

## Oxymoron: Alone with God

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Some people enjoy being alone. More often than not, though, in the noisy and crowded world in which we live, being alone is often a scary thought. A man who lived from 1856-1922, Johnson Oatman, Jr., realized the benefits of being alone, especially when the stresses of life gathered around him. In his song *Alone with God, the World Forbidden*, Mr. Oatman reminds us that it is because of the very nature of our daily busyness and stresses that we should seek out this alone time with God.

When storms of life are round me beating,  
When rough the path that I have trod,  
Within my closet door retreating,  
I love to be alone with God.

Refrain: Alone with God, the world forbidden,  
Alone with God, O blest retreat!  
Alone with God, and in Him hidden,  
To hold with Him communion sweet.

What though the clouds have gathered o'er me?  
What though I've passed beneath the rod?  
God's perfect will there lies before me,  
When I am thus alone with God.

'Tis there I find new strength for duty,  
As o'er the sands of time I plod;  
I see the king in all His beauty,  
While resting there alone with God.

And when I see the moment nearing  
When I shall sleep beneath the sod,  
When time with me is disappearing,  
I want to be alone with God.

Mr. Oatman knew that even when no other physical presence is in the room, the spiritual presence of God is there. So then, one is never truly alone. Let us acknowledge this and actively seek out communion with God when we have the opportunity to be away from others, or perhaps we need to deliberately take time away from others to make space for God!

What does one do during this alone time with God? Here are a few things: read the Scripture; sit in quietness and listen for God's direction; sing praise to God; pray for God's guidance—for self, family, friends, your community, your government, the world.

When was the last time you enjoyed being alone? When was the last time you physically removed yourself from the presence of others and sought out the presence of God? Perhaps its time for you to experience the joy of being *alone with God*.