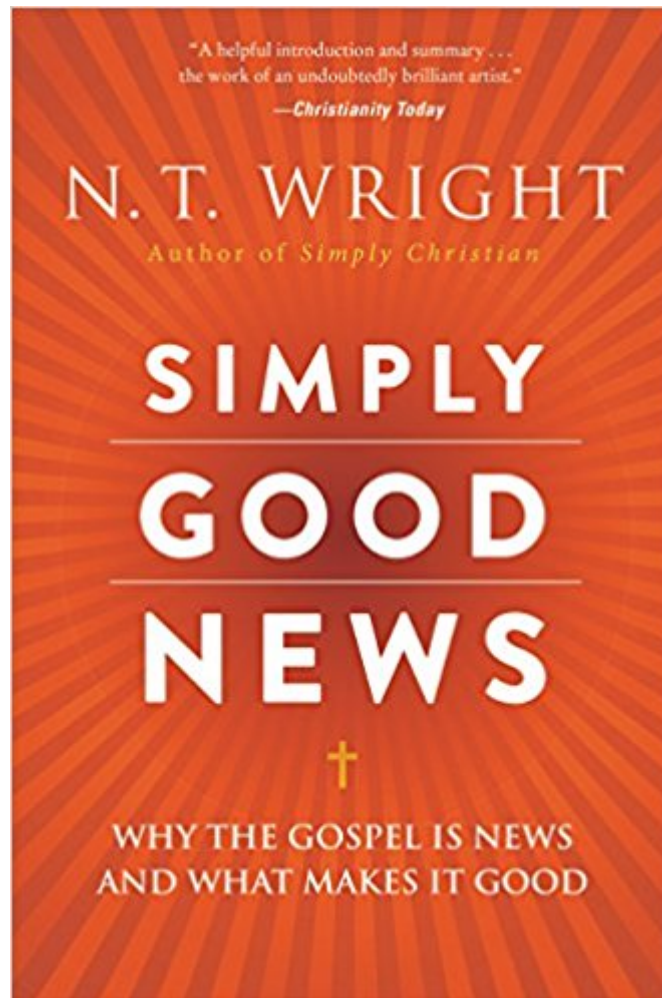




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Simply Good News: Why The Gospel Is News And What Makes It Good



Synopsis

The bishop, Bible scholar, modern heir to C. S. Lewis, and revered author of *Simply Christian* and *Simply Jesus* offers a fresh look at the Gospel, explaining why Jesus's message is "good news" and why it is more timely and transforming today than we know. The Gospel means good news. But if the message has been around for 2,000 years, what makes it significant today? What's so "good" about stories involving damnation, violence, and a God who sacrifices his only son? Noted Bible scholar N.T. Wright shows us how Christians today have lost sight of what the "good news" of the gospel really is. In *Simply Good News*, he takes us back in time to reveal how the people of the first-century the gospel's original audience would have received Jesus's message. He offers a clear and thoughtful analysis of what the "good news" really is, and applies it to our lives today, revealing its power to transform us.

Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: HarperOne; Reprint edition (January 31, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062334352

ISBN-13: 978-0062334350

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.5 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 103 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #37,447 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > New Testament > Jesus, the Gospels & Acts](#) #109 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Apologetics](#) #617 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Theology](#)

Customer Reviews

"For those who are new to Wright, *Simply Good News* will offer a helpful introduction to and summary of . . . the work of an undoubtedly brilliant artist." (Christianity Today) "Simply Good News is a potent reminder that the gospel is an announcement of a past event, and this ensures the future and transforms the present. In a world of competing allegiances and rivals for cultural dominance, Wright steps in to say, 'Jesus is Lord.'" (Gospel Coalition) "Takes aim at pious church-going Christians who

