

### SCRIPTURE STUDIES: TURN WRIGHT III

The first two essays titled this way were DQ 4 and DQ 5. The intervening essays were my effort to get a sufficient poise for the third essay. There is a sense in which I am not ready to go ahead, or, if you like, to go head to head with N.T. Wright. Or toe to toe, if you prefer a boxing parallel: perhaps indeed you are a fan of cage fighting, which is closer to the no-holds-barred strategy of Lonergan's 1833 Overture.

It seems neat to return to the strategy of the first essay (DQ 4) now, which emerged from Rachel Miller's efforts to figure out Wright's position on Christian beliefs. Her collection of Wright pointers was sent to me for my consideration. Now I send myself some of his pointers from a more recent text for our consideration. The text is Wright's fairly recent book, *Surprised by Scripture: Engaging Contemporary Issues* (Harper, 2014). My effort here is collaborative and pedagogical: if you like, it is an invitation to an amateur version of the high-powered cage-fight behavior described on *Method* 250, lines 18–33.

Here we go, then, with some quotations. And it seems as well to just end with them, so that there is a chance, between now (December 1<sup>st</sup>) and February, to share what sense we make of them, with or without the context provided by this series of essays, or by any other source. Might there be some communication with me on the matter: on these texts and the display N.T. Wright gives of his grip on the issues involved? So, I leave us dangling till March 1<sup>st</sup>, but would hope for communications on this or indeed on any other promising issue.

- A. Several of these essays have been as much a surprise to their author as they may be to their readers. I have spent much of my life trying to understand the New Testament in its own context, and so have often had to postpone consideration of other subjects, however fascinating in themselves. However, since I am also committed to relating the Bible to our own day, some of these other subjects have forced themselves upon my attention from time to time. Preface, page ix.
- B. If we are talking about reimagining and relaunching the Christian worldview in the Western world, it isn't only science and religion that have to be thought through. It is the whole of the way we do society and politics, personal life, and, not least, mutual

responsibility across the global family. “Healing the divide between Science and Religion,” pages 24–5.

- C. One of three wonderful things about the Bible is the way no generation can complete the task of studying and understanding it. “Do we need a Historical Adam?” page 29.
- D. First, some reflections – unsystematic musings, really – on the types of knowing. “Can a Scientist Believe in the Resurrection?” page 43.
- E. My intention in this chapter is, as always, to pay the fullest attention to scripture in both its details and its broad sweep, to allow the biblical writers to set the agenda rather than forcing on them a scheme of thought that does not do them justice.” “Jesus is Coming – Plant a Tree!” at page 83.
- F. The Bible tells a multitude of stories, but in its final form it tells an overarching story, a single great narrative, which offers itself as the true story of the world. “How the Bible Reads the Modern World,” page 143.
- G. The knowing that goes with wisdom in the biblical sense sees the object of study not as an isolated entity to be manipulated or exploited but as part of a much larger world in interlocking connections and mutual relations. “Idolatry 2.0,” page 158.
- H. The Gospels as wholes demand to be read in deep and radical integration with the Old Testament. “Our Politics Are Too Small,” page 171.
- I. . . . celebrating the promise of a new world, a world filled with God’s glory as the waters cover the sea. . . . Reflecting on this vision ought to inform and direct our thinking and action in many fields of inquiry and endeavor. But for the moment we might do well simply to pause in contemplation and gratitude. This is the vision of God’s new heavens and new earth; within that vision each of us has a particular calling – prophet, artistic, political, scientific, whatever it may be – by which God will call us to bring signs of that new world to birth within the old one, where vision is still limited and widows still weep. “Apocalypse and the Beauty of God,” page 206.