A scroll with text on it. The scroll is unrolled and has a light brown, parchment-like texture. It is held by four wooden rollers, two at the top and two at the bottom. The text is centered on the scroll. At the bottom center of the scroll, there is a decorative flourish consisting of several parallel lines that curve upwards and then downwards.

A Guide To
Christian
Writing
and
Publishing

By Joyce Gill

A Guide to
Christian
Writing
and
Publishing
by Joyce Gill

*It is a violation of Christian ethics
to reproduce any part of this manual
without the written permission of the authors.*

Gill Ministries
PO Box 6969
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315
www.gillministries.com

Table of Contents

A Guide to Christian Writing and Publishing.....	5
Your Vision and Goal	6
Target Your Readers	7
<i>Readability</i>	
Before You Even Start	8
<i>Computers and Their Awesome Abilities</i>	
<i>Consider a Bible Program – Dictionary with Thesaurus</i>	
Make an Outline.....	9
Now for the Fun Part – Write!	11
Beginning Again	12
<i>Chapter’s Length – Editing and Proofing</i>	
Scripture and References	14
<i>Inserting, Proofing, Copyright Information</i>	
Using Proper Grammar	16
<i>Be Consistent – New Spelling Rules</i>	
Proper Paragraph Structure	17
<i>Person – Tense</i>	
Sentences and Paragraphs That Cause Hurt.....	18
<i>The Accusing “You” – Must</i>	
Using the Right Word	19
Redundant Words.....	22
Capitalization	23
<i>Most Common Errors in Capitalizing</i>	
Rules for Writing Numbers.....	25
Using Abbreviations	25
Using Contractions.....	27
Lord Jesus Christ.....	27
Use of “Man”	28
Punctuation	28
<i>No Double Spaces – Quotation Marks with Periods and Commas – Never Double Punctuate – Use of Hyphens- Em Dashes - En Dashes – Using the Ellipsis</i>	
Typesetting to Look Professional.....	30
<i>Keep It Simple – Keep It Consistent – Uppercase, Underlining, Use of Bold – Two Forms of Paragraphing</i>	
Using a Style Sheet	33
The Final Composition	33
<i>Name and Address – Signatures – Copyright – ISBN Numbers</i>	
Authors, Typesetters, Publishers, and Printers	35
<i>Author – Typesetter – Publisher – Vanity Publishers – Printer</i>	
Various Bindings	39
In Conclusion	40

This work is dedicated to my mother, Goldia Mills, who instilled in me a love for books at a very early age. She often replied, “A little bird told me,” when asked how she knew certain things.

A Guide to Christian Writing and Publishing



Writing a book seems so exciting when we start – especially our first book! It’s something like having a baby. We spend months of time on it. It seems so perfect and then – someone has the nerve to tell us it isn’t! What happened? What went wrong? Why don’t others realize what God has shown us and how wonderful it is?

Maybe, we fell a little short of our first goals. We may have chased a few rabbits (followed a few side issues) making the trail harder and harder for others to follow. Perhaps, we knew our subject so well, we assumed the readers knew more than they did and left them totally confused, unable to follow our thoughts.

There are two main reasons God leads us to write a book. We may have lived through a damaging experience and need to work through the details of what happened, finding God’s solutions. Writing is a great way of doing this. It helps us organize our thoughts and feelings. This writing could be just for ourselves – or it could also have tremendous insight and teaching for the body of Christ. Another reason to write is that we have a message burning in our spirits, and know we should get it written to share with others – to help others.

It is flattering that so many people are asking us about writing and publishing their books. We have spent a lot of time answering questions – or feeling guilty because we couldn’t take the time. We have written many letters saying much the same thing about writing or publishing a book. In *A Guide to Christian Writing and Publishing*, we have put our varied pieces of information into an organized written form. Another title could be, *Learning from Our Many Errors!* Our desire in putting this manual together is to answer many of your questions – to help you start reaching your own goals.

***Have fun! Write!
Don’t let others – especially us –
stop you from doing what is in your spirit!***



Your Vision and Goal

It's hard to reach a goal if we don't know where it is – or even what it is. When starting a new project, one of the first things we do is pray about, discuss and agree on our objective. We decide what the theme is going to be – what our vision is – what we want to teach. While working on the project, we keep this theme in mind at all times!

However, we don't write, "This is the theme of the book." We let the readers discover it for themselves. By doing this, we let them experience the discovery of the truths of the book as it is revealed to them.

When we were children, another child would sometimes chant, "I know something you don't know!" This caused us a lot of stress. We don't use phrases such as, "In this lesson, we're going to teach you ..." To us, this is like saying, "We know something ..." We would rather write in such a way that we are all learning together. And we have found that every writing project becomes a great time of learning for us.

Take time to think through and write your theme into a strong, brief statement. Then, make every sentence, every word move toward that theme. If they don't – change them, or take them out. You may find you need to change your theme to agree with what is coming out of your spirit as you begin thinking, studying and writing the various parts of your book. That's all right! Change the theme, but as you do make the things you have written previously line up with the new vision.

Write your goal below:

Now that you have your vision written, the next step is to decide how you are going to accomplish it. Are you going to write your personal experiences with teaching interwoven? Are you going to write a verse-by-verse Bible study? Will a teaching manual accomplish your goal better – or a fiction book? In other words, what is the best way to accomplish your purpose?



Target Your Readers

Who do you think will read your book? Your first answer probably is, “Absolutely everyone!” But being a little more realistic, who are the readers you’re going to reach – children, teens, young adults, college students, women, men, mister and misses average American, pastors, or the seminary student? The answer to this will strongly affect the words you use.

Readability

The average American reads between the sixth and eighth grade level. This becomes even more important if we expect our work to be read in countries where English is the second language. In many word-processing programs there is a program for *Readability Statistics*. It’s usually part of the *Grammar Check* program. We put almost everything we write through this test – sometimes several times – before we consider it finished.

I have taken the teaching of Jesus – our most wonderful example of a Communicator – from Matthew five and six (New King James Version), and put it through the *Readability Statistics* on my computer program. It came up with these results:

Readability Ease	84.5
Flesch Kincaid Grade level	4.6
Coleman-Liau Grade level	11.0
Bormuth Grade Level	9.8
The reading grade level averages	8.5

Jamie Buckingham was our personal role model as a top communicator in writing for many years. We typed in two of his articles and put them through the *Readability Statistics*. He shot the rules to pieces, but his writing came out:

Readability Ease	80.9
Flesch Kincaid Grade level	5.0
Coleman-Liau Grade level	6.2
Bormuth Grade Level	7.8
His reading grade level averaged	6.34

Use your computer program to evaluate your sentences and words for the group you have targeted.



Before You Even Start

Computers and Their Awesome Abilities

Years ago, A.L. started out writing his books by hand, and then I typed them into manuscript form. Then he revised them, and I revised them and we made notes all over the pages. We even cut sections from one place and taped them onto another. Then I retyped them – we revised them – I retyped them ... It seemed like an endless process. At last, we had our book completed and took it to the typesetter.

Typesetting was a whole different process. The book was typed again into typesetting equipment and photo ready pages were printed. These pages were proofed again and again looking for typesetting errors. Corrections were made, and finally that process was complete and photo-ready pages were sent to the printer.