cling to a naive but persistent belief--that Jesus's teaching is all about getting your caboose into Heaven. . . . Wright is a giant among conservative Christian thinkers, often compared to C.S. Lewis in stature and influence. (The News & Observer) "Wright wipes off the dust of history and culture and finds that the good news of Jesus is more exciting, dynamic, and inspirational than what we have settled for. . . . Excellent scholarship expressed clearly and simply . . . a short gem. (Above the Haze) "Explains the nature of good news, the essence of what that good news is and is not, and what it means for the way we live now, think about God, and pray . . . readable and insightful, characterized by Wright's familiar mixture of rich scholarship, vivid illustration, and contemporary application. (Christianity Today) "Clarifies what exactly the good news is, and why such an undertaking even matters . . . well-articulated. (Seedbed) "Thoughtful and accessible, offering concrete Biblical wisdom as to how we can live as good news people. (Unfundamentalist Christians) Praise for N. T. Wright: "Tom Wright is, as always, brilliant at distilling immense scholarship into vivid, clear and accessible form. (Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury) "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. (Kimberly Mauck, The Christian Chronicle) "Wright's books have overpowered both Lewis and Stott because he has expanded those studies and set it all in a firmer historical orientation. (Scot McKnight, author of The Jesus Creed) "Simply Good News sets out to reorient and refocus the Christian faith by examining its central tenet: the gospel. His exegesis of Jesus's words is thoughtful and accessible, offering concrete Biblical wisdom as to how we can live as good news people. (Patheos) "Wright's got another masterful book under his belt with Simply Good News. (Clarion Journal)

Discover the Real Story Jesus Came to Announce Many people think the message of the gospel is that if we believe in Jesus we will be saved from hell and be transported to heaven after we die. But what if that is not what the Bible actually teaches? What if the good news Jesus came to announce is much bigger, much better, and includes much more than merely what happens after we die? Revered bestselling scholar N. T. Wright reveals what the gospel really is and how it can transform our todays just as much as our tomorrows. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

NT Wright is an author that many are excited about and many are frustrated by. There is good reason for both. NT Wright is a serious scholar and he has helped reinvigorate serious scholarship about the New Testament that is focused on orthodox Christianity. The main theological frustration, especially for a particular group of Reformed, is that he has focused on Paul and interpreted Paul as not being primarily focused on Jesus' Penal Substitution. He has not ignored Penal Substitution, or said it is not a real part of Christianity, but he has said the focus of Paul is not on Jesus' penal substitution, but on Jesus as King and restorer. That major focus on Wright's work is front and center in *Simply Good News*. Wright does fairly well writing either to an academic audience (as his 1700 pages opus on Paul) or a popular audience. *Simply Good News* (like *Simply Jesus*, *Simply Christian* and *Surprised by Hope*) is popularly focused and has few footnotes or academic references. And it is one of Wright's shortest books. NT Wright is in one way imminently readable. He tells stories and builds a case that can be followed. But in another ways Wright is almost always frustrating because he usually seems to complicate even small matters. Nothing by Wright is unrelated to the whole story because the nature of Wright's project pulls together parts of the Christian story which some minimize or over simplify. Wright cannot talk about the Good News without talking about Jesus and his project (obviously) or the broader concept of covenant (which Jesus is coming to fulfil), or the work of the church (doing our part in reconciling the world to Christ), or the end times (which should drive our understanding of what our reconciliation should be focused on), or the history of Israel (to which Jesus came as Messiah) or a whole host of other issues that are interrelated and connected. Anyone that has read Wright before always feels the repetition that is necessarily a part of Wright's method of presenting the story. NT Wright wrote the introduction to Scot McKnight's 2011 *The King Jesus Gospel*. In many ways *Simply Good News* is Wright's version of McKnight's earlier book. I read *Simply Good News* looking for how it is different from *King Jesus Gospel*. I think the main difference is that *King Jesus Gospel* was written theologically (primarily to clergy) to help change people's theology of the gospel from one focused on sin to one focused on kingdom. McKnight's general point is the main point of *Simply Good News* as well, but Wright has more of a pastoral focus and tone and is more oriented toward lay people. The end of the book looks practically at the Lord's Prayer to illustrate how moving from a focus on individual sin to a corporate submission to Christ's kingship changes our understanding of Christianity. Wright suggests that individual sin focus leads us to do the Lord's Prayer backwards, help me, forgive me my sins, give me what I need and because you have done those things you are great. But instead the Lord's Prayer has a particular order that Wright thinks better illustrates the point of the Gospel, Lord you are Hallowed, we ask that your kingdom come now on earth as it is in heaven so that all things may be reconciled

