

You Can Do It!



A Guide to Christian Self-Publishing

ATHENA DEAN

You Can Do It!

A Guide to Christian Self-Publishing

ATHENA DEAN



© 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002 by Athena Dean. All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

Published by WinePress Publishing, PO Box 428, Enumclaw, WA 98022.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any way by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright holder except as provided by USA copyright law.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version of the Holy Bible. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982. Used by permission of Thomas Nelson, Inc. Scripture versions marked NLT are taken from the New Living Translation of the Bible.

ISBN 1-883893-82-8

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 00-12345

*To the many Christian writers scattered across the country who
have—through their questions, concerns, and
stories—inspired me.*



***Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.
Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.***

—Psalm 96:3, NLT

Contents

Introduction.....	11
Chapter 1 Why Self-Publish?	15
Chapter 2 Self-Publishing Successes & Disasters	47
Chapter 3 What's Your Heart Motive?	63
Chapter 4 Industry Terms	69
Chapter 5 Budgeting Your Project	89
Chapter 6 Raising Funds for Your Book Project	95
Chapter 7 Prepublication Promotion	109
Chapter 8 How to Market Your Book	121
Chapter 9 Creating a Demand for Your Book	125
Chapter 10 Making Your Book Available	133
Chapter 11 Getting the Most Out of the Media	139
Epilogue	157
Endnotes	161

INTRODUCTION

LOOKED FRANTICALLY AROUND the plush lobby of the Sheraton Inn Atlanta. The billboard listed many events, but the Christian writers' conference at which I was supposed to be speaking was not one of them.

“All things work together for good” came quickly to my mind. I dismissed that thought impatiently and thought, “Oh sure, God . . . here I am, stranded!” The nightmare of an overfull calendar colliding with reality had come true. I had written the dates for the conference incorrectly in my Daytimer and was now in the right place at the wrong time. I could feel a lump rising in my throat. I had worked so hard to get everything done so I could be away from the WinePress office for four days. Now I was confronted with the fact that I was in a strange hotel, away from my family, with nothing to do and a nonrefundable plane ticket that forced me to stay over Saturday night. The front desk clerk was nice enough to give me the “airline rate” for my room. When I finally got up there, I fell to my knees.

“Oh, Jesus! Why am I here? How could this have happened? What is going on?”

Ever so gently, that still, small voice whispered into my heart, “You’ve been asking me for time to write, haven’t you?”

The light came on . . . fireworks went off . . . the choir started singing “Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!” That’s it! I had spent my whole flight to Atlanta scribbling an outline for the book you are holding in your hand. Above the quiltwork patches of Midwestern farms, I had fine-tuned the outline and had discussed it with God.

“Lord, when am I ever going to have time to write this book? I know I need to, and I know You want me to—but Lord, when?” I didn’t get an answer, but I continued writing down ideas for the chapters.

Christian writers’ conference directors had been after me for the previous six months to put into print the concepts that I had learned firsthand in my Christian publishing business and that I taught in my classes. There has been a need for information about self-publishing specifically geared to the Christian market, and many felt that God was going to use me to fill that need.

Within hours I had arranged for a computer and printer to be delivered to my Atlanta hotel room, along with a carafe of hot coffee. Two long, grueling days (and more coffee) later, I emerged from room 310, disk in hand—mission accomplished! Well, at least the first draft of the mission.

God, in His infinite mercy, arranged my circumstances to give me both the time to write the book and the energy to complete it. It was a miracle out of misery. My prayer is that through this book many more miracles will come and many believers will be helped to get their work into print.

Since the first edition of this book was printed, I’ve watched the Christian publishing industry continue to focus on celebrities and cut back on titles from new authors. And while it was disturbing to read the *World* magazine article on Christian pub-

lishing (July 12 / 19, 1997), it was a sobering confirmation of all that's been happening.

Not long after that article came out I spent some quality time with a well-known author. After twenty years in the industry she finally came to the conclusion that she can't make a living in Christian writing. This prolific writer had received reports from friends and relatives complaining that they couldn't find her books in Christian bookstores. Frustrated and disillusioned, she felt like quitting. Getting the illusive contract with a big publisher is not all it's cracked up to be.

The good news? Such changes in the publishing industry only make self-publishing a much more viable option. WinePress Publishing is blessed by the Lord to be smack dab in the middle of this cutting-edge trend.

I've added some great new material to this revised edition of *You Can Do It!* including how to raise the money to fund your project and some great tips on getting the most out of the media. The one major area I have changed is all the "how to do it yourself" information I used to include in this book. Unfortunately, over the years I've seen many people take the information in this book and try to cut costs by doing their own editing, cover design and printing. What has resulted is many more books out there that *look* self-published, making it even more of a challenge to keep the reputation of self-publishing in the Christian market at a highly respectable level. I've come to the place where I just do not recommend anyone try it on their own, but use a *reputable* book packager—one who has a long track record of producing quality product and offering many options to the author. It is my prayer that this information will bless you and enable you to finish the race the Lord has given you to run.

Why Self-Publish?

HAS THE LORD given you a message? Yes? Then why haven't you published it yet? I can almost hear your answer: "I can't find a publisher interested in my book. I keep getting rejection slips." Could it also be that you're not quite sure how to go about it and afraid of being taken advantage of?

Back in 1996 I attended a reunion for Christian Leaders, Authors & Speakers Services (CLASS) held during the annual Christian Booksellers Association (CBA) convention. As one of the senior editors for Thomas Nelson Publishing gave her session, I felt overwhelmed with how obvious it became that the celebrities were the only ones getting any attention at all from Thomas Nelson Publishers. She shared that it came down to dollars and cents: If they weren't absolutely sure that they could move 25,000 hardcover copies of a book in the first year, they weren't interested. Just a few years later one of our editors represented WinePress Publishing at a Christian Writers Conference in Pennsylvania where another representative for Thomas Nelson took the spotlight. Here's the email I received from her:

Dear Athena:

Just wanted to let you know the Mercer (PA) Christian Writers' Conference went well. I taught on Self-Editing and Writing the Nonfiction Book. An interesting turn of events set up my second session quite well. The keynote speaker was the editorial director for Thomas Nelson.

I sat in on his workshop entitled, "What CBA – Especially Thomas Nelson – is Looking For." After reading your book I almost didn't go, but then I figured the conferees in my late afternoon workshop probably would have heard him earlier in the day.

Basically he told us that Thomas Nelson was looking for "luminaries" – the professional athlete, gospel singer, or preacher / teacher who is already famous. They want a star who can move 25,000–50,000 copies in the first five months of a books release.

You could just sense his announcement took the wind out of the sails of these budding writers. At the close of my session, I acknowledged how difficult it was to be published with Thomas Nelson, but that shouldn't dash everyone's dreams of having a book in print. I passed out the WinePress brochures, showed the press kits, and held up the WinePress sample books. I think it sparked some hope in those who attended my workshop.

Sincerely,

Debra

If we are going to have realistic expectations, then we ought to take a close look at the Christian publishing industry, the trends, and the real state of affairs. Publishing companies have basically two ways of doing business. The first is to publish a multitude of titles with the expectation of decent sales for all; the other is to publish fewer titles with high sales volumes for each one. The trend that most Christian publishing companies are following is the second one—fewer titles and higher sales volume—which means "big name" authors. Right there the majority of us are excluded!

