

## Alone with God for 24 Hours

Alicia Mills

### Big Idea

*Spending time alone with the Lord provides the opportunity to truly come to know Him and His character; it allows us to draw close to Him and experience a stirring in the soul and a peace that only He can bring.*

### Main Scriptures:

*Time spent in His Word:*

- *Psalm 119: 105*

*Time spent quiet in His presence:*

- *Psalm 139:23-24*

*Time spent in prayer and thanksgiving:*

- *Ezra 3:11*
- *Philippians 4:6*

### My Journey:

I am currently sitting in complete silence. After weeks of beautiful chaos leading up to Christmas day and the come-down the days following, I slipped away from my family and my responsibilities for a full 24 hours to spend alone with the Lord.

Daunting? For a busy wife and working mom of 3, absolutely. Twenty-four hours by myself, away from routine, and constantly going and doing feels *weird*. But oh, how I have been looking forward to it. I know that I need it desperately. But will I be able to quiet myself for a full 24 hours? That's the real challenge.

The fact that someone had to *task* me with taking 24 hours away for me to actually do it tells you all you need to know. I don't take time away. I don't stop or slow down. But why don't I? When my soul longs for a deep breath, my heart aches to be filled with all the Holy Spirit has for me, and my mind desires wisdom to be deposited. It's only been 1 hour, and I can tell you that something like this, a retreat, a reprieve, needs to be added to my year more than once. Whether it's 24 hours, 12 hours, 1 hour, or even just 20 minutes, being *intentional* about how I spend my time with my Maker, my Father, my Rock matters.

My name is Alicia Mills. I am 36 years old. I am a wife and newly named 'pastor's wife.' My other half is Beau Mills, the newly named SWC Granbury Campus Pastor. This is a very new role and one that we are honored to have. We have four beautiful kiddos, one who is currently hangin' out with Jesus and saving us a spot in heaven.

After 15 years of marriage, we have finally hit our stride. That's a lot of years of struggle. But without struggle and the grit to fight, we wouldn't have growth. So if you're married and it's hard, wondering if *this* is as good as it's going to get, keep fighting, keep praying because the Lord is faithful. God can heal any marriage.

Being alone with God, often in the context of prayer and reflection, can be an eye-opening and profound personal experience. Here are three potential takeaways from such moments:

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### **Being alone with God deepened my connection with the Lord:**

- Spending time alone with God allows for a deepening of one's spiritual connection. It provides an opportunity for introspection, self-awareness, and a sense of communion with the divine. This time can foster a stronger understanding of your beliefs, values, and purpose. Start your time with prayer. Open His Word. Ask God to help you understand what you are reading and allow it to transform you (Psalm 119:18).

### **Being alone with God brought clarity and guidance:**

- Solitude with God provides a space for contemplation and listening. Quieting oneself and just *being*. It allows us to seek guidance, find answers, and gain clarity on our journey. Finding these moments of solitude with God can bring a sense of peace, direction, and purpose, helping us navigate challenges and make important decisions.

### **Being alone with God renewed my strength in the Lord and perspective on life:**

- Being alone with God is a source of renewal and strength. It offers a chance to lay burdens down, find solace in times of hardship, and gain a fresh perspective on challenges. Think and pray as you read through different passages of the Bible. Get specific and honest with yourself. Resist the urge to apply the passage to others. Do you have sin to confess? How should this passage impact your attitude toward people and circumstances? Does the passage command you to do something? Do you need to trust Him for something in your life? This renewal can contribute to emotional and mental well-being, fostering resilience in the face of life's ups and downs.

Ultimately, the takeaways from being alone with God are very individualized; your time with the Lord and my time with the Lord can and will look different and are personal. It's about creating a sacred space for connection, reflection, and renewal. Put down your phone and pick a place where there will be little distractions, where you can talk to and hear from God.

Practice gratitude. Be patient and open-minded. Open His Word. Be raw with where you are and where you want to be. The Lord will meet you exactly where you are.

1. Befriend silence
2. Normalize boredom
3. Reframe distractions
4. Remember that prayer is not something we master but an act that forms us
5. Trust that God is always waiting for you with open arms.

Remember, even in solitude, you're never truly alone. The journey may be challenging, but it's also an invitation to deepen your connection with the source of all strength and wisdom. And *that* is invaluable. In the Old Testament, we see many stories where God calls His prophets to come to Him alone. In the New Testament, Jesus spent time alone with the Father many times as described in these scripture passages: Matthew 14:13, Mark 1:35, Mark 6:45-46, Mark 14:32-34, Luke 4:42, Luke 5:16, Luke 6:12, Luke 9:18 and John 6:15. We need to take a note from Jesus. Jesus, as the incarnate Son of God, maintained a unique connection with the

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Father, seeking guidance, strength, and communion through prayer and solitude. We must follow suit.

### STEP BY STEP PLAN:

Determine your own rules:

1. Secure Location:
  - a. VRBO
  - b. I was able to use a friend's condo!
  - c. Find a cute little hotel for the night.
2. Food
  - a. Plan to have snacks ready and some easy meals accessible! I had a few pre-made meals, plus popcorn, trail mix, and chocolate (duh).
  - b. Drinks: coffee, water, soda.
3. Supplies
  - a. Journal: This was so helpful for me. I was able to write down thoughts, questions, and words from the Lord. Journaling allowed me to unpack what the Lord was revealing to me.
  - b. Highlighters and pens.
  - c. Bible or multiple to study different versions as you study.
4. Phone
  - a. For me, I had to put down my phone (it was not easy, but you can do it!) I had to pick a place where there were no distractions.
  - b. I put it in another room and had it available only in case of emergency.
  - c. Occasionally, I would get my phone to play worship as I sat with Jesus.