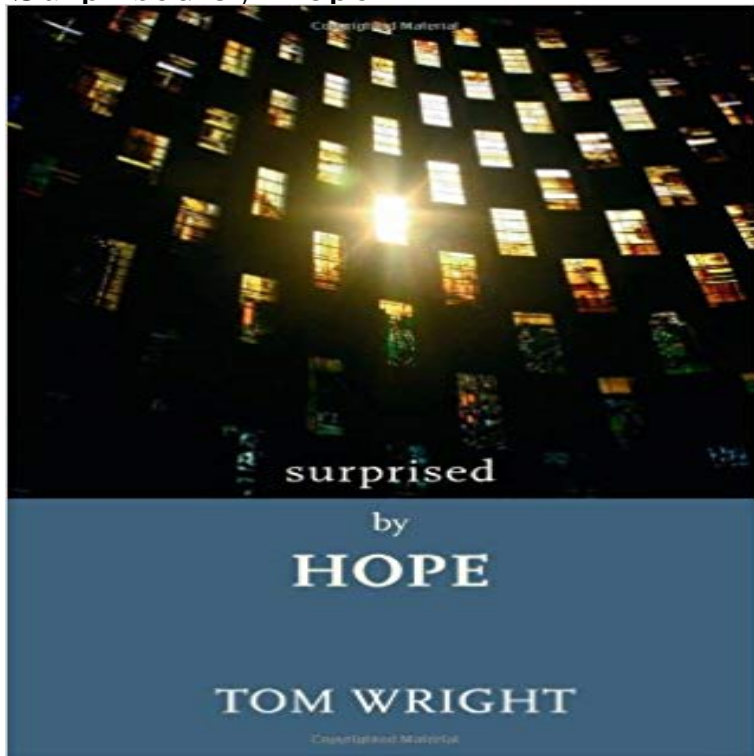


Surprised by Hope



What do Christians hope for? To leave this wicked world and go to heaven? For the kingdom of God to grow gradually on earth? What do we mean by the resurrection of the body, and how does that fit with the popular image of sitting on clouds playing harps? And how does all this affect the way we live in the here and now? Tom Wright, one of our leading theologians, addresses these questions in this provocative and wide-ranging new book. He outlines the present confusion about future hope in both church and world. Then, having explained why Christians believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus himself, he explores the biblical hope for new heavens and new earth, and shows how the second coming of Jesus, and the eventual resurrection, belong within that larger picture, together with the intermediate hope for heaven. For many, including many Christians, all this will come as a great surprise. Wright convincingly argues that what we believe about life after death directly affects what we believe about life before death. For if God intends to renew the whole creation - and if this has already begun in Jesus resurrection - the church cannot stop at saving souls, but must anticipate the eventual renewal by working for God's kingdom in the wider world, bringing healing and hope in the present life. Lively and accessible, this book will surprise and excite all who are interested in the meaning of life not only after death but before it. It is intended for readers of Tom Wright's other books, such as *Simply Christian* and *Evil and the Justice of God*.

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