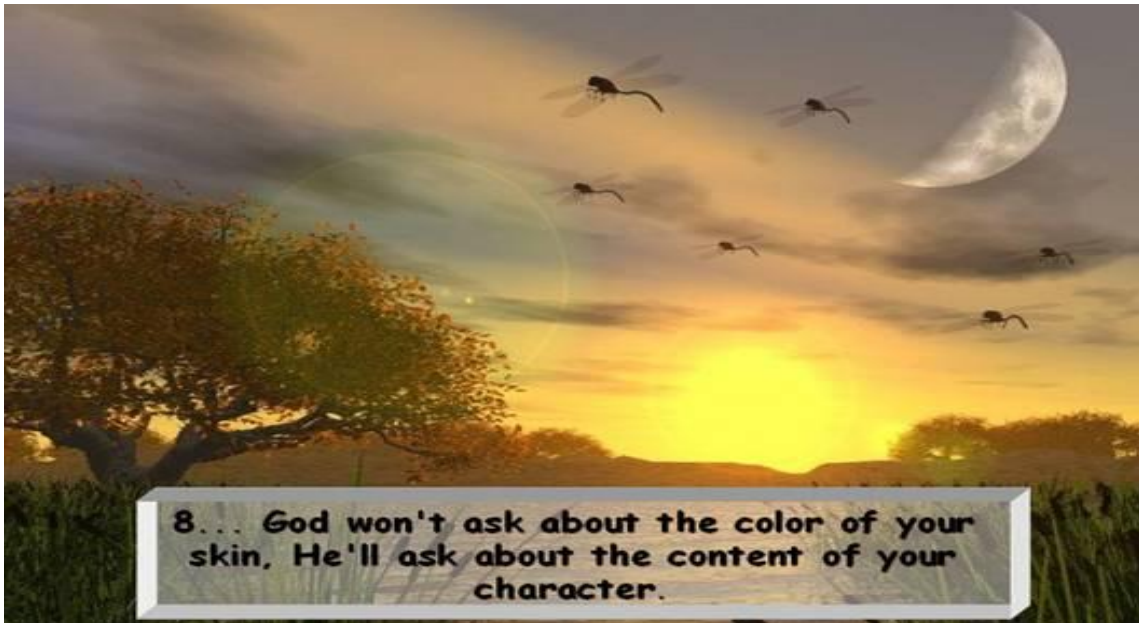


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Sometimes Alone but Never Lonely



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Graham F. Watts, Sr.

VISION: To hear the midnight cry, "The bridegroom comes, go out to meet Him" (Matthew 25:6) and become like Him when I see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

MISSION: Purify myself even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3) to be glad, to rejoice, give honor to Christ and be ready for the marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

VALUES: Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4), be without fault before God (Revelation 14:5), be perfect even as my Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48), wear the Lamb's fine, clean and white linen (Revelation 19:8) do righteously (1 John 3:10) and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

OVERALL AIM: Studies presented here unveil Bible knowledge to inquiring minds to prompt the following inquiries: "Are our feet on the rock of ages? Are we one with Christ as He is one with the Father" (John 10:30 in Evangelism, {Ev} 199.1)? Am I crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20)?

25

26 **PURPOSE/REASON FOR/WHY**

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28 This study examines a preferred reaction when earthly supports fail.

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30
31 **OBJECTIVES/WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH/THESIS**

32
33 At the end of this study, believers, who at different times may lack
34 social support, can be confident of the abiding presence of Christ.

35
36
37 **SIGNIFICANCE: SO WHAT**

38
39 It is human to seek earthly companionship and assistance. But life
40 is far from perfect, and just as Christ's disciples deserted Him
41 (John 16:32); earthly help can fail. Therefore, to avoid
42 hopelessness, which plays a role in depression, God gives assurances
43 such as: "...I am with you and I will protect you wherever you go..."
44 (Genesis 28:15, NLT). "...I will never fail you; I will never
45 abandon you" (Hebrews 13:5, NLT). So we can confidently say: "...If
46 God is for us, who can ever be against us" (Romans 8:31, NLT)!