One year, while on faculty at the Mt. Hermon Christian Writers' Conference, I taught a class on self-publishing and one on promoting and marketing your book. After the class I had the opportunity to take in some of the other sessions, so I sat in on one by an editorial representative from a major Christian publishing house. He told how they receive 24,000 unsolicited manuscripts per year and publish only 12 to 17 new titles per year. He went on to explain that in order to be one of their authors you "have to bring something to the table." That list includes:

1. A cutting-edge topic that is unique but still falls into their publishing niche
2. A Ph.D. or some other certified training that makes you an authority in your area
3. Strong communication skills and / or the ability to speak in front of large crowds
4. An established speaking or mail-order ministry that would purchase (in order to sell at your speaking engagements) at least 2,000 copies a year

That certainly rules out many Christian writers. However, just because you may not fit into the narrow criteria of a major publishing house doesn't mean the message God has given you shouldn't be in print. But again, we must be realistic. We need to take a look at the cold, hard facts in Christian publishing today and see what our chances are of selling works to a major Christian publisher, whether as a first-time author or as a self-published success.

The October 16, 1995 issue of *Publisher's Weekly* contains an article entitled "Downsizing Hits Thomas Nelson," in which Byron Williamson, head of the recently formed Nelson / Word Publishing Group, is quoted: "The changes are being made to accommodate a planned reduction in title output. In recent years, Nelson /

Word published close to 400 titles annually, but . . . this figure will be cut to about 200 titles by fiscal 1997.”¹ This signaled only the beginning of major cutbacks in the industry.

The Writers Information Network printed the following excerpt from a rejection letter penned by the editorial vice president of a major Christian publisher.

[Our company] has instituted a planned reduction in our title output for the next year. This means we are not accepting any additional projects for the next several months. This is unfortunate, for I do find your project intriguing and the sample material is quite well done! Possibly it could work very well for us. But, as things stand for us at the moment, we are passing on many things we might have gladly published before.²

During the Pacific Northwest Book Fair, I met Jay Heinlein who was, at the time, a director of sales for Word Publishing. I let him know about WinePress Publishing and how we help people self-publish affordably (and professionally). Heinlein noted, “We receive as many as 3,000 manuscripts per year and only print approximately 150. Many of those wonderful efforts find other publishers, but sadly many never find a home.”

In an early edition of our WinePress newsletter we had an opportunity to interview Bruce Zabel, literary agent for the Curtis Bruce Agency. Bruce had worked sixteen years in the publishing field before becoming an agent. He has worked for InterVarsity Press, Goodnews Publishers, Lion Publishing, and the Right Group. At the time of our interview he was representing several productive and notable authors, such as Mark Littleton, Angela Elwell Hunt, and David and Karen Mains. His comments about the Christian publishing industry were frank and sobering. The interview went like this:

Q: What are some current statistics regarding the book publishing industry?

A: Typically there are approximately 1,500 to 2,000 new Christian books published each year. Thomas Nelson, one of the largest Christian publishers, does approximately 200 to 300 new titles each year. At the other end, some of the smaller organizations will do five to ten books, so you can see there is quite a spread. The book sales figures for all [combined] Christian publishing houses is 800 million to 1 billion dollars annually.

Q: How many manuscripts does the average publisher receive in a year?

A: The big publishers get in the neighborhood of 5,000 to 10,000 unsolicited manuscripts per year. However, it is incredibly rare for an unsolicited manuscript to ever get published.

Q: What are some of the factors that make it so difficult?

A: There are tons of books and ideas submitted every day—some solicited and some not. Needless to say, more are submitted than ever get published. The main problem I see is that far more people are writing today than ever, and the number of books being published is not increasing to keep up with what is written. One of the growing practices and trends is for the publishers to use agents, like myself, to do their screening for them. I get a thousand to two thousand ideas or proposals yearly and I reject 99 percent of those, . . . and then of the 1 percent I keep and submit to the publishers, only a fraction get serious consideration. Some publishers do look at unsolicited manuscripts still; but it is becoming more and more rare. Most won't even talk to a writer unless he or she has an agent, and writers generally don't pick an agent—the agent picks them!

Q: So what do you see as the major changes or trends in the Christian publishing industry?

A: I think the major trend [now leveling off] is fiction. However, some publishers are now re-evaluating their interest and thoughts on fiction, and I see it slowing down quite a bit in the

near future. Another critical change to look at is the cost of publishing a book. As we speak, here in the spring of 1995, the price of paper has been going up for about 18 months now. Consequently, most publishers are looking closer at the number of books they publish, which makes it even tougher for an unknown writer to get a contract. The number of books getting published also seems to be decreasing.

Q: How does the Christian retail bookstore fit into all these trends and changes?

A: This is only an intuitive comment. I'm not sure if there have been any studies done on it, but Christian bookstores are not increasing the amount of space devoted to books. So this, of course, presents another problem. There's no new space being set aside for books, and any free space or shelf space is being given over to gift items, art, and music. In other words, book space is decreasing and gift item space is increasing. One thing I do know: The competition for shelf space is incredibly fierce in the Christian bookstores.

Q: In your opinion, is an unknown author likely to be picked up and contracted by a royalty publisher like Zondervan, Thomas Nelson, or Multnomah?

A: It does happen from time to time, but to answer your question . . . it's not likely. It is rare because the bigger publishers, and you can't fault them for this, would rather go with someone who has a proven track record and is a proven seller and a proven commodity mover. So for an unknown author to be published by them is rare. It does happen, but not too often.

Q: What is your opinion of self-publishing?

A: Well, I actually have a handful of clients who have done some self-publishing. They have also subsequently gone on to publish with a traditional publisher. I would say this: If you have a forum from which to sell your books, or a "built-in" market, so to speak, it could work out for you. That's the first thing. You just can't publish books and not have a way to get

them to people who might want them. Second, if you have the time and inclination to invest in selling and marketing your books, either as a part-time or a full-time business, then it could be a very viable way to go. It could result in a successful venture for you.

Q: Do you have any concluding comments that may help or encourage our readers?

A: Yes. I have known some self-publishing ventures that have been very successful. They have gone to an organization like WinePress that helped them edit, stylize, typeset, and print their book. In this way they have gotten it into presentable form [which is crucial]. Then they turned around and sold those books and made a good profit. They were able to see lifelong dreams come true. Their message was in print and selling. These folks had a forum and a market, and I'll reiterate: This is a critical factor in deciding whether to self-publish or not.³

In order to intensify your reality check, pick up a copy of the *Christian Writers' Market Guide* by Sally Stuart. You'll see all the various Christian publishers listed in alphabetical order. You will notice in the information that each company includes the percentage of first-time authors they publish. Sadly, the percentage numbers are almost always very low.

As I speak at the various Christian writers' conferences, I am sometimes concerned with the message that often comes across from some of the better-known authors. I've heard comments like, "Don't quit; if I can do it, you can do it. I just signed a three-book contract with a major publisher before ever actually writing the manuscripts. . . . I work in my sweats, in the comfort of my own home, set my own hours. I am a full-time Christian writer. Now, it took me fifteen years to get to this place. If I can do it, every one of you can too."

The unreal expectations fanned into flame by such comments concern me. I agree that you should not quit. If God has given you the gift or burden for writing, you should do all you can to perfect your craft, and you should be persistent. But whether or not your name will be in lights as a well-known author just because you keep at it for fifteen years is still highly unlikely. I know that authors who make these remarks mean well and are trying to encourage the conferees, but I feel these remarks are unrealistic.

I received this e-mail message from one of the attendees of that specific conference.

