

**READING REPORT FOR “Spiritual Journey; Can I Really Get Close to God?”.**

**SF505.NA/NOS — Formation for Ministry (FFM)**

Student Name: Annika Tilly

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

Thoroughly and Entirely—100% YES

Quickly but Completely—\_\_\_%

Thoroughly but NOT Entirely—\_\_\_%

Quickly and NOT Completely—\_\_\_%

Not at all —\_\_\_%

Signed: Annika Tilly

1. Short summary of the main points of the author.

This week we read, “Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?” by Wanda Walborn. The book outlines how to identify different obstacles in our spiritual walk with God and practices we can implement within each. This includes the practice of prayer of intentions to combat refusing God’s love or the practice of journaling to combat fear. Overall, the book give emphasizes the importance of giving God space to work in our lives to experience freedom and the fullness of God’s presence personally.

2. Interaction - How does the reading interact with your present or anticipated ministry context?

Personally, in the first chapter when Walborn spoke of conforming to meet other’s needs resonated with my present ministry context. She writes, “We have concluded that being ourselves

is not enough, so we pretend to be what other people want or need. We are chameleons who change with the crowd as often as necessary to belong” (p. 54). Too often we fear that to be wanted we need to be needed. When leaders in the church have this fear, it impacts the growth of the church. They hold on to tasks rather than empowering and teaching others, in fear that they won’t be needed. In addition to the fear of not being needed, they fear losing control. Therefore, they cater to others' needs, insecure in their gifting, because they have taken on too much. This exaggerates performance anxiety— if my performance is good enough, if I meet all these needs, then I will be accepted and a good leader. When the reality is if my identity is grounded in the word and the presence of God, then I hold freely the gifts and passions God has given me, I welcome collaboration and development, and I see others' accomplishments as opportunities to develop them as leaders and not as a threat.

3. What did this book reveal about your worldview and spiritual expectation (please use quotes & page numbers)?

This book revealed how important it is to spend time alone with God because there are things that God can only teach me and I can learn by taking the time to be alone with God. However, often we are scared to come to a time of silence with God because of fear. Walborn writes, “Rejection triggers abandonment issues and true feeling that are hidden below the surface that have no other way to be revealed than through silence and waiting” (p. 107). It’s important not to neglect time away to meet with God. It is the very place he meets with us and speaks truth over us.

4. Where did you agree most with the author? Disagree most?

I disagree most with Walborn that Christians often forget that Jesus came for the broken. She notes, "In American culture, it is considered great weakness to admit lack" (p.86). She goes on to say that it is not accepted by western culture to be vulnerable, scared, and broken. I don't agree that we often forget Jesus came for the broken. Rather, I would emphasize that western culture doesn't know how God's power is made perfect because our weakness. What does that look like in our personal lives day to day. In other words, what does it look like for Jesus to come into my brokenness? What does loving others look like when we are so broken? Western culture isn't scared of admitting lack. Rather, we can't explain nor understand how God's power is made perfect because of our weakness.

5. How will this book impact your theology and current ministry?

This book will impact my theology and current ministry by understanding the three types of anger mentioned in the New Testament. The first is not expressed, but festering below the surface. The second gradually builds as you feel something important to you is threatened. Lastly, the third is expressed in outbursts of rage. Walborn states, "Fear can be a strong emotion, causing you to feel weak, vulnerable, and powerless" (p. 96). This is important to understand in my current ministry because each of us expresses anger differently, but the biblical solution to anger is universal. Some may be aggressive and express their anger with rage or are passive-aggressive and depressed. Both cause us to feel weak, vulnerable, and powerless as Wanda said. Therefore, the appropriate way to handle anger is to acknowledge how anger is manifesting, identify why, seek help, express grief, and choose to forgive the offender.

## Bibliography

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