47
48 **BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

49
50 The creation story of Genesis described the dawn of civilization. In
51 the majestic setting of a garden, God created a heterosexual couple--
52 Adam and Eve-- who shared mutual support (Genesis 2:18 & 20). So it
53 is not surprising that the human family thrives on giving and
54 receiving companionship and assistance. Even Christ as the God man
55 asked Peter, whom He later found asleep in Gethsemane, "...Couldn't
56 you have watch with me even one hour (Matthew 26:37-40, NLT)? Moses,
57 the most humble man of his day (Leviticus 12:3, NLT), also asked the
58 Lord about companionship as he led the Israelites to the Promised
59 Land (Exodus 33:12). There are times along life's journey, when
60 people feel alone (Genesis 32:24) and perhaps lonely. This
61 background provided the impetus for the study question that follows.

62 **STUDY QUESTION**

63

64 How can a person be alone, but never lonely?

65

66 **ANSWER SOURCE: HOLY BIBLE**

67

68 1. **God is always with His children, so they are never lonely.** An
69 example from the Old Testament follows. Moses said to the Lord:
70 "...You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me
71 know whom You will send with me. ...You have said, 'I know you by
72 name and you have also found grace in My sight.' Now therefore, I
73 pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way
74 that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight..."
75 (Exodus 33:12-13). And the gracious God replied to Moses: "**My**
76 **presence** will go with you and I will give you rest" (Exodus 33:14)!
77 Child of God, the abiding presence of God is your companionship.

78

79 2. **God invites His children to spend one-on-one time with Him.** An
80 entourage of 70 elders along with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu
81 accompanied Moses into the Mountain (Exodus 24:1 & 9, NLT).
82 "There, they saw the God of Israel; [and] ...ate a covenant meal,
83 eating and drinking in [God's] presence" (Exodus 24:10-11, NLT).
84 But when the time came for God to give Moses "...the tables of
85 stone on which [He had] inscribed the... [Commandments], the
86 entourage was instructed to "...worship from a distance [and] only
87 Moses [was] allowed to come near to the Lord: '...Come up here to
88 me; come up to me on the mountain'" (Exodus 24:12 & 1-2, NLT).
89 When the omnipotent God wants intimate communion with a soul, all
90 other voices are made silent, even disappear so that God's
91 "...still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12) can be heard above the
92 sounds of earth. Thus, being alone provides an opportunity to
93 commune with "...El-Shaddai, God Almighty..." (Genesis 35:11, NLT).

94

95 3. **God talks to His children during their time together.** Rich
 96 insights come from the Old Testament! Handpicked to lead Israel,
 97 Moses was very conscious of his lack of gifted, fluent speech.
 98 Thus, he "...said to the Lord, 'I am not eloquent..., but... slow of
 99 speech and slow of tongue'" (Exodus 4:10). Therefore, "...please
 100 send by the hand of whomever else You may send" (Exodus 4:13). And
 101 God reminded Moses that He created man's mouth (Exodus 4:11) and
 102 gave him this assurance: "...**I will be with your mouth and teach you**
 103 **what you shall say**" (Exodus 4:12)! God retained Moses as Israel's
 104 leader, put words in his mouth and in-turn Moses communicated with
 105 Aaron, his spokesperson (Exodus 4:15-16). Child of God, expect to
 106 hear in "your own ears... a voice... saying: 'This is the way you
 107 should go,' whether to the right or to the left" (Isaiah 30:21,
 108 NLT) because "the Lord says, 'I will guide you along the best
 109 pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you'"
 110 (Psalm 32:8, NLT) "...to guard... all your ways" (Psalm 91:11, NASB).

111
 112
 113 4. **God uses aloneness to prepare His children for evil encounters.**
 114 For example, deception abounds! "Neighbors lie to each other,
 115 speaking with flattering lips and deceitful hearts" (Psalm 12:2,
 116 NLT). And this state of affairs is only expected to get worse as
 117 time elapses. "...In the last days, there will be very difficult
 118 times" (2 Timothy 3:1). "...Evil people and imposters will
 119 flourish; they will deceive others and will themselves be deceived"
 120 (2 Timothy 3:13, NLT). This observation is NOT meant to foster the
 121 Elijah syndrome--...I am the only one left--(Romans 11:2-3, NLT),
 122 but rather to emphasize that God has a faithful people on earth
 123 (Romans 11:4, NLT) who must "...come out from among [those who
 124 practice deception] and be... separate..." (2 Corinthians 6:17)
 125 because God wants "...truth in the inward parts..." (Psalm 51:6).
 126 In fact, this mandate is clearly stated this way: "...**Have no**
 127 **fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness**, but rather
 128 reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11) to repent and follow 2 Peter 1:5-8.

