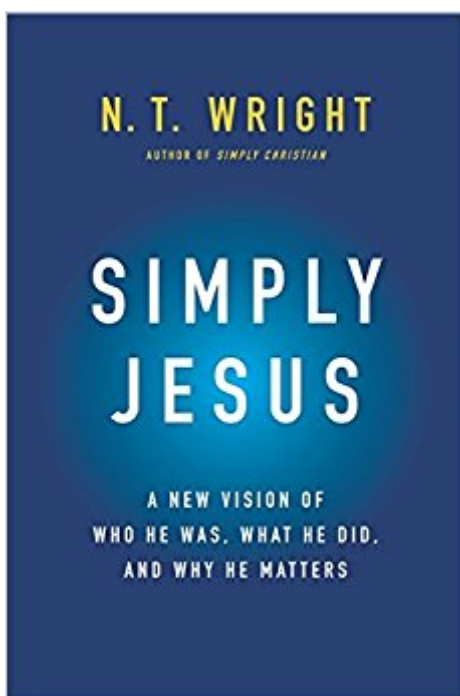


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Simply Jesus: A New Vision Of Who He Was, What He Did, And Why He Matters



Synopsis

In *Simply Jesus*, bestselling author and leading Bible scholar N.T. Wright summarizes 200 years of modern Biblical scholarship and models how Christians can best retell the story of Jesus today. In a style similar to C.S. Lewis's popular works, Wright breaks down the barriers that prevent Christians from fully engaging with the story of Jesus. For believers confronting the challenge of connecting with their faith today, and for readers of Timothy Keller's *The Reason for God*, Wright's *Simply Jesus* offers a provocative new picture of how to understand who Jesus was and how Christians should relate to him today.

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Customer Reviews

"N. T. Wright's introduction to Jesus is erudite (and yet also entertaining), and decidedly thought-provoking. Somewhat to my surprise, I felt that, in reading *Simply Jesus*, I was really coming to know Jesus better; reading *Simply Jesus*, I actually felt Him near." (Lauren F. Winner, author of *Still: Notes on a Mid-Faith Crisis*)

"Tom Wright is, as always, brilliant at distilling immense scholarship into vivid, clear and accessible form. This book is yet another of his great gifts to the worldwide church." (Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury)

"No one living today is writing more thoughtfully and compellingly about Christian theology than N.T. Wright. With *Simply Jesus*, he takes readers on an illuminating intellectual expedition to recover the Christian Messiah. If you have not read Wright, start now, and start with this book." (Jon Meacham, author of *American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White*

House)“Tom Wright has a fresh way of presenting the story of Jesus, the one and only Savior and Lord of the four canonical Gospels. This book retrieves Jesus from the margins of contemporary ideologies and places him once again at the heart of biblical faith. A compelling read!” (Timothy George, founding dean of Beeson Divinity School of Samford University, general editor of the Reformation Commentary on Scripture)“Wright patiently explains the world views that Jesus stepped into, how his parables point to his mission, and, finally, what this truth means in today’s world. Wright’s direct style, reminiscent of C. S. Lewis’s writings, invites readers in but allows for internal argument.” (Booklist (starred review))“When today’s leading New Testament theologian has something new to say about anything, readers pay attention. In his latest work, he again exhibits his gift for making in-depth scholarship vivid and accessible.” (Kimberly Mauck, The Christian Chronicle)

We have grown used to the battles over Jesus—whether he was human or divine, whether he could do miracles or just inspire them, whether he even existed. Much of the church defends tradition, while critics take shots at the institution and its beliefs. But what if these debates have masked the real story of Jesus? What if even Jesus’s defenders have been so blinded by their focus on defending the church’s traditions that they have failed to grapple with what the New Testament really teaches? Bible scholar, Anglican bishop, and bestselling author N. T. Wright summarizes a lifetime of study of Jesus and the New Testament in order to present for a general audience who Jesus was and is. In *Simply Jesus*, we are invited to hear one of our leading scholars introduce the story of the carpenter’s son from Nazareth as if we were hearing it for the first time. “Jesus—the Jesus we might discover if we really looked,” explains Wright, “is larger, more disturbing, more urgent than we had ever imagined. We have successfully managed to hide behind other questions and to avoid the huge, world-shaking challenge of Jesus’s central claim and achievement. It is we, the churches, who have been the real reductionists. We have reduced the kingdom of God to private piety; the victory of the cross to comfort for the conscience; Easter itself to a happy, escapist ending after a sad, dark tale. Piety, conscience, and ultimate happiness are important, but not nearly as important as Jesus himself.” As the church faces the many challenges of the twenty-first century, Wright has presented a vision of Jesus that more than meets them.

