

210 *The way ahead*

This is just a set of random jottings, inspired by having found what feels to be an important book for me: *How God Became King*, by ‘Tom Wright’, and not by ‘NT Wright’, i.e. written for the more general reader rather than theological experts. But...

After I had read the two-thirds of it I realised I was struggling to grasp the fundamentals so I restarted – took another run at it – and I was glad I did; it made me see echoes of a lot of the threads from my own five-year journey since I wrote, ‘Full circle’.^[0]

My exploration started when a single sentence at the beginning of Richard Rohr’s *The Divine Dance* exploded into my brain, saying that faith should not be ‘*propositional* and *transactional*, but **relational** and **mysterious**’ – that expressed *exactly* how I felt.

Here are a few themes that have emerged during my journey:

- The huge importance of God’s overall plan being to bless the world through Abraham.
- The importance of the exodus as an underlying theme through the New Testament (Jesus’ death didn’t just *happen* to be at Passover).
- Salvation as a journey, ‘the way’.
- Faith as community.
- A restored emphasis on the gospels – they’ve been largely ignored in favour of Paul’s theology.
- A false emphasis on ‘getting saved’ and ‘going to heaven’, so church leaders find ‘discipleship’ hard to sell, and ‘social action’ is almost looked down on.
- The importance of the **whole** Bible, i.e. the Old Testament is the essential foundation for the New Testament – Christ came to fulfil it, make sense of it, complete it.
- Seeing the Bible as inspired, yet as written by fallible people who held a specific worldview and had a developing understanding of God’s nature. (I love how God inspired authors and hid gems in seams that later generations could recognise – “Didn’t our hearts burn within us...!”)
- The creation story as the story of God entering his temple. Then God enters the physical temple. In the new creation, God again comes to dwell in his temple, but *we* are the temple of God.
- The importance of the church’s creeds (but Tom adds, plus the canon of scripture, esp. gospels).
- The huge importance of the Lord’s prayer.
- And suffering fits into the mix somewhere, too.
- A recognition of my own pharisaism.

Random thoughts. Maybe some of them have become important to you, too.

Finally an illustration that might help you in your ‘relationship’ with the Bible. As you read a book – any book – you get a bit of an understanding of what the characters are like, and as you get to the end you can see more how it fits together. Now go back and reread the book and, in the light of what you now know from the later parts, you can understand and interpret some of the things that seemed mysterious at first read.

That’s a bit how it feels for me as I follow the way ahead. So exciting!

I suspect you’ll be hearing more about *How God Became King*.

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