

Surprised by Hope

Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Please read chapter 3, and answer these questions as you read.

Chapter 3

- I. Do you have a fun or humorous story (maybe from childhood) where the various participants remember key details rather differently? Jot a few notes, and consider sharing them if you're part of a group.

- II. Often times, the eyewitnesses of the Bible are belittled today in claims that if they knew science or other fields as we believe we do today, they wouldn't have claimed what they did in the scriptures. What do you think? Are the accounts we have from naive individuals who didn't know that dead people don't come back to life? Why or why not?

- III. Note here the various pagan and Jewish beliefs that existed around the time of Jesus' death regarding life after death (or lack thereof). Are any intriguing, convincing, or consistent with your own thinking?

- IV. Wright indicates that *resurrection* had a particular meaning in Greek, Latin, and other languages in that time and region. What is that meaning? Do you think Jesus was resurrected by this definition? Do you think you will be resurrected by this definition?
- V. How does Wright characterize what would have been the disciples' initial reaction to the crucifixion?
- VI. Wright notes the Christian hope after death has two stages. What are the two-stages? In which will the person's spirit be present; in which will the body be present?
- A.
- B.
- VII. Wright states that the form of the resurrected body in Judaism is rather vague. In Christianity, it is more defined. What will the body be from a Christian perspective?
- VIII. Wright claims that death is the last weapon of a tyrant or of anyone in power. Do you think life after death, then, is a challenge to those in power? Why or why not?

This study guide is written to guide study and discussions of *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* by N. T. Wright. The full set of study guides is available at <https://livingintograce.com/2022/02/21/study-guide-questions-for-surprised-by-hope-rethinking-heaven-the-resurrection-and-the-mission-of-the-church-by-n-t-wright/>. While based on the book, this guide was not prepared in cooperation with the author, N. T. Wright, nor the publishers (SPCK and HarperOne).



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