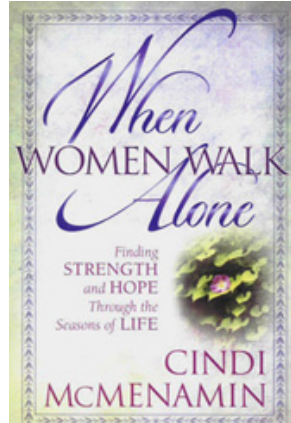


# When You Feel Alone Spiritually

BY CINDI MCMENAMIN



Have you dreamed of what it would be like to be “spiritually one” with someone? If you’re single and hoping for a spiritual partner in life, or married but not on the same page spiritually with your husband, chances are you feel you “walk alone” in your spiritual life. But you aren’t alone. Throughout time, countless women have walked alone, spiritually. And you’re in good company.

Throughout the Bible, we find women who walked alone in their spiritual journey. Deborah, Israel’s only female judge, was a wife as well as a prophetess. But we don’t hear of her husband being around to support her or work alongside her when she commanded Israel to engage in war against the Canaanites. Nowhere do we read about her husband’s concerns for her, much less coming out to help save her skin. Deborah carried out her “ministry” alone. (Judges 4:1-16)

Jochebed appeared to be alone, with maybe just her daughter Miriam by her side, when she put her infant son, Moses, into a basket and set him to float on the Nile River, trusting God to care for the child that would otherwise be killed by the Egyptians. Although Jochebed was married, we don’t see her standing on the riverbank with her husband’s arms around her, or her husband praying with her as they watched their son float down the river. It’s possible that he was at work somewhere and simply couldn’t come. But whatever the case, I imagine Jochebed stood there –and prayed her heart out – alone (Exodus 3:1-10).

And Abigail, who was married to a man described as “mean and surly,” listened to her heart one day and prepared provisions and brought them to David, the king-elect, despite her husband’s hardened heart toward helping God’s anointed. She was used mightily by God that day to save her whole household and prevent a small war, while her husband partied with friends (First Samuel 25:1-42).

Throughout time, many women have walked alone in their spiritual quest. And today, studies show that women walk alone spiritually – perhaps more than they ever have before. In a recent study by Barna Research Online, it was shown that women were 10 percent more likely to

say they were “absolutely committed” to Christianity, reading the Bible, and attending church; 13 percent more likely to pray to God; and 14 percent more likely than men to have a regular quiet time with God. The study also showed that men were considerably more likely to be un-churched (38 percent vs. 29 percent).

My friend, Linda, says “I have felt alone because my husband and I aren’t on the same page, so to speak, spiritually. We are definitely in the same book of life, but on totally different pages.”

In the words of another friend of mine: “It can be very lonely when you can’t talk about the most exciting, fulfilling thing in your life with the person that you’re supposed to be one with.”

I, too, have struggled with feeling alone, spiritually, even though I’m married to a pastor! Although my husband loves God with all his heart and has devoted himself to full-time ministry, there are still times when I feel alone in my spiritual life. There are certain expectations I have that – when unfulfilled – make me feel I walk alone spiritually. For instance, if I had my way, my husband would pray with me on a regular schedule every morning, go through a couple’s devotional book with me on a regular basis, and spend at least one day a week discussing what we’re learning in our personal study of Scripture. Although, he likes that third one, the other two are difficult to coordinate with our diverse schedules and there are times he doesn’t see the necessity for them, other than to appease his wife’s romantic ideas of “spiritual oneness.”

If you are single – or married to an unbeliever – you may find yourself wondering if you’ll ever be “spiritually one” with someone this side of heaven. If you are married to a man who just isn’t as fired up about his spiritual life as you are, you too may be asking this question. In either case, I want to encourage you that there is a certain “aloneness” that comes with your relationship with Christ that is precious and produces much blessing. So, rather than fight for what you feel is lacking in your life, here are some reasons to embrace the aloneness you may be experiencing:

**Our Alone Times Deepen our Relationship with God** – While we all need encouragement, support, accountability, and regular fellowship with other believers, our true spiritual condition comes down to our individual time alone with God. Rather than resenting that you feel alone in your spiritual quest if there isn’t a man alongside you, capitalize on it by taking the opportunity – when the sadness strikes – to bring it to God and relish in His presence with you.

**Our Alone Times Drive us to a More Intense Prayer Life** -- I looked around at the prayer warriors in my church one Sunday and realized they all had one thing in common. They were all women who were alone, spiritually. Each of them was either married to an unbeliever, attended church by themselves or was single or divorced. Did their alone times cause them to develop a more intimate relationship with God? Did they learn, through not having a man at their side, to go to God more intensely and more often? Had they needed to rely on prayer for their provision and protection more so than women who tend to rely on their husbands for the same? When we have no one else in our lives to turn to, we turn to God, don’t we? I truly believe our alone times can intensify our prayer life.

**Our Alone Times Remind Us to Invest in Others** – While you may lack spiritual encouragement from a spouse, you can be that encouraging person in another woman’s life.

When I complained to God years ago about not having any spiritual mentors in my life, He impressed upon my heart to start *being* a mentor in someone *else's* life. As I was faithful to do so, He brought the encouragement and support I needed in due time.

Alone is a word we, as women, don't tend to like. But as we grow in our relationship with God, perhaps it is something we will desire more and more, so we can be alone with *Him*.

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This article is based on Cindi McMEnamin's book *When Women Walk Alone*. To order the book, visit [www. StrengthForTheSoul.com](http://www.StrengthForTheSoul.com).