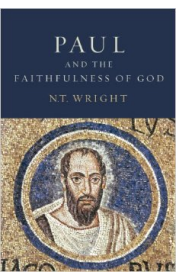
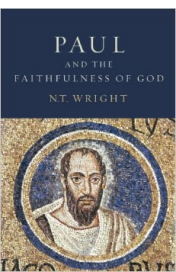


1 Corinthians 5 and Theology in Culture



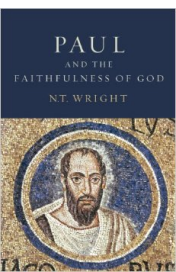
Theology in Culture, Defined

- Theology in culture is...
 - ...becoming fully established in our faith...
 - ...and understanding the needs and problems of the time and place we live in...
 - ...so we can apply our faith to address those needs and solve those problems.



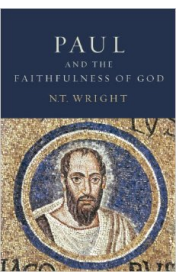
Theology in Culture, Applied

- Thus far, we have (rightly!) emphasized “pressing needs” (Re:Build)
- There’s another side to Theology in Culture (...)
 - Race and racism (overt *and* systemic; The New Jim Crow)
 - Issues of sexuality (gay marriage, transgendered persons, different mores)
 - Economic justice (income inequality; greed, which is idolatry)
 - Unraveling of social fabric (Bowling Alone)



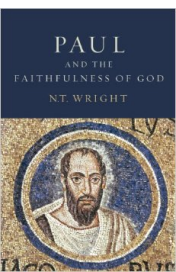
Theology in Culture, Applied

- Michael: “We, like all people before us, get confused and lose sight of the Story; we begin to think that being set apart means to protect ourselves from the ‘outside world.’ We become more concerned about our personal piety than seeking the welfare of our city. Israel did this; the Pharisees did this; churches today do this.”



Read the Passage: 1 Co 5.9-13

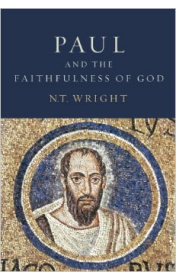
- What does “judge” mean, in this context? What sort of judgment are we talking about?
- What would it look like, in practical terms, “not to associate” with someone?
- How is the American church at large doing with this?





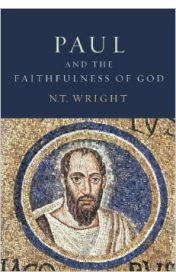
From *The GW Hatchet*

“Crazy Religion Guy”



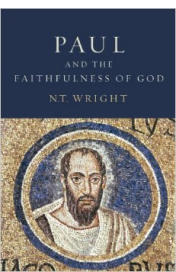
What's the Principle?

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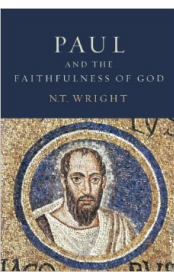
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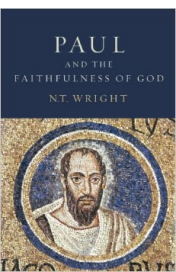
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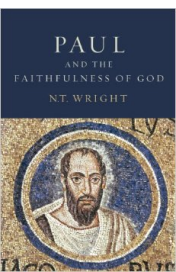
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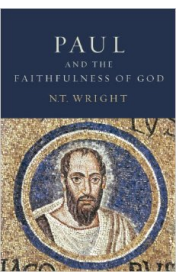
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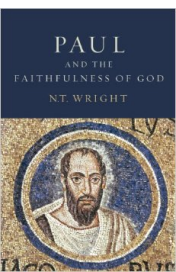
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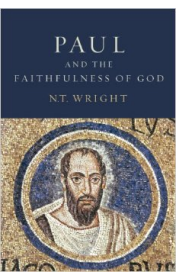
- “The Pauline principle is simple: Free association *outside* the church, precisely because God, not the church, judges those on the outside; but strict discipline *within* the church, because in its free association with the world it may not take on the character of the world in which it freely lives. ... It does not take too much observation to note that all too often the opposites have tended to prevail in the church.” Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 249

