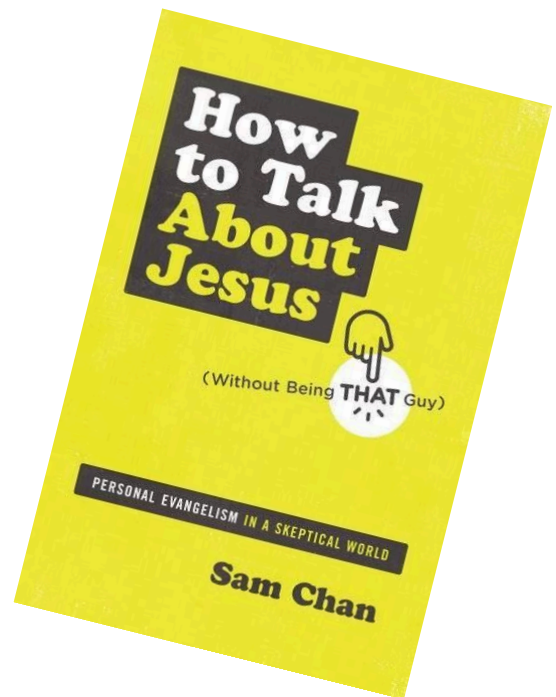


# How to talk about Jesus (without being that guy!)

This is the title of a really accessible [book](#) on evangelism written by Australian author Sam Chan. An interview with Sam about the book can be found [here](#). It was shortlisted for the 2021 Christian Book of the Year.

As Anglicans we want to talk about Jesus with our friends, and not be embarrassed or awkward as we do it. How do we go about that?

Sam has 8 tips for this.



## 1. Merge your universes of friends

We all have friends who are followers of Jesus and some who are not, but they usually live in different worlds. The gospel of Jesus will become much more credible to your friends who are not Christians if they know some people who are. So why not merge those groups of friends? Invite some non-Christians when your Christian friends are around and see what happens.

## 2. Go to their things

If we hope people will come to our things – say, the Hope25 Wine and Cheese event at our church – then we need to spend time going to their things, being involved in the groups, clubs and activities that our friends belong to. Jesus spent a lot of time hanging out with people who were different to him, that he wanted to reach. The more we spend time with the people we want to reach, then more likely it is they will respond to an invitation to join us.

## 3. Coffee, dinner, gospel

Conversations with our friends have several levels. We begin with interests, move on to values, and eventually to worldviews. When we are conversing about worldviews, we can speak about the gospel and hope in Jesus. As we think about hospitality – coffee allows us to speak about interests, but when we invite someone to dinner, the conversation goes deeper into values. By asking helpful questions (eg What is important to you? What do you think it all means? Do you pray?), you can move into the realm of worldviews. So be creative in the hospitality that you do to allow the deeper conversation.

## 4. Learn the art of listening

If our talking about what Jesus means to us is going to be natural, it will take place within the context of conversation not monologue. So spending more time listening attentively and asking questions, like good conversationalists do, rather than seeking the moment to give a “speech”, will more likely create the environment where you can actually speak some words about Jesus.

## 5. Tell a better story

We have a great story to tell about Jesus to the world. He answers the questions that many people are asking – about meaning, forgiveness, shame, uncertainty, identity, death, fear and so on. We need to find ways to communicate that in the language of people today. Chan has some great material in this chapter that is a bit too much to summarise – but he is encouraging us to tell God’s story in a fresh way without jargon. One I really liked was “Manger, Cross, and King”. Manger – we can tell the story of God becoming one of us in Jesus. Cross – we can talk about Jesus dying for us to wash away guilt and shame. King – we can tell the story of us choosing to be loyal to Jesus to spread his love, justice and mercy, and how he will return one day to finally establish his kingdom. We can also learn to tell our own story of faith and link it with the bible’s story of Jesus.

## 6. Tell them stories about Jesus

Telling people that we are Christians will often not convey the right message, as people will have preconceived ideas about what a Christian is. But telling them some stories about Jesus will help them engage with him. You might tell the one about how Jesus healed the paralysed man, or how he calmed the storm, or the one about how he ate with tax collectors and sinners. This might even lead to you offering to read some bible stories with your friend. How encouraging would that be?

## 7. Become their unofficial, de facto Chaplain

Chaplains get to walk alongside all kinds of people in their daily lives – think of those who work in the military or hospitals or schools. We can do the same with our friends. Chaplains provide wisdom and a listening ear to people. They learn people’s names and take an interest in them. They are a calm presence and offer to pray with people. You can take that role in your friends’ lives, being there for them and connecting them with the sacred.

## 8. Lean into disagreement

Sometimes when we talk about Jesus, it will make people react to us. Some will probably disagree with us and our worldview. That’s OK! All we have to do is lean into it, with the confidence that Jesus did too. We can gently challenge people about their worldviews and leave the rest up to God. The thing we are trying to do is win the friendship, not win the argument.

There is so much more in Sam Chan’s book, and we recommend it to you. It could be used as a discussion guide for small groups, or perhaps a reading group in your church, or as training for your Hope25 team. You can order a copy [here](#).

The Hope25 Team

