

Reid, Alvin L. *Sharing Jesus Without Freaking Out: Evangelism the Way You Were Born to do it.* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017), 160 pages.

Alvin Reid, senior professor of evangelism at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, has written a concise account of evangelism as a lifestyle. The book was written to be an accessible guide for the evangelism class that Reid teaches at the church he serves as a bi-vocational pastor. There are eight chapters, each which explains a principle aimed at helping believers share Jesus through their everyday connections, focusing attention on their strengths and interests. The book closes with an insightful “eight week challenge” which can be done individually or as a group, assisting the reader to integrate the eight principles into their lives. The emphasis on the practitioner as the primary audience is demonstrated throughout this book, highlighted by stories of Reid’s ministry among young professionals in a rapidly growing urban area.

The content moves away from the modernity methods of evangelism which taught one approach that everyone would share in every situation (think *The Four Spiritual Laws* or *The Roman Road*). The book points to relationships, challenging the reader to focus on what God is doing in and through the lives of those involved in the process, both the one sharing the gospel and the person receiving it. Reid acknowledges the strengths of teaching one system to large groups of people but recognizes that the gospel becomes more effective when personal connections are made to the lives of the participants.

The book has a theological foundation, focusing on the role of God in evangelism and encourages the reader to prayer, spiritual awareness, sensitivity, and conversations that help them perceive how God is at work. This style of evangelism emphasizes a move

from an individualistic approach to a broader view in which people fit into the narrative of how God is at work in the world. The narrative approach means that evangelism is redefined as conversations rather than presentations. This moves the 'method' of evangelism to be centered on people with whom there are significant relationships rather than strangers.

One of the primary contributions of this book is the clarity with which Reid points out that evangelism flows from the identity of the believer rather than being a rote system. He comes back to this point in a variety of ways throughout the book, driving home the theme that if the believer doesn't enjoy their Christian relationship, it isn't realistic to expect others to be attracted to Christ through the witness of that person. The book also serves as an excellent resource guide, pointing to places online and other possibilities which a person can explore to improve their understanding of evangelism.

It is important to note that this book communicates Reid's pastoral heart louder than his academic voice. It is well researched with endnotes, but lacks a bibliography and thus may not serve some educators for the purpose of higher education. Even so, it could be used in academia to address the complaint of many graduates who find themselves ill-prepared for evangelism in the real world. Overall, Reid has made an insightful contribution to the literature on evangelism and the book is recommended for those seeking to expand their understanding in this field.