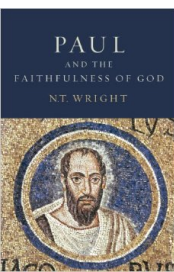


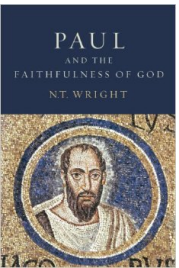
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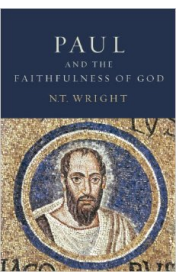






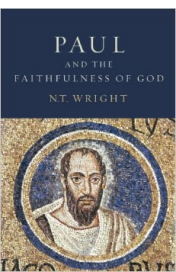
Free Association Outside

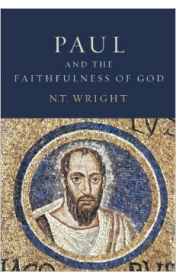
- It's a matter of our basic posture: judgment is out, love is in
- Mt 22.39: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
 - If don't associate with them, how could we?? (...)
- “The word he uses [in 5.9], [means] ‘become mixed up with (*synanamignysthai*)’, ... [it] implies a regular association with, time spent together, close friendship.” Dunn, Beginning from Jerusalem, 787
 - *Not* in ways that lead to sin
 - *But* in the normal course of our lives



What's the principle?

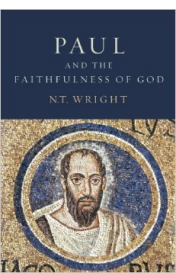
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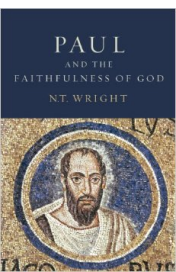


Ph 2.14-16a: "There must be no grumbling or disputing in anything you do. That way, nobody will be able to fault you, and you'll be pure and spotless children of God in the middle of a twisted and depraved generation. You are to shine among them like lights in the world, clinging to the word of life."



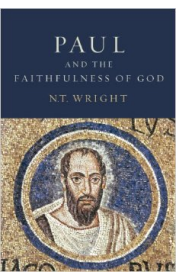
Purity Maintained Inside

- It's a matter of being who we are meant to be
- “The death of Christ makes them new; yet they must get rid of the old in order to be new, precisely because in Christ they already are new! Thus no ‘do in order to be,’ but ‘do because you are.’” Fee, NICNT, FEC, 236
- The danger: contamination *by those within*
 - *Cannot* expect outsiders to “put on the new” (and should not!)
 - *Can expect fellow believers to!*



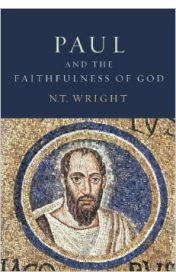
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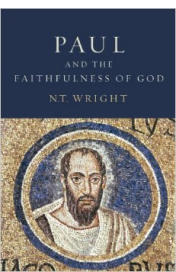
Theology in Culture

- One type of danger: being self-congratulatory
 - E.g. Lk 18.11: “God, I thank you that I am not like the other people—greedy, unjust, immoral, or even like this tax collector.”
 - Leads to judgment, condemnation—and winking at sins
 - Example: condemnation toward gays, poor people
- Another type of danger: contamination
 - “Their major problem lay with their not taking this matter seriously, neither the evil itself nor their danger of being thoroughly contaminated by it.” Fee, FEC, 237
 - Worldly values, brought within the community
 - Example: modes of political speech, laissez-faire attitudes toward sexuality



Theology in Culture

- Note: I think (for the most part) we do OK with this (free association without judgment; purity without separatism)
- But: it's all too easy to become contaminated; values out *there* taken on, and brought *in here*
- It's a wide range of values that can contaminate:
- “In an age in which ethics is too often modified to fit one's present cultural existence—in North America greed, e.g., is easily subsumed under Christian patriotism—these words need once more to be heard distinctly in the church.” Fee, FEC, 240



Discuss at table

- Discuss the balancing act: free association without judgment on the one hand, purity without separatism on the other
- Which side of this will be harder for you—free association outside, or maintaining purity within? Why?
- What sorts of judgment/condemnation tend to take place in churches today? Be specific, and, if you dare, personal.
- What sorts of worldly values tend to contaminate churches today? Be specific, and, if you dare, personal.