When we saw a word-processor the first time, we were thrilled at all the benefits it had. And that word-processor was nothing compared to the computers and programs we have today. Of course, when we learned to use a computer, the revisions went faster and faster. And then, to save the time and cost of using professional typesetting, we purchased a sophisticated typesetting program and learned to use it.

Now it's even easier. Most typesetting can be done using a current word-processing program and they're quite easy to learn. We use Microsoft Word. Some of our friends say Word Perfect is great.

Whatever program you use, be sure it's compatible with these two programs in case you need to send your file to someone for help, a professional typesetter, or a publisher.

All of this is to say, if you're serious about writing and ever took a course in typing, consider using a good computer program and learn to take advantage of its many features.

The wonderful thing you know, or will know, about working with a computer is that it's easy to add, change and delete. One of the things that isn't so wonderful is the computer's ability to lose creative writing. Set your program to automatically save at least every ten minutes. Beyond that, when you know something is new and fresh and you have "caught it" – save your file and then continue writing. We could give you tear-jerking examples of creative material we have lost over the years because we became so

involved in the creativity that we forgot to back up the file as we wrote! Each time you stop working on your project, make a backup disc copy.

In the earlier word-processing programs, it was easier to work with smaller files and we usually had one file for each chapter. With the added capabilities and speed of our present computers and programs, we have found it's quicker to have the complete book in one file – for moving paragraphs and chapters around; for consistency; doing *Find and Replace*; making a Table of Contents; page numbering; and for setting up headers and footers.

Consider a Bible Program

Besides a strong word-processing program, you should consider using a good Bible program. There are many available. Be sure the program you purchase will insert verses directly into your documents and that the translations you prefer are available. There are other considerations, such as the study helps the program has. We, for example, use the Strong's Concordance and the code numbers continuously and our program needed to include these.

A Dictionary with Thesaurus

It is a great help to have a good dictionary program with a thesaurus. Writing expands our desire to know words and their exact meanings. A dictionary and thesaurus we can tab into and out of instantly, are a great assistance and they will more than pay for themselves in the time they save.

Make an Outline



Remember the groans in our English composition class when the teacher said, “Make an outline.” There was nothing we wanted to do less! But now we understand the reason and the advantages. Now, we see it as a great organizer.

We may have a great amount of disorganized knowledge but our desire is to put it into a book for others to read and understand. An outline is the best way to organize our thoughts. It takes us from the general thought of wanting to write a book, to the organized steps of achieving our vision.

Have you ever had someone start to tell you about something that happened, and jump right into the middle of the story, and then realize you needed

some background information? The story started, then backed up and started again, and backed up, until you were thoroughly confused – or maybe bored.

For instance, “That person at the stop sign just ... Well, actually when I was on the way to work yesterday, this person at the stop sign just ... Yesterday morning, I was wearing my new silk blouse and was on the way to work drinking a cup of coffee. This person at the stop sign ...”

We can get by with this type of sentence structure when we are upset, talking to friends, but not when we expect someone to read our book. We should organize our thoughts.

The first outline of a book is very broad and always subject to change. An outline covers the most important facts, and often the main points become the chapter headings. If we’re writing a Bible study, the Scripture we’re going to use should be inserted next. As we do this, the lesser points of the outline become obvious. Subtitles are entered. Indications of possible illustrations are added. Comments, even sentences that come to mind are added. But every word in a section should line up with its heading – that’s why the headings are always changing.

The outline is for you – to organize your thoughts. It’s very probable no one will ever see it, so make it what you need. Our first outline is usually less than one page in length and we title it *Basic Outline*. We copy this outline to a second page and retitle it *Working Outline*. We insert our Scriptures, illustrations, comments, sentences, and paragraphs into this outline. It becomes longer and longer, and in time, becomes the book.

Facts can be boring. Even the first chapter titles can be boring, so titles are also very much subject to change. Don’t be too concerned about titles when you begin. One of the last things you should do in each chapter is to go back and make the title a truer picture of what is contained in each section. Make them exciting – or at least interesting.

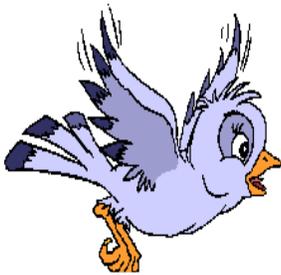
For example, *My Trip to the Dentist* doesn’t sound too exciting. Who wants to read about a trip to the dentist? How about changing it to, *My Trip to Hell and Back*? Of course, that’s too negative and is certainly an exaggeration. A better title might be, *I Didn’t Want to Go!*

Maybe you’re going to write about what happened when you were traveling to the dentist, or the fact that a former business partner who took thousands of dollars from you was sitting in the waiting room. Maybe you finally got up your nerve, and sat there for two hours only to have the dentist called

away on an emergency just as your turn came. Everything in that chapter should be building on the theme, *My Trip to the Dentist*.

You can retitle your chapters continuously. Be creative. You can even put in some titles you know you won't use. They may be a step to the right title. Actually as you are doing creative writing, good titles will probably come to mind. Titles are fun. Make the titles descriptive of what is in a chapter or section, but also interesting – words that will draw the reader on into reading the next section or chapter.

A biography can have an even more boring outline – Chapter One, Ages 0 to 12, Chapter Two, Ages 13 to 19, etc. Then everything you learn about the person will fit somewhere in your outline. Chapter One might later become, *The Child No One Wanted*. Chapter Two may become Chapters Two and Three. Always remember, the outline is for your convenience. It's not set in concrete – it's always changing to meet your needs.



Now for the Fun Part – Write!

The fun part for every author or teacher is answering the question:

- ✧ How do I teach this point and make it interesting, exciting, readable, and understandable?
- ✧ Why am I qualified to write about this?
- ✧ What unique experiences have I had in my life that made this teaching a reality for me and how will that experience make it “come alive” for my readers?

Don't worry about sentence structure – misspelled words – or half thoughts. Put in a code to indicate you're coming back to fill in the facts. God gives an anointing to write and being too careful, trying to correct every word or sentence, will stop this anointing.

Write on Chapter Three, point six one time; and the introduction to Chapter One at another. Or, you might write Chapter Four first. Write whatever is in your spirit. Write the part you're most excited about at the time. Write where you feel the anointing to write. Add quick edit notes such as “/// find paragraph – T.L. Osborn on healing,” or “///add verse – weak are strong,” “///story about San Diego trip.” Make just enough notes to trigger your memory when you go back, but go on in the flow of the anointing. Write toward the broad picture as you understand it and fill in the details later.

Use your personal illustrations – they make your writing unique to you. Use inserts you have read from others and remember to give them credit.

***Don't be a perfectionist at this time.
Perfectionism destroys creativity!***

We could compare writing under the creative anointing of God, to skiing down a mountainside in fresh snow. It's exhilarating! It feels wonderful! But when we get to the bottom and look back, we see our trail wasn't always smooth. It would be hard for another to follow in our tracks.

When the anointing to be creative – to write – lifts, do *Spell Check*. Then rewrite the section you have just written. If you notice you have used a word over and over, use a thesaurus to find other possible words. You may have used a word that doesn't give your true meaning. Sometimes a thesaurus will give a clearer understanding of the popular meaning of a word than the dictionary definition does. For example, the word, "weird," should never be used in connection with the Christian life. It has to do with "abnormal, bizarre, deviant, queer" – all connected with the satanic realm.

