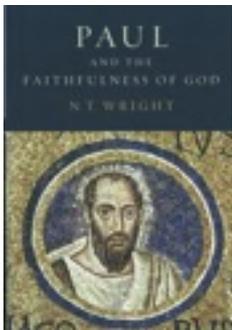


Once a group of people believe and are formed into a church, how do we get them to fully embrace the whole new life they have just entered?

How do we get them fully established and living transformed lives in true community as Christ intends for us?

Why do you think so many people in our churches are not fully established?

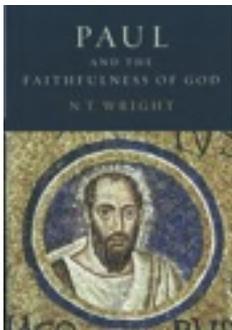


Nancy and I had a chance to see this in living color on our trip to Albania.

This passage says, “have charitable concern for the whole family” including “the whole of Macedonia.”

We were just with that family

3 stories: Steve Galegor, Holger, Femi, Ditron the freedom fighter



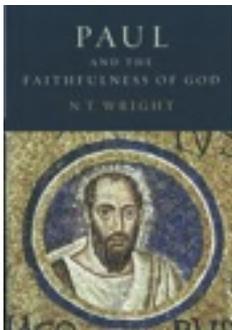
Mastering the Scriptures Series

New Testament Theology

1. **The Gospels (5 booklets) - early 2017**
2. Paul's Early Letters (13 booklets), **Early letters - 6 booklets, early 2018**
3. The Jewish Encyclicals (5 booklets)
4. Johannine Writings (4 booklets)

Old Testament Theology

1. **The Story (1 booklet) - 2016**
2. The Law (2 booklets)
3. The Prophets (4 booklets)
4. The Writings (5 booklets)



Toward a NT Theology

(In order of both situational events and authorship of NT Writings)

Theology of John's Letters—The 7 churches until Christ' return
Theology of Peter's Letters—reinforcing Paul in Jewish churches
From Jesus to Gospels (5 booklets) Stabilize churches (gospels among last written)

Stabilizing Transition From Israel to the Church

Later letters—fully developed didache for churches

Middle letters—Christ' grand strategy fully developed, didache framed in

Early letters—fully developing gospel (NT Wright) emerging didache

(*Paul's Early Letters: New Testament Theology*—5 booklets)

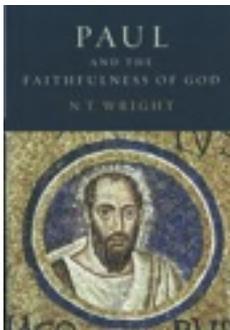
Pauline Theology—*The First Principles* (plus *How to Teach First Principles*)

Building on Foundation—The Didache, Sound Doctrine, The Faith

Apostles-Kerygma/Acts 1–8 (formulaic)—“foundation laid by apostles and prophets,” recorded in Acts

Jesus—kingdom at hand/Messiah of OT — *The Story* (Law, Prophets, Writings) opened scriptures—Jesus the “cornerstone” —Jesus, the Living Kerygma (1 booklet plus *How to Teach the Story*)

Substructure of NT Theology—The Kerygma



Paul's Early Epistles

BILD THEOLOGY IN CULTURE SYSTEM

THE STORY

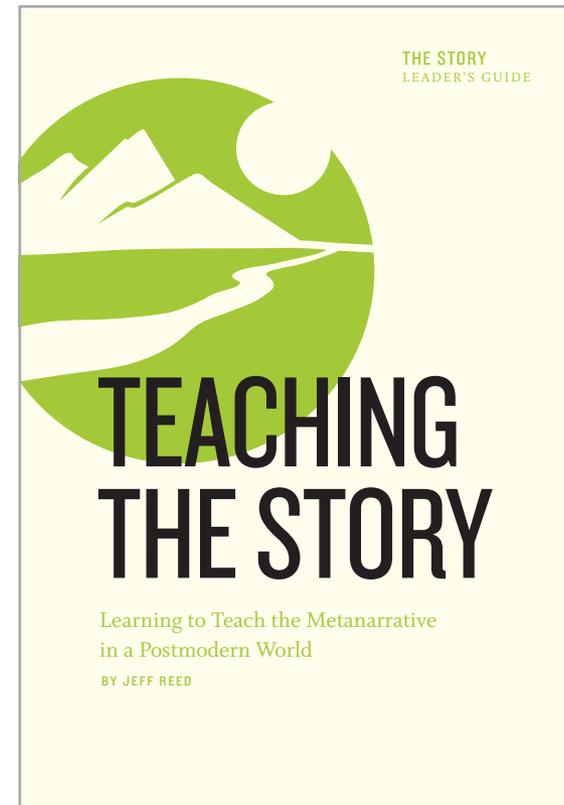
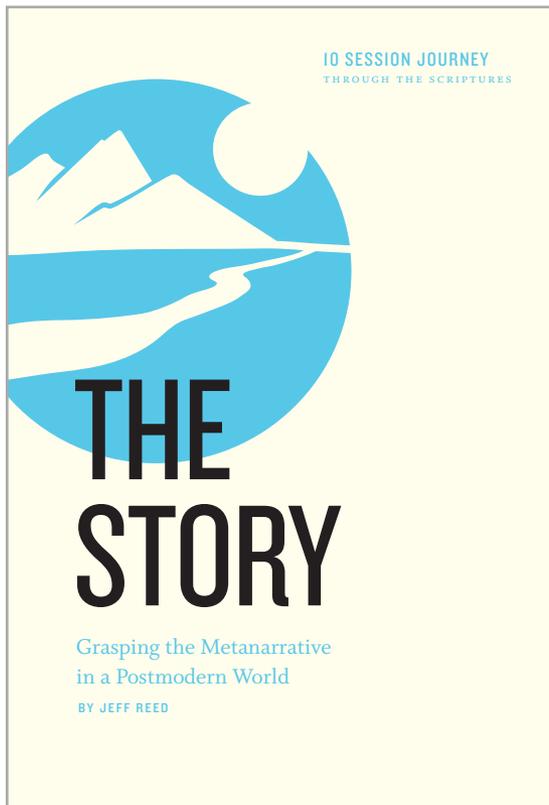


