

Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?

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The Spiritual Journey by Wanda Walborn is an amazing interactive text with the reader seemingly experiencing her as the speaker for God right in front of you. I strongly believe that “Those who are close to God are those who are desperate for Him.”¹ Humans face two situations in their lives: a Shame's message that describes a person completely hopeless and worthless. The other is Grace's message that shows love, forgiveness and hope. Through discovering God's love in a personal way we realize that it's not worthy to compare ourselves to others, for each one is unique. A great obstacle in today's life is individual belief in the sufficiency or pride to overcome the world in its challenges and obstacles to be successful.² Dr. Walborn does an excellent description of a trajectory of how by analyzing the inside of us we can bring up several areas in our hearts that have been oppressed by time and experience. She proposes several ways that we can encounter ourselves with forgiven moments that will help us to be more effective as followers of Jesus.

I find her analysis interesting on how we get spiritual formation. We must decide to have an intentional format, an informal process of giving God space and let Jesus transform us from the inside out to reflect Him. She also describes three ways we are formed: we reflect God's image (image Dei), church formation (ecclesiology) and participation in God's mission field (missio Dei). However, I would also add cultural and technology influence. It is amazing how these agents in the world influence shaping our world view as followers of Jesus.³

¹ Dr. Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey, Can I Really Get Close to God* (Carpenter's Son Publishing, Franklin, Tennessee) 23

² Dr. Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey, Can I Really Get Close to God* (Carpenter's Son Publishing, Franklin, Tennessee) 31-39

³ Dr. Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey, Can I Really Get Close to God* (Carpenter's Son Publishing, Franklin, Tennessee) 44-50

I strongly agree with her overview about spiritual disciplines since what she says are not checklists to mark off after completion. Rather it is an embrace of a spiritual disciple of God's presence invading our moment and cleaning, renewing, comforting, teaching and encouraging us in order to be successful in our daily lives. She explains in detail the disciplines of abstinence such as: Chastity in order not to have sex for a certain period of time. Celibacy is a permanent choice of life. Fasting refraining from food or water for a period of time. Frugality to learn to use little money by doing things inexpensively. Martyrdom being willing to die for Christ. Poverty, submission, and simplicity disciplines that show that are a result of abstinence. She also mentions the disciplines of solitude, silence and stillness as abstinence which make room for God in very purposeful ways. As we grow in our abstinence disciplines our spiritual engagement disciplines are added to deeper our connection with God. Dr. Walborn speaks of practice like reading the Bible, memorizing scripture, prayer and worship to help us reinforce biblical truths on which people's faith have relied on throughout church history. I find her compilation of the different abstinence and engaging spiritual disciplines effective and true because I grew knowing and practicing some of them and ignoring others. I praise the Holy Spirit for giving her the ability to put everything together in a few pages. We are blessed!⁴

This book has deepened my theology as a follower of Jesus. It has helped me to touch areas in my heart that had been covered or ignored using the word "forgiveness." I now know that it is important to reflect on our wounds and grief them in order to be more effective in the kingdom of God.

⁴ Dr. Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey, Can I Really Get Close to God* (Carpenter's Son Publishing, Franklin, Tennessee) 55-64

Bibliography

Dr. Walborn, Wanda *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?*, (Franklin, Tennessee: Carpenter's Publishing,) 2020

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: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paddy Sawyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "P" and "S".