

Assignment Title: Reading Report

Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God? / Report by Nathan Northcutt

Name: Nathan Northcutt
Campus Location: ATS/NY City

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Professor: Dr. Ronald Walborn
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According to Walborn, “This book seeks to answer the gnawing question, Can I really get close to God?”¹ Walborn does this by walking us through things that get in the way of our

¹ Wanda Walborn, *Spiritual Journey: Can I Really Get Close to God?* (Franklin, TN: Carpenter’s Son Publishing), 13.

connection with God, and disciplines that will allow us to move through those roadblocks into greater intimacy and relationship with God. These spiritual disciplines are sorted into two categories, disciplines of abstinence and engagement.² Walborn gives the reader plenty of space to consider these disciplines and very practical advice on how to practice them which is very helpful.

This book really spoke to me. All of the obstacles that Walborn talks about really hit home with me. Those are all obstacles that I am either currently trying to work through or have worked through in the past. As someone in ministry, this book made me realize that to be an effective worker I have obstacles that I need to work through with God. How are we who are supposed to be caring for the people in the church do so if we aren't moving closer and closer to God?

I felt that the author was spot on with the different disciplines that combat the obstacles presented. Even though things like forgiveness, honesty, and community aren't often considered spiritual disciplines, I felt that these ideas really made sense. It does take discipline to forgive or stay in community. Often I have found that it is much easier to withdraw or lie to protect myself. But, when you are disciplined to be open and in community, keep sin in the light, and seek help from others, you can combat the lies you believe in or dissolve the bitterness in your heart toward people. Everyone would do these things well if they didn't require discipline. So, I think Walborn did a great job of providing disciplines that perfectly combat the obstacles.

I think this book revealed that I do place limits on what the Spirit can do. I don't believe that I do this intentionally, however, in practice it seems like this is the case. In chapter 7, Walborn talks about the different ways God can speak. I have to admit, things like pictures, visions, pain in the body, and spontaneous utterances aren't typically on my radar. I often look for words or phrases or Bible verses from the Lord, but I typically am not paying attention to the

² Walborn, *Spiritual Journey*, 46.

other ways God can speak. I would say that I believe He can do the others, but my lack of looking for God to speak in those ways speaks to my worldview.

Another challenge to my worldview was the idea of the spiritual discipline of spiritual warfare. I believe that spiritual warfare is necessary, but, I often do not believe that I have the power and authority through the death and resurrection of Jesus that I do. Again, I would say in my head that the Spirit can help me, but in practice, I so often feel like there is no way around the temptation and sin that entraps me. But, this book challenged me that I do have the power because of what Jesus has done.

I don't think that this book will impact my theology too much. It mostly aligned with what I already believed, other than reminding me to place a greater emphasis on hearing from the Lord and broadening my mind on ways God can speak. But, I do think that it will greatly affect my ministry. I feel like a lot of the disciplines in this book aren't being taught to the church by the church. As I work through and grow in the disciplines myself, I would love to help others to do the same. Maybe even trying to keep each other accountable to work on some of the spiritual disciplines would be really helpful. This book has really encouraged me and I hope to encourage others I know with the tools I have learned.

Bibliography

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

With integrity, I have read this book:

Thoroughly and entirely 100%

Signed: Nathan Northcutt