You may discover you were thinking one thing but not accurately expressing it. Now, it's time to be correct. Change sentences, rewrite paragraphs. Check the "person" in the paragraphs. Check the tenses. This may be boring, but is very necessary. You may find whole paragraphs that don't belong in this section, but in another. Move them. Now it's time to be a perfectionist.

Continue in this writing and rewriting mode until you have filled in every point of the outline – or changed it – or deleted it. Sometimes you think you have a lot to say on a particular point and discover one sentence did it. Put that sentence in another chapter where it fits and delete the point in the outline. About now, you might even think, I'm done! I've finished my book! – but you haven't.



Beginning Again

Go back to the first paragraph, the first sentence and begin to rewrite. Does anything you wrote seem to conflict with something you wrote in a different chapter? Did you really say what you meant? Did you jump from subject one to subject two, and then back to subject one?

Rearrange paragraphs – sections – even chapters to move the reader in a

straight line toward your goal. Continuously ask yourself, “Did I achieve my goal?”

What seemed so anointed one day, may seem very dreary another. Relax! Your writing (and ours) is most likely not the inspired Word of God, and so can be changed and changed again, making your main theme clearer.

A book is written by writing, and writing, and writing, and then by rewriting, and rewriting, and rewriting. John and Elizabeth Sherrill were a tremendous writing team who wrote best seller after best seller in the Christian market for many years. Their secret was two-fold. They wrote in the anointing of the Holy Spirit and they rewrote, going back and forth between each other a minimum of six times on every book.

Chapter's Length

Often as you're writing, you will find you have twenty-five pages under one point of the outline and three pages under another. Chapters of a book should be approximately the same length. Don't be concerned about this as you're writing. However, in the rewriting process, you may need to do more research to adequately fill a chapter. You may need to divide one chapter into two in order to equal out the length of the chapters.

Editing and Proofing

We can edit and proof our own writing only to a certain point. We tend to read our sentences as saying what we mean – not what they actually say. We cannot read without our own knowledge coming into play.

At this point, we need another's viewpoint – someone who will point out errors, but not be destructive in doing so. “What do you mean here?” may be written in the margin. Words written in error, such as mixing “their” and “there,” will more easily be found by a new reader.

You may find this person among your friends or business acquaintances. It will usually be a person who loves to read.

After A.L. and I write and rewrite, going back and forth between each other several times, we have at least two others go carefully over our work. It's distressing how many errors they still find! Then we work our writing back and forth between them and us until we finally feel it's ready for printing.

Editing is the process of rearranging to help the flow; finding conflicts; asking pointed questions to help the author clarify their meaning; and finding sentences that are not sentences. The list is almost endless. A good editor will find all kinds of errors and bring them to the author's attention.

The editing process may take several times of rewriting the same manuscript.

Proofing is quite different. Proofing is going over the manuscript in minute detail looking for missing commas; periods that should be question marks; misused words; misspelled words; double spaces. Again, the list is endless.

Not all editors are good at proofing, and not all who are good at proofing are good at editing. One is looking at the content, the other is looking more at the format.

We have found that good proofing requires taking many “passes” over the same work. The first “pass” may be checking nothing but titles and subtitles for proper upper and lower case, and proper formatting to show they’re the main title, or a subtitle. Another “pass” may be looking at nothing except the headers and footers for errors. Another “pass” may be to check that all sentences beginning with a phrase have a comma following the phrase. Another “pass” may be ... You have the idea.



Scriptures and References

Inserting, Proofing, Copyright Information

For years, we asked people buying study books and guides if they looked up the references. A few said they looked up some. But most said they didn’t take time to look up the verses. When writing, it’s good to remember that it’s the Word of God that is alive and powerful – not our words! It’s the Word of God that cannot return void. Isaiah wrote, “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11). For these reasons, we personally insert the verses we are referring to – not just the reference.

When we read a Bible study book, we turn on our computer Bible program and look up every reference. Imagine our surprise and dismay, when we find references that have nothing to do with the subject. Usually, we can find the reference errors, such as First Timothy should have been Second Timothy. Verse and chapter numbers are transposed. However, many times we never found the reason for the reference given.

We have a wonderful Bible insertion program for our computers, but one number mistyped means we are putting in the wrong verse. We do much of our research in the King James Version, but when we insert a verse, we

usually use the New King James. It's very easy to accidentally insert a verse here and there from the King James Version. In the writing and editing process, we may have started with four verses and deleted one of the verses forgetting to change the verse numbers in the reference. To avoid all of the above errors getting into print, every reference and verse is looked up in the final stages of the proofing process.

Roman numerals are no longer used, even when referring to books in the King James Version of the Bible. For example use 1 or 2 Kings, not I or II Kings.

It is correct to use Psalm (singular) when referring to one Psalm, and Psalms (plural) when using more than one. Our Bible program always uses "Psalms" in the reference. We correct this by doing *Find and Replace* and reading each reference to see if it needs to be changed to the singular.

All Scriptures are quotations, so we need to make a decision on how we are going to present them. They can be put in normal text with quotation marks showing the beginning and end as we did in the first paragraph of this section or they can be set in a different font or indented.

We personally use the Univers Condensed font and so don't use opening and closing quotation marks. Neither do we indent Scripture when we put it in a separate paragraph with a special font, for example:

Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart (Jeremiah 15:16a).

We keep the different font for the reference also. This is not correct according to some rules, however we feel changing it looks strange and confusing on the page.

Whole paragraphs in italics are considered hard to read, and so it is no longer recommended that italics be used to indicate Scriptures.

Notice in the first paragraph of this section, the partial scriptural quotations were not set in quotation marks. Don't over use quotation marks. Assume your readers know such partial quotations are from the Bible. If they don't, what is hurt by not calling attention to them? However, if you're going to teach from the verse, it should be set apart and the reference given.

When capitalized abbreviations are used to indicate a translation such as NKJ, they should be set in a smaller point size. We use the rule of two points less.

Abbreviations that are used should be identified with the Bible copyright information at the beginning of the book. For example:

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in this book are from the New King James Version, copyright 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers. Other references use the Amplified Bible (Amp), – give proper copyright information; The Tyndale Living Bible (TLB), – give proper copyright information; etc.

You can usually find the correct way to list the copyright information in the translations you are using. If not, contact the publisher for the correct wording. (The publisher will also give you their rules for permission to quote from their publications.) Give all the copyright dates, not just the latest one.

When you are using a different version just a few times, it is proper to use the abbreviation and put the proper name in parentheses following it the first time it is used. You should use just the abbreviation from that time forward. Since the abbreviation for the translations is often given in parentheses, this rule could be modified – (NKJ – New King James Version) for example. Only identify a translation that is different from the general one in use, which should be identified on one of the opening pages.

In *A Guide to Christian Writing and Publishing*, we did not make a formal copyright notice because we used only a few verses as examples. They are from the King James Version which is no longer under copyright.

If you are using a translation that uses quotation marks, using them or not using them at the beginning and end of your insertion becomes very interesting. I have not seen any printed rules on this – but our “in house” rule is that if a quotation opens or closes within the passage we are using, we open or close quotations at the beginning or end of our insertion.

The abbreviation for verse is “v.” or “vv.” for verses.

We do not use periods or spaces in references to save space – for example, Revelation 12:1,2,6. The rules say this should be Revelation 12:1, 2, 6. Make a decision on how you want to do this and then be consistent.