Dear Athena: Thank you for bringing a realistic view of both the difficulties and the possibilities of self-publishing. You certainly erased all our vainglorious imaginations and lofty ideas of seeing our names in lights. You brought us back to earth, and at the same time you gave us hope!

I must admit I was saddened to see that all I've been noticing in the Christian publishing industry has been confirmed. At the 1997 Christian Booksellers Association International Convention (CBA), a very disturbing article was the talk of the show. "Whatever Happened to Christian Publishing?" reiterates the dreadful state of affairs in our industry. The author has given me permission to reprint the article in its entirety.

Visitors to the Christian Booksellers Association convention in Atlanta, July 14–17, will walk into the ultimate trade show. The latest T-shirts, plaques, CDs, and software will all be on display. Celebrity authors will sign autographs. Bookstore owners will be feted at hospitality suites. Publishing insiders will schmooze and make deals.

Last year's convention attracted 13,663 attendees, including 2,801 store representatives and 419 exhibitors from what has

become, according to published reports, a \$3 billion industry. But such dramatic material success is not without its price. Today the largest Christian publishers are owned by secular corporations or have shares held by Wall Street investors. As ministries turn into big businesses, theological integrity can easily give way to marketing considerations. The attendant [cutthroat] competition, coupled with theological looseness, can lead to promotion of a new, watered-down, pop Christianity.

The trend concerns many Christians who work in book publishing. Although one source was willing to be named in this article, all the others spoke only under conditions of confidentiality, because they legitimately fear a kind of excommunication from the tightly knit industry. Information for this story was gathered from trade publications, published articles, and dozens of interviews, conversations, and e-mail correspondence with editors, writers, and other industry insiders.



Christian publishing in America has a long and distinguished history, but the contemporary story begins five years ago, with two buyout offers.

Thomas Nelson Publishers generated one of the buyouts, purchasing Word for \$72 million in cash, according to Business Wire. Nelson / Word is now the largest player in the Christian publishing industry. Though the two companies retain their separate names and catalogs, many of their operations have been combined. This year, Word is moving its corporate headquarters from Dallas to Thomas Nelson's offices in Nashville. The merged companies make up a single corporate entity, owned by stockholders.

Zondervan Publishing House employees tried the other buyout. Their company had been purchased in 1988 by

HarperCollins, a publishing segment of Rupert Murdoch's empire. (The Australian billionaire also owns the Fox television network and has just purchased the Family Channel.) Four years later, a management-led group of employees tried to buy the company back. James Buick, then president of Zondervan, told The Grand Rapids Press that the group's purpose was to "return the direction and control of the company into the Christian community." But according to the Grand Rapids Business Journal, the effort failed and HarperCollins solidified its control.

Opinions differ on whether that is a problem. In today's Byzantine world of corporate conglomerates, a company can theoretically have absentee landlords while retaining considerable independence. Secular ownership poses special problems, though, for Christian publishers. Church-related companies can ask questions about an employee's faith, but publicly held or secular operations are not allowed to discriminate on the basis of religion. Christian ministries are often concerned for evangelism and doctrinal fidelity, but secular corporations are motivated mainly by the bottom line.

According to Len Goss, a former Zondervan editor currently with Broadman & Holman, HarperCollins and Mr. Murdoch at first adopted a hands-off policy. The religious commitment of its employees was delicately taken into account, and the company was allowed to do as it had been doing. But after a few years, he said, the corporate owners did interfere.

Mr. Goss told World that HarperCollins handed down a dictate that Zondervan publish more big sellers and cut down on the rest. As a result, the academic line on which Mr. Goss worked was scrapped, and the focus shifted to mass-market titles, to books that could meet sales thresholds by appealing to the broadest possible audience. Spokesmen for Zondervan did not return World's calls seeking comment.

Thomas Nelson and Zondervan now are the Big Two of the Christian bookselling industry, an industry that is going through

some introspection after a highly successful first half of the decade. Between 1991 and 1994, sales of religious books jumped from 36.7 million to 70.5 million, according to Christianity Today, a 92 percent boost that moved religious books from a 5 to [a] 7 percent market share.

The lucrative growth of the religious market pleased investors, but it added to the pressure to focus on big sellers. This pressure was accentuated by other changes in the religious marketplace that forced even the smaller publishers to adapt to the ways of big business.

Christian bookstores have long been the main retail outlet for the industry. The same consolidation that was taking place with the publishing companies was taking place with Christian bookstores. Family-owned and ministry-related local businesses were giving way to chain stores and retail franchises. One advantage of such franchises is that they can buy books en masse and supply stores with sharply discounted product. The priority, however, is on stocking fewer titles, often only those with big sales and high turnover, according to a John Armstrong article in *Viewpoint: A Look at Reformation & Revival in Our Time*.

Here's another obstacle publishers face: In a typical Christian bookstore today, books now make up only 28 percent of sales, according to *Publisher's Weekly*. T-shirts, CDs, videos, inspirational plaques, greeting cards, and knickknacks take up two-thirds of the shelf space, leaving little room for the display of books that are not bestsellers. (*note: this statistic has dropped since 1997, to 20–25%*)

Big wholesalers that supply the bookstores are also contributing to the new market considerations. Retailing insiders note that many booksellers take seriously the task of selecting the books they stock, but it is far easier—and often more profitable—to take advantage of their suppliers' offer to ship only those projected to be the top-selling titles. This sets up a self-fulfilling prophecy, as books that might well have turned out to be strong

sellers never make it to the shelves, while the books given special favor by the publishers and wholesalers are the only ones available for customers to buy.

Authors too are getting swept up into the new religious market. Though writers are of course essential to the publishing process, they often complain of being neglected, exploited, or—in an industry highly dependent on ghostwriters—invisible. But those Christian authors who do sell well, like their secular counterparts, increasingly use agents to negotiate mega-deals.

Ever since Chuck Swindoll used an agent in 1989 to negotiate a [forty-five]-title, [ten]-year contract with Word, the most popular Christian writers have been offering their services to the highest bidder with the help of agents. Publisher's Weekly last year recounted how an agent scored a five-year, [eleven]-book contract for historical novelists Brock and Bodie Thoene in a bidding war finally won by Nelson for a reported \$3.5 million.

Though such arrangements are clearly good for superstar writers, use of agents changes the relationship between author and publisher into a purely financial one as opposed to the personal and collaborative relationships that sometimes occurred in the past. Another consequence, lamented in writers' conferences, is that new, less-established authors find it harder to get published, as many editors grow dependent on agents and refuse even to look at unsolicited manuscripts.

(Most such manuscripts, publishers note, are not worth their reading. But what happens to the rare exception? Even a [bestseller]—[like] *This Present Darkness*, Frank Peretti's first supernatural thriller—can occasionally be fetched out of what book companies call the “slush pile.”)

Most Christian publishing companies, including the Big Two, began as family-owned ventures closely tied to a ministry or to a church body. Many of the smaller to medium-sized publishers continue in that manner and are organized as nonprofit or

church-related organizations. But today, through their own policy decisions or out of necessity, they are having to function in the tough world of big [business].

Though many publishing companies and editors are still working out of a strong Christian commitment and are publishing valuable Christian books, competing in today's religious marketplace poses special challenges and temptations.

Surely the free-market economy is a good thing. America's prosperity and freedoms are tied to marketplace competition and disciplines. But while consumerism, the profit motive, and survival of the fittest are good for the realm of economics, they should not rule theology. Jesus, who drove the salesmen out of the temple, warned about the impossibility of serving both God and money. The prophets strenuously denounced religious leaders who told the people pleasant words from their own minds rather than the unsettling truths of the Word of God.

