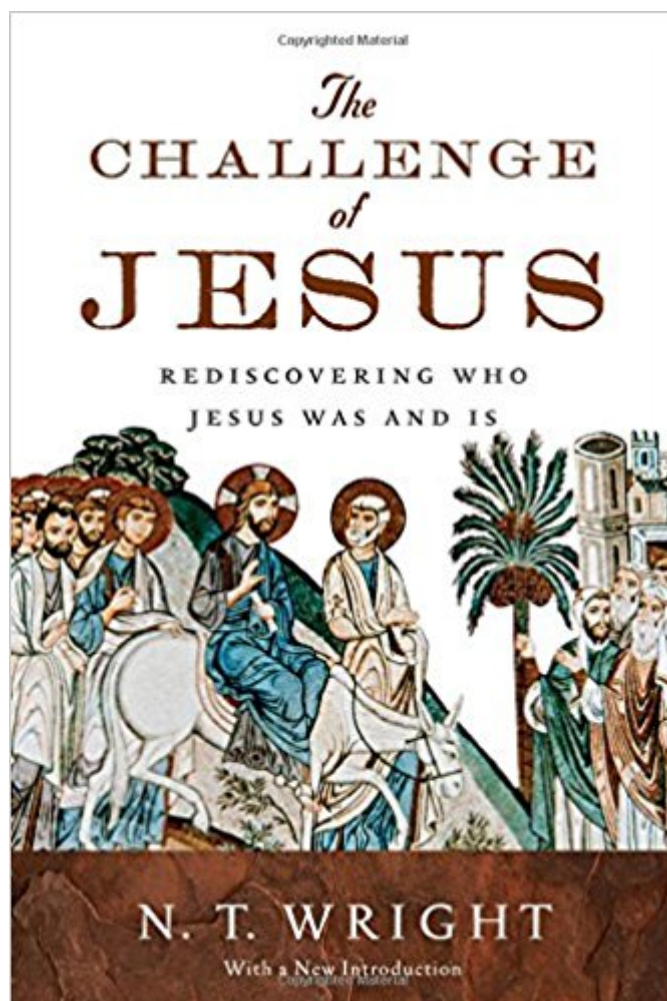


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# The Challenge Of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was And Is



## Synopsis

Today a renewed and vigorous scholarly quest for the historical Jesus is underway. In the midst of well-publicized and controversial books on Jesus, N. T. Wright's lectures and writings have been widely recognized for providing a fresh, provocative and historically credible portrait. Now this paperback edition of Wright's classic work contains the same original content plus even more insight with an all-new introduction by the author. Out of his own commitment to both historical scholarship and Christian ministry, Wright challenges us to roll up our sleeves and take seriously the study of the historical Jesus. He writes, "Many Christians have been, frankly, sloppy in their thinking and talking about Jesus, and hence, sadly, in their praying and in their practice of discipleship. We cannot assume that by saying the word Jesus, still less the word Christ, we are automatically in touch with the real Jesus who walked and talked in first-century Palestine. . . . Only by hard, historical work can we move toward a fuller comprehension of what the Gospels themselves were trying to say." The Challenge of Jesus poses a double-edged challenge: to grow in our understanding of the historical Jesus within the Palestinian world of the first century, and to follow Jesus more faithfully into the postmodern world of the twenty-first century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"We cannot assume that by saying the word Jesus," writes N.T. Wright--Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey and formerly Dean of Lichfield Cathedral--"still less the word Christ, we are automatically in touch with the real Jesus who talked in first-century Palestine." Even less are we