Using Proper Grammar



We all need to have on hand a good, current, English grammar and composition book. We personally use *The Gregg Reference Manual, Eighth Edition*, written by William A. Sabin, McGraw-Hill Publishers.

A Christian Writer’s Manual of Style, written by Bob Hudson and Shelly Townsend, and published by

Zondervan Publishing, is a great book which we also recommend for current rules of Christian writing. Read it from cover to cover, not because you will remember everything you read, but as you're working on rewriting, you will remember that there was a rule for this or that and know where to find it. For example, should we write the "Body of Christ" or "body of Christ?" This book has a ten-page list of commonly used Christian words and phrases and how they should be capitalized.

Be Consistent

Being consistent is one of the major rules of writing and typesetting. You will find it referred to several times throughout this manual. For example, if you have the references before the Scripture (usually in a teaching outline, or manual), you should have it first in all places. If you have it following the verse (usually in a book) have it following in all places. It is permissible to work some references into the introductory sentences ("The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 12:6, ...") and have some in parentheses following the verses.

New Spelling Rules

Now that we almost all use computers, there are three new rules of spelling we should follow: *Spell Check – Spell Check – Spell Check!*

Never allow any writing, even a letter, to be printed without running the *Spell Check* program. In the past, a person might overlook an error in typing, or misspelled words, but now that almost everything is done with computers we have a higher lever of expectancy. Misspelled and mistyped words are a sign of carelessness. Even with *Spell Check*, it should be carefully read because it's easy to use the wrong work but have it spelled correctly. (Did you catch the wrong word in the last sentence?)



Proper Paragraph Structure

The first sentence of a paragraph should be an introduction to what is in the paragraph. Every sentence in that paragraph should be on the same subject. When the subject changes, a new paragraph should be started.

Person

Pronouns such as I, we, she, he, you, and they, are called the "person" in a paragraph and should remain the same throughout each paragraph. For

instance, if we start a paragraph using “I,” we must continue using “I” until that paragraph ends – “He” remains “he” – “she” remains “she” – “they” remains “they” – and “you” remains “you.”

We cannot properly write: “I hurried out of the store. They yelled out to me, ‘Look behind you!’ I spun around, and there was ...”

“I” is the person in the first sentence. “They” is the person in the second. “I” is the person in the third. To be correct, we would need to change paragraphs between these three sentences. Better yet, we could change them to read: “As I was hurrying from the store, I heard someone yell, ‘Look behind you!’ I spun around and ...”

We should stay with the same person for several paragraphs when possible, and not let the reader feel tossed back and forth. However, in writing, variety is truly the spice of life.

Tense

The tense in a paragraph must also remain the same. It happened in the past – it is happening now – or it will happen in the future.

Sentences and Paragraphs That Cause Hurt



The Accusing “You”

Years ago, my Mother used to say, “Joyce, remember, when you point your finger at someone, there are three fingers pointing back at you.”

The pronoun “you” can often be used correctly in sentence structure and still cause hurt, rebellion, or rejection of a person’s teaching and should be watched carefully. The use of “you” can be accusing. It can be done in a way that puts down another. Very often, the pronoun “we” can be substituted and by doing this, the writer carries as much responsibility as the reader does.

Another solution is to write the paragraph without a person. The paragraph above is written in this manner. You, I, we, she, he or they did nothing. This is an impersonal style and is usually used in instruction manuals and textbooks. My personal feeling is that when this is used continuously it produces writing that gives a lot of facts but lacks feeling.

Let's take an extreme example of the "accusing you." "I can't believe you were so stupid! How could you have done that?" Those sentences are very destructive when spoken and when written in various forms.

Now read – "I can't believe we were so stupid! How could we have done that?" Sharing makes it easier to take, doesn't it?

Now read the sentences – "I can't believe I was so stupid! How could I have done that?" As we read this, we aren't threatened. We start identifying with the author and are willing to continue reading.

A good rule is: If a sentence could be considered a "put down" use "I" or "we." If the sentence builds up, it can be "you."

Must

The word "must" is often overused. It means, according to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, – to be obliged or required by morality, law, or custom – to be compelled, as by a physical necessity or requirement. It is used to express a command or an admonition.

Jesus said, "You must be born again," and that is a proper use of the word "must."

About the third or fourth time most of us read we must do this or that in close proximity, we give up. Why should I do that? When would I have the time? How? becomes our response. This type of response is soon followed by rejection.

Much of the time, when we use the word "must" we mean "should." According to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, "should" is used to express obligation or duty – probability or expectation – conditionally or contingency. It is used to moderate the directness or bluntness of a statement.



Using the Right Word

There are many words in English that sound the same, or almost the same, but have different meanings. The following is a list of some of the more common ones.

Most of us have words we switch without thinking, and it's a good idea to do *Find* and check for these words in the final stages of editing our work.

accept	willing to receive
except	exclusion or exception of
altar	as in a church
alter	to change the appearance
anybody	anyone, any person, singular
any body	any group, plural
bazaar	a marketplace
bizarre	unusual, weird, strange
born	as in birth
borne	past tense of bear, in all areas not referring to birth
complacent	self-satisfied, unconcerned
complaisant	eager to please, amiable
complement	supplements something
compliment	to give praise
desert	large arid, sandy region, or to run away from
dessert	final course of a meal
eminent	prominent or outstanding person or thing
imminent	an act, usually threatening, about to take place
farther	physical distance or to a more advance point
further	extension of time or degree, or in addition
fiancé	a man engaged to be married
fiancée	a woman engaged to be married
foul	offensive or out of line
fowl	a bird, esecially those used for food
gorilla	a large ape
guerrilla	hidden band of soldiers and their activities
hangar	where we put airplanes
hanger	where we put our clothes
honesty	denotes uprightness, fairness, impervious to deceit or fraud
integrity	denotes soundness of moral principle, impervious to influence
in	pertains to location

into	pertains to motion
incite	to arouse, instigate or spur on
insight	perception, apprehension, or inner knowledge
its	possessive form of it
it's	contraction of "it is" or "it has"
lay	to put something down – past tense of laid
lie	to recline – past tense of lay
lightning	flashing light in atmosphere
lightening	to make less heavy or less dark
like	used to compare nouns and pronouns
as	used to introduce clauses
may	expressing permission
can	expressing ability
naval	pertains to the navy
navel	pertains to our body or to oranges
pedal	to push with the feet – as with a piano, organ, or bicycle
peddle	go from place to place selling
principal	having to do with rank or authority
principle	a fundamental truth or motivating force
prophecy	a noun – prediction
prophecy	a verb – the act of giving a prediction
recipe	a formula as in cooking
receipt	a written acknowledgment of payment
repress	to curb, subdue
re-press	to iron for the second time
rout	an overwhelming defeat, a disorderly retreat
route	the way to go, a road or a map
seize	to take hold of suddenly
siege	a military blockage of a place to force surrender
stationary	standing still
stationery	writing supplies

their	possessive form of “they”
there	referring to a place
they’re	a contraction of “they are”
vain	egotistical
vane	a device for indicating weather direction
vein	a blood vessel or a body of ore
waive	to give up the right or privilege
wave	of the ocean or a motion of the hand



Redundant Words

All of us have a few words we use repeatedly in our normal conversation. They’re not necessary to what we’re saying. If we’re not careful, these words “creep in” and confuse our sentences. We have a list of the words that we are prone to use and at various stages of editing, we do a computer search removing most of them. These are superfluous, redundant, and unnecessary words. Basically, it’s very easy to undermine the essential understanding of a sentence just by using too many words. Stop! Let’s edit the last two sentences.