BILD THEOLOGY IN CULTURE SYSTEM

FIRST PRINCIPLES SERIES

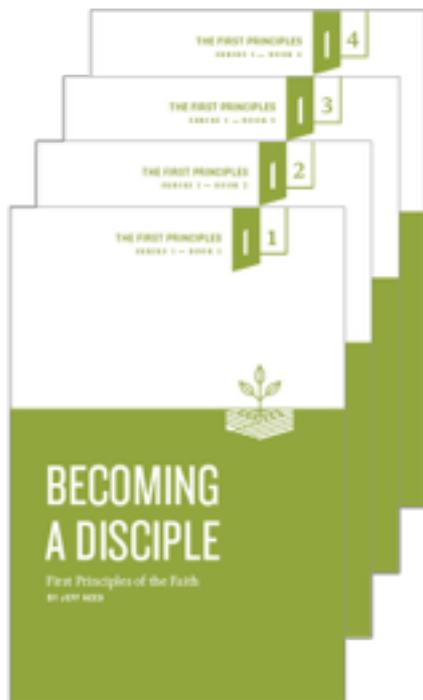
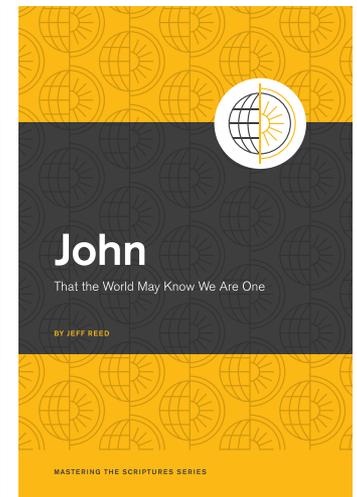
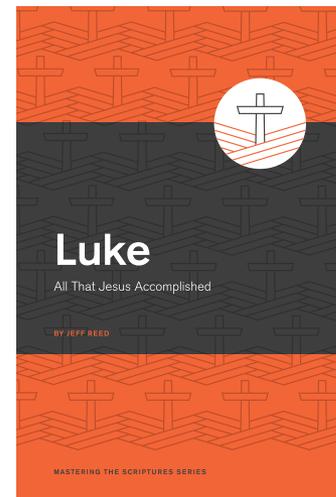
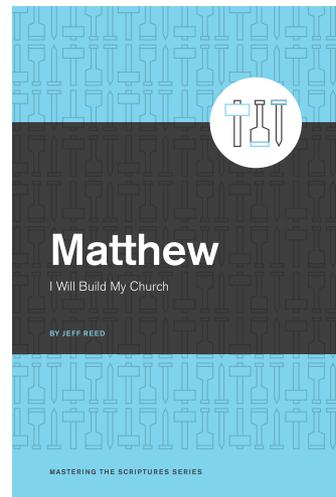
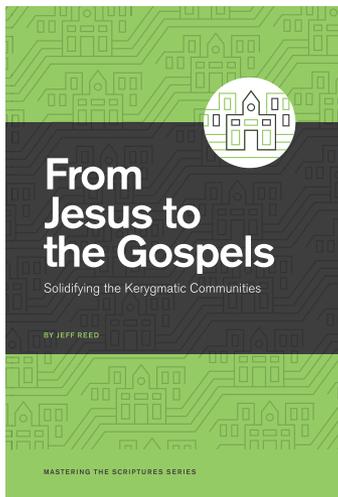


BILD THEOLOGY IN CULTURE SYSTEM

MASTERING THE SCRIPTURES SERIES



November 2016

Late 2016 / Early 2017



Toward a NT Theology

(In order of both situational events and authorship of NT Writings)

Theology of John's Letters—The 7 churches until Christ' return
Theology of Peter's Letters—reinforcing Paul in Jewish churches
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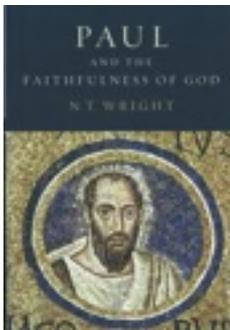
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Substructure of NT Theology—The Kerygma



Paul's Early Epistles

The Early Letters

Book 1: The Early Letters: Fully Establishing
the Churches in the Gospel

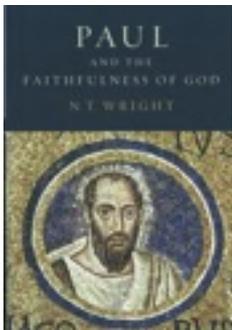
Book 2: Galatians: So Quickly Leaving the
Gospel

