



Gustave Doré

And He said to them, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?”

Luke 2:49

# Looking in All the Wrong Places

**J**oseph and Mary were frantic. Their oldest child was missing after their recent trip to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. Abandoning their caravan back to Nazareth, they returned to the city and spent three days, sick with worry, searching for him in all the wrong places. At last they checked for Him at the temple, where He had been all along.

The young Jesus appeared incredulous that they had bothered looking anywhere else—indeed, that they had bothered searching for Him at all. *I am in My Father’s house, doing what My Father wishes. Where should I be?*



In the early hours of the third day, a small group of women arrived at the tomb of Jesus to complete His burial, to further anoint His body and to perfume the grave. But they were astonished to discover the body missing, and the open grave being watched by two strangers in blinding white apparel. The sight of these unnatural men drove the terrified women to their knees, their faces to the ground in reverent submission. The angels answered their dazed bewilderment with a question.

“Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen.”

Luke 24:5b-6a



Ever since the first woman proffered the forbidden fruit to the first man, people

have been looking for the Messiah in all the wrong places. In fact they seem to hold a perverse fascination with searching for the Christ (hence, their salvation) in the strangest places imaginable. Over the millennia man has conjured and crafted an unabridged dictionary of means to attain enlightenment, fulfillment, comprehension, wisdom, immortality, holiness, deliverance, redemption. The mind of man has agonized over the means by which any or all of this might be attained—all the while dismissing the easiest, most direct path to all this and more.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

John 1:12-13

Man has searched in vain for a measure of effective, dependable, lasting consolation. Fellow man will inevitably disappoint, and idols stand silent and unfeeling before any entreaty. But there is an empathetic, compassionate Lord within easy reach.

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and You will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:28-29



Salvation is not to be found in enlightenment, but enlightenment can be found in the saving Christ of God. Truth is not found in new-age spirituality, but *the Spirit* generously dispenses the truth of God. Redemption is not found in any acts of man, but man’s redemption *is* found at the cross of Calvary.

Why, oh *why* do we waste our years looking in all the wrong places? We are without excuse: in our hearts and minds we know that there is a true God,

... because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Romans 1:19-20

Yet something in us cries out to exhaust every other possible “god” before we will reach out to the one *true* God. He is where we find Him, and He has been there all along. God has an exquisitely beautiful, simple plan to fulfill every desire of our heart. His name is Jesus, and He has already done everything necessary for our redemption, our holiness, our enlightenment, our salvation.

He did all this on the cross, and we can believe because the tomb is still empty.

