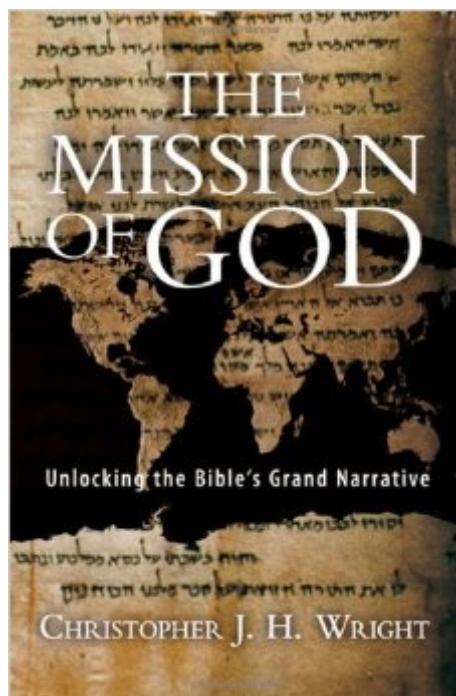


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The Mission Of God: Unlocking The Bible's Grand Narrative



Synopsis

Winner, 2007 Christianity Today Missions/Global Affairs Book Most Christians would agree that the Bible provides a basis for mission. But Christopher Wright boldly maintains that mission is bigger than that--there is in fact a missional basis for the Bible! The entire Bible is generated by and is all about God's mission. In order to understand the Bible, we need a missional hermeneutic of the Bible, an interpretive perspective that is in tune with this great missional theme. We need to see the "big picture" of God's mission and how the familiar bits and pieces fit into the grand narrative of Scripture. Beginning with the Old Testament and the groundwork it lays for understanding who God is, what he has called his people to be and do, and how the nations fit into God's mission, Wright gives us a new hermeneutical perspective on Scripture. This new perspective provides a solid and expansive basis for holistic mission. Wright emphasizes throughout a holistic mission as the proper shape of Christian mission. God's mission is to reclaim the world--and that includes the created order--and God's people have a designated role to play in that mission.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What is the Bible all about? Is it a random collection of writings about people who have experienced God? Is it one story about Israel and another somehow connected story about Jesus? In this masterful work, Christopher Wright sets out to demonstrate that the Bible, from start to finish, can be read as focusing on God's mission: in both the Old and New Testaments, God is on the move. The depth of Wright's book is too much to summarize here, beyond surveying the ground he covers and

discussing a few of the high points along the way. He begins by discussing hermeneutics, that is, how we read the Bible and what we see when we do, and the argument he makes there is that instead of mining the Bible for insights about "missions," we should instead look for God's mission that permeates the pages of the Bible. It's not about searching for texts that tell us to go to the nations, but instead about being attuned to what God is doing and finding our part in it. To flesh out this theme, and to demonstrate how it is one way of showing the unity of the Bible, Wright begins with God, looking at who God reveals himself to be and what God reveals himself to be doing in the world. This involves especially the fundamental notion of God's uniqueness, the foundation of biblical monotheism. The second foundational idea about God is that God wants to be known by that which he has created. God has revealed himself in many and various ways. The final investigation Wright undertakes with regard to God's identity is an extended investigation into the theme of idolatry, a major theme especially of the Old Testament, where he demonstrates that the constant prohibitions of idolatry over and over show God's desire to be known and Israel's conviction (though often forgotten) that God is the only true God.

Christopher Wright is an Old Testament scholar who has written this book to show that the Bible as a whole can be read with a missional hermeneutic. Wright clearly has a great Biblical mind and shows this by using at least one (usually several) passage to back all of his points. Wright prefaces the work by telling of a class he taught at Cambridge University saying: "the more I taught that course, the more I used to introduce it by telling my students that I would like to rename it from 'The Biblical Basis of Mission' to 'The Missional Basis of the Bible.' I wanted them to see not just that the Bible contains a number of texts, which happen to provide a rationale for missionary endeavor but that the whole Bible is itself a missional phenomenon (p.22). This statement sets the tone for the book and Wright takes off from there. Throughout the book Wright discusses several topics that are crucial to understanding the Bible as having a missional mandate. Wright discusses how God sought to make him known to the people of Israel in the Old Testament and to the world through Jesus in the New Testament. God seeks to make himself known to all the nations of the world, as well as be worshiped by these nations. Wright goes on to discuss who the people of mission are and that all Christians are called to play a part in redeeming and restoring God's kingdom. The last part of the book is dedicated to what Wright entitles "The Arena of Mission" and deals with how God's image and missional mandate include taking care of the earth that God has given us. Wright's abundant use of scripture gives his arguments and points of view very strong support and it is easy to see where his ideas are coming from.

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