129 5. **God allows the crowd to disperse that He can share personal time**
 130 **with you.** Examine Daniel's experience! "Only I, Daniel, saw this
 131 vision. The men with me saw nothing, but they were suddenly
 132 terrified and ran away to hide. So I was left there all alone to
 133 see this amazing vision. My strength left me, my face grew deathly
 134 pale and I felt very weak" (Daniel 10:7-8, NLT). Even Jesus had to
 135 be alone sometimes, so He would make himself free of people, where
 136 He could be alone and in prayer (Matthew 14:22-23, NLT). This
 137 habit was exercised by Christ at the start of each new day, when,
 138 "before daybreak..., [He] got up and went out to an isolated place
 139 to pray" (Mark 1:35, NLT). Even "when the people saw [Christ] do
 140 [miracles, and]... were ready to force Him to be their king, He
 141 slipped away into the hills by Himself" (John 6:14-15, NLT). If it
 142 was necessary for Jesus Christ, when He walked upon earth, to be
 143 alone; then, "...a servant is not greater than his Lord..." (John
 144 15:20). Learn to use quiet time to your advantage.

145
 146 6. **Only those who take time to be alone with God share His secret**
 147 **(Amos 3:7).** Read what "...Azariah... [said to] King Asa as he
 148 returned from battle. 'The Lord will stay with you as long as you
 149 stay with him! Whenever you seek him, you will find him. But if
 150 you abandon Him, he will abandon you'" (2 Chronicles 15:2, NLT).
 151 In other words: "...draw near to God..." (Psalm 73:28). Why is
 152 this important? God said: "Ask me and I will tell you remarkable
 153 secrets you do not know about things to come" (Jeremiah 33:3, NLT).
 154 Many desire to look into the future that they might prepare for it.
 155 God makes this possible. The Psalmist said: foreknowledge comes
 156 this way: "Let me hear Your loving kindness in the morning; for I
 157 trust in You. Teach me the way in which I should walk; for to You
 158 I lift up my soul" (Psalm 143:8, NASB). Children of God, an angel
 159 stand at the golden altar before God's throne and mix your prayers
 160 with incense (Revelation 8:3) that your voices can be heard on High
 161 and God will "...send help from the sanctuary..." (Psalm 20:2)!

163 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS: This study examined a preferred response when
 164 earthly supports fail. The question that focused this study asked:
 165 How can a person be alone, but never lonely? In the discovery phase
 166 of the study, six points emerged: 1) God is always with His children,
 167 so they are never lonely. 2) God invites His children to spend one-
 168 on-one time with Him. 3) God talks to His children during their time
 169 together. 4) God uses aloneness to prepare His children for evil
 170 encounters. 5) God allows the crowd to disperse that He can share
 171 personal time with you and 6) Only those who take time to be alone
 172 with God share His secret (Amos 3:7). Given what we have discussed,
 173 can a person simultaneously know El-Shaddai and be lonely, desperate,
 174 destitute, hopeless and helpless? Ponder this question and be
 175 persuaded in your own mind (Romans 14:5). However, because it is of
 176 little redeeming value to engage in Bible study merely for
 177 information, subsequent paragraphs follow that make a practical
 178 application of the truths set forth here.

179

180 DISCUSSION: WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?

181

182 Change is inevitable! Change represents life. It is the single
 183 constant that is ever present in every experience. Even in death,
 184 the change of decomposition goes on in fulfillment of the promise:
 185 "...you were made from dust, and to dust you will return" (Genesis
 186 3:19, NLT). So when your life turns from being the center of other's
 187 attention and you find yourself being alone, remember that aloneness
 188 is part of life's experience, but it does not have to mean that you
 189 are lonely, forgotten, not-liked or abandoned. Let us examine
 190 together three Bible characters that emerged from aloneness with
 191 awesome productivity and strength.

192 Our first character is John the Revelator. "I, John, am your brother
 193 and your partner in suffering and in God's Kingdom and in patient

194 endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of
 195 Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about
 196 Jesus" (Revelation 1:9, NLT). But out of John's exile came the Book
 197 of Revelation, which remains a source of blessing to everyone " who
 198 reads the words of [his] prophecy to the church, ...listens to its
 199 message and obeys what it says..." (Revelation 1:3, NLT). In
 200 retrospect, we might say that it was good for John to be alone.

