



# LOST AND FOUND: What does it mean to be spiritually lost? Student Guide

OUTREACH

- ? ▪ How do you know if someone is a Christian?
- How do you reach out to someone who doesn't know Christ?

## WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT:

Perhaps you've seen the quote framed on a wall, "Find the one thing that makes you happy, and go do it." Or maybe you've heard that, to live a good life, you should do good things. Have you heard about Karma? Some people think Karma is an invisible force that makes good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people. These two principles feed into the way many think about the world. They think the way to go to heaven or to have a good life is to do whatever makes you happy and to do good to other people. Once you've checked those things off your list, you're all set.

But does that really match with reality? You can't always be happy. Bad things happen, and it's okay to feel bad when they do. In the darkest parts of life, pretending to be happy doesn't help. And bad things happen to good people all the time. Karma may sound good in theory, but in the end, it just doesn't explain why the world is the way it is. People who live their lives this way think they know where they are, but in reality, they're lost. God's told us the key to a good life, to reaching heaven, to salvation. It's not pretending to be happy or doing good things. It's following Jesus as Lord and developing a personal relationship with him. Without that, all those other things are worthless.

Who are the lost? It's not as simple as asking whether or not someone goes to church. In fact, Jesus condemned those who appeared religious but didn't care about a true and radical relationship with him. Luke 7 tells the story of two approaches to Jesus. On one hand, you'll see the Pharisees, the religious leaders of the day. They did everything right and seemed to have it all together. On the other hand, you'll see a sinful woman, someone who messed up in a big way. Who does Jesus treat as lost? Whose faith does Jesus truly value?

**Read:** Luke 7:36–50

### **Answer:**

- Who is lost in this story? Who gets it right?
- Why does Jesus prefer the faith of the sinful woman to that of the Pharisees?





- Why isn't happiness enough to have a good life?
- Why isn't being a good person enough to get to heaven?

### \* **A SECOND LOOK:**

Enuma Okoro has a hard time answering when people ask her where she is from. She has lived in four countries and moved every three years (at least). She was born in the United States to Nigerian parents, lived in West Africa for a while, and then went to boarding school in England. She has experienced many different lifestyles and has seen people practice many types of religions. This broad range of experiences has helped Enuma Okoro grasp the truth about who is lost and who is found. She understands that the difference between being lost and found doesn't have anything to do with saying or doing the right things. Instead, it's about whether or not a person knows Jesus and how passionately that person is pursuing God. Interestingly, she admits her problems and quirks—she calls herself a drama queen and a self-indulgent introvert. But people like her often experience God in a deeper way than those who seem to have it all together on the outside. She says, "God's light shines especially bright through the multiple and endless fragmented slices that exist in broken people."

Being found has little to do with looking like you have it all together. Enuma explains one of the major changes a person experiences when going from lost to found: "It's so much less about 'what's in it for me' and so much more about the transformation that happens in us and between us that helps us spill our lives, somewhat clumsily, outside the boundaries we've comfortably drawn around ourselves." Salvation involves an inner transformation and an intimate, passionate relationship with Jesus. When the inner transformation happens, the outward transformation will follow. Unless a person has experienced this inner transformation by following Jesus as Lord, that person is lost.

### **Answer:**

- According to Enuma, what does a "found" person look like? What does that tell us about those who are lost?
- Does this mean doing good things and pursuing what makes you happy are always bad? Why or why not?
- How can you tell if someone has experienced what Enuma calls "the transformation that happens in us"?



- If the world's understanding about being lost and being saved is so different from what the Bible says, what are a few ways we can start correcting the misunderstanding?



### APPLY IT:

Now that you know more about who the lost are, and what it means to be found, what are you going to do about it? What is something you can do this week in order to reach out to the lost and help them be found?

#### ***Be specific:***

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

Is there someone who can keep you accountable?



### THINK ABOUT IT:

“Did becoming older bring me closer to Jesus?” – Henri Nouwen

“Going to church...doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to McDonald's makes you a hamburger!”  
– Keith Green

