overhead and the earth upon which we stand. He made the lofty trees and put the covering upon every flower. He gave to each one its tints, and the Lord of heaven made human beings and gave them the Sabbath. What for? For all the posterity of Adam; it was a gift to all his posterity. If they had always obeyed the fourth commandment there never would have been an infidel in the world, because it testified that "the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." . .

His hands are over His created works. Can you wonder that the devil wants to make void the law of God, the standard of His character? It will be the standard in the judgment when the books shall be opened and every person judged according to the deeds that are done. And the names are written—what does He say?—engraven "upon the palms of my hands." The marks of the crucifixion have engraven them. Humans are His property, and they are God's by creation and by redemption . . .

What do we give to Satan when we concede the point that the law of God needs to be taken away? We give the whole creative universe a defective God, a God that made a law and it was so defective that He had to take it away. That is all Satan wants. Can we afford to be working on any side but that of God? (Ellen G. White, Christ Triumphant [Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999], 15.)

By the first angel, men are called upon to "fear God, and give glory to him" and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey His law. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. Without obedience to His commandments no worship can be pleasing to God. "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." 1 John 5:3; Proverbs 28:9.

The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. "All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens." Psalm 96:5. "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it: . . . I am the Lord; and there is none else." Isaiah 40:25, 26; 45:18. Says the psalmist: "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves." "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Psalms 100:3; 95:6. And the holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things." Revelation 4:11.

In Revelation 14, men are called upon to worship the Creator; and the prophecy brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God. One of these commandments points directly to God as the Creator. The fourth precept declares: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested (cont. on p. 61.) 63
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

- How is the biblical understanding of Creation different from a deistic understanding of it? Why is this difference so important?

- Why is being created by God not enough for humanity? Why does humanity also need the promise and fulfillment of redemption?

- How have you personally experienced God’s love through His creative power working in your life?

- How does the reality that God created the entire cosmos comfort you? How does it humble you?

- What does it say about God if He used evolutionary methods such as death, violence, destruction, suffering, and mass extinction to “create” humanity?

- How does this week’s study impact your private and public worship of God?