**GOD SEEKERS**

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**A. WHAT MAKES US LOOK FOR GOD**

**Following the example of the three Magi from the East:**

Wizards were actually the scientists of their day. In the same way that scientists today look for the origin of the universe and in it a certain sense of things, magicians looked for signs in the sky, signs of divinity. They believed that God manifested himself in the stars, in their movement, in their conjunctions ... (And, as far as we know today in the light of faith, they were not very wrong.)

And, when they find a sign, the very strange conjunction of three stars, they look for the meaning in the sacred books of the peoples that surround them in the direction in which the conjunction is going to take place and they find the prophecy of the Messiah in the people of Israel. When they found it, they were convinced that the conjunction of the three stars meant the fulfillment of that prophecy and they decided to go out to meet that special event.

We have to bear in mind that they were not Jews, they did not worship the Jewish God, but they are seekers of truth, who discover that there is an important truth in that sign of heaven and in that prophecy and go out to look for that truth that, without knowing it They are convinced that it can be important to their lives.

**Why do we still feel the need to seek God today?**

The reasons why men and women today continue to need to seek God are as many and as varied as the people who seek. But now we are going to highlight a few that are usually common to many people. These are not unique and exclusive reasons, but in most people and perhaps also in you, they are mixed and some complement and urge others, to make the search important for life.

1.- Philosophical and scientific motivation:

It is the desire to know where we come from and where the world is going. This reason is above all intellectual and it is what moves scientists and philosophers. But all of us have some philosophers and some scientists and we all need to know if at the origin of the world there is a being that created it and if the universe and everything that forms it follows a path marked by the laws of physics, the laws of nature, the laws of ethics.

At the beginning of the last century, most scientists discarded the idea of ​​a creator God, because they believed that the universe was eternal. But everything changed when Hubble discovered that galaxies are getting further and further apart and scientists understood that this meant that the world was not eternal, but had started in a great explosion, which they called the Big bang, which gave rise to time and everything that exists.

Philosophers of science began to say that everything that did not exist and now exists, must have an external and superior cause. The increasing knowledge of the laws of physics opened the door to the theory of intelligent design, which includes, not only the origin of the universe, but also the fine-tuning of all the laws of physics and chemistry with a precision that it is impossible to think it without an intelligence that has designed it.

More and more scientists speak of the anthropic principle. What's that? Scientists say that it gives the feeling that all the laws of nature seem oriented towards the existence of a habitable planet like earth (a rarity much rarer than originally believed) and within that planet for existence of an intelligent being that can know and study the universe from a place, the earth, specially designed to do so.

If some of you are especially interested in this philosophical-scientific path, I recommend Lee Strobel's book: “The case of a creator” (It is found for free on the internet, in PDF format and you can also see a summary of the book at the You Tube documentary, in English with Spanish subtitles: : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9cuLhzB34g> and in Spanish: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xamb9BxUG3k&list=PLzQm2_KQ4eM2AAmy8xym_vPQMAjJOeYq>)

2.- The desire for fulfillment never fulfilled:

All people who live a shallow interior life, discover in their interior a void that cannot be filled by oneself, or by things, or by the people around us.

The human being cannot fulfill himself. No matter how far he goes in self-knowledge and in his own perfection, he always discovers in the end a kind of abyss of perfection that is beyond himself, like on the other side of a precipice that must be crossed.

It is about a desire for fullness, perfection, conjunction and assembly of what we are and feel, which cannot be fulfilled in one's own life, no matter how rich and suggestive it may be. It is a desire that we feel as necessary, at the same time that we discover as impossible to achieve by ourselves. It is something like if we discover that our own fullness and perfection is not found in ourselves, but in something (someone) different from us, who can provide us with what we lack and allow us to reach the goal.

3.- The inner emptiness of our subjectivity:

Closely linked to the desire for fullness, is the feeling of inner emptiness, which cannot fill our own subjectivity. This inner emptiness is screaming at us that we are something more, that there is something more that fills, gives meaning and completes our being.

It is the sensation of being made with several missing pieces that we must look for outside of ourselves. They are not material pieces, but spiritual ones. Without it we are incomplete and we need it to be able to feel ourselves in our totality and perfection.