Book 3: The Thessalonians Correspondence:
Conversion to the Gospel

Book 4: The Corinthian Letters:
Fragmentation of the Gospel

Book 5: The Corinthian Letters: Paul's
Gospel Defended

Book 6: Romans: Complete Treatise
of Paul's Gospel



The Early Letters

We will finish Thessalonians in the next 3 weeks

Then in 2017 we will do 3 more booklets

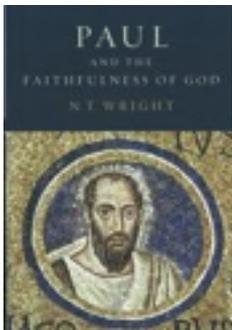
1 Corinthians

2 Corinthians

Romans

it is scheduled for the whole year.

They will all be published early 2018



Paul's Early Epistles

Book 1: *The Early Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches in the Gospel*

Session 1: The Intent of The Early Letters

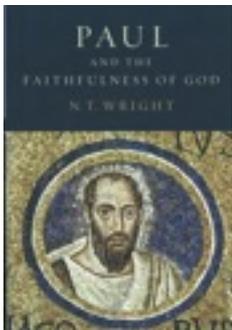
Session 2: The Galatian Problem

Session 3: The Thessalonians' Conversion

Session 4: The Corinthian Schisms

Session 5: The Roman Treatise

Session 6: Use in Life and Ministry

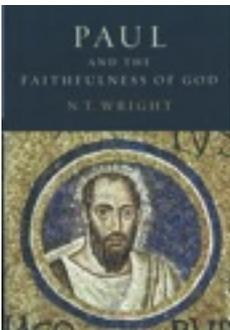


Paul's Early Epistles

The intention of these early letters is to establish the churches in the gospel.

Paul broadens the understanding of the gospel, and he roots the solutions to the problems his churches were encountering in that growing and broadening understanding of the kerygma and its implications.

This intention will become clearer and clearer as each letter unfolds.



Paul's Early Epistles

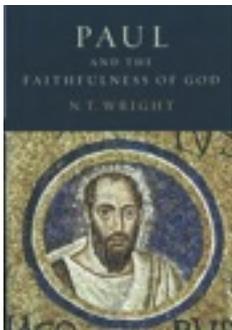
We will validate this in the six books of this series, as we will look at the correspondence of these early letters:

The Galatian letter

The Thessalonian correspondence

The Corinthian correspondence

The letter to the Romans



Paul's Early Epistles

Book 2: *Paul's Early Letters: The Galatian Problem*

Session 1: The Galatian Problem

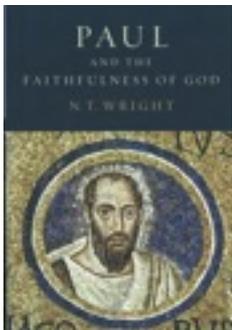
Session 2: The Pure Gospel

Session 3: The Gospel as a System of Living

Session 4: The Gospel and Walking in the Spirit

Session 5: The Gospel and Respecting Leaders

Session 6: Use in Life and Ministry



Paul's Early Epistles

Book : *Paul's Early Letters: The Thessalonians' Conversion*

Session 1: Paul's Concern for the Thessalonians

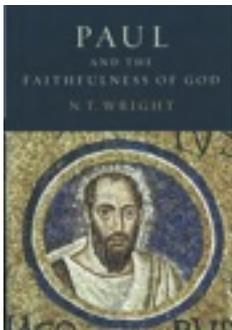
Session 2: Their Dramatic Conversion

Session 3: Three Emerging Problems—Letter 1

Session 4: Further Clarification—Letter 2

Session 5: Solidifying Their Conversion

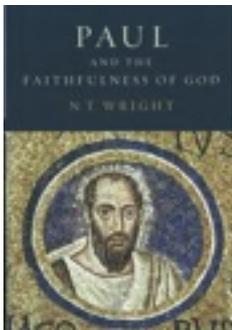
Session 6: Use in Life and Ministry



Passage: 1 Thessalonians 4:1–5:11

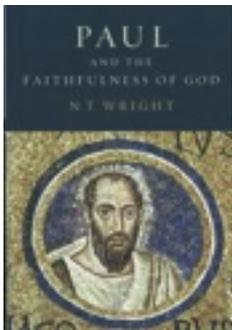
Questions

1. What did Paul understand was needed for the Thessalonians to be fully established in their faith?
2. What were the 3 main areas Paul challenged the Thessalonians in? Were they related to each other?
3. What is the essence of Paul's challenge to them in fully embracing their new faith?
4. How did he root his instructions in the gospel and the emerging teaching? What is the basis of his authority?

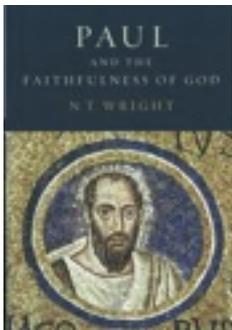


Last session we focused on the conversion process of the Thessalonians.

This session we turn our attention to the 3 areas Paul addresses in the Thessalonian churches in order to fully establish them.