These are ~~superfluous, redundant, and unnecessary~~ words. ~~Basically,~~ it’s ~~very easy~~ to undermine the ~~essential~~ understanding of a sentence ~~just~~ by using too many words.

If you can read the sentence, leaving out a word or words, without changing the meaning of the sentence, delete them. Don’t confuse these with adjectives which make sentences come alive. The following is a list of words that can often be deleted.

Write your problem words below.

basically

comparative

definitely

essentially

fundamentally

just

really

relatively

simply
specifically
that
very

Redundant also means saying the same thing with two or more words. For instance – “the huge giant” (giant means huge), or “completely full” (if it’s not completely full, it’s not full).

There is an excellent book which has great lists of problem areas in writing. *Smart English – The Easy-to-Use Instant-Access Guide to Proper Written and Spoken English* is a Signet book written by Annette Francis and published by the Penguin Group. In it you will find lists for reference of Redundancies and Clichés – Abbreviations and Acronyms – Compound Words and Phrases – Frequently Misused Words – Gender Specific Words – and Computer and Internet Terms. If you love to study words and their meaning, or need to study them, this book is for you.

Capitalization



One of the last steps to editing a book is to look for words that should be capitalized and are not – or that are capitalized and should not be. For example, should we use the “Body of Christ” or “body of Christ?”

Read over the list given in *A Christian Writers Manual of Style*. Write down the words you may have used in error and using the *Find and Replace* feature of your computer program check your work for each of your problem words or phrases. It will only take seconds to search through hundreds of pages.

Find and Replace Jesus, Christ, Holy Spirit, Bible, etc., to be sure they’re never inadvertently mistyped. This can be done automatically. “God” must be read before it’s changed since you do not want to capitalize “the god of this world.”

The *Find* or *Find and Replace* features are great tools for finding errors and being consistent.

Most Common Errors in Capitalizing (Typed as they should be)

Abrahamic covenant

Add your own list below.

age of grace

Almighty, the

almighty God

anti-Christian

apostle Paul, etc.

ark, the

baby Jesus

biblical

blood of Jesus or Christ

body of Christ

book of Genesis, etc.

bride of Christ

charismatic

church – the universal church

Church – as part of church name

Day of Pentecost

gifts of Holy Spirit

good news

gospel of Matthew

Gospels, the

kingdom of God

new birth

person of Christ

persons of Trinity, the three

prophet Isaiah, etc.

Scriptures (for Bible)

Word (for Bible)

Many times, you can check the word you think may need to be capitalized in the Bible translation you are using. Again, strive for consistency, matching the primary translation you are using even if it doesn't agree with a common rule of capitalization. Do the same through your entire work. You can also look up words in a secular dictionary to find whether or not they are

capitalized. However, the words Christians capitalize are sometimes different.

It is preferable to use upper and lower case letters for book, chapter and subtitles. Make them bold and use a larger point size to make them stand out. Prepositions (at, by, in, of, on, to, from, with) are not capitalized in titles. Articles (a, an, the) are not capitalized in a title.



Rules for Writing Numbers

The rules on writing numbers can be very confusing. You may need to look up your particular need. However, a general rule is that if a number is less than one-hundred, write it out, but if it's in a "run" of numbers and some are over one-hundred, (taking more than three words to write was the old rule) put all of them in numbers rather than words. "There were one-hundred and twenty-five in attendance" is incorrect. The number is over a hundred and takes more than three words to write.

Don't begin a sentence with numerals. "125 were in attendance" is not acceptable. Rewrite the sentence – "There were 125 in attendance."

Again, the rules are varied on dates and times. It depends on the context of your sentence. It is normal to write dates as in this example, "On December first, 1995, we met in the old church." Times are also written out as a general rule. "It was six-thirty and the sun was beginning to set, when ..." However, when you are emphasizing a particular date or time, it becomes: "Please be there January 12 at 6:30 PM." Notice it is no longer January 12th.



Using Abbreviations

It's usually wrong to use abbreviations in a sentence. However, there're many exceptions. Degrees after names are usually abbreviated. But, you didn't take a trip to TX (properly used only in addresses), or Tex. – it's Texas. Titles of address are abbreviated – Mr., Ms., Miss., Mrs., Dr., but not Rev.! It's the YMCA not the Y.M.C.A.. Confused? So are we! Many times your *Spell Check* program will indicate what is proper, but if not, look it up!

When a person uses their initials for their name, such as A.L., the initials are typed without a space. Use initials with the space unless you know as a fact, the initials also serve as their name.

We personally don't abbreviate the names of the books of the Bible as a way of showing respect and also to make which book we are referring to clear new believers.

It is never proper to abbreviate the name of books in a sentence. It can only be done when giving the reference in parentheses. Be consistent, if one book name is abbreviated, abbreviate all that are longer than five letters in length.

The following is a list of the proper abbreviations for the books of the Bible taken from the New King James Bible. You can use the period, or not use the period, but, whatever you decide, do it the same way throughout your work.

Proper Abbreviations for the Books of the Bible

Genesis	Gen.	Obadiah	Obad.
Exodus	Ex.	Jonah	Jonah
Leviticus	Lev.	Micah	Mic.
Numbers	Num.	Nahum	Nah.
Deuteronomy	Deut.	Habakkuk	Hab.
Joshua	Josh.	Zephaniah	Zeph.
Judges	Judg.	Haggai	Hag.
Ruth	Ruth	Zechariah	Zech.
1-2 Samuel	1-2 Sam.	Malachi	Mal.
1-2 Kings	1-2 Kings		
1-2 Chronicles	1-2 Chron.	Matthew	Matt.
Ezra	Ezra	Mark	Mark
Nehemiah	Neh.	Luke	Luke
Esther	Est.	John	John
Job	Job	Acts	Acts
Psalms	Ps. (Pss.)	Romans	Rom.
Proverbs	Prov.	1-2 Corinthians	1-2 Cor.
Ecclesiastes	Eccl.	Galatians	Gal.
Song of Solomon	Song.	Ephesians	Eph.
Isaiah	Isa.	Philippians	Phil.
Jeremiah	Jer.	Colossians	Col.
Lamentations	Lam.	1-2 Thessalonians	1-2 Thess.
Ezekiel	Ezek.	1-2 Timothy	1-2 Tim.
Daniel	Dan.	Titus	Titus
Hosea	Hos.	Philemon	Phil.
Joel	Joel	Hebrews	Heb.
Amos	Amos	James	James

1-2 Peter	1-2 Peter	Jude	Jude
1-2-3 John	1-2-3 John	Revelation	Rev.

Wouldn't it be great if we could make all the proper abbreviations just three characters long? So far, only the computer programs are doing that.

Using Contractions

Many of us were taught we could never use contractions, but that's not today's rule. We can use them for more informal writing, or not use them, but again be consistent. We should consider the group we're targeting. Writing that uses contractions is easier for most to read and follow. However, a manual for college students would not use an informal sentence structure.

