



Understanding Watchman Nee: Spirituality, Knowledge, and Formation

By Dongsheng John Wu

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"Dongsheng John Wu's work is an excellent example of the best interdisciplinary work now being done in the field of Christian spirituality. . . .

Readers of many different backgrounds and interests who come to this study with an open mind will find themselves invited into a deeper appropriation of the cruciform way of discipleship, the mysterious truth at the heart of the universe, and the abundant life that is God's gift to humankind."

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Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California

Understanding Watchman Nee is a ground-breaking scholarly studies on Watchman Nee's spirituality and spiritual theology. It is done in close conversations with some significant voices in the history of Christian spirituality. Such interactions reveal that Nee's crucial theological convictions exhibit strong parallels with related themes found in the church's spiritual or mystical treasures. This book also responds to some unsympathetic critics of Nee, and convincingly contends for the significance and practicality of Nee's spiritual teachings for contemporary believers. This book is valuable for pastors, teachers, scholars, seminary students, and others who are interested in the theology and practice of Christian spiritual and intellectual formations.

In this book Dongsheng John Wu examines Watchman Nee's thought on the spiritual life, focusing on the relationship between spiritual knowledge and spiritual formation. Different ways of acquiring spiritual understanding are explored, including the respective roles of divine illumination, intellectual studies, and life circumstances. This book begins by synthesizing strategic aspects of Nee's teachings, as well as formative events and influential sources in the development of Nee's own spirituality and theology. It then utilizes the critical work of contemporary theologian Mark McIntosh to bring Nee's voice into dialogue with some important figures in the Christian spirituality history. This book situates Nee's view within the rich heritage of the Protestant, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox spiritual traditions, and thus renders Nee's thought more

intelligible to Christians of both evangelical and more liberal persuasions. This book would be helpful for evangelical believers to re-source their own spiritual legacy as well as to re-evaluate the mystical strand of the broad Christian tradition. It would also facilitate the building of the bonds of love among various communities of Christians.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Reframing Nee as a Chinese Christian mystic will have important ramifications not only for the future of Chinese churches but also for the evangelical-pentecostal-charismatic movement that is presently at the vanguard of global Christianity in the twenty-first century. . . .will need to come to terms with spiritual traditions such as those promulgated by Watchman Nee, and this volume clarifies many of the important issues in this regard." - Amos Yong, *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*.

See the full review at: muse.jhu.edu/journals/spiritus/v013/13.1.yong.pdf

From the Back Cover

"In this book, Dongsheng Wu offers a refreshingly new interpretation of the life and thought of Watchman Nee. Using the critical work of American Episcopal theologian Mark McIntosh, Wu offers a creative approach to Nee's view of spiritual knowing and spiritual life, one that shows the depth and insight of Nee's thought on such subjects as divine illumination and union with God . . . Wu puts Nee in a Christian spiritual tradition that has deep roots in Protestant mysticism and creative possibilities for today."

Philip L. Wickeri

Advisor to the Archbishop on Theological and Historical Studies,
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (Anglican), Hong Kong SAR, China;
Adjunct Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies,
The Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, USA

About the Author

Dongsheng John Wu was born and raised in Guangzhou, China. He holds a B.S. in physics, an M.A. from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and a Ph.D. in Christian Spirituality from the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California. He has taught spiritual formation at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada, as well as teaching spirituality and theology at different Bible and theological schools. He is an ordained pastor in the Free Church tradition.

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