4.- The void left by human relationships:

Human beings have been created for relationships. He/She exists within a human community that has shaped his/her being, through education, understood in a global sense, as the transmission of knowledge, customs and values. But, in addition, we all feel the need to leave ourselves to live with and for others.

Saying that we were created for relationships is the same as saying that we were created for love. Love is essential to find meaning in our lives, in and with others. But all human relationships, even the most beautiful and happy, leave a vacuum of perfection, which makes us look beyond our loved ones, beyond the people with whom we deal. It is as if we need a more perfect, safer, more eternal relationship that other people cannot bring us.

Deep down, it is about a thirst to love and to be loved fully, which we, on our own, or with the help of others, cannot achieve. It is about the discovery that we live and are part of a universal love that comes from much farther and reaches far beyond where we can go and that is the origin of all love and all relationships.

*FOR PERSONAL AND / OR GROUP REFLECTION*

*The Magi of the East looked for signs of God in the stars of the sky. So many times, we are content to look for meaning in stars on this earth, which are evidently as human and worldly as we are. Are you looking for the meaning of your life beyond the worldly things and the expired stars of this world?*

*Try personally, and / or in a group, to recognize which of these reasons are the ones that lead you, or your group, to need and seek God.*

*Do you have other different personal reasons that you could or would like to share with your fellow group members?*

**B. THE ATTITUDES NEEDED TO SEEK GOD**

**Following the example of the three Magi from the East:**

The Magi did not settle for an intellectual or spiritual search, but they went out in search of that sign that they were seeing produced in heaven. Although it had to be difficult for them to leave their land, the safety of their homes and their comforts, they undertook a hard journey through deserts and mountains in search of that unknown “king” that the conjunction of stars announced to them.

They were neither intimidated by the dangers, nor by the uncertainty of what they would find. They went after an ideal and sought it with all the consequences.

They had to leave behind many things that the world showed them as attractive, but they were looking for a greater good, although they did not yet know exactly what it consisted of.

They allowed themselves to be guided by the star, they did not put conditions on it, nor were they discouraged by the difficulty, even when the star seemed to disappear when they reached Jerusalem, they simply followed it with faith and trust that it was guiding them towards something very good, a worthwhile find.

**The right attitudes to find God:**

In the search for God, not everything goes. Not just any attitude will do. Correct attitudes are necessary, which allow us to find him as the God that he is, not as any other thing or person.

1.- The passion to find it:

Fr. Anthony de Mello SJ said that a disciple asked his teacher for the way to find God and that the teacher took him to a river, submerged his head under the water until he was almost drowning, so that the disciple struggled to put his head out to breathe. When the teacher finally released his head, he asked: What did you want the most when you were underwater? The disciple answered without hesitation: Air to breathe. The teacher replied, only when you want to find God with that same intensity, will you find him.

Why is such a passion necessary? Because God is not a thing, not even another person. God is God and wants to be known and recognized as God. We cannot seek God like someone looking for a new thing or a friend to pass the time. We must seek him as God, that is, as the reason and purpose of our existence.

This is what Jesus wanted to express with the parable of the treasure and the pearl. Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God, but refers to meeting the God who promises us the Kingdom:

*The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field: whoever finds it, hides it again and, full of joy, goes, sells everything he has and buys that field. fine pearls and that, when you find one of great value, you will sell everything you have and buy it*. (Mt 13, 44-45)

2.- Simplicity and humility:

The true attitude that allows us to find God is the simplicity and humility of the little boy who looks for his father, because without him he feels lost. Remember the words of Jesus: "If you do not become like children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." Pride separates us from God, because God loves and manifests himself in simplicity, as in the baby Jesus of Bethlehem.

We have to bear in mind that it is not God who is lost, it is we who have separated ourselves and have lost God from the horizon of our lives. In reality, God does not hide, we are the ones who are blind or look to other places, to other interests and that is why we cannot see him. Because God is present in the world, in others, in yourself, as are the waves of the radio or mobile phone, but to find him we must tune in to his frequency, otherwise we will not be able to perceive him.

3.- Patience and perseverance:

God likes us to look for him, sometimes he is lazy, because only what is costly is worth searching for and so only if we find it with determination, dedication, enthusiasm and perseverance, will it be of true value to us. God is close, but he is not trivial, as everything that is truly worth is asserted. God is personal and we must find him, know him and love him, otherwise our search will be worthless.