The apostle Paul could have been describing today's religious marketplace: "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear" (2 Tim. 4:3). A free-market economy, catering to consumer desires, gives us convenient supermarkets and shopping malls. But a marketing approach to religion requires "suing desires" that because of the Fall are innately evasive of God. Religious consumerism involves "scratching ears" by telling the customers only what they want to hear, instead of the Word of God they need to hear.

The Christian marketplace thus follows the lead of the world's pop culture. A common saying in the industry is[:] Whenever a trend emerges in the secular arena, wait six months and a Christianized version will appear in the religious bookstores. Romances, horror novels, management books, and other popular genres that are essentially written according to easy-to-

follow formulas rather than original insights, all have their counterparts in Christian bookstores.

Our culture's obsession with physical beauty gives rise to Christian diet plans and Christian exercise videos. Even when it comes to religion, Christian publishing often follows trends rather than leads, as in the rash of books on angels and near-death experiences inspired by New Age books on the same subjects.

One phenomenon of America's pop culture is celebrity worship. Books by sports stars, entertainers, or other icons of the pop culture—a significant number of which are ghostwritten—have become big sellers for Christian publishers. While testimonies of conversion have long been staples of evangelicalism, sometimes the mere fact of celebrity seems to justify publishing an individual's life story.

One editor offered the example of the autobiography of hamburger mogul Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's. Though the book, [copublished] by Zondervan and HarperCollins, is generically inspirational and has a first-rate title—*Well Done*—it has almost no explicit Christian content.

Some celebrity authors—the Billy Grahams and the Chuck Swindolls—have a strong track record in ministry and teaching. Others, however, are motivational speakers or positive-thinking gurus whose works may be uplifting but are at best only remotely connected to the biblical worldview. Such writers are entitled to their say and may be worth reading, but the question, again, is why are they published by presses that claim to be evangelical?

Self-help is another popular category for evangelical publishers, despite the irony that “self help” would seem to be the opposite of the historic evangelical emphasis on the grace of God. Many of these titles—such as Thomas Nelson's *Don't Let Jerks Get the Best of You*—are little more than pop psychology, with the standard secular bromides of self-esteem and

assertiveness training. Others approach the Bible itself as a self-help manual.

Here again, the publishers are merely following the market instead of attempting to teach. Polls have shown that many Americans are interested in the Bible insofar as it can give “practical principles for successful living.” Christian publishers, instead of finding ways to show that the Word of God has the power to save, sometimes domesticate it into a rule book for a contented, prosperous, middle-class lifestyle. Thomas Nelson offers titles such as *The Management Methods of Jesus* and *The People Skills of Jesus: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Business*.

The desire for market share, the yearning for acceptance by mainstream American culture, and the overweening goal of many Christian publishers to cross over into the bigger secular market, sometimes result in even bigger doctrinal compromises. Word’s *Searching for God in America*, based on a PBS series that gave Islam and Buddhism equal time with Christianity, portrays the different faiths as equally valid paths to God.

Some smaller publishers resist the pressures of commercialism and continue to publish theological books—but some of them nevertheless have drifted away from biblical orthodoxy. InterVarsity Press for many years was a lifeline for Christians engaged in the intellectual battles of the universities and the secular culture. IVP still publishes books such as Phillip Johnson’s *Darwin on Trial*, a work that broke through into secular circles to ignite fresh debates about evolution. But IVP also publishes “megashift” theology, as in *The Openness of God* and other works by Clark Pinnock, which maintains that God changes, that he condemns no one, and that salvation is possible apart from faith in Christ.

William B. Eerdmans for many years was one of the relatively few publishers to specialize in solid, scholarly research from the perspective of conservative Protestantism. Eerdmans still publishes on occasion important evangelical books such as

David Wells' *No Place for Truth*, but it also puts out books from the perspective of contemporary liberal theology, Roman Catholicism (including hagiographic lives of saints), and even Judaism (including a book on anti-semitism that argues, in the words of the catalog, that "the New Testament itself expresses a deep distrust of the tradition into which Jesus was born").

Both InterVarsity and Eerdmans are interested in post-modernist theology, with its assumptions that theology in our "post-foundationalist" age is "constructed" rather than revealed. Again, such books may deserve to be printed, but why by the few publishers available for conservative Christian scholarship?

What has gone wrong in the Christian publishing industry can perhaps best be illustrated in the career moves of Mr. Peretti, the million-selling author. Word lured Mr. Peretti away from Crossway, the company that launched his career, for a reported \$4 million and a plan to turn Mr. Peretti into a crossover hit, helping him to break into the coveted secular market.

According to a veteran publishing insider who spoke on condition of anonymity, Word took the first manuscript Peretti delivered, *The Oath*, and hired a secular editor from the New York publishing establishment to make it more acceptable for the tastes of the non-Christian market. As might have been, *The Oath* has failed to win the big sales of Mr. Peretti's first novels. Apparently, it has not attracted the attention of Stephen King fans, for many of whom overt evil is what is titillating. Nor has it won much favor from Peretti fans, who find that it lacks what attracted them to his writing in the first place. Spokesmen for Nelson / Word did not return World's calls seeking comment.

The irony is that, in all of the attempts by the Christian publishing industry to reach the secular world by emulating its values, it is failing to do so. Despite phenomenal sales and a dramatic growth of market share, Christianity is not exerting an increasing influence on the culture. It is the other way around. Some Christian publishers tend to think that being too explicit about

issues of faith is the main barrier to crossover acceptance. They forget that the Christian writers who have won the greatest reputation in secular circles—such as T. S. Eliot, C. S. Lewis, and Flannery O’Conner—have been in your face about their faith, winning attention by the power and originality of their writing.

Judging by the buzz at past conventions, conversations with practically anyone at this year’s CBA convention—authors, editors, marketers, booksellers—will uncover a host of frustrations, bitter experiences, and disillusionment. Most of the individuals committed to the industry still have a strong sense of Christian vocation and hope to publish books of genuine value. But if past conventions are a guide, insiders will swap tales of ruthless competition, ghostwriting in high places, and regrets about things they believe they had to do.

One insider even ruefully observes that in some ways Christian publishing is more [cutthroat] than its non-Christian equivalent, since federal and state laws provide remedies for such conflicts as contract violations and intellectual property disputes. Christians in the industry, to their credit, usually continue to follow the scriptural injunction not to sue fellow Christians. The apostle Paul’s warning against lawsuits was not intended, of course, as a cloak for shady dealings. Rather, it was predicated on the fact that Christians should be above the concerns of mere worldliness. It also assumed the accountability of church discipline.

The revival of Christian publishing must be, above all, a spiritual revival, for which Christians should be praying. In the meantime, the church can still hold the publishers of its Bibles and its ideas accountable. The power of the marketplace can exert a positive as well as a negative influence. Christian retailers can become more selective about what they stock. Christian book buyers can be better stewards, spending their money not on spiritual junk food but on what is true to the Bible.

Christians, after all, are people of the Book. Since God reveals himself by means of a Book, some of those at the CBA convention next week will be praying not for the opportunity to surf the newest big wave, but for God to safeguard and review the acts of writing, publishing, and reading.⁴

A recent article in *Christianity Today* entitled “No Longer Left Behind” had a lot to say about the current issues of Christian publishing. A few comments showed that things are no different now than when I initially quoted the *World* article from 1997, and actually have gotten worse:

Thomas Nelson is now the largest evangelical publisher with 2001 sales of nearly \$300 million. *Like many CBA publishers, it is responding to the new pressures by cutting back on titles.* Two years ago, Hyatt’s Nelson Book Division released 120 books. During the fiscal year that ended in March, the same division was scheduled to publish only 54 titles.

