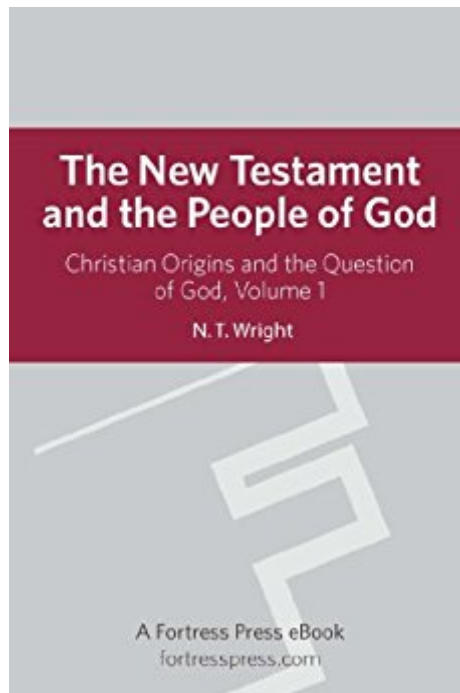


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New Testament People God VI: Christian Origins And The Question Of God



Synopsis

This first volume in the series *Christian Origins and the Question of God* provides a historical, theological, and literary study of first-century Judaism and Christianity. Wright offers a preliminary discussion of the meaning of the word *god* within those cultures, as he explores the ways in which developing an understanding of those first-century cultures are of relevance for the modern world.

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Customer Reviews

This book is the first volume in N.T. Wright's series of books on "The question of God," and Wright spends the first quarter of the book explaining and defining the methodology he intends to apply to the task. This makes for some tedious reading if one has never studied (or studied and found horribly boring) literary theory or historical method. But it is important to the argument he is making. I went back and read it again once I got into the "good stuff" (the historical background of Second Temple Judaism) just so I wouldn't miss any of the finer points he was making. Wright's interpretation of Second Temple Judaism is a variation on E.P. Sanders and J.D.G. Dunn's "New Perspective", which denies that the Jews in Jesus' time believed they could earn salvation through

acts of covenantal loyalty. Wright parts ways with Sanders at several important points, though, including the historicity of Jesus' debates with the Pharisees (which he explores more fully in "Jesus and the Victory of God") and seems to be less interested in doing apologetics for Second Temple Jews than Sanders. But with Sanders, he argues for a pluriform Judaism. He cites scads of ancient texts which catalogue the debates between the Pharisaical schools of Shammai and Hillel, the separatist Essenes and the Sadducees. These groups all expected the "forgiveness of sin" to involve YHWH moving decisively against those who refused to acknowledge him in the way he deserved, which included not only the Gentiles, but also members of the other sects of Judaism which did not hold to their belief system, and to exalt their particular group as the true children of Israel, returned from exile at last.

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