4.- Let you meet him:

In reality, it is God who seeks us, before we seek Him. God loves us more than we can ever love Him. God is more interested in us finding him than we have in finding him. That means that in reality we are the ones who must allow ourselves to be found by God.

Perhaps you remember that comic of a ball that was looking for God desperately, in a great hurry and everywhere, and could not find it until, completely exhausted, it stopped, and God could finally reach it.

5.- Let yourself be surprised:

You must look for the God who really exists and how he really exists, not the God that you may have in your head. Sometimes we get false ideas of God and that is why we are not able to recognize him when we come face to face with him.

You must allow yourself to be surprised, because God is much bigger, much better, much more generous, and merciful than you can ever imagine. You cannot limit God to what you perceive him in your, which can be poor and very incomplete. God is not a liquid that must conform to your vessel. In any case, you are the liquid that must enter and mold you, taking the form of the vessel of God.

6.- Leave the networks:

Remember the vocation of the first disciples:

*As Jesus was walking by the lake of Galilee, he saw two brothers: Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew, who were casting the net into the lake, since they were fishermen. He said to them: "Come with me and I will make you fishers of men." They instantly left the nets and followed him. Later he saw James, the Zebedee, and his brother John, who were in the boat with their father Zebedee, repairing the nets. He called them also, and they, immediately leaving their nets in the boat and their father, followed him*. (Mt 4, 18-22)

They found Jesus, or rather, Jesus found them and called them and they left their nets and followed him. We too can be busy with the networks, we can be literally entangled in so many things, that it is not impossible to find God, because in reality the networks prevent us from looking for him. And we are not talking about fishing nets, but about everything that entangles us, and even in the literal sense of social networks, which so many times keep us tangled, distract us, and separate us from the search for God.

To find God, one must be willing to leave things and perhaps even projects, to leave everything that entangles us, to achieve the freedom of the children of God.

*FOR PERSONAL AND / OR GROUP REFLECTION*

*Are you willing to leave yourself, your comforts, your worldliness, to go out in search of God, as the magicians left their house and undertook a long and difficult journey after the star, in search of a Messiah unknown to them?*

*Are you looking for God with the necessary passion? Are you looking for him as the God who can give meaning to life, or simply as another object of knowledge?*

*Do you seek Him with humility, with patience and perseverance, as He wants to be sought?*

*Are you trying to tune into the spiritual dimension in which God communicates, or are you tuned only to things in the world, which distract you and take you away from God?*

**C. SEEKING GOD WHILE BEING FOUND**

**Following the example of the three Magi from the East:**

The Magi were radically open to what they found. They were looking for a saving Messiah and they found a child wrapped in swaddling clothes and were able to recognize in Him the "Greatest of kings, born in the humblest place, God made flesh."

While Herod feared a powerful leader, capable of overthrowing him from the throne, the Magi searched for him, letting themselves be carried away by the star, in a humble portal, in a stable of animals and they found him in the simplicity and poverty of a newborn child in circumstances completely precarious.

The Magi are able to recognize that the royalty of Jesus was of another order: "My kingdom is not of this world ..." They were able to recognize the royalty of the incarnate God and they manifested it in their gifts, gold for the king, incense for God and myrrh for his sacrifice on the cross.

And finally, the magi were obedient to God and not to Herod and returned to their land by another way, to safeguard the mystery and the life of the child.

Seek God where He really is.

The prophet Isaiah says: "Seek God while he maybe found, invoke him while he is near" (Is 55, 6). Indeed, we have to look for God right now, who is near and who allows himself to be found, but we have to look where he is, because if we look for him in the wrong places, we will never find him.