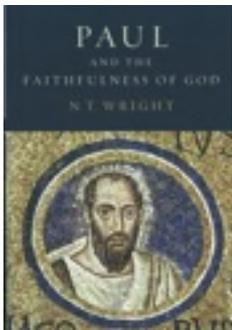


Conversion is *misunderstood* because it is removed from its literary context, *compartmentalized* because it is separated from the establishing process, and *reductionistic* because it is reduced to a moment-in-time event only.



A complete conversion process looks like this:

1. An initial solid response, in which the gospel is fully embraced, takes several weeks of exposure to the Word of God and results in those receiving the gospel beginning to proclaim it themselves.
2. It must be immediately followed up by careful nurturing and exhorting.
3. It is then followed up in the context of a new community by leaders who know the Word—a balance of modality (local leaders) and sodality (apostolic leaders).



Marks of Solid Conversion:

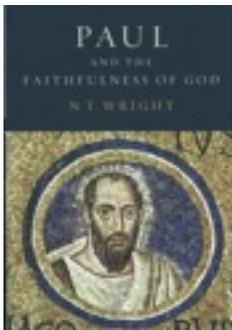
- accomplishment of your faith
- the hard work of your love
- the patience of your hope

Their faith turned into action

The *accomplishment of faith* was their own dramatic proclamation of the gospel everywhere.

Their *hard work of love* was towards the Thessalonian churches themselves.

And their *patience of hope* was how they were responding to persecution and suffering.

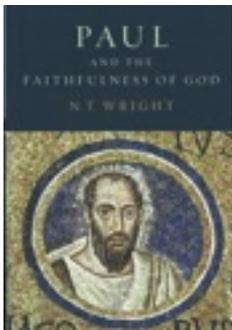


Paul's Early Epistles

Passage: 1 Thessalonians 4:1–5:11

Questions:

1. What did Paul understand was needed for the Thessalonians to be fully established in their faith?
2. In what 3 main areas did Paul challenge the Thessalonians? Were they related to each other?
3. What is the essence of Paul's challenge to them in fully embracing their new faith?
4. How did he root his instructions in the gospel and the emerging teaching? What is the basis of his authority?



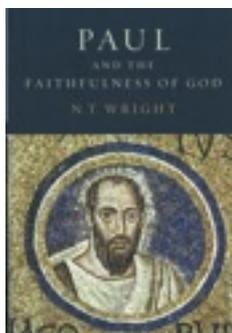
Intention Statement for the Thessalonian Letters

To further establish the Thessalonians, deepening their understanding of the full implications of the gospel they recently embraced

that they might not be unsettled, but would remain strong and focused amidst suffering and emerging tensions in the churches,

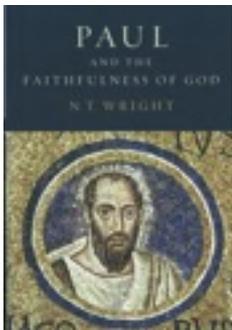
by challenging them, in the first letter, to fully embrace the new lifestyle in community as laid out in the emerging traditions handed down by Paul from Christ

by further clarifying his challenges to them in the first letter, giving them specific instructions in solving problems that had the potential to destabilize them



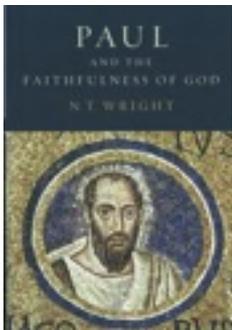
Three key words bookend this passage

- 4:1 “urge”—parakaleo: to personally come along side and encourage/challenge them
- 4:2 “instructions”—transmission of a command
These instructions are commands from the Lord. Paul had instructed them earlier.
- 4:8 “human command”—not rejecting a human, but God; so the word carries the idea of human authority



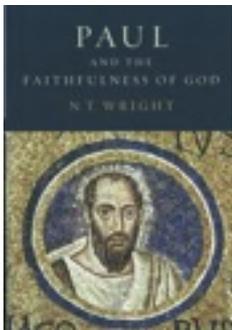
The Thessalonian churches were only 9 months old, but they needed to be challenged in 3 areas:

1. Changing their whole lifestyle from one of sexual impurity to living lives set apart to God.
2. Developing charitable concern for the whole family, demonstrated in their own hard work and generosity.
3. Fully embracing the gospel's (kerygma) claim of the return of Christ; not losing hope when loved ones die.



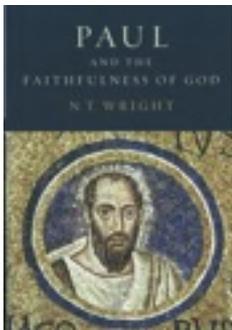
4:1 What remains, my dear family, is for us to ask you, and indeed to urge you in the Lord Jesus, that you should continue more and more to behave in the manner that you received from us as the appropriate way of behaving and of pleasing God. ²You know, of course, what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³This is God's will, you see: he wants you to be holy, to keep well away from fornication. ⁴Each of you should know how to control your own body in holiness and honor, ⁵not in the madness of lust like Gentiles who don't know God. ⁶Nobody should break this rule, or cheat a fellow Christian in this area; the Lord is the avenger in all such matters, just as we told you before and testified most solemnly. ⁷For God did not call us to a dirty life, but in holiness. ⁸Anyone who rejects this, then, is not rejecting a human command, but the God who gives his holy spirit to you.