A little difficult to get started into, but very much worth it. I can’t put the theme into a simple

statement. The person, ministry, intent, of the historical Jesus is examined from a faith perspective. Included are many references to "Old Testament " themes, prophecies, and stories that illuminate the actual words & deeds of Jesus. I love connecting Jesus stories to the story of God working in the history of the Jewish nation, and there is a lot of that here. My bias of believing in literal truth of the scriptures, the divine, but human Jesus, who knew who he was and what he was doing, were reinforced, and given added density. The Kingdom he established is described in believable detail that gives each of us a charge to push it farther in every aspect of our lives. The simple peaceful nonviolent character of Jesus and his kingdom is presented beautifully.

This is a great historical analysis of who Jesus was, and why he matters today. It merges solid historical scholarship with genuine pastoral concern. In short, Wright describes two competing winds: The strong wind of what the Roman Empire was doing during the the first century and the strong wind of Jewish Hope. Into the middle of these opposite winds, God inserts His own will. These three winds interact and create what Wright calls "A Perfect Storm" - the appropriate backdrop against which we can better understand Jesus in his original context. In the final chapter, Wright explains how his historical analysis affects Christian community and worship today. I strongly recommend this book to any serious student of Jesus who wants to go deeper in their understanding of him.

No time for a long detailed review. However I will simply say that there is no one I am aware of in our time that is as readable and as academically as revolutionary as N.T Wright. This particular book (as all the Simply series) is extremely helpful as it summarizes a little better what his larger works expound upon exhaustively. Which is crucial when you decide you just don't agree with his overall assessment of the Christian worldview and theology and really for the moment just want it summarized. and more to the point of the questions that you may be left with after hearing a thing of his here or there.

N. T. Wright is a brilliant writer, and the book is fascinating. I couldn't stop reading the book even though there were things I didn't agree with, and I guess that's why I can only give it a 5 star rating. Nevertheless, I was captivated by his unceasing push to show that Jesus is Lord and king, and that nothing is more important than that piece of fact. I appreciate his clarity in arguing that the gospel is mainly and most of all about Jesus becoming king, and that all other aspects of his work are subordinate. What I don't like, is that he leaves you with more questions unanswered than any other

book I have read, but maybe that's on purpose. I don't like it when he says everyone else has missed the point, and only sometimes explains it. I don't appreciate that he spends a few pages to answer his toughest question, namely, why and how does the cross bring about his kingship of the world. But, even though I have issues, I still give it a 5 star. It's a must read.

clear presentation of Jesus in his historical Jewish - Roman setting. similar content to his more scholarly books on the topic, but more accessible to the everyday reader. Wright drives home a message about how followers of Jesus should be living his story and bringing about God's kingdom that emphasizes working for justice and helping the poor rather than the conventional dogma of spiritual experiences and ethical living. I found this refreshing and very challenging.

I had read some mixed reviews on this book before starting it myself. Some were saying it was complicated, some saying it is a rehash of stuff from a couple of his previous books, books which presented it better. However, I found it to be a great read. Having read a handful of Wright's stuff before, I have found some to be very deep theological (which I enjoy), and others not so much. This for fall into the category of the not-to-deep. The more I read, the more I felt like I was becoming a part of the first-century era, and started to see the actions and words of Jesus in a new light. Of course having just finished reading two other similar books on the first century life around Jesus' time may have had an influence on the enjoyment factor for me. I was really intrigued by the history lesson of those before and even after Jesus, who had stood up and made the claim to be the anointed one, and how they went about fulfilling that claim. Based on the expectations of the first testament scriptures, they had a plan, and of course ultimately failed. Jesus came on the scene, and we see parallels in his plan, but with a serious twist that shows his plan to be the real one. Understanding that really brought a better understanding to why they placed a sign saying "King of the Jews" on the cross of Jesus; whereas not knowing this past history it made a bit less sense. The section on exactly what it meant to stand up and claim to be king, and what that meant at that time was also similarly enlightening. What exactly that meant and how it played out, which is the heart of the book, was a real thrill ride. Of course the whole journey comes to a real head with the closing section which wraps this package up beautifully and should challenge believers to be a part of the kingdom and stop trying to escape the world. The church has failed its mission over the past few hundred years, and men like Wright are steering the "sinking ship" back on course to the kingdom mission Jesus left his followers to do. I finished the book inspired and desiring to be more engaging in the culture around me. A much needed read by pretty much anyone claiming to be a disciple of

Jesus.

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