1.- In the beauty and harmony of nature:

It is about this search in creation that St. Paul speaks in his speech at the Areopagus:

“*The God who made the world and what it contains; He is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not dwell in temples built by men, nor does human hands serve him; as if he needed someone, He who gives life and breath to everyone, and everything…… He wanted them to look for Him to see if, at least gropingly, they would find Him; although he is not far from any of us, because in him we live, move, and exist*. " (Acts 17, 24-28)

Paul, again, proclaims that God can be known through creatures:

*What can be known about God, they are clear before their eyes, because God has revealed it to them. And it is that the invisible God, his eternal power and his divinity, has been made visible since the creation of the world, through created things. So, they have no excuse*. (Rom 1, 19-20)

We can glimpse God in the grandeur of the universe, which produces spontaneous admiration and praise in us, which makes us feel that so much grandeur and beauty cannot be gratuitous, the result of chance or of a blind evolution without direction or meaning. We discover that the entire universe is a work of art and we realize that there is no work of art without an artist who has created it.

The universe is beautiful in the vastness of space, but also in the splendor of a landscape. In their own way, the forests and the small wildflowers are beautiful, which perhaps no one will ever see and which are there, as St. Francis would say, praising God.

Seeing the world, seeing the landscapes, seeing the diversity of plants and animals, seeing the perfectly ordered disorder of all things, we feel that God is necessary so that all that can exist and we feel that all the beauty that surrounds us is the gift of that God a generous artist who gives us his works for free, so that we can enjoy them to the end.

2.- In the depths of our hearts:

Let us remember the words of St. Augustine in his confessions:

*Late I loved you, beauty so old and so new, late I loved you! and you were inside me and I outside, and so on the outside I was looking for you; and, misshapen as I was, I would throw myself on these things that you created. You were with me but I was not with you. Those things that, if they were not in you, would not exist, kept me away from you. You called me and cried out, and broke my deafness; you shone and shone, and cured my blindness; you breathed out your perfume, and I breathed it in, and now I long for you; I liked you, and now I feel hungry and thirsty for you; You touched me, and I long for the peace that comes from you*.

God dwells in the depths of us and awaits us in our most intimate intimacy. You have to know how to look for him in silence, in meditation, in prayer. We must speak to him, but also and, above all, we must listen to him in the silence of our interiority.

God is within us, because he wants us to find the meaning of our life in ourselves, in our own interiority and not in what is exterior to us. God awaits us where we are what we are, with nothing but ourselves: without ideas, without things, without occupations, or plans, without everything that so often keeps us away from ourselves and the God who It inhabits us, as St. Augustine used to say.

3.- In the sisters and brothers in whom God also dwells:

If God dwells in the depths of our hearts, he also dwells in the hearts of our sisters and brothers, therefore, we can also find him dwelling in others, who are also children of God like us.

We can find it in the works of love of the sisters and brothers, who show us the presence and action of God in their lives, because all love comes from God. Remember the words of Jesus: “… So that, seeing your good works, they may glorify our heavenly Father”. Then God manifests himself in the good works of sisters and brothers and we must be able to discover him acting in them and to praise him for what he does in them. And let's not forget that what he does in others, he can also do in us, if we let him act, if we put ourselves at his service, if we love as he loved us.

And God manifests himself especially in the poor sisters and brothers, in those who need us, in those who resemble the poor and weak Christ of Bethlehem and the suffering Christ on the cross. "Every time you did it with one of those younger brothers, you did it with me."

And when we speak of discovering it in poor sisters and brothers, we are not referring only to material poverty, but to all kinds of poverty, which make our brothers beings in difficulty, in need of a merciful hand that shows them the love of God.

4.- In love, in all kinds of loves:

God is love, he is the source of all love, therefore, we can discover him in all manifestations of love, both our own and others. We speak of love as a couple, paternal and maternal love, filial love, friendship, love in solidarity, love of nature and animals ... In all these manifestations of love we can discover its source, which is none other than God. same.

5.- In forgiveness, the highest expression of love:

God is merciful and a source of mercy, a mercy that means suffering with the needy, and means forgiving those who offend us.

God is the *par excellence* forgiver; He is also a forgiver without memory, does not keep accounts of evil, and only looks towards the future, towards the possible conversion of the one who feels loved in forgiveness: "I do not condemn you either, go away, and from now on do not sin anymore," Jesus said to the sinner whom he had just saved from certain stoning.

Forgiveness is the highest expression of love because it means loving the other when they do not deserve it, because they have been lacking and have infringed upon an evil. It involves restoring the life of the person who has made a mistake or sin, because it returns the love they had lost and, with it, gives them back the possibility of loving again. In these expressions of love, we can see the action and acting presence of God in our midst.