201 Our second character is Elijah. After his rendezvous "...with the
 202 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah..." (1 Kings
 203 18:18-40, NLT), Jezebel's threat alarmed Elijah so he "fled for his
 204 life... to Beersheba; a town in Judah, [where]... he left his
 205 servant... [and]... went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all
 206 day" (1 Kings 19:3, NLT). Eventually Elijah reached "Mount Sinai,
 207 the mountain of God..., where he spent the night" (1 Kings 19:8-9,
 208 NLT). But out of Elijah experience came the anointing of "...Elisha
 209 son of Shaphat..., " who "went with Elijah as his assistant" (1 Kings
 210 18:19-21, NLT). God makes "...a... road through... once deserted
 211 land..." (Isaiah 35:8, NLT). "Who dares despise the day of small
 212 things, since the seven eyes of the Lord that range throughout the
 213 earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hand of
 214 Zerubbabel" (Zechariah 4:10, TNIV)?

215 Our third character is Gideon. He was alone "...at Ophrah;
 216 ...threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide it from the
 217 Midianites, [when]... the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and
 218 said: 'Mighty hero, the Lord is with you!'" (Judges 6:11-12, NLT).
 219 From this encounter, Gideon became Israel's victorious commander in a
 220 battle against "the armies of Midian, Amalek and the people of the
 221 east... [camped] in the valley of Jezreel" (Judges 6:33 & 7:1-23,
 222 NLT). So be not alarmed or despondent when you are alone. Turn
 223 these quiet times into prolific seasons of growth and opportunities
 224 through meditation, prayer and joyful communion with Jesus Christ.

225 **CONCLUSIONS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

226

227 In every situation, whether in abundance or scarcity (Philippians
 228 4:12), exercise faith in God and embrace positive awareness. Live in
 229 the positive. "...All things work together for good to them that
 230 love God, to them who are the called, according to His purpose"
 231 (Romans 8:28). "[...God's] secret is with the righteous" (Proverbs
 232 3:32), "...with them that fear Him, and He will show them His
 233 covenant" (Psalm 25:14). "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who
 234 made heaven and earth" (Psalm 124:8). When you are alone, remember
 235 you are never lonely. Take courage from the conversation that
 236 occurred under the fifth seal. John the Revelator "... saw under the
 237 altar the souls of all who had been martyred for the word of God and
 238 for being faithful in their testimony. They shouted to the Lord and
 239 said, 'O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you judge the
 240 people who belong to this world and avenge our blood for what they
 241 have done to us?' [Examine the transition in the discourse before
 242 the reply]! Then a white robe was given to each of them and they
 243 were told to rest a little longer until the full number of their
 244 brothers and sisters—their fellow servants of Jesus who were to be
 245 martyred—had joined them" (Revelation 6:9-11, NLT). That God
 246 remembers the dead in Christ is a guarantee that He will remember
 247 you, whose names are written on the palms of His hands (Isaiah 49:16,
 248 NLT). So, "don't be afraid..., don't be discouraged, for... God...
 249 will strengthen you, and help you..., [and] hold you up with [His]
 250 victorious right hand" (Isaiah 41:10, NLT). In periods of aloneness,
 251 "...be encouraged, my child! Your sins are forgiven" (Matthew 9:2,
 252 NLT) by "...Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the
 253 dead and the ruler over the kings of the earth, ...who loved us and
 254 washed us from our sins in His blood" (Revelation 1:5, NKJV).

255

256

257 **CALL TO ACTION: WHAT SHALL WE DO?**

258

259 "Jesus said: 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy
260 burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me
261 teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find
262 rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I
263 give you is light'" (Matthew 11:28-30, NLT). Immersion in the things
264 of God will displace despair! "...Praise the Lord at all times;
265 ...constantly speak [of] His praises; ...boast only in the Lord; let
266 all who are helpless take heart. Come, let us tell of the Lord's
267 greatness; let us exalt His name together" (Psalm 34:1-3, NLT). "In
268 God we boast all daylong and praise [His] name forever" (Psalm 44:8).
269 "Arise, shine; ...your light has come [and] ... the glory of the Lord
270 has risen upon you" (Isaiah 60:1, NASB). You will be alone
271 sometimes, but be confident that you are never lonely, for "...God,
272 [who] cannot lie..." (Titus 1:2) gives this assurance: "...I will never
273 abandon you" (Hebrews 13:5, NLT) in fulfillment of Jesus' promise:
274 "...I will ask the Father and He will give you another Advocate, who
275 will never leave you" (John 14:16)! God is always with you through
276 the person of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26-27 & 1 Peter
277 3:18)!