

Chan, Sam. *Evangelism in A Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus Christ More Believable*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. 288 pp.

Like the title of the book suggests, Sam Chan is writing on how to do evangelism in a world that is not only skeptical to Christianity, but sometimes overtly hostile to it. According to his own website (www.espressotheology.com), Chan is a theologian, preacher, author, evangelist, ethicist, cultural analyst, and medical doctor. He holds a PhD from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and is a public speaker for City Bible Forum, which does all kinds of evangelism throughout Australia.

The main purpose of the book is to teach Christians to evangelize more creatively and effectively in 2018 and beyond. Chan highlights several evangelism strategies and even specific methods in the past that have worked wonderfully but are no longer as relevant due to the changing landscape. He does not propose a new evangelism tool but rather provides a new toolset by articulating what has changed and looking at the world through new lenses.

The book is divided into ten chapters and one concluding section. He starts off with a theology of evangelism which provides the theological foundation for what he thinks evangelism should be. The next six chapters deal with different issues that are relevant for evangelism in the West (which he defines as North America, Western Europe, and Australia) today. Examples include a defense and methodology for storytelling the gospel and what to watch out for when evangelizing to post-modern people. He includes two chapters on evangelistic preaching (drawing from his previous book) and one on epistemology, apologetics, and what he calls defeater beliefs. Perhaps his biggest contribution is to talk about concepts related to evangelism using theology proper, sociology, soteriology, and many other -ologies in a way that makes sense to the 21st century Christian and especially the post-churched non-Christian. He does not just back them up

with practicality, as some books on evangelism might be prone to do, but with biblical insight and theology.

For example, to advocate for talking about the idea of sin without using the word "sin," Chan explores many examples where Jesus often does not use the word to describe sin but uses vivid imagery (p. 85). Chan does not believe in a one-size-fits-all gospel but argues for presentations of more particular aspects of it. He thinks that this is essential for evangelism in a "post-Christian, post-churched, post-reached world" (back cover). He believes that one of the primary needs right now is to change the language that Christians use in talking about evangelism and especially when doing it. He argues that Christians need to be more aware of a redemptive analogy, the existential cry, and the storyline (or metanarrative) of the culture before we intersect it with the gospel.

Chan utilizes such concepts like Peter Berger's plausibility structures (pp. 42-45) and Immanuel Kant's noumenal-phenomenal divide (pp. 46-47) with ease. These are just two examples among many, reflecting his interdisciplinary approach to his writing and representing a major strength of this book. Chan is good at giving readers both propositional truths as well as concrete-relational examples. His many stories show Chan's ideas as emerging from experience and practice more than from abstract theory, which to some readers might be a good thing while for others it might be a weakness.

Chan's understanding of evangelism is quite orthodox. Moreover, looking at his literature base, Chan is obviously capable of depth in his writings. The way that he makes it all accessible to the general public makes this book an easy read for most people and highly recommended. Chan's 15-session DVD compendium to the book makes this a valuable resource on the popular level to the minister hoping to spark more evangelism in his church congregants and the average

Christian who is struggling to reach out to her seemingly hopeless non-Christian friend. For the theologian, this book will illustrate wonderfully how certain concepts plays out in real life.