

## **Behind the Hymn: O Living God**

During the last two days of January, 1996, I was in beautiful Callaway Gardens, outside Atlanta, Georgia. As part of my duties for Lillenas Publishing Company, I was attending the Music in the Gardens seminar sponsored by Pine Lake Music.

Already I was deep into my longtime passion for mining hymn tunes from folk tunes. Hymn tunes must be simple and easily singable, yet rich and musically interesting. Folk tunes fill that need so beautifully!

“O Shenandoah” has long been a favorite of mine. The tune evokes a deep, wistful longing that is almost beyond words. I wanted a hymn text worthy of that longing. As I felt the tune, it reminded me of the Christian’s yearning to see Christ, to stand in His presence, and to express face-to-face our gratitude and heartfelt worship.

“O Living God” was written during my stay there at Callaway Gardens.

*--Ken Bible*

**Hymn: [O Living God](#)**