Other companies are following similar strategies. “Publishers are saying they’re going to publish fewer books and put more effort into the ones they do publish,” says ECPA’s Ross.⁵ (emphasis added)

A few years ago I had the opportunity to spend some time with an acquisitions editor for some of the biggest publishers in Christian publishing over the last twenty years. She frankly told me that she struggled with promising new authors the moon when she knew that the publishers allowed her to sign them on only to fill empty spots in the catalog. All the marketing dollars were spent on the big names and once the catalog was replaced with the next season’s catalog, the new author’s books were taken out of print and forgotten about. It is sad that Christian publishing has come to the point of using new authors as filler, but it is reality, so we might as well get used to it.

Should you self-publish? Given the current direction of Christian publishing, it may be your only option. It should be something you seriously pray over. Ask the Lord to confirm the direction you should take with your specific project. Consider this article from *U.S. News & World Report*.

Former Milwaukee salesman Fred Gosman couldn't interest a publisher in his book on why parents should stop spoiling their kids. "You're no expert," he was told. But Gosman figured that being a parent was expertise enough. So, after being rejected by [twenty] or so publishers, he decided he would publish *Spoiled Rotten: Today's Children and How to Change Them* on his own.

Gosman, whose book has since sold tens of thousands of copies, is in good company. "Self-publishing is the fastest-growing segment of the publishing industry," says Jan Nathan of the Publishers Marketing Association [PMA] trade group. Self-publishing works best with how-to books and carefully targeted niche markets. Atlanta author Diane Pfeifer, for example, has successfully produced two specialty cookbooks, fewer than half of which have been sold in bookstores. Pfeifer netted \$110,000 on *For Popcorn Lovers Only*, published in 1987. She rushed to print with *Gone with the Grits* in four months so it could debut last April at the World Grits Festival in St. George, SC. She is also peddling the book in airport and hotel gift shops and turnpike restaurant chains.

BOOK VALUE

Getting your name in print isn't cheap. "Putting out a book costs about \$12,000," says Dan Poynter, self-published author of more than [sixty] books including *The Self-Publishing Manual* (\$19.95, Para Publishing, 1997). But compared with the standard 10 to 15 percent royalty that publishers traditionally offer authors, self-publishers can pocket up to 30 percent. Of course,

you'll eat up much of the royalty on production costs. "You're not going to make enough money on one book to leave another career," says the PMA's Nathan.

Harried authors may find it worthwhile to farm out production to a pro. About Books in Buena Vista, Colorado, for instance, charges \$12,000 to \$40,000 for everything from editing to designing the cover and registering the copyright. Such consultants are different from vanity publishers. Book consultants work for a preset fee; profits are yours. Vanity publishers offer only a royalty after charging you to produce the book; complaints about quality and marketing are legion.

COOKING UP A SALES PLAN

Many self-published writers are surprised to learn that their biggest job begins after the book is printed. Marketing demands cunning, stamina, and luck. When cookbook writer Pfeifer couldn't interest Macy's book buyers in a book signing, she arranged one through the gourmet department instead. Spoiled Rotten author Gosman lived in his car and in cheap motels for weeks, pitching his book to newspapers, radio, and television. Gosman's grueling schedule paid off when the publicity led to an offer to publish the book from Villard Books, a subsidiary of Random House, and an advance in the high five figures. Craig Zirbel, who wrote *The Texas Connection: The Assassination of John F. Kennedy*, credits providence for his stints on the New York Times and other best-seller lists. "It's like I was sitting in the ballpark waiting for the game and someone threw me the ball and I hit a grand slam. It's pure dumb luck."⁶

Now, this book is about Christian publishing, and that was a secular article. You and I both know it's not about luck—it's about hearing God and being obedient to what He tells us to do. When we obey, He blesses. But I am trying to make a point for self-publishing, because if the secular industry is saying self-publish-

ing is the fastest growing segment, then the same will be true in Christian publishing. It is a fact that the trends in the secular book publishing market set the pace for the Christian book publishing market.

I sit on editor's panels at Christian writers conferences all across the country and unfortunately I hear more often than not that whatever you see selling in the secular arena, just wait six months and you'll see the idea repackaged with a Christian slant and selling in the CBA market. It's sad that we're following the world instead of the other way around, but it is true in more than just the marketing of products. Even the way the world does business is the way we are doing business. I mentioned earlier in this chapter that Thomas Nelson looks for new authors who are luminaries. The following article is just more proof that Christian publishing is following the world:

REAL WRITERS LOSING OUT ON CONTRACTS: CELEBRITY OF MONTH DRIVES BOOK MARKET

Except for the anguished authors, few noticed this summer when publishing megahouse Harper-Collins unexpectedly canceled more than 100 titles from its lists of forthcoming books. But that unprecedented act signals all sorts of problems for wannabe authors on down to book buyers.

The difficulties were in place long before the HarperCollins news, starting with the headlines that regularly trumpeted multimillion-dollar book deals for celebrities, politicians, athletes and a very few real writers such as Tom Clancy and Mary Higgins Clark.

To stay in business, publishers generally need book sales to cover the costs of the author's contract, printing, production time (editors, artists designing the dust cover, etc.) and shipping.

It has always been the custom to give some book contracts to talented authors whose books won't sell in the hundreds of thousands. The hope is that simply getting the book on the market will, over time, allow the writer to develop a following that will buy future titles in larger, profit-making numbers. Dollars lost in this manner are supposedly offset by the millions of books sold each time a Clancy or a Clark brings out a blockbuster.

But in recent years, the old formula hasn't worked. Outlandish advances to celebrity authors have drained publishers' pockets, and more often than not, the subsequent books didn't sell nearly as well as expected.

Johnnie Cochran's "Journey to Justice" is a good example. Ballantine paid Cochran a \$4.4 million advance for the book. By a conservative estimate, "Journey to Justice" would have had to sell at least 850,000 to 1 million copies to break even. Industry sources peg the book's sales at fewer than 200,000.

Cochran still keeps the \$4.4 million.

Ballantine is left with warehouses full of unsold books.

The only way publishers can make up such losses is to do what Harper-Collins has done: cut back on contracts with lesser-known writers. Those authors are lumped into the "midlist" category, meaning that their often well-written books regularly sell 5,000 to 10,000 copies. (It takes sales of 50,000 to 60,000 to make most bestseller lists.)

That doesn't mean that the publishers lose money on those modestly selling books. Despite the millions thrown to celebrities, most working writers rarely exceed \$5,000 in royalty advances. If their books sell 10,000 copies, the publishers will probably make a profit.

So why don't publishers simply abandon the expensive celebrities and concentrate on talented if less well-compensated authors?

They blame the proliferation of major chain bookstores, Barnes & Noble and Borders in particular.

In Tarrant County, Texas, alone the big chains have virtually eliminated privately owned bookstores and even smaller chains such as Taylors. This has been seen as a boon for most consumers, because the chains can buy titles in bulk and offer substantial discounts from suggested retail price.

Publishing houses want to be the big chain's best friends, because a major national purchase of a title by a chain such as Barnes & Noble can instantly propel a book onto best-seller lists.

