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Alone With God

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When Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. (Genesis 32:24 NKJV)

By coming face-to-face with God, Jacob also came face-to-face with himself. It is no secret that loneliness can be difficult to deal with, yet so many people try their best to avoid it. Whether it is by staying busy with work, studying till midnight, keeping their social media feeds filled with activity, or even distracting themselves through mindless web browsing, loneliness is something most people strive to ignore. However, although loneliness is at times an unavoidable part of life, could there also be hidden benefits to being alone? What if being alone was not something we feared, rather, it was something we embraced?

Throughout the Bible, there are countless examples of people finding themselves alone. Joseph was alone in a pit before he got called to the palace. Moses found himself alone on a mountain in Midian when God called him from a burning bush. John the Baptist spent time alone in the wilderness of Palestine before he baptized Christ. Paul spent more time alone in prison than probably any other character in the Bible, yet he also wrote most of the New Testament. Adam was alone before God brought Eve to him. God can use periods of loneliness as a powerful means of self-discovery and spiritual growth. It is during times when we are alone that we are often confronted with our deepest thoughts, feelings, and doubts which can lead us to grow even closer to God.

In Genesis 32, the Bible says that Jacob was left alone while he waited in dread at the thought of encountering his twin brother Esau. However, it was while he was alone that he came face-to-face with God. During this moment of isolation, Jacob was confronted with a deep realization of his guilt, but it is also here that God's power deeply changed the guilt-ridden patriarch. By coming face-to-face with God, Jacob also came face-to-face with himself and was transformed. He was given a new name, Israel, one that would eventually become synonymous with God's chosen people. Perhaps experiencing times of silence is not something we should be trying to avoid, but rather something that can help us develop resilience, inner strength, and courage to hold onto God.

Times of solitude can be transformed into an invitation to seek God for wisdom, strength, and forgiveness. Finding ourselves alone in moments of life is not something to be ashamed of, but like Jacob, we can experience a deeper connection with God and be transformed through His presence. By being alone with God, Jacob discovered that there was more to who he was; God revealed that he is also Israel – the one who wrestled with God and prevailed. Ultimately, Jacob was able to face his fears (Esau), because he first came face-to-face with God when he was alone.

Ellen White writes, "Cultivate the habit of talking with the Saviour when alone, when walking and working. Let gratitude and thanksgiving ascend to God because Jesus loves you and you love Jesus..." [Ellen Gould White, *That I May Know Him* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1964), 277.]

REFLECT

1. How comfortable are you when you find you experience times of being alone? Why do you think that is the case?
2. In what ways can solitude transform us and bring us closer to God?
3. What evidence do we have in the Bible that being alone does not always equate to being lonely?
4. Consider what your prayer to God might be next time you find yourself alone?

NEWS & RESOURCES

- Join us for a special Vespers this Friday evening at 7:30 in the University Church. We invite you to come to GroupLink tonight immediately following Vespers and explore all the LifeGroup options available to students!
- Contact [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you would like to lead an employee LifeGroup next semester.
- If you are feeling anxious or have recently experienced loss or grief, call 423.236.2782 to talk to a counselor on campus! (This is a free service for Southern students.)
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.