1 Thessalonians 4:1–8 (N. T. Wright)
Paul's Early Epistles



The Thessalonian churches were only 9 months old, but they needed to be challenged in 3 areas

1. Changing their whole lifestyle from one of sexual impurity to living lives set apart to God.
2. Developing charitable concern for the whole family, demonstrated in their own hard work and generosity.
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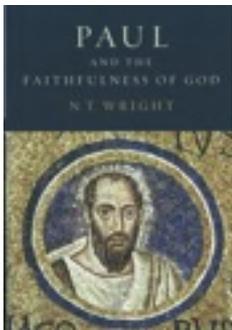


Cleaning up their lives from all sexual impurity and living lives set apart to God.

The essence of Paul's challenge:

They needed to be completely committed to a new lifestyle, fully committed to Christ and His new plan and purposes.

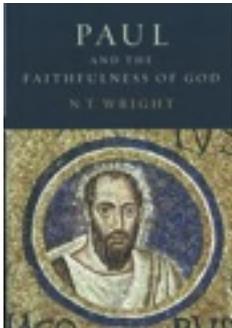
This meant cleaning up their old lifestyle, specifically putting aside all sexual sin.



Cleaning up their lives from all sexual impurity and living lives set apart to God

Key concepts:

- the instructions, 4:2: the emerging didache
- madness of lust, 4:5: passions that hurt you and others
- holy, 4:3, 4, 8: dedication, like a Nazarite vow
- way of behaving, 4:1: to live, referring to lifestyle



Paul's Early Epistles

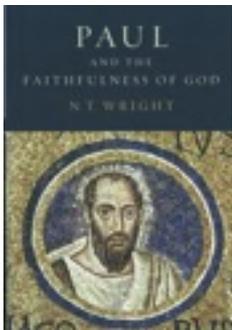
Cleaning up their lives from all sexual impurity and living lives set apart to God

The temples in the Roman cities were the specific application of the day.

They were filled with wild parties, sexual perversions of all kinds, and prostitutes.

The Christians were to avoid them—to set themselves apart in vow like fashion.

It wasn't just men who went to them.

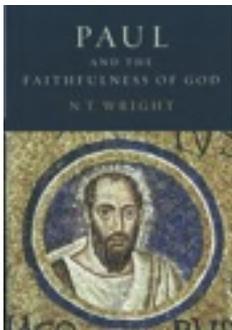


Paul's Early Epistles

⁹Now, about charitable concern for the whole family: I don't really need to write to you, because you yourselves have been taught by God to show loving care for one another. ¹⁰Indeed, you are doing this for all the Christian family in the whole of Macedonia. But we urge you, my dear family, to make this an even more prominent part of your lives. ¹¹You should make it your ambition to live peacefully, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, just as we commanded you, ¹²so that you may behave in a way which outsiders will respect, and so that none of you may be in financial difficulties.

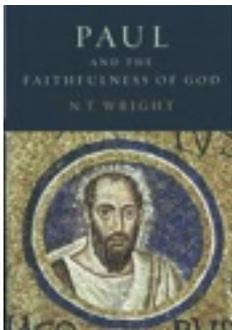
1 Thessalonians 4:9–12 (N. T. Wright)

Paul's Early Epistles



The Thessalonian churches were only 9 months old, but they needed to be challenged in 3 areas:

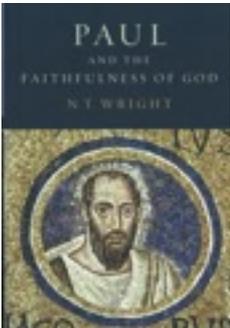
1. Changing their whole lifestyle from one of sexual impurity to living lives set apart to God.
2. Developing charitable concern for the whole family, demonstrated in their own hard work and generosity.
3. Fully embracing the gospel's (kerygma) claim of the return of Christ; not losing hope when loved ones die.



Developing charitable concern for the whole family, demonstrated in their own hard work and generosity.

Again the essence is *lifestyle*.

A charitable intent must govern the stewardship of their work, toward both their own churches and families of churches in Macedonia.

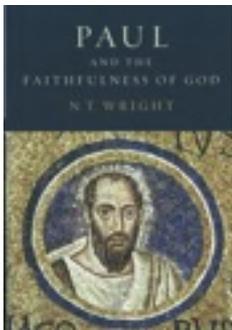


Paul's Early Epistles

Developing charitable concern for the whole family, demonstrated in their own hard work and generosity

Key concepts:

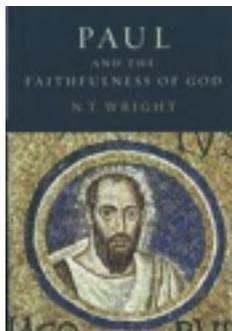
- charitable concern, 4:9: love for the brethren, brotherhood
- Christian family in all of Macedonia, 4:10: church network
- live peacefully, mind your own business, work with your hands, 4:11: peaceful living at home—possessions, property, assets—and businesses
- outsiders' respect, 4:12
- financial difficulties, 4:12: dependent on others



Paul's Early Epistles

¹³Now concerning those who have fallen asleep: we don't want you to remain in ignorance about them, my dear family. We don't want you to have the kind of grief that other people do, people who don't have any hope. ¹⁴For, you see, if we believe that Jesus died and rose, that's the way God will also, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