to you and submit to you, and so that your will as King be done both on earth as it is in heaven. And as King, give us our needs, forgive us our sin and help us to forgive (and act rightly toward) those around us. And keep us from temptations and evil that we cannot endure. While I think *Simply Good News* is probably going to be my suggestion for the best entry point for Wright, none of Wright's books are perfect. He has a tendency to over state his case a bit and while that is less here than most books, it is still here. I think while his point is to complicate the story and make it richer, more meaningful and more whole, there are times when he needs more summary to make sure everyone is following along. There is also one point where he talks about myth as a false story, which while I know he is writing to a popular audience, I wish he would not have done. Because Wright has often done a good job at using the richer understanding of myth as origin story (not false story) as he did in this video. (video link was removed by) Overall if you are new to NT Wright, this is a great place to start. If you are familiar with NT Wright and have read Scot McKnight's *King Jesus Gospel*, you will not find much new material here, but this is a good summary of why Wright's project is important, not only for Pauline studies or New Testament studies but for the basic theology and practice of the church.

Wright has an amazing knack for forcing us to look through an entirely different lens at light, at God, at the Word, and at our own selves. This book is one of my favorites. Seeing the Gospel as GOOD NEWS is challenging, inspiring, and so, so liberating. What a privilege Wright lays out for us. We - as believers - have the great honor and duty of proclaiming the GOOD NEWS and living like we ourselves have heard that same GOOD NEWS we proclaim to others. This is one of those books you will want to read, re-read, and read again. I highlighted so many passages and plan to write more than a few into my Bible as reminders that I have heard GOOD NEWS! God has got this.

Simply a great place to start for new NT Wright readers. *Simply Good News* is a (very) high-level summation of a number of NT Wright's more detailed works, including (most importantly) *Surprised by Hope*. For someone who does not need to be convinced of the truth of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, this would be the ideal NT Wright book to pick up first. For a skeptic - particularly one skeptical of Jesus' resurrection and its implications - I would still suggest *Surprised by Hope*. A very quick, efficient and effective read that will challenge the dualistic/fractured view of God that many Christians take today, and a very convincing argument for why the Gospel is truly good news and not just a viral marketing campaign for fire insurance.

Anybody who thinks that the idea "love is the point of the Gospel" is nothing more than wishy-washy, liberal sentimentality needs to read this book. For according to one of the world's leading scholars and theologians, love is the point of the Gospel. This book summarizes many of the points found in Wright's writing elsewhere, and will be familiar ground for those who have read his other books. But if you are unfamiliar with Wright, this is a great starting place, especially since the book covers a critical issue.

I've read this book as help for a sermon series on The full, robust, Gospel, alongside others like McKnight's "The King Jesus Gospel." Thankful, once again, for Wright's commitment to read the Scriptures in their 1st century context, and then bring them to life for 21st century readers. I appreciated his distinction between good advice and good news. News - the type that Wright believes the Gospel is - is the type of news that declares something has happened, something will happen, and because of that life in the middle of those two can never be the same.

One of the best books I've read in a long time. We read it in our men's group at church and all were very impressed with Wright's style and focus. His writing and reasoning are impeccable. He calls Christians back to the essential duty of us all to communicate the good news of the gospel. He asserts that most of what we teach and preach is good advice about how to live and get to heaven but we usually leave out the news that God has intervened in God's world and changed everything through Jesus Christ. That's the news we are to proclaim. As some have said and I agree that Wright is the best Christian writer since C. S. Lewis.

N. T. Wright has way of making a very strong, revolutionary point and then getting me disengaged in the chatter after that. His point that the gospel is not (as usually presented) good advice of "what we do to get saved" rather good news of a triumphant reigning king is masterful. I remember I used to wonder why God didn't include a copy of the Four Spiritual Laws of Peace With God at the end of the Bible to kind of "bottom line" it for us. The reason, is that we see the gospel as a sweeping proclamation of redemptive history. Receiving Christ may indeed be an appropriate response but "How To Receive Christ" is not the gospel. The God stepping into our history and culminating it for His glory is. Like most Christian books, it probably would have been more effective if edited back to a pamphlet.

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