

Assignment Title: RR#2

Spiritual Journey: Can I really get close to God? / Wanda Walborn

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The author Wanda Walborn invites the reader to a spiritual journey of experiencing God's intimacy and illustrates that this desire to be close with God has to start with intentional seeking of God. And one crucial prerequisite for this closer encounter is one's strong desire and desperation to be with God. Wanda correctly point out that "mankind is always seeking, but God is always drawing. Apart from God drawing us to Himself, we wander." (Walborn, 33) God desires for each of us to have a loving and intimate relationship with him. However, vulnerability and honesty must follow on our end as we desire to get close to God. Wanda shares how one may hear God's voice and encourages to be in solitude, silence, and stillness with God. This journey however, is not without obstacles, barriers like fear, rejection, anger, unforgiveness, and rebellion that makes one to think that one can't really have a close relationship. These lies from the enemy must be removed, and suggest ways to keep them out of one's life so that we can have a fuller experience of God. When we cry out, God will hear us and attend us because of His love for us. This cry is our intentional choice to draw near to God and through the process of spiritual formation we become like Jesus as God helps us transform us. We can be personal and close to God and have relationship because God is a person. (Walborn, 41) Wanda also points out that we belong to God who has a place for us in his house, and "true belong means love and acceptance *as you are* to experience community, accountability, fellowship, and healing." (Walborn, 55). One reason many people have a difficult time really getting close to God is our brokenness. When we can honestly process and grieve and forgive our brokenness, Wanda argues, we are on the path to freedom from things that holding back from having a fuller intimacy with God. This is important because intimacy is God's desire for God's people.

Wanda's working definition of spiritual formation has challenged me to rethink about how intentional I am in my walk with God and whether I truly make it a spiritual discipline to make a space for God to work and help us become more like Jesus. Maybe in a way, my Calvinistic background makes it a too complacent in my intentionality, I feel ambivalent and not sure. Am I obedience to God's call out of duty or do I do it out of love? I don't know. I do agree that we are all made from love, formed in love, and require love for healthy growth and development (Walborn, 19) A loved person is much more secure in his or her identity. As Wanda writes "Shame's message screams that we are broken, worthless, unlovable, forever tainted, useless, and defective. Grace's message is one of hope, forgiveness, and love." (Walborn, 23) I particularly thought her suggesting of journaling is a practical and helpful for any believers that wish to engage God more in concrete, methodical, and honest manner. Journaling helps us to be more honest with ourselves. Many Christians today put on masks, out of fear, rejection, and what not, and rather than seeking and finding our identify in Christ alone, we have hard time getting real with our friends and family. I cannot agree more that "the greatest sadness in living a fake life is that no one knows the real you." (Walborn, 105). We have to realize and recognize that it was not something that we did well that got God's attention to love us and accepted us. God's love and His grace is unconditional. That said, we experience a true freedom from bondage of sins as we confess and admit and ask God to help you turn away from it. I agree with the author that without repentance, merely admitting the wrong, does not get one close to God per se. However, when we humbly repent, we receive God's forgiveness, and we experience God's intimate love. It is this aspect of the book that I will like to apply to the group I minister to at our church.

With integrity, I have read this book (circle one):

Thoroughly and Entirely\_\_100\_\_\_\_%

Quickly but Completely\_\_\_\_\_%

Thoroughly but NOT Entirely\_\_\_\_\_%

Quickly and NOT Completely\_\_\_\_\_%

Not at all

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_Joshua Kwon\_\_\_\_\_