Americans use contractions continuously, even several in a sentence. People don't usually say, "We are going to the store." They say, "We're going ...". People might emphatically state, "We are not ...". Notice, there is no contraction used here for emphasis.

In writing conversation, use a lot of contractions, but not a lot of slang. Unless it's the way you personally talk, or the person you are quoting talks, it could sound very artificial. In conversation, you're not required to write complete sentences. Use the ellipsis (...) for incomplete sentences.

There is a special rule for "its" and "it's" since in both of its usages it could have an apostrophe. "It's" always means "it is" or "it has." An apostrophe is never used with "its" to show possession.



Lord Jesus Christ

Don't fall into the trap of writing, "Lord Jesus Christ," or "Lord Jesus," or "Jesus Christ." You may do it meaning to show respect, but it removes Jesus from a personal relationship. Using two, or even three names makes the writing sound stilted, and could even be considered a little "religious." Remember, "His name shall be called Jesus ..." Jesus alone is correct. You can use the others for variety.

We did a computer search through the New Testament looking for Jesus Christ (using the New King James Version). It's used 177 times. Jesus is used alone 763 times. That's a ratio of about 1 in 5

We always write “Jesus” unless there is a reason to use something more. Jesus Christ means Jesus the Anointed One. New believers often think Christ is like using a last name, and a more formal form of addressing Jesus.

Use of “Man”

In the past, it was acceptable to use “man” meaning men and women, or “his” meaning his and hers, etc. That day is past! To be correct, we can write “humanity” or “humans,” but “man” is still the central part of these words. The use of “person” is more acceptable. We refer to a salesperson, not a salesman, or saleswoman unless we mean a certain man or woman. An example would be, “I thought the dress the saleswoman had on was the perfect color;” or, “Be sure you talk to a knowledgeable salesperson before you choose your computer.”

Do not write “the common man,” use the “average,” or “ordinary person.” Our “forefathers” have become our “ancestors” or “forerunners.” A “fireman” is a “firefighter.” On airplanes, we have “flight attendants.” A “foreman” is a “supervisor,” or “overseer.” An “insurance man” is an “agent.” A “housewife” is a “homemaker.”

You can write “men and women,” or “he and she,” but this is an area in which we should be careful not to let our writing become formal. Often we can rewrite the paragraph changing the singular noun to a plural and then we can use “they” and “their” in the following sentences.

An example would be, “The author who desires to be up-to-date in his or her writing should be careful he or she doesn’t use gender specific words. When he or she is working with the Bible as his or her guide, it is especially easy to forget about this rule.” Horrible! Now change it to read, “Authors who desire to be up-to-date in their writing ...”

The newer word-processing programs with a good *Grammar Check* program, will call your attention to “gender specific” words and give you suggested changes.



Punctuation

Punctuation is very important in our writing and the rules are intensive. The following sections deal with the most common errors. They are in no way to be considered a comprehensive study of punctuation.

No Double Spaces

A computer justifies paragraphs by adding space where it will be the least noticed. One place is at the end of a sentence. Never type double spaces after a period. That was a rule for typing.

We personally don't think about it as we're writing, but when we finish, we do *Find* "space, space" and *Replace* with "space." This catches the times we have reverted to the past, and also any errors in spacing we did not catch when we were doing inserts and deletions in the editing process.

Quotation Marks with Periods and Commas

Another area of inconsistency we all seem to fall into is inconsistency in periods and commas with quotation marks. Do they come before or after the quotation mark? It's my understanding that in the United States we always put the period or comma inside the quotation marks. In England, they put them outside. Read the rules, make your own decision, but do it all the same – by a definite set of rules – throughout your work. Again use *Find and Replace* to make sure it's correct.

Never Double Punctuate

We should never use double punctuation. That is another old rule that has been replaced. Use the stronger of the two needed. An example is, "Stop it!" she shouted." We shouldn't write, "Stop it!," she shouted."

Of course there are exceptions to this rule. Initials used for a name use the same rules you would for a name. They may be followed with double punctuation. "A.L., I'm going to ..." Some abbreviations follow the same rules, Ph.D., for example, may be followed with a comma or other punctuation.

When a Scripture, title, or quotation is set off in italics, or a different font, there is no need to use quotation marks. This is, in reality, a double punctuation.

Use of Hyphens – Em Dashes – En Dashes

Hyphens are used for connecting two words only. Those used in any other way should be replaced with an em or en dash. The difference between the en and em dash is the length of the line compared to the space it takes for an n or m. In typing, an en dash was indicated by --, and an em dash by ---. That is no longer acceptable. Many word-processing programs will

automatically change the two hyphens to an en dash for you. If not, you can insert the proper dash by typing Alt 0150 (for an en dash –), or Alt 0151 (for an em dash —) in most programs. An em dash is used in a word indicating a letter, or letters, have been left out. A three em dash (———) is used to indicate a word has been left out of a quotation.

An em dash can be used instead of the ellipsis (...) in many situations. Whichever you decide to use, be consistent in your usage.

In our own typesetting, we prefer to use “space, en dash, space” rather than the em dash which does not have the spaces before and after. Most often, we are using it to indicate a break in the flow of words – a change in thought – or a list we desire to make stand out from the rest of the sentence. To us, an em dash which does not use spaces before and after makes for confusion in reading the sentence.

Using the Ellipsis ...

An ellipsis is typed, “space,dot,dot,dot,space.” It should never be divided between lines. When it’s properly typed without spaces in between, the computer recognizes the ellipsis and will not divide it between lines. We try never to let an ellipsis be the only item on a line.

When you leave words out of a verse, or make an incomplete sentence you use an ellipsis. The length of what is left out makes no difference. For this reason, we prefer using the ellipsis over the more formal em dash. It’s proper to use four dots, when you left out words but did write a complete sentence. The fourth dot is the ending period of the sentence.

The opening connecting words of Bible verses such as: and, for, but, verily, and therefore, can be omitted without using an em dash or ellipsis to indicate their deletion.

Typesetting to Look Professional



The last part of our writing project is working on the typesetting. How confusing! Authors didn’t use to think about this part at all. Now, with computers, we have the ability of perfecting our book to portray just what we desire.

Look at each page. Does it give the reader an organized outline, or are there confusing bolds, underlines, words in uppercase, indenting, etc.

All straight quotation marks (") should be replaced with typeset opening or closing quotations marks (“ or ”). Many programs can be set up to do this automatically. If not use your friendly *Find and Replace* feature.

Keep It Simple

The first rule of typesetting is to keep it simple. A good rule is to never use more than three different fonts. You can use several different styles of the same font such as normal, normal italics, bold and bold italics. You can also use several different point sizes. Don't try to be fancy. **Don't use fancy fonts that are hard to read** – maybe for emphasis with a certain subtitle or for an advertising piece.

Keep It Consistent

All chapter titles, subtitles, and other special paragraphs, should be typeset exactly the same way throughout the book. This makes it possible for a reader to subconsciously follow your outline as they read what you have written.

Uppercase, Underlining, Use of Bold

There are some general rules we need to remember. Don't put words all in caps except for special headings, such as in a teaching manual, but never in normal paragraphs. Uppercase words, such as LORD, need to be typeset LORD (two points smaller).

Don't use bold or underline in normal paragraphs. You can use them to mark the first sentence or part of a paragraph in a teaching manual or written instructions when they will become a tool for finding a particular section faster.