But the chains want books by big names. Publishers that disdain Oprah or Tim Allen in favor of gifted but little-known writers simply won't get any substantial orders from the chains.

Even when the chains order hundreds of thousands of copies of a book, the publisher is still gambling by printing and shipping them. If a store orders 200 copies of a book and sells just 20, it can return the other 180 to the publisher for credit on future orders. When a much-hyped book doesn't sell, it hurts the publisher far more than the bookstores.

How bad is it? Last year, more than 30 percent of books were returned by bookstores to publishers. One midsize press says that 70 percent of its books were returned.

The real pain, however, is being felt by midlist writers, talented but as-yet-unpublished authors and, most of all, book buyers.

Big-dollar deals with celebrities have left the incorrect impression that anyone who regularly publishes books must be rich. In fact, most published authors have full-time jobs because they cannot support themselves by writing.

These midlist writers are the ones whose contracts were terminated by HarperCollins and whose books will be expunged from publishing lists if other houses follow suit. They will have no choice but to turn to small regional presses, whose limited

budgets mean tiny (1,000 to 2,500 copies) printings even more miniscule royalty advances.

Yet those smaller presses are the ones that regularly offer first contracts to previously unpublished writers. With more established authors available, the regional presses will contract with far fewer wannabe writers, making it even more difficult for fledgling authors to get their first book published.

One publishing industry proverb: “For every 100 people who say they’re going to write a book, one starts a book. For every 100 people who start writing a book, one finishes a book. And for every 10,000 books that are finished, one gets published.” This was before HarperCollins made its draconian move.

It could be even worse for readers.

In recent years, books have gradually increased in price. In 1980, an average hardcover book cost about \$15. In 1997, it’s \$24. Publishers blame production expenses, particularly an explosive rise in paper prices. But in fact, readers have also been subsidizing huge book advances to celebrities-of-the-month. That’s your money in Johnnie Cochran’s pocket.

As long as the chains demand books by famous people, and the famous people demand unreasonably huge advances from the publishers, the situation isn’t going to change.

Fewer books will be published. Those that do make it into print will be caught in the same publishing Catch-22: they’ll cost more and more, and probably sell less and less.⁷

So, as you can see, whatever is happening in the secular publishing world, will be happening in the Christian publishing world in no time flat. Sad, but true. Again, the fact that self-publishing is the fastest growing segment of the secular publishing industry confirms the trend in the Christian market in this additional publishing option. WinePress has been blessed to lead the way in bringing credibility and respect to the alternative of self-publishing. Over the last ten years we have worked hard at bringing the standard of

excellence in self-publishing up to a competitive level with royalty publishers in the marketplace.

Now just because publishing a book can run into the tens of thousands of dollars, don't tuck tail and run. You don't have to spend \$40,000 to get a quality book into print. As I mention in chapter two, this tends to be a greed-driven industry, but that does not mean that all Christian subsidy publishers, book packagers, and consultants are dishonest.

Dan Poynter's best-selling book, *The Self-Publishing Manual*, gives us eight good reasons to self-publish.

Self-publishing is not new. In fact, it has solid early American roots; it is almost a tradition. Well-known self-publishers include Mark Twain, Zane Grey, Upton Sinclair, Carl Sandburg, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Stephen Crane, Mary Baker Eddy, George Bernard Shaw, Edgar Allan Poe, Rudyard Kipling, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Robert Ringer, Spencer Johnson, Richard Bolles, Richard Nixon and many, many more. These people were self-publishers, though today the vanity presses claim their books were "subsidy" published.

Years ago, some authors elected to go their own way after being turned down by regular publishers, but today most self-publishers make an educated decision to take control of their book—usually after reading this book.

Do self-publishers ever sell many books? Here are some numbers (at last count): *What Color is Your Parachute?*, 4.3 million; *Fifty Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth*, 3.5 million; *How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive*, 2.2 million; *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun*, over half a million; and *Final Exit*, over half a million copies. These authors took control and made it big.

Self-publishing is not difficult. In fact, it may even be easier than dealing with a publisher. The job of the publishing manager is not to perform every task, but to see that every task gets

done. The self-publisher deals directly with the printer and handles as many of the editing, proofing, promotion and distribution jobs as he or she can. What they can't do, they farm out. Therefore, self-publishing may take on many forms depending on the author's interests, assets and abilities. It allows you to concentrate on those areas you find most challenging. . . .

HERE ARE EIGHT GOOD REASONS TO SELF-PUBLISH:

1. To make more money. Why accept 6 [percent] to 10 [percent] in royalties when you can have 35 [percent]? You know your subject and you know the people in the field. Certainly you know better than some distant publisher who might buy your book. While the trade publisher may have some good contacts, he doesn't know the market as well as you, and he isn't going to expend as much promotional effort. Ask yourself this question: Will the trade publisher be able to sell four times as many books as I can?

2. Speed. Most publishers work on an 18-month production cycle. Can you wait that long to get into print? Will you miss your market? The 1 1/2 years don't even begin until after the contract negotiations and contract signing. Publication could be three years away! Why waste valuable time shipping your manuscript around to see if there is a publisher out there who likes it? Richard Nixon self-published *Real Peace* in 1983 because he felt his message was urgent; he couldn't wait for a publisher's machinery to grind out the book. Typically, bookstores buy the first book on a popular subject. Later books may be better, but the buyer will pass on them since the store already has the subject "covered."

3. To keep control of your book. According to *Writer's Digest*, 60 [percent] of the big publishers do not give the author final approval on copy editing. Twenty-three percent never give the author the right to select the title, 20 [percent] do not consult the author on the jacket design and 36 [percent] rarely

involve the author in the book's promotion. The big New York trade publishers may have more promotional connections than you, but with a stable of books to push, your effort may get lost in the shuffle. The big publishers are good at getting books into bookstores but they fail miserably at approaching other outlets. Give the book to someone who has a personal interest in it—the author.

4. No one will read your manuscript. Many publishers receive more than 100 unsolicited manuscripts for consideration each day. They do not have time to unwrap, review, rewrap and ship all these submissions, so they return them unopened. Unless you are a movie star, noted politician or have a recognizable name, it is nearly impossible to attract a publisher. Many publishers work with their existing stable of authors and accept new authors only through agents.

5. Self-publishing is good business. There are more tax advantages for an author-publisher than there are for just authors.

6. Self-publishing will help you to think like a publisher. You will learn the industry and will have a better understanding of the big picture. A book is a product of one's self. An analogy may be drawn with giving birth. The author naturally feels that his book is terrific and that it would sell better if only the publisher would dump in more promotion money. He is very protective about his book (ever try to tell a mother her child is ugly?). The publisher answers that he is not anxious to dump more money into a book that isn't selling. So, if the author self-publishes, he gains a better understanding of the arguments on both sides. It is his money and his choice.

7. You will gain self-confidence and self-esteem. You will be proud to be the author of a book. Compare this to pleading with people to read your manuscript.