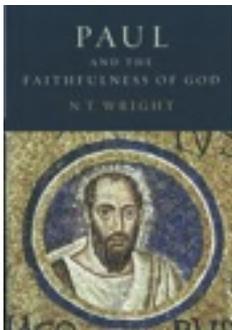
1 Thessalonians 4:13–14 (N. T. Wright)



Paul's Early Epistles

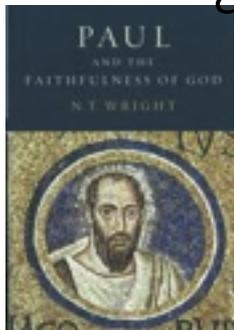
¹⁵Let me explain. (This is the word of the Lord I'm speaking to you!) We who are alive, who remain until the Lord is present, will not find ourselves ahead of those who fell asleep. ¹⁶The Lord himself will come down from heaven with a shouted order, with the voice of an archangel and the sound of God's trumpet. The Messiah's dead will rise first; ¹⁷then we who are alive, who are left, will be snatched up with them among the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And in this way we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸So comfort each other with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:15–18 (N. T. Wright)



Paul's Early Epistles

5:1 Now when it comes to specific times and dates, my dear family, you don't need to have anyone write to you. ²You yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a midnight robber. ³When people say, "Peace and security!" then swift ruin will arrive at their doorstep, like the pains that come over a woman in labor, and they won't have a chance of escape. ⁴But as for you, my dear family—you are not in darkness. That day won't surprise you like a robber. ⁵You are all children of light, children of the day! We don't belong to the night, or to darkness. ⁶So, then, let's not go to sleep, like the others, but let's keep awake and stay sober.

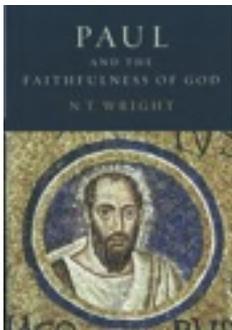


1 Thessalonians 5:1–6 (N. T. Wright)

Paul's Early Epistles

⁷People who sleep, you see, sleep at night. People who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But we daytime people should be self-controlled, clothing ourselves with the breastplate of faith and love, and with the helmet of the hope of salvation; ⁹because God has not placed us on the road to fury, but to gaining salvation, through our Lord Jesus the Messiah. ¹⁰He died for us, so that whether we stay awake or go to sleep we should live together with him. ¹¹So strengthen one another, and build each other up, just as you are doing.

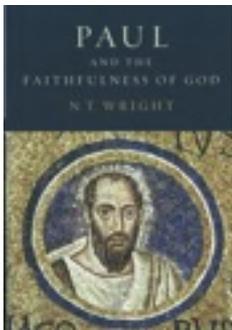
1 Thessalonians 5:7–11 (N. T. Wright)



Paul's Early Epistles

The Thessalonian churches were only 9 months old, but they needed to be challenged in 3 areas:

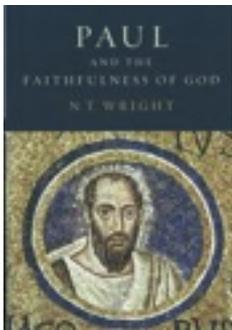
1. Changing their whole lifestyle from one of sexual impurity to living lives set apart to God.
2. Developing charitable concern for the whole family, demonstrated in their own hard work and generosity.
3. Fully embracing the gospel's (kerygma) claim of the return of Christ; not losing hope when loved ones die.



Fully embracing the gospel's (kerygma) claim of the return of Christ; not losing hope when loved ones die.

The essence of his challenge to them was to live sober lives, recognizing that part of following Christ is to embrace His whole gospel—He is returning and we will be rejoined with our loved ones at His return.

Keep focused!

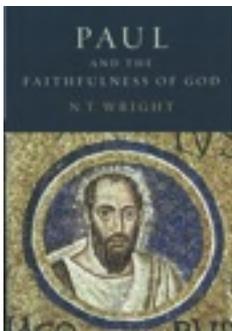


Paul's Early Epistles

Fully embracing the gospel's (kerygma) claim of the return of Christ, not losing hope when loved ones die

Key concepts:

- grief/hope, 4:13: distress that brings carousing vs. expectation that brings focus—a powerful concept
- will not find ourselves ahead, 4:14: our loved ones are not left behind. They will join the action at the same time.
- clouds/fury, 4:17; 5:9: *clouds* = storm clouds on horizon vs. the storm itself—(affects rapture metaphor)
- keep awake and stay sober, 5:6: *keep awake* = be alive; *sober* = composed (don't go get drunk)



Paul's Early Epistles

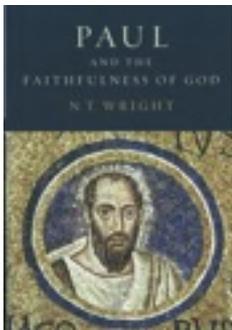
This affects the rapture metaphor

clouds/fury, 4:17; 5:9: clouds = storm clouds on horizon vs. the storm itself—(affects rapture metaphor); mass of clouds, mist, fog (LSJ),

“will be caught up” carry off as spoil (LSJ), something regarded as gain (Kittle); almost every lexicon defines work to carry off