Use these emphases sparingly or they lose their effect. It can be compared to a mother who begins to yell at her children. As her yelling has less and less effect, she will do it more and more. Let your sentences show the importance of your thoughts. Expand on a thought until it's clear. Don't depend on typesetting devices.

The old rule of typing was to underline a title used in a sentence. With the computer age, we use italics for that purpose.

Many times breaking the above rules says “self-published book” to a potential buyer.

Two Forms of Paragraphing

There are two main forms of paragraphing with many variations in between depending on the style of the book being typeset.

One is the **block format** which we're using for this writing. It's used mainly for instructional writing, where there is a multiple amount of titles and subtitles. The first line is not indented in the block format. To show the paragraph change, there is more space between the paragraphs than between the lines. It's easier to look back in block formatting to find a certain section.

The other type is the **indented paragraph** style. The spacing between paragraphs is the same as the spacing between lines. The first line of the paragraph is indented. This can be done by changing the spacing before and after paragraphs and choosing to indent the first line in the normal paragraph definition in the word-processing program.

Generally, books use the indented form of paragraph style.

<p>The other type is the indented paragraphing style. The spacing between paragraphs is the same as the spacing between lines. The first line of the paragraph is indented.</p> <p>This can be done by changing the spacing before and after paragraphs and choosing to indent the first line in the normal paragraph definition in the word-processing program.</p>
--

It is improper to use the indented paragraph style and also put space between the paragraphs.

<p>The other type of paragraphing is the indented style. The spacing between paragraphs is the same as the spacing between lines. The first line of the paragraph is indented.</p> <p>This can be done by changing the spacing before and after paragraphs and choosing to indent the first line in the normal paragraph definition in the word-processing program.</p>

Don't mix the block and indented paragraph styles – use one or the other. Notice how we put the above samples in boxes. It is a different paragraph style than the one we are using in this manual and so should be set apart from the rest of the work. We could also have used the same paragraph indent with a different font without the box to set it apart.

You can indent or center paragraphs with either style to show titles, emphasis, a quotation, or a list.

A gift book may have a few sentences on a page, using a large point size, special fonts, borders, ornaments, wingdings, or dingbats, etc. (Ornaments, wingdings and dingbats are typesetting terms used for special symbols such as ∞ .) There are hundreds of these available in various fonts.



Using a Style Sheet

In whatever word-processing program you use, learn to use a style sheet. In a style sheet you define paragraphs. Every time you make a return, you start a new paragraph. For the purpose of typesetting, a paragraph may be several sentences or one word. Any special formatting you use, subtitles, or indenting, should have their own paragraph definitions. The use of a style sheet will stop inconsistencies in the font or point size in chapter numbers, titles, subtitles, etc.

The chapter number is a paragraph, which should be defined as Heading 1. You can change the font, point size, page position, etc. to fit your design. The chapter title is another paragraph and should be defined as Heading 2. Subtitles can be identified as Headings 3 and beyond. The advantage of doing this is that your computer program will make as complete a *Table of Contents* as you can use while you are writing and editing. When you're finished working on your book, you can select just Headings 1 and 2 and make a *Table of Contents* automatically. As you make changes, it will also, stopping the problem of incorrect page numbers getting into print.



The Final Composition

Name and Address

If you're going to self-publish your book, we strongly suggest you don't use your personal address in the book. It doesn't cost that much to rent a post office box and it's a lot of protection.

A pastor friend of ours had sold thousands of his books all over the country using his home address.

One day, a family from out of state drove up to his home, came to his door and said, "We feel like we know you from your books and are certain you won't mind if we come in to cool off. We'll just take a quick shower before we leave."

It took some time to convince them, they couldn't just come in and take over his home. How thankful he was that he was the one answering the door – not his wife or his children. In our society, it could be even more dangerous.

Signatures

Perfect bound (see Various Bindings below) books are made up of signatures of sixteen pages. When you're planning your typesetting, you want the total number of pages to be divided evenly by sixteen. Some printers will work with a half signature if your book comes out to that length. However, you will pay by the signatures and have empty pages in the back and front if there aren't the right number of pages.

There are techniques to consider in making a book come to the right number of pages. On your first drafts, begin all chapters, except the first which must be on the right-side page, where they happen – right or left-side pages. When you have your book written and edited, you can add pages to come to a full signature by starting all new chapters only on the right-side pages. You can change the header and footer widths or side margins to make more or fewer pages. Unless you are deliberately trying to “bulk” up your book and make it seem longer than it is, don't use a separate page for chapter numbers and titles.

Manuals of style are available. We understand that many publishers use the *Chicago Manual of Style* or *Words into Type* as their standard of typesetting.

Copyright

It's important to protect your work and it's not difficult to obtain a copyright. If it is a non-dramatic literary work, you need *Form TX* from the Library of Congress. The address is Copyright Office, Washington, DC 20559. To order the forms by telephone, call 202-707-9100. The form includes complete instructions and the cost of a copyright is minimal.

Copyright information should be on the title page or on the back of the title page.

ISBN Numbers

The ISBN (International Standard Book Numbers) are also important in our computer age. This number identifies the national or geographic group, the publisher, and the title of the book.

It should be listed on the title page of your work and on the back cover along with the barcode for scanning. Many distributors and stores will no longer handle items without this information.

We use the *Barcode Anything Software* which prints a 1x2 1/2 inch label. Labels can be attached to books already printed. The barcode should be printed on the back cover of new books.



Authors, Typesetters, Publishers, and Printers

There is often confusion between these different areas and we need some clarification as to what the different areas of responsibility are.

Author

Authors write books. They create the words, sentences, paragraphs, etc. They may do their own typesetting and publishing. And if they do, they will probably use a printer to print their books.

Professional authors may write their own books, or they may write books for others.

If you feel you have a great story to tell, or know that God has given you fresh insight into an area of the Christian life, but don't have the time to do it properly, you may want to contact a professional author. The best way to do this is to find, in your local Christian bookstore, the type of book you feel yours will be. Contact the publisher of that book, give them a brief synopsis of your book, and ask them if they have the names of professional authors you could contact about writing your story. Make it clear that you understand that giving you the names in no way implies they're going to publish the book.

Professional authors can take a series of recorded sermons and turn them into a book for you.

The first step you would take in this process is to have your tapes transcribed. Be certain the person transcribing them is using a well-known word-processing computer program and will furnish you with the hard copy (printed on paper), and a computer disc copy.

Care should be taken when writing a book from recorded messages that it doesn't read like a transcribed sermon, but like a well thought out book. In teaching, there is a lot of review and clarifying of previous teaching. When

writing, new thoughts should be added where they fit in the flow of the book. All review material should be left out.

Professional authors charge for their time. They may work with you in getting the book published, and they may expect a percentage of the royalties for their work. You may arrange to pay them for their time, and not include them in any future royalties. Whatever you decide, you will need a signed contract to make it clear to both parties – even if you are close friends.

Typesetter

Most typesetters can take your computer file, convert it to their equipment, and put it into the correct typeset form. This person should know all the rules and give you a photo-ready page at a cost of so much per page. The professional typesetter is able to produce more dpi (dots per inch) giving each letter a clean-cut edge, with more black ink for the best reproduction.

Some printers use the output from the typesetter on computer disk. Some use typeset pages.

With today's use of computers, many are saving the cost of using professional typesetters. A good laser printer offers less, but acceptable dpi and the difference in appearance is not visible to the average reader.

