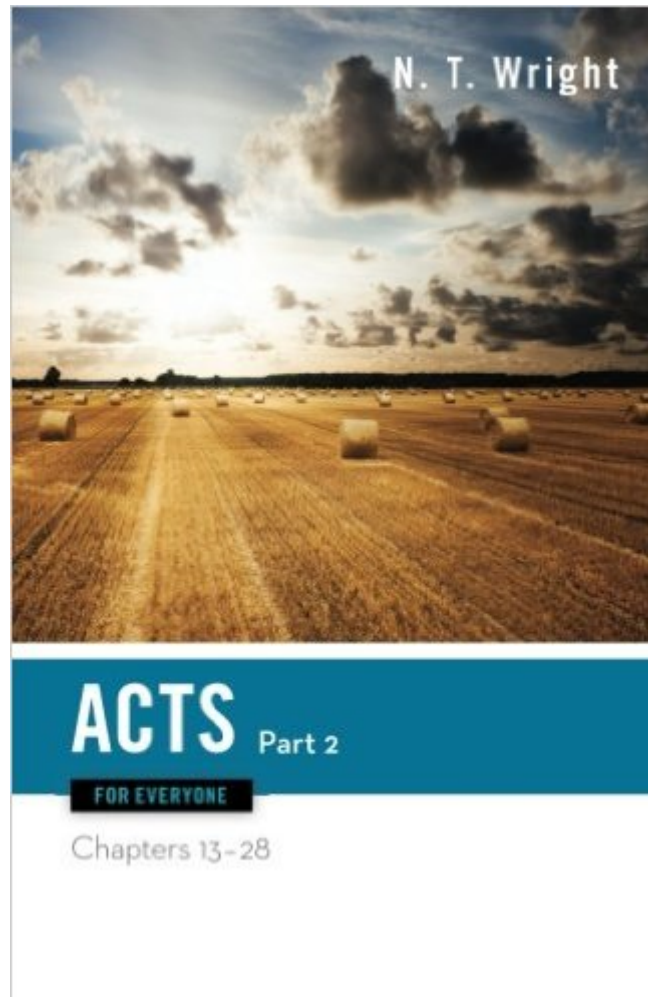


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Acts For Everyone, Part Two: Chapters 13-28 (The New Testament For Everyone)



Synopsis

Writing in an accessible and anecdotal style, Tom Wright helps us to approach the rich and many-sided story of the book of Acts. Wright shows how the book builds on Luke's Gospel, laying out the continuing work and teaching of the now risen and ascended Jesus in the power of the Spirit. His writing captures the vivid way in which Luke's work draws us all into the story, while leaving the ending open and challenging, inviting Christians today to pick up and carry on the story as we in turn live our lives in the service of Jesus. Tom Wright has undertaken a tremendous task: to provide guides to all the books of the New Testament and to include in them his own translation of the entire text. Each short passage is followed by a highly readable discussion with background information, useful explanations and suggestions, and thoughts as to how the text can be relevant to our lives today. A glossary is included at the back of the book. The series is suitable for group study, personal study, or daily devotions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Tom Wright has written a series of New Testament commentaries that are easy and enjoyable to read. He combines excellent scholarship and insight with reader friendly simplicity. I highly recommend the Everyone series to everyone. In each book a very readable translation of the New Testament book being discussed, is provided by Tom Wright. He follows this by a story or

anecdote and then gives his insightful comments on the text itself. At the end of each book is a helpful glossary of terms. In chapters 1-12 that make up part 1 Wright skillfully walks us through the stories of the ascension, the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2, the spreading of the gospel by Peter before the Sanhedrin, the stoning of Stephen that caused the church to move out from Jerusalem into Judea, Samaria, and unto the utmost parts of the earth. This spread of the gospel climaxes with Peter and Cornelius and the spread of the gospel out into the Gentile world. In part 2 he works his way through chapters 13-28. This will take you through the missionary journey's of Paul, the Jerusalem Council, Paul's trip to Jerusalem, his two years in prison at Ceasarea where he offers his defense before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, then the trip to Rome, which includes Paul on the isle of Malta, and finally in Rome awaiting trial. Wright takes the position that Luke is taking Paul's life in parallel to Jesus, who set his face toward Jerusalem, where he knew the son of man would be handed over to be crucified. Paul, despite prophecies of warning from Agabus, goes to Jerusalem and causes a stir about the resurrection. He ends up in Rome preaching the Gospel. Wright masterfully walks us through the drama of Acts and does so with simple and easy clarity, but with the backing of great scholarship.

For those unfamiliar with Wright's "_____ for Everyone" series, they are a series of commentaries on the New Testament books by Bishop Wright based on his extensive historical scholarship. He provides his own translation (based on his study of the source languages) which is a very engaging paraphrase. The text is divided up into chronological topic-based segments, followed by a 2-3 page sermonette/commentary based on that section. This volume covers chapters 13-28 of the Book of Acts, which could be considered as the "Trials of Paul" as it follows the adventures of Paul as he travels throughout the Mediterranean area, preaching the good news and encountering opposition everywhere he goes. The church continues to define its Jewish/Christian identity, chiefly over the circumcision issue and the prerequisites for admission to the fellowship of believers in a time when the Jews are "zealous" for their traditions and national identity under Roman occupation. Of Wright's commentaries, this edition is unique in that many sections are illustrated with maps to show the areas mentioned and Paul's journeys. Even though this is the longest volume (249 pages), it reads quickly like a novel, as we see Paul face his trials. Wright suggests that Luke has compiled this chronology as a sort of affidavit for Paul's trial to show that he has not offended against the Jewish traditions, being found not guilty repeatedly while the Jewish zealots attempt to stir up trouble for him. Wright suggests that Paul's last voyage and shipwreck are Luke's allusion to Jesus' crucifixion and death and the story of Jonah. The end of the Book of Acts, Wright emphasizes, is our

beginning.(NOTE: I did notice an error in Wright's translation of Acts 25:12, which initially made me do a double-take: it is FESTUS, not FELIX, who tells Paul "to Caesar you shall go!")

N.T. Wright is (deservedly) famous as a scripture scholar, but in this series addresses a general public. His explanations are well-founded. This is the fruit of biblical scholarship, not biblical scholarship itself and the discussion with colleagues that is so often found in academic commentaries is left out. Because Wright wants to engage, he uses a homiletic style which uses an image, often a story and often about him to introduce the reader to a small section of the text. Sometimes it works not very well, but it always makes a point. A homilist will find that this images can be adapted to make good attention grabbers. The exegesis is well founded and free of novelties for novelty's sake. I would recommend this series to all who want to understand Christian scripture, to bible study groups, and to priests and all who want to and need to explain scripture. A theology student can certainly do worse for an introduction into an important book of the bible, and will find the interpretation a great help when tangling with the more involved exegesis that academia has to offer.

N.T. Wright is a good writer. This is the second "for Everyone" commentary that I have purchased (Revelation was the first). Both were very useful. He takes a story like approach that introduces most sections with a personal story that illustrates the Biblical text. His exegesis is good without being too heady. He doesn't dwell at length on the original Greek, but does bring in word studies when they are helpful. Wright does a fine job of contextualizing his comments on the text to today's world. If you're a biblical scholar or a seminary student, this book may be too simplistic for you. If you are new to biblical studies and are interested in learning more or are leading a Bible study in a local church this book will be perfect for you.

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