

Reading Report

Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God? By Wanda Walborn

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In her book *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?*, Dr. Wanda Walborn navigates her readers through the journey of getting closer to God. She first highlights the importance of having desperation for God prior beginning this journey and elucidates the importance and significance of the spiritual journey—to have intimacy with Him, as God desires.¹ Then, in every chapter, she identifies obstacles that hinder intimacy with God and lays out the truth and spiritual disciplines to help people eliminate those barriers, so that one could understand God’s heart and experience intimacy with Him. These obstacles include refusing God’s love, shame, anger, lies, noise, and temptation. At the end of each chapter, she provides practical applications to help people practice and cultivate various spiritual disciplines to overcome these barriers, such as the discipline of community, forgiveness and listening prayer. Although not everyone might resonate with every chapter, Wanda’s guidance assists individuals to understand where they are in their spiritual walk with God, and the needed posture or intervention to experience breakthrough and to persevere. As eyes are opened to the truth, she brings people to a deeper place with Christ to experience sweet intimacy with God.

Wanda’s book will serve as a powerful tool in helping people initiate spiritual formation in my future ministry. As a campus ministry staff in the past, I noticed a discrepancy between most individuals’ lives and their desires for their spiritual life. Yet, it was difficult to help individuals identify the barriers that prevent them to grow and to suggest practical steps to overcome. However, Wanda’s insights brought a lot of clarity in how to minister to people who are struggling in their walk with God. Mainly because she does not tackle only one but various obstacles that both new and existing believers can relate to, I view her book as a tool that I can use to help individuals grow deeper in their relationship with Christ. As I read this, I thought it

¹ Walborn Wanda, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God* (Tennessee: Carpenter’s Son Publishing, 2020), 40.

would be a great book to use along with Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* to help people cultivate spiritual disciplines that will enable them to have greater intimacy with God.

Wanda also brought light to the barriers that prevented me from experiencing intimacy with God. I have always had a passion for empowering women and girls in developing countries through improving the country's public health. Thus, I planned to get a Master's in Public Health to work towards this dream. Yet, attending seminary felt like I had to abandon my goal to work in ministry. Moreover, I desired to be financially independent to support my parents after finishing my undergraduate degree. However, going into seminary felt like I could not help as abundantly as I would like to. Although I decided to follow His will obediently and in faith, I was disappointed and discouraged about God ignoring my dreams and desires. However, Dr. Walborn spoke truth through the chapter about "Intimacy: God's Desire for Me" and "Hearing God's Voice: Is that You?" When I read her comment about lies, "We live by what we believe so whatever the lie is, we are set up for unhealthiness"² and followed through her application, I recognized that I had been unconsciously believing that God does not care for me. These lies were amplified through my worries about future, which eventually resulted in my deafness of listening to God. Wanda also revealed why I have been keeping myself away from God, "Threat of disappointment keeps us emotionally distant from God."³ Recognizing these barriers, I have been applying Wanda's spiritual disciplines through which I am slowly experiencing more intimacy and joy in this season of my life. Experiencing and witnessing this transformation, I was reminded about the importance of spiritual formation—it is key to emotionally healthy spirituality. It is not optional but an absolute in growing closer to God and understanding His heart for us and humanity.

² Walborn Wanda, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God* (Tennessee: Carpenter's Son Publishing, 2020), 112.

³ *Ibid.*, 160.

Reference

Walborn, Wanda. *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* Carpenter's Son Publishing, 2020.

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

Thoroughly and Entirely_____%

Quickly but Completely__100__%

Thoroughly but NOT Entirely_____%

Quickly and NOT Completely_____%

Not at all

Signed: _____**MYUNG JIN SHIN**_____