8. Finally—you may have no other choice. There are more manuscripts than can be read. Most publishers don't have time to even look at your manuscript.⁸

I'd like to add one more compelling reason to self-publish. The more commercial and worldly the Christian publishing industry becomes, the harder it will be to get more controversial topics published. Certainly, my two books on the dangers of multi-level marketing in the church (*Consumed by Success* and *All That Glitters Is Not God*) were controversial enough that I didn't even waste my time trying to go the royalty route. But other examples would include John Paulk's book *Not Afraid to Change: The Remarkable Story of How One Man Overcame Homosexuality*. While a successful agent tried for a full year to sell his manuscript to the larger Christian publishing houses, it was finally obvious that the topic was just a little too controversial for the mainstream Christian publishing industry. The story of John as an active homosexual and high-profile life as a "drag-queen" before his radical conversion, deliverance and marriage to a former lesbian was just a little too "colorful" for most. John's commitment to the message of hope for those trapped in the homosexual lifestyle enabled him to take the self-publishing step of faith. We published 3,000 hardcover copies and when sales took off, reprinted 10,000 softcover copies. Not long after that step he went to work for Focus on the Family and the door was opened, partly due to the success of *Not Afraid to Change*, for Tyndale House to contract him for the story of he and his wife, entitled *Love Won Out*.

Another example would be a book we published in late 1998 entitled, *Hating for Jesus*. It is a "hard word" which expounds on Luke 14:26–27 where Jesus says;

If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

Although the obvious intent is not worldly hate, the title in itself is controversial enough that no royalty publisher would want to risk their reputation to publish it. But because the underlying foundation was the full message of the Cross, much like the Andrew Murray, A.W. Tozer, William Law, Corrie ten Boom, Amy Carmichael and Thomas a’Kempis books of long ago, we were willing to help this pastor and his wife get the message into print.

In *Is There a Book Inside You?* Dan Poynter and Mindy Bingham offer a simple quiz to help you determine which route is best for you to go. The following should help to solidify some realistic expectations.

PUBLISHING OPTIONS

Consider the following statements to help decide which publishing option is best for you.

CONVENTIONAL PUBLISHER

If you feel:

1. It is important to me to be published by a major New York publisher because I value the type of recognition that would bring.
2. I have a personal connection with a publisher. I know an editor and can get my manuscript considered.
3. Publishers and their editors will change my manuscript for the better. I trust their judgment.
4. I will be happy to accept a 10 percent royalty.
5. Rejection does not bother me. I will keep sending out my manuscript until I find the right publisher.

Then start trying to find a conventional publisher.

VANITY PRESS

If you feel:

1. I want a few copies of my book for family and friends. It does not have to sell.
2. I am not concerned about price or about getting a return on my investment.
3. I do not want to produce my own book.

Then a vanity press might serve your purposes well.

BOOK PRODUCER OR PACKAGER

If you feel:

1. I want an attractive, professional-looking book.
2. I want someone else to handle the details, to take my manuscript and deliver the books to me to sell.

A book producer might be your answer.

AGENT

If you feel:

1. I do not have the time to find a publisher.
2. I would rather create than sell.
3. I am confident of my talent as a writer.

You should try to find an agent.

SELF-PUBLISHING

If you feel:

1. I am businesslike as well as creative.
2. I can afford to invest in a business.
3. I want to maintain complete control over my book.
4. If I wait much longer, someone else will beat me to the market.

5. I want a business of my own, and I am willing to put in the time and effort necessary.
6. I want to maximize the return on my efforts.

Self-publishing might be the route for you.⁷

At this point, you may have prayerfully determined that self-publishing is the most viable option for your project. But before we move into the how-tos, I'd like to tell you some of the real-life successes and disasters that I've encountered working in this industry.

Self-Publishing Successes & Disasters

AS I SPEAK ABOUT self-publishing across the country at Christian writers' conferences, I am amazed at the awful stories I hear. At every stop, someone has a tale about being taken advantage of by greedy and deceptive publishing companies. When the Lord gives you a message and you are passionate about writing it so that it will bless others, you may be especially susceptible to the unscrupulous motives of some vanity or subsidy presses. Some of those companies have the word Christian in their names, but they don't act in a Christian manner.

It is no wonder that the whole arena of self-publishing has had a tarnished reputation. It is a serious offense when so-called Christian companies say they will help people get their work published, but instead take advantage of a writer's vulnerability. If you are going to consider spending your hard-earned money to publish your book, then God expects you to be a good steward of those resources. You should do your homework and not just publish with the first company that comes along and flatters you into signing a contract. Hopefully this book will help you to discern what's right for you and your manuscript—and your integrity.

In subsidy publishing the author pays for publishing his own book, and often at exorbitant prices. This is especially true for runs of 1,000 copies. In comparison, the price per book for 5,000 copies looks pretty good to the unsuspecting Christian writer. One company I know posted a pretty hefty charge per copy for 1,000 copies of a 144-page book, but then made a big deal about how much less it would run per book for 5,000 copies. They did not offer any options in between those quantities, so the only thing an author could do to get a decent price per copy was to publish 5,000 copies. The question remains, does the new author really need 5,000 copies of his book? Usually not, unless the author is in ministry or doing a lot of public speaking. That kind of deception happens frequently in this industry. I consider this to be manipulation and an example of the “diverse weights and measures” of which the Bible warns. Proverbs 11:1 says, “Dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight.”

A few years ago, before WinePress had any distribution and marketing capabilities, a pastor who had been considering our services decided to go to another company that promised to list his book in their catalog. The last time I saw him he hung his head sheepishly as he admitted to sending this “Christian” company \$9,000 six months before. At that point he had not heard one word from them, but his check had been cashed.

Another retired pastor who was a longtime acquaintance decided that a different subsidy publisher could offer him more because they also promised his book would go into their catalog. Based on their assurance of great sales, he paid close to \$20,000 for 5,000 copies of his book. He was a retired pastor! He was not doing any speaking or ministry that would get him in front of prospective buyers.

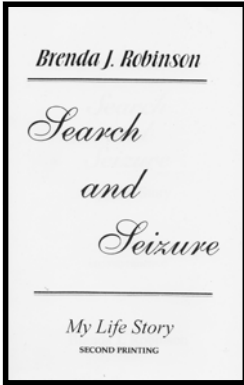
Given his situation, WinePress would have suggested he start with a run of 1,000 to 2,000 copies—to see if his book would sell

well—and then consider reprinting later. We would have suggested that he do a test run to assess the market. This retired pastor still has a garage full of books and is desperately doing all he can to get media exposure in order to sell them. This is just another horror story of greed-driven manipulation.

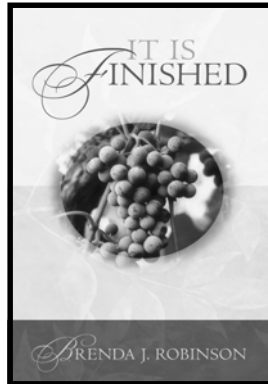
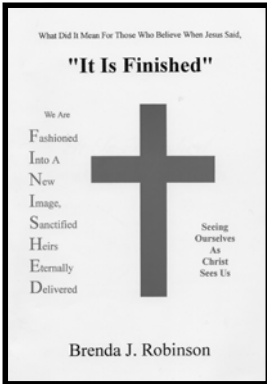
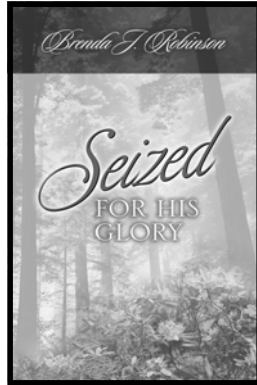
While speaking at a Christian writers' workshop a number of years ago, I met Joyce. She told me the sad story of how she found a subsidy publisher from Georgia in the Christian Writers' Market Guide. They initially quoted her a reasonable price to publish her book, but in the end she paid \$5,000 for 400 copies. The cover was ugly, the spine was crooked, it had no ISBN (International Standard Book Number) that all reputable publishers assign to every book, and quite frankly, it looked like it had been assembled by amateurs in a garage.