automatically in touch with "the Jesus who ... is the same yesterday, today and forever." Wright's goal in this volume is to present in a simplified form the findings that are occupying him in his monumental six-volume series entitled *Christian Origins and the Question of God*, and in particular in the second volume, already published, *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Distinguishing himself from the "Jesus Seminar" theologians, who question the literalness of the resurrection (among other things), Wright affirms the absolute centrality of both the Last Supper and the Easter experience as historical events. Through these experiences with Jesus, Wright suggests, the early Christians came to see that "Jesus--and then, very quickly, Jesus' people--were now the true Temple, and the actual building in Jerusalem was thereby redundant." Written with refreshing clarity and passion, *The Challenge of Jesus* serves as an excellent introduction to the thinking of this influential New Testament historian. --Doug Thorpe --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Here, prolific Anglican theologian and historical Jesus quester Wright makes accessible to lay readers the arguments he laid out in his scholarly tome *Jesus and the Victory of God*. But Wright does more than just rehash old arguments; he adds a discussion of the resurrection, absent from *Victory*, and addresses the prickly problem of relevance. In the first six chapters, Wright tackles many of the questions of the historical Jesus debate: Did Jesus believe the Kingdom of God was "now" or "later"? (Both, says Wright.) Did He know He was God in the same way "that one knows one is hungry or thirsty"? ("It was not a mathematical knowledge.... It was more like the knowledge that I have that I am loved by those closest to me.") What exactly happened on Easter? (Jesus' body seemed both physical and transphysical.) Wright then addresses how all these historical-cum-theological musings are significant for Christians living in a postmodern world. This superb addition to Wright's oeuvre will prove fruitful reading for neophytes as well as for those already familiar with his approach. (Jan.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This book has great value to folks wanting to think more about Jesus - his existence, the fact of his resurrection, his mental state as a 1st century Jew, his self-awareness as God - and the implications of following Jesus in our world today; and Simon Vance, as always, did a remarkable job reading the book; but there was something about this brief 8 chapter work that made it feel much longer. The subject, for one, is not lightweight. But what was ultimately unsatisfying is the oddness of Wright's expressions, calling us to "live out in symbol and praxis" "what Jesus did for Israel". When writing on the question of whether Jesus knew he was God, Wright flips the question about what we

mean by "know". ... it was just a lot of work to read the book. Great ideas and helpful, scholarly, historical approach to knowing Jesus, but confusing when it came to applying knowing Jesus in today's world.

This book presents a view of the historical Jesus focusing on his foundation in the messianic Judaism of his time and the Roman occupied culture in which he lived and taught. I found the author's style a bit pedantic. In places, I found it difficult to keep track of the argument he was making as he related point after point of his supporting rationale. This may have been my fault for expecting a somewhat more casual read instead of the more scholarly tome. Nevertheless, I persevered and found the effort well worthwhile. I read "The Challenge of Jesus" while studying the Gospel of Mark. "The Challenge of Jesus" provided me with context to develop a significantly more nuanced and textured understanding of this Gospel.

This is one of Dr Wright's best books in my opinion. He causes us to look at the heart of the historical Jesus through middle eastern eyes only to see the Jesus of theology and the messiah of Israel. Dr Wright provides a clear perspective on how we should view scripture through its intended meaning rather than the skewed viewpoint of the post reformation and post enlightenment periods. He allows us to avoid the caricature of the the postmodern Jesus with his many a la carte faces to see Jesus as his Disciples would have seen him, as the first century world would have seen him. Through this lens, we see a deeper and richer meaning to scripture that shows the meta narrative of scripture to be the story of Israel, with the climax and fulfillment coming in the presence and purpose of Jesus the messiah. I would highly recommend this book for all.

Challenging and Thought Provoking. Written in theological language that requires some decoding.

Here's a fresh, challenging and historically accurate picture of Jesus in the context of second temple period Judaism, the authors historical grasp of ancient Hebraic worldview, their understanding of the language and meaning of the parables and the ongoing desire for a new Exodus experience along with Jesus sense of His part in bringing that to fruition through the message, clearly spoken and displayed through his ministry of the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God brings a whole new perspective to the Gospel accounts. NT Wright has done it again!

N.T. Wright is an excellent writer, you can never go wrong. Quick shipment

N.T. Wright a most brilliant scholar has done an excellent work in "The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was & Is." He answers the critic and presents the positive evidence of who Jesus really was and is. He counters the present critic who would deny the identity of Jesus being deity. It is my view that he accepts the New Testament as being historical books which must be accepted as a "historical fact." The writes of these books wrote from the period of time in which they lived - about people who lived at that time - most of all Jesus of Nazareth. I recommend this book for a deeper reading of this topic.

thanks

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