

Simply Good News: Why the Gospel is News and What Makes It Good by N.T. Wright

Chapter 2 “Foolish, Scandalous, or Good?”

1. Wright begins by pointing out that Paul understood the people of his day would greet his good news by snickering. He goes on to say, “That doesn’t mean the good news is in fact incomprehensible, or meaningless, or stupid. But it will sound like that to some who hear it, which is what we should expect” (15).
 - **Why do you think the good news will sound this way to some people?**
 - **Why is it important and helpful to have this expectation in sharing the good news?**
 - **What do you think will be the result if we try to shape the good news so it doesn’t sound that way to people we share it with?**
2. Wright says that Christianity isn’t a religion, a moral system, or a philosophy. In short, it isn’t Christianity isn’t advice. Rather, “Christianity is, *simply, good news*” (16). It is an announcement “that *something has happened as a result of which the world is a different place*” (16).
 - **How does this understanding change the way we share our Christianity?**
 - **Do you have a sense of what has happened, of what will happen, and of the new moment between these two?**
3. Wright says at the heart of what had happened something about God is highlighted. Namely, “that Israel’s God was the creator of the whole world, and he was alive and active” (22). Wright points out that this is surprising to us because of our assumption about the word god and how we’ve been taught that Christianity is about getting people to heaven and behaving on the way (23).
 - **What are the alternative gods today that Israel’s God, known in and through Jesus of Nazareth, is the alternative to?**
 - **How does this emphasis on the truth about God rather than on getting people to heaven change the way we approach the good news?**
4. On page 24 Wright gives us the clearest description of the good news based on 1 Corinthians 15:3–6. He says, “Everything pivots around the complex event that had happened: the Messiah died, was buried, was raised, was seen. Take that away and Christianity collapses. Put it in its proper place and the whole world is different. That is the news.”
 - **How does that description differ from the way we have been taught to understand and share the good news?**
 - **Wright says the significance of the events are only understood in light of the Jewish Bible of the day, what we call the Old Testament. What happens if we divorce Jesus’ story from the larger story of the Bible?**
5. The second half of the good news is a future event, namely, “what God did for Jesus at Easter, raising him from the dead, is what he will do for all his people in the end” (26).
 - **What is the difference between the contemporary understanding of going to heaven and the idea of resurrection?**
 - **How does the event’s of Jesus life, death, and resurrection which shows Israel’s God is creator, alive and active and the coming resurrection transform our lives in between these two events (past and future)?**
6. The ultimate summary of good news is that in Jesus God has come and as the good news is announced God is coming to the whole world in the Spirit, and one day Jesus will come back to finish the job of healing everything with his love (34). **How does this shape the way we invite people to participate in Christianity?**