Publisher

A publisher is usually not the printer of the book. When a publisher decides to publish a book that means they're going to handle all aspects of that book. They will choose the title for marketing appeal. They will have the cover designed. They will work with the author in editing the book, have it typeset, and printed.

They have an advertising budget and will decide how to advertise the book. They often have salespeople that call on bookstores in person or by telephone to present the book. They may have regional and national sales conventions where they present their complete line.

A publisher puts thousands of dollars into a book before it ever reaches the buying market. They must be convinced of the sales potential of a book before they make a contract with the writer. It's getting harder and harder for authors to get their books published because of this "up front" cost.

If you have an established ministry or are well known, it's more likely your book will be accepted because they know you already have a buying market.

How do you, the author, know where to send your manuscript? Go to your local Christian bookstore. Look for the type of book you're writing and see who published it. Contact them. Make a telephone call and find out the person to address your manuscript and letter to.

They may have a packet they will send you first. It may give you information on the type of manuscripts they're looking for at the present time and other pertinent information. One publisher may want a synopsis of the book, the *Table of Contents* and one chapter – not the whole book. Another may want the whole book. Be attentive to their needs.

They may specify the format they will accept. Usually this is 8 1/2 by 11 inch normal typing paper, with double-spaced lines, printed on one side, with one inch margins all around.

If you have a friend who is an author, or in another way is known to the publisher, an introductory letter from him or her will be of benefit.

Please, don't send a letter saying God told you to write this book and that they, the publisher, were to publish it. This is coercion and will probably be met with instant resistance and rejection.

We were working for one publisher evaluating manuscripts and received literally hundreds of these letters along with some rambling thoughts the person felt would be that year's best-selling book if we would only, "Obey God." If God has told you that, great! But, please, let God work it out with the publisher.

Don't expect to get your manuscript back. Hundreds of unsolicited manuscripts are sent to publishers every week. It's not fair to expect them to bear the cost of returning your work.

*Don't send original pictures, manuscripts, etc.
Always send copies!*

If you would like your copy back, send a self-addressed envelope large enough to contain your work with the correct amount of postage attached.

You can expect to get a general notification from the publisher that they have received your work and a second letter telling you their decision. Many times, evaluation takes months to complete.

If you write to a publisher for information and would like an answer, send a #10 self-addressed, stamped envelope with your request. Many times someone will take the time to get the information for you, write a note on your original letter and return it to you. This is informal, but answers your

questions in the quickest manner possible thus saving them the cost of producing a formal letter.

Vanity Publishers

There are publishers who write that they have accepted your book for publication. It's a great book and they know it will be a good seller and then they let you know the amount of money you will be paying them. Some of them are good at covers, at getting the typesetting and printing done and will send you a nice product. Read the contract, they aren't going to advertise or help you sell the book. They have just published it for you. You can recognize this type of publisher by the request for money. They are not concerned with how well a book is written or how much it will sell. You are putting up the money. It's not really a fraud – you get the product – and it may be better than you can do for yourself. But be aware of what you are or are not going to receive from their services.

Printer

Instead of going to a printer, you can use high quality photo copies and produce a few hundred manuals at a time. Notice the cover on this manual. It is a good way to start a new work without the high cost of full-color printing.

We used professional full-color paper and printed our own design for the cover with a color printer. Our volume is such that we can purchase spines and acetate covers directly from Ibico. However, when we started, we used a warehouse office supply as our source.

Usually your local printer is not set up to handle printing books. They can handle a smaller quantity of books with a staple binding, or manuals you, or they, are going to spiral bind.

To find the right printer for you, look in the yellow pages of the larger cities near you for printers that specify they print books. Get bids from two or three printers to find the best price. The pricing they give you will depend on what equipment they have and how much work they have on hand.

To get the best price per book, you will need to order thousands of books. For a book in the four by seven inch format or smaller, you need to consider printing 5,000 books. For the 8 1/2 by 11 inch manual, you need to consider printing 2,000 or more books at a time.

To ask for a bid, you need to know how many books you're considering printing – the finished size of the book – the type of binding (see the next

section) – the number of pages – and if you want a four-color (or full-color), or three-color, or two-color cover. The printer will usually help you in specifying weight of paper and cover stock, but whatever weight you arrive at with the first printer should be specified with the second for fairness in the bids.

On demand Printing

In on demand printing, books are stored electronically and printed one at a time. You are required to order a hundred books to start and then you can reorder in quantities of as little as fifteen. We haven't used this service, but several of our friends have and are very pleased with the quality of the books. This seems like a great way to produce a smaller amount of books. With some of the companies, using their service means your book is automatically listed on many of the web sites. To learn more about this service, you can use a search engine on the Internet and type in "on demand printing."



Various Bindings

There are several types of bindings you need to consider.

- ✧ Saddle binding, or staple binding is usually used for books with less than a hundred pages. They can be of any page size. These books are folded and stapled at the spine.
- ✧ Perfect binding is square across the spine and is usually used for books with a hundred or more pages. The pages can be of any size.
- ✧ There is also spiral binding with metal, which is very expensive, or with plastic combs which comes into almost everyone's price range. You can purchase the binder and spines and bind these books "in house."
- ✧ There is also a heat process binder that you can buy to bind books yourself.

Staple and perfect bindings are usually done by a printer or a bindery. You can do the spiral or heat process yourself. To look into the types of binding systems you can do yourself, visit a warehouse office supply.

In Conclusion

It has been our sincere desire to help you start and successfully complete your writing project. It's an awesome feeling when God says, "Write a book!" Most of us have not had the slightest idea of where we are to start. The best advice we can give you is – just do it!

*We're in the computer age,
writing and publishing have never been
easier than they are today.*



Five Steps To Producing A Good Book

*This article was so good we asked McDougal Publishing for permission to include it in a **Guide to Christian Writing and Publishing**.*

Step #1:

Prospective buyers will pick up the book based on two things: the cover and the title.

The cover design and title are the billboards of your book's content. A good cover and title will get the attention of prospective readers and will convey the vision of your book.

Step #2:

Next, a prospective buyer will turn the book over and read the back cover.

Now that we've gotten the attention of the prospective buyer, the back cover of your book should provide a preview of the book's content. It should tell the reader what is being said in the book, who is saying it, and why they should read it.

Step #3

Next, the buyer will fan or leaf through the pages, to get the general feel of the book.

Once we've gotten the readers' attention and they have been invited to open the front cover, the next thing they will notice is the overall feel of the book. A properly produced book will open easily and not slam shut because of stiff pages.

Step #4

If we have kept their interest, a buyer will next turn to the front of the book and read the table of contents and part of the introduction.

Now that the readers feel comfortable with the book, they usually read the table of contents and perhaps the first page of the introduction. This is a critical point in their decision making process and largely determines whether they will buy the book or move on to another.

Step #5

Having examined these basic points of interest in your book, a prospective reader will arrive at an overall impression.

The look and feel of a quality product will ultimately determine whether or not your message is taken seriously. People understand that a violinist doesn't carry a Stradivarius in a paper bag. Your message is important, and you will only have one chance to make a first impression.

The overall quality of the production of your book will inspire confidence in the message of the book and determine the effectiveness of its ministry.

**The Conclusion: People do judge a book by its cover
... and a few other key factors.**