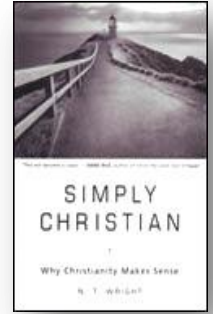


discussion / reader guide

simply christian: why christianity makes sense

N.T. Wright HarperOne 2006



CREDENTIALING
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about the book

This book is described as essential reading for anyone who wants to consider the fundamentals of Christianity. Written in a lively and accessible style, though rooted in solid scholarship, Wright explores the relevance of the Bible and the Christian story for the contemporary world. The book opens with the frustrated longings of humanity for justice, spirituality, relationships and beauty (why are things like this, do they have to be and can life be lived differently?). He then sets out the central Christian beliefs about God and His creation and explores a biblical analysis of what's wrong with the world (explaining God's plan for its renewal, and the central importance of Jesus). In the final section, he explores what it means to follow Jesus, to be energized by the Holy Spirit and to advance God's plan for our world.

about what you do with it

As you make your way through reading Wright's book have these questions handy to both guide your reading and to prepare your answers. The book and questions are intended:

- to prepare your thinking for later in your credentialing process when you will have to do more intentional study for the biblical & theological requirement and
- to begin a dialogue with your peers and regional trainer around the ideas of faith.

You need to provide a typed response to these questions to your regional training director to complete this orientation requirement

the questions

1. Tom Wright writes about justice in chapter one. Do you agree with the author's view that children naturally have a sense of what is just and fair and that we all do? Where do you think our sense of justice comes from? Do Wright's statements about justice resonate with you? Does it ring true in your experience?
2. Notice the description of Jesus on page 10 ... What do you think of this picture of Jesus? How does it register with your perceptions of him and where do you think those perceptions come from?

the questions

3. Can religion and spirituality (faith) be purely private matters? (See p 17)
4. What do you think of the idea, explored in Chapter 3 that human relationships point to something bigger; that they reflect a larger reality of love and more? Can you think of people who you feel reflect something of the Christian picture of the goodness and love of God, or of the judgement and power of God? Are these parallels useful?
5. Where on earth do you find beauty? Talk about your experience of places that speak to you, and how they lead you to think about God?
6. What do you make of the idea of a 'Chosen people' as explored in Chapter 6? What do you think of the idea that God could have 'favourites'? What key relationship themes do you draw out of the long relationship between God and the Jewish people?
7. Tom Wright argues that the resurrection points to the overlapping and interlocking of heaven and earth. What do you make of this idea?
8. "... it is through Jesus that we find ourselves called to live the way we do. ...we are summoned to become more truly human, to reflect the image of God into the world." (page 119)
Can you come up with three concrete examples of 'becoming more truly human' and 'reflecting the image of God'?
9. What's your reaction to part 2 of the book?
10. What is the most meaningful act of worship or prayer you have ever been involved with? What is the dullest, most empty example you can think of? What positive roles do worship and prayer play in your life. If you wanted to make them more meaningful and significant, what could you change about the way you worship and/or pray (see chapters 11 and 12).
11. Christians claim that the Bible is 'inspired', what does this mean?
12. How would you explain the ideas of Chapter 15 to a friend?