Also, when we feel forgiven, restored to love, we can more strongly feel God's presence and discover his unconditional and perpetual love.

6.- In the Eucharistic presence:

And, last but not least, we can seek and come to feel the presence of God in the Eucharist, which is the sacrament of God's love, the personalized repetition of the sacrifice of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus for each one of us.

Christ given in the simple and daily forms of bread and wine, is the maximum expression of God's love: "*No one has more love than the one who gives his life for his friends" ... "You are my friends, if you love as I love you command*".

To believe that Jesus is present in the Eucharist, to commune with his body and his blood, to become one with him, is to live his life, it is to let him dwell in us, “*whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I in him.”* To receive Communion is, furthermore, to become “another Christ”, Christ looking in my mirror, is to give himself as He in communion to the sisters and brothers, to make the Kingdom of God present.

*FOR PERSONAL AND / OR GROUP REFLECTION*

*It is clear that if you look for God where He is not, you will never find Him. We can look for God in the wrong places, because we have a false idea of ​​God ...*

*Does your idea of ​​God lead you to look for him where he has told us, through his Son Jesus Christ, that he can really be found? Or are you still looking for him with the world's criteria?*

*Prayer and meditation are essential elements to tune in to the God who dwells within you:*

*Do you pray enough that God can manifest Himself in you? In your prayer do you try to be silent and listen to the God who whispers to you from the depths of yourself, or does your prayer consist only of speaking yourself and asking for things?*

*In order to discover the God of love, it is necessary to live in the realm of love.*

*Do you live in the realm of love, letting yourself be loved and loving others with all your heart?*

**MOTIVATION VIDEO SCRIPT TEXT**

**TITLE: SEEKERS OF GOD, IN THE FOOTPRINTS OF THE WIZARDS OF THE EAST.**

**PART ONE: Why do we seek God?**

**Natividad Movie:** Try it, Gaspar, any sign we find could be the linchpin.

A star will rise from the earth… From Israel? From Israel.

If what the prophet says is true, a new Messiah could come into the world during our lives.

If I am right, and I usually am, the three will seem to touch for the first time in three thousand years.

We: The Magi were looking for signs of God in the stars and found a conjunction that heralded the birth of a saving Messiah.

We, like the Magi, seek God because he can explain:

The vastness of the universe.

The harmony of nature.

The beauty of animals.

The greatness of the human mind and heart.

We seek Him because we feel incomplete and yet we need a fullness that we do not have.

We seek Him because we need to fill the void we feel inside.

We seek Him because human relationships are never as perfect as our need for love demands.

**Part Two: Attitudes to Seek God**

**Nativity Movie:** I suppose you are talking about a spiritual journey, Melchior? Won't you talk about actually going there?

I want the three of us to go.

For the first time in three thousand years the three will seem to touch.

We: The Magi left their home, their country, their comforts and set out in search of that Messiah that the star announced to them.

You, seek God with the same passion, you must need him like the air you breathe, if you want to find him.

Look for him with the simplicity and spontaneity with which the child looks for his father, to feel loved and protected in his arms.

God is personal and personal relationships require perseverance and patience.

God looks for you with much more intensity and love with which you look for Him. That is why let yourself be found by Him.

Let yourself be surprised by God. He is much better than you can imagine and dream of.

Disconnect from everything that distracts you. God whispers to the heart. Listen to him with all your heart.

**Part Three: Seeking God Where He Is**

**Nativity Movie**: Foreigners, What brings you here?

We come from the East, we follow the star. The star of prophecy.

The prophecy of the Messiah?

Do you believe it now?

The greatest of kings born in the humblest place. God made flesh.

Gold for the king of kings. Incense for the priest of priests. Myrrh to honor your sacrifice.

We: The Magi were looking for a saving Messiah and found a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, born in a stable. They knew how to recognize God in the child and worshiped him with all that they were and had.

You seek God in the peace, harmony and beauty of nature.

Look for it in the depths of your heart. There God waits for you patiently.

Look for it in the other people around you. Because God also dwells in their hearts.

Look for him in the poor, God's favorite children.

Look for it in all manifestations of true love, because God is the source of all love.

Look for it in forgiveness, the highest expression of love that regenerates people and relationships.