

**SMALL
GROUP
GUIDES**
from HarperOne

Broken Signposts

HOW CHRISTIANITY MAKES
SENSE OF THE WORLD

N. T.
WRIGHT

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INTRODUCTION

1. N. T. Wright notes that there are seven “signposts” that all human societies contend with: justice, love, spirituality, beauty, freedom, truth, and power. He then goes on to say they are broken (p. 8). What does he mean by that?
2. Why did Wright choose the Gospel of John as a lens through which to view these seven signposts? What does this gospel’s description of Jesus uniquely offer to this conversation?

CHAPTER 1: JUSTICE

1. Where do you see the difficulty—or even impossibility—of justice in the world today? Name some examples. Why is justice so difficult to achieve?
2. How would you describe the “good news of the gospel”? What role does justice play, if any (p. 16)? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 2: LOVE

1. What kind of love do we read about in, even at the very center of, the Gospel of John (p. 39)?

2. Wright describes Jesus as “God’s love enfleshed” (p. 46). What does Wright mean by this? Why does it matter that, in Jesus, God fulfills his longstanding promise to “come and live” with his people (p. 46)?

CHAPTER 3: SPIRITUALITY

1. What was ancient gnosticism (p. 64)? What form do you see it taking today, and how is it connected to contemporary understandings of spirituality?
2. Wright makes two key claims in this chapter: “The center of Johannine spirituality . . . is the replacement of the Temple by Jesus himself” and “*his followers are to be Temple people too*” (p. 76). How do these claims affirm or challenge how you understand both Jesus and your own spirituality?

CHAPTER 4: BEAUTY

1. Wright notes that beauty is a “pointer to the strange, gently demanding presence of the living God in the midst of his world” (p. 93). Have you ever experienced beauty in this way? If so, describe it.
2. What is the relationship between glory and beauty that we find in John’s description of Jesus? What does that relationship reveal?

CHAPTER 5: FREEDOM

1. “Our culture has . . . been plagued with misunderstandings about freedom” (p. 118). What misunderstandings does Wright mention? Where do you see freedom gone wrong in our world today?
2. Wright claims that Jesus brings external and internal freedom. What does he mean by this? What passages from John’s gospel does he cite in support?

CHAPTER 6: TRUTH

1. “All truth is ‘somebody’s truth.’ Everything depends on who’s telling the story and from what angle. But does that mean there’s no such thing as truth after all?” (p. 138). How would you have answered this question before reading this chapter? How would you answer it now?
2. For Wright, the interaction between Jesus and Pilate in John 19 highlights the difference that Jesus makes when it comes to truth (pp. 141–45). What does this interaction reveal?

CHAPTER 7: POWER

1. Wright suggests that “the abuse of power and the abdication of it . . . point to the ongoing dilemma of power itself” (p. 163). How do you view power? Do you see it

- as something that others abuse, as something to be abdicated, as something to be leveraged, or more? Why? What is your own relationship to power?
2. In Jesus, we see power being properly ordered by vocation (p. 165). How does Jesus do this? What does this mean for our own use of power today?

FINAL QUESTIONS

1. Which of these seven broken signposts did you learn the most about from reading this book? How are you thinking or planning to act differently now because of that learning?
2. On what signpost does your faith community need to grow the most? How could you play a role in that growth?