“meet”—going out to meet, to meet up with (LSJ, Louw-Nida)

“air”—mist, haze, lower air (LSJ), lower denser air as opposed to the higher rarer air

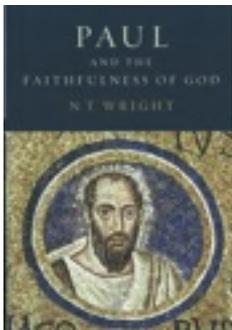


Paul's Early Epistles

This changes the idea

¹⁶The Lord himself will come down from heaven with a shouted order, with the voice of an archangel and the sound of God's trumpet. The Messiah's dead will rise first; ¹⁷then we who are alive, who are left, will be carried off with them among the storm clouds, to meet up with the Lord in this haze (fog, lower dense air). And in this way we shall always be with the Lord.

Storm clouds before the fury—pulled out of the massive battles of the Lord taking over the earth and fully setting up His kingdom.

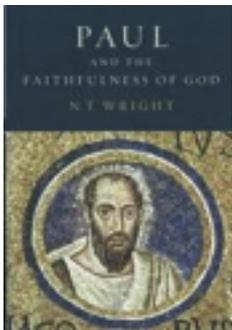


Paul's Early Epistles

Excursus: The rapture?

This is a fairly recent doctrine, and it confuses the simple argument of Paul in the context of fully embracing the kerygma. Remember, the kerygma—the gospel story—finished with the fact that Jesus will return as king and judge, and everyone who believes in Him will be saved.

The context of the disciples just before He left and of the church at Thessalonica now, is when will He return? The confusion of the Thessalonians is that some of their relatives had died and Christ had not yet returned; therefore, their relatives would not be part of the kingdom when He returns to set it up.

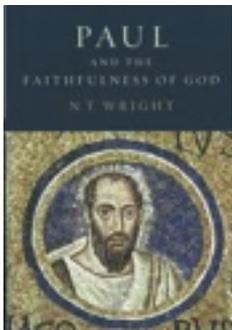


Paul's Early Epistles

Excursus: The rapture?

As to N .T. Wright: He believes we will go out to meet the king when He arrives and usher Him, as triumphant, into the kingdom.

But there are too many passages that speak of Christ returning and unleashing a fury against a world government coalition that is trying to establish its own world peace, and He fights against it —the day of the Lord, which we will look at next week as Paul expands his teaching on the return of Christ in his second letter.



See *The Story*

Paul's Early Epistles

Paul's argument is simply this

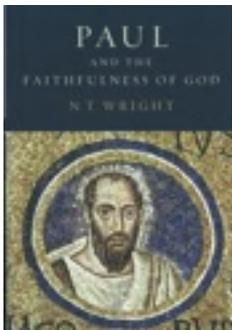
Part 1: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

When Christ returns to set up His kingdom, those who have died will rise first, then we will be gathered out to meet Him as He is releasing His fury on the world, which is opposing Him, and as He sets up His kingdom.

Point 2: 1 Thessalonians 5:1–10

We do not know when He will come, but when the world is claiming world peace and safety, He will appear, will release His fury on the world, and will set up His kingdom. We will all be part of it, so stay focused, be alert, and keep the hope the gospel demands of us who embrace it.

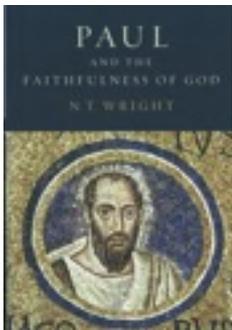
Paul's Early Epistles



Issue: Fully established churches today

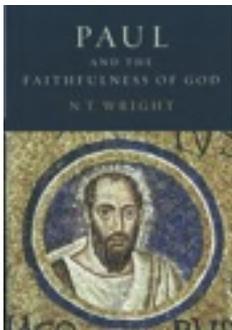
Questions:

1. What does it take to fully establish believers in the gospel and its accompanying lifestyle?
2. Why are so few churches fully established? so few members fully established?
3. Have you seen any of the three areas of challenge addressed in the Thessalonian letters in your church or churches? How are they manifest?
4. Is your church equipped to fully establish all of its members?



To become fully established means that we change our whole lifestyle once we embrace the gospel.

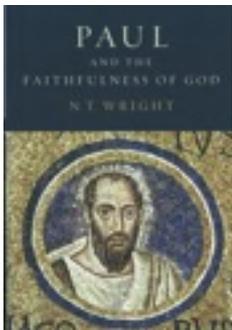
Anything short of that will result in a shallow conversion.



Paul's Early Epistles

Just like the Thessalonian churches, we need to be challenged in 3 areas:

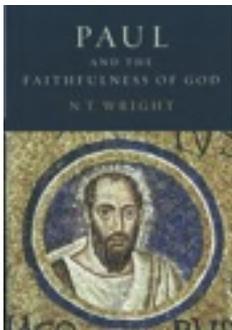
1. Changing our whole lifestyle from one of sexual impurity to living our lives set apart to God.
2. Developing charitable concern for the whole family, demonstrated in our own hard work and generosity to our churches and churches worldwide.
3. Fully embracing the gospel's (kerygma) claim of the return of Christ; not losing our hope when loved ones die.



This is all part of continuing to be established in the gospel, which concludes with the return of Christ.

