



Heresy in Counted
Cross-Stitch

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A colorful counted cross-stitch picture in the window of a needlecraft store lured me into the shop. In the picture a sad-faced little boy looked up beseechingly at his mom while the stitchery spelled out the message: "God couldn't be everywhere, so he created mothers."

Oh, isn't that cute, I thought while checking the price tag on the kit. Then I corrected myself. Wait a minute. That's heresy!

I doubt that the designer of the kit deliberately contradicted good theology. I assume it was designed to make mothers feel the importance of their tasks. But the Bible clearly states that God *can* be everywhere, and in fact He is. Theologians call that omnipresence. I call it comforting.

"Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them?" declares the Lord. 'Do not I fill heaven and earth?'" (Jeremiah 23:24*). "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9*).

But children do have a way of wandering out of the yard, of not coming home when they're supposed to, of leaving us to go to that great intimidating place called school (where we have little control over what happens), and of attending parties given by people we may not know well.

I remember the night our six-year-old daughter got lost among thousands of people at the State Fair. Only after a long, frantic search did we finally find her by the "haunted house." I still shudder when I think about it. We hear so many news reports about kidnapped children being sexually abused or used for pornographic films that it's hard not to be fearful. So I've decided to reverse that motto. I say that no matter how careful we try to be, "Mothers can't be everywhere; that's why they need God." Maybe someone should design A cross-stitch pattern that says that!

Lord,
It is scary
to raise children
in today's society.
Oh, Ever-present God,
quiet my heart
to trust you to be there.
Embroider in their minds
and mine
Your omnipresent care.
Amen.

*Scripture verses from NIV