

Simply Good News

Chapter 3: "Surprised by King Jesus"

1. Wright asserts that Jesus is not offering teaching or moral example. Rather, "He was claiming to do things *through which the world would be healed, transformed, rescued, and renewed.*" (36)
 - **How does this make Jesus different from other figures that he is usually compared to?**
2. "In other words, [exodus] speaks of God *becoming* king of the world in a whole new way. The one true God was always the rightful ruler of the world, but he needed to reclaim his kingdom after the power of evil had usurped it." (36)
 - **How does this description impact the way we understand what the gospel is?**
3. Wright explains why Jesus' kingdom movement was different by saying, "Rather, [Jesus] had a different vision of God, God's purposes, and God's way of achieving those purposes — a different vision of what the real good news was supposed to be." (38)
 - **What was the vision of God, God's purposes, and God's means of the other groups like Pharisees, Sadducees, etc?**
 - **What is our own vision and how does it impact our understanding of the good news?**
4. On page 40 (at least in my hardcover book) Wright says, "Let's put it like this." Then he describes Jewish expectation and hope in three paragraphs and says, "They got Jesus."
 - **How do those three paragraphs help us to understand what God was doing through Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension?**
 - **How does that content fit with the way you've been taught the gospel?**
5. On page 42 Wright gives us a dynamic and critical paragraph:

This is central to the good news Jesus announced. It isn't just that God is becoming king, through Jesus and what he is doing, but that *God's kingship is a different sort of kingship altogether.* There is a different kind of power, and it is the power of the gospel — the power announced by the gospel, the power wielded by the gospel. It is the power neither of brute force nor of superior argument but of something that goes much deeper, into every area of human life. The early Christians called it the power of *agape*. Our modern word *love* doesn't begin to get near what they meant by that, but it will have to do for the moment as a signpost to a great, multidimensional, all-embracing energy, which swept people off their feet in the first century and continues to do so today.

 - **How does this description of God's alternative power of love shape the way we represent God, particularly when we share the good news?**
 - **In your opinion, how has the church done with this representation?**
6. Wright charges, "It's also why people step back from the big claims in the Bible and turn the radical good news into something they find more believable. Something about "me and my relationship to God" or about "going to heaven." Something more like advice than news." (43)
 - **Do you think Wright is right or wrong? Describe why you think so.**
7. The last paragraph on page 44 which continues to page 45 describes the way Jesus' death condemns evil itself. **Why is this important and why does it matter that contemporary**

ways of telling the 'gospel' like the bridge illustration or the four spiritual laws not include it?

8. We don't doubt Jesus being raised from the dead is important, but Wright gives us two important implications of it: 1) "God was the creator of all things who had made a world full of beauty and power." 2) "God intended to sort out the mess into which the world had fallen. He would judge it—that is, he would get rid of everything that corrupted and defaced it, in order to renew it and make it, even more gloriously, what it was supposed to be." (49)
 - **How does this fill in the importance of what the good news is?**