We need to develop a “kerygma worldview.

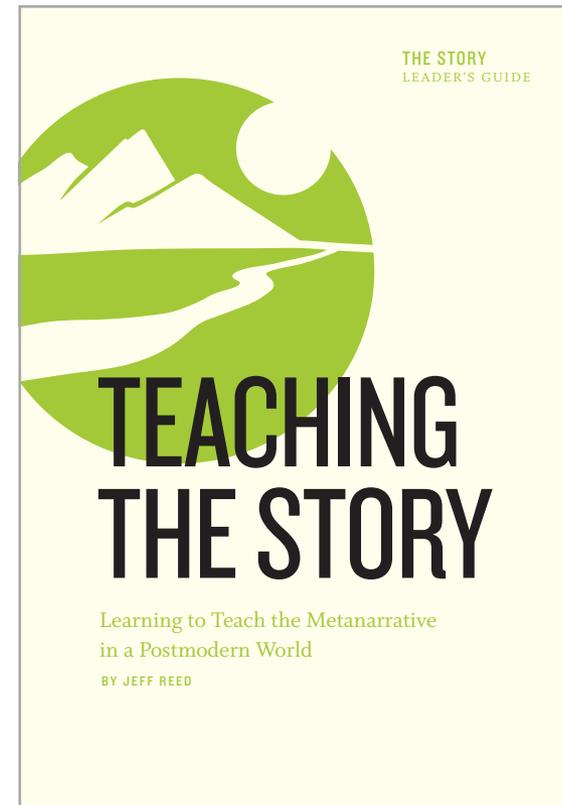
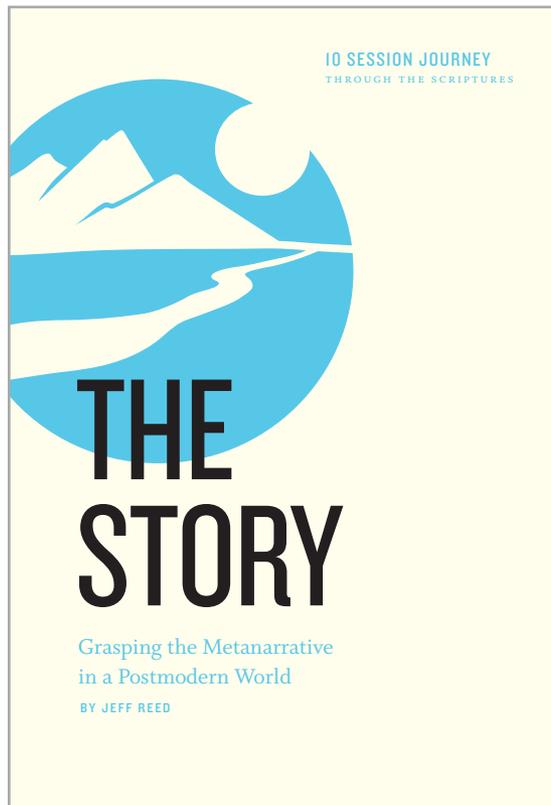
It includes how we think about everything in life, even how we vote. Are we voting for those who are after one world government and religious ethic, or for those who are more aligned with how God is wanting the world, whether they are moral or not?



Paul's Early Epistles

BILD THEOLOGY IN CULTURE SYSTEM

THE STORY



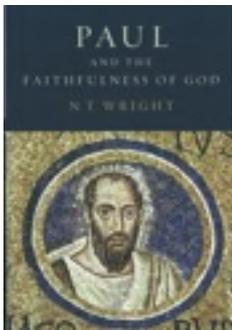
Mastering the Scriptures Series

New Testament Theology

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2. Paul's Early Letters (13 booklets), **Early letters - 6 booklets, early 2018**
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1. **The Story (1 booklet) - 2016**
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3. The Prophets (4 booklets)
4. The Writings (5 booklets)



Toward a NT Theology

(In order both situational events and authorship of NT Writings)

Theology of John's Letters—The 7 churches until Christ' return
Theology of Peter's Letters—reinforcing Paul in Jewish churches
From Jesus to Gospels (5 booklets) Stabilize churches (gospels among last written)

Stabilizing Transition From Israel to the Church

Later letters—fully developed didache for churches

Middle letters—Christ' grand strategy fully developed, didache framed in

Early letters—fully developing gospel (NT Wright) emerging didache

(*Paul's Early Letters: New Testament Theology*—5 booklets)

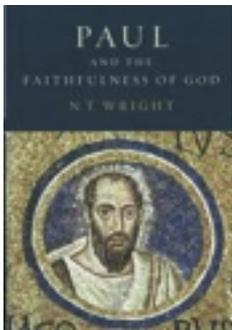
Pauline Theology—*The First Principles* (plus *How to Teach First Principles*)

Building on Foundation—The Didache, Sound Doctrine, The Faith

Apostles-Kerygma/Acts 1–8 (formulaic)—“foundation laid by apostles and prophets,” recorded in Acts

Jesus—kingdom at hand/Messiah of OT — *The Story* (Law, Prophets, Writings) opened scriptures—Jesus the “cornerstone” —Jesus, the Living Kerygma (1 booklet plus *How to Teach the Story*)

Substructure of NT Theology—The Kerygma



Paul's Early Epistles