

St Martin's Small Group Material

The Resurrection

1. The Resurrection: BODY
2. The Resurrection: HEAVEN
3. The Resurrection: EARTH

NT Wright is the former Bishop of Durham and a noted New Testament scholar who has written extensively on the implications of the resurrection. His books *Surprised by Hope* and *The challenge of Jesus* take seriously the idea that the physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus has meaning for our lives not only after death but in the here and now. Tom has often taken part in public debates with those who deny the physical resurrection such as Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. He has also written a high successful series of commentaries for everyday people on many of the books of the New Testament.

This 3 week series is based on the work of Wright with short video clips, articles and scriptures to help get you going in discussion.

During the first week we think about the idea that we are indeed to be Easter people. We live in the age of the resurrection. Whilst there is a future hope that Christ will return and reign in fullness at some point we taste the powers of the age to come as we see the kingdom, the resurrection breaking into the present. Our first session asks the question *What does the resurrection mean?*

The second session asks the seemingly simple question *Where is Heaven?* Some of us have the idea that heaven is a distant place just to the right of Pluto. Some of us might believe that we will have no need of our bodies in heaven. Perhaps you think it's about floating round on clouds, plucking the strings of your heavenly harp all day long? N T Wright's book *Surprised by Hope* paints a more biblically sound view. We look together at Revelation 21 and 22.

Our final session considers an issue related to the idea of where heaven is located? If God makes his home amongst us and wipes away every tear, extinguishes death and invites us to be his people here on earth, as Revelation 21:1-5 appears to suggest, how does that correspond how we care for the earth? Some passages in the New Testament appear to consign the earth we live on to destruction and fire but is that really God's intention for the world he initially created as very good? What should our position be and how does the resurrection impact this.