In fact, that same subsidy publisher published four different books for Brenda Robinson. As she was working with this publisher on book number five, a few weeks from the time she needed books in her hands, she was informed that they could not print a hardcover 6 x 9 book. He insinuated that she didn't know what she was doing by requesting that trim size in hardcover and insulted her by saying that she should know better. She finally threw her hands up and called WinePress for help. In no time flat, we gave her a bid for a 6 x 9 hardcover book exactly the way she wanted it. When the book was published by WinePress she couldn't hold back the tears . . . finally a REAL book! On the next page you can see the difference between what this "publisher" gave her as the final product and what WinePress created. It was nothing short of a "night and day" difference. We have since repackaged all of her other books and given her the credibility she and her message deserved.

Non-reputable
subsidy publisher



WinePress version



While at the American Christian Writers' Conference in Orlando, Florida, I met with another retired minister. He was so excited about the letter he had received from a publisher that told him what a wonderful manuscript he had. They assured him it needed to be published. With the letter they included a contract to publish 1,000 copies of his book for \$14,000! Of course, they offered to market it. But after taking his money up front I doubt they would have any incentive for making a significant marketing effort. Even after paying the \$14,000, he still didn't own the books, he only owned the right to 40% royalties of the books that might or might not be sold!

At Marlene Bagnull's Greater Philadelphia Christian Writers' Conference, I met a wonderful man from Ethiopia. He had been in the United States five years and was in full-time ministry. He told me how he had responded to a secular vanity press advertisement in a Christian publication. At the time that I spoke with him, he had spent \$18,000 for 3,000 books. The cover was unprofessional at best, and any copies that he wanted to have or sell, he had to purchase from the company. That is highway robbery! When the book didn't sell during the first year, the vanity press destroyed the inventory after offering him a chance to buy back his books for another \$6,000.

A few years ago I spoke to a friend who ghostwrites for people in ministry who have a story to tell but don't have the time or expertise to write their own book. He shared with me that one pastor he was working with took his manuscript to a cooperative publishing group out of Tulsa, Oklahoma. He paid them \$30,000 for 10,000 copies. Among other things, they changed the Scripture references from the King James Version to another version without his approval. He is suing them to get his money refunded, having pulled the job because he felt they were not acting in an ethical manner.

We hear countless stories of people paying too much money for an inferior product, resulting in a garage full of books. It is amazing to see how greed-driven this industry is, even when the companies are reputable and actually deliver what they promise.

The other thing I have seen over the years since *You Can Do It!* first came out is small self-publishing houses starting up all across the country. Many have tried to take the information I teach and start offering their services to others. Unfortunately the end products I have seen from many of these endeavors have been slipshod and sorely lacking in quality control. Typos on the covers as well as riddled throughout the text, amateurish formatting and covers, and of course, with a product that looks unprofessional, no marketing

or distribution. For this very reason, I have deleted much of my “how to do it yourself” information and now only recommend that you work with a full service book packager such as WinePress Publishing or one of the other reputable companies . . . for the most part, this is the only way you will really end up with a product that you are proud of and that others will take seriously.

To back up that statement, here’s a quote from Sally Stuart in a recent copy of the *Christian Communicator*:

In the past, I have talked about the change of attitude toward self-published or print-on-demand books within the Christian publishing industry, but I want to return to that subject. While it is true these options are making it possible for more writers to get their books published, that opportunity also brings with it a responsibility to maintain an appropriate level of professionalism.

Although the stigma attached to self-published books is blurring, it is still true that in order for such a book to get equal attention it must also maintain the highest quality of workmanship. For that reason, you must make every effort to produce a product that is equivalent to a royalty-published book.

Doing so means you must pay someone to design an appropriate cover; use quality paper and a reputable printer; and especially pay a well-qualified editor to do a thorough, line-by-line editing of the manuscript. To take shortcuts in any of these areas will lessen your chances of being noticed—and your book bought—once you get to the marketplace. Ultimately it may also mean that you need to take a realistic look at your project and determine first if you have enough experience and credits to justify producing a book at this point—and then to be sure there is a place and need for it in the market at this time.¹

Print-on-Demand

With the recent developments in the area of print-on-demand (POD) many new companies have sprung up offering publishing

services “at a fraction of the cost.” As I continue to speak at writers conferences and hear from people across the country, the disasters I have heard regarding this kind of publishing have been just as dramatic.

One pastor from Texas wrote me about his print-on-demand experience saying “they offer no support, no encouragement, not even the common courtesy of returning one’s phone calls. Also, I had two editors work my book over, but it didn’t matter . . . every person who publishes with that company and doesn’t clean their manuscript up puts a blemish on my book as well . . . there is no quality control. The ordering process is not simple . . . you usually have to leave messages on machines for author orders and sometimes they get the order and sometimes they don’t. Orders may take two weeks or six, one never knows! . . . I have received three faulty books so far. One I opened with my book cover on it had someone else’s book inside! The title page read *My Big Fat Head by Jodie Something.*”

In a recent copy of *Advanced Christian Writer*, Sally Stuart reported on a similar situation.

An author who recently had a POD book released shared some of the problems she encountered in trying to promote and sell it: (1) She couldn’t get information on the publisher’s marketing plan, which it said wouldn’t kick in until she had done her local marketing. (2) The publisher wouldn’t send her books on consignment for a large local book fair. (3) It promised the book would be available through Ingram Book Company, a major distributor, but it isn’t there. (4) A local bookstore ordered a dozen copies for a book signing but could only get a 20 percent discount. (5) She was unable to get any copies to send out for reviews, and the publisher would not provide a list of where it was sending review copies. (6) The highest discount available to the author is 30 percent.²

One of our WinePress authors emailed me not too long ago saying:

Is Book-on-Demand publishing hurting your business? Probably not . . . I haven't seen one yet I'd want my name put to!

Another author lamented over his print-on-demand experience:

As you may know, iUniverse does not send out review copies, no press releases, or in any other way plug the book. So I'm left on my own and I need all the help I can get!

While on the subject of print-on-demand, I should probably mention that WinePress has developed a print-on-demand program for those authors who cannot afford to publish at least 2,500 copies, or for those with a market so small that their need is less than 500 copies. Hopefully this will help to counteract all the horror stories I have heard about print-on-demand. We have studied the market diligently and created a strategic alliance with the top on-demand printer in the country. In doing so, we're now able to offer quality print-on-demand and the excellent customer service writers have come to expect from WinePress. We've also built in great marketing and promotions options as well as WinePress quality editing and cover design. We've watched to see where other POD publishers have missed the boat and made sure that our new division, called PLEASANT WORD, provides the best service, discounts and royalties offered in this rapidly growing industry. This new option gives you a better choice of alternatives so that the word inside you can get out to the world!

Successes

While there may be many self-publishing disasters when using less than reputable companies, you'll also find some real success stories at the same time, proving that you don't need to despair about ever getting your manuscript published.

In August of 1995 I completed my first manuscript, *Consumed by Success: Reaching the Top and Finding God Wasn't There*. I wrote it in obedience to a message that I felt the Lord had given me. He wanted me to expose the plan of the enemy, who keeps Christians so busy chasing the American Dream that they lose the most important thing in life: their first love, Jesus. It is definitely a controversial message and a hard word for the body of Christ. In the book I admit how I nearly destroyed my friendships, family, and faith by getting consumed with multilevel marketing. I didn't write it to make money and would give all the books away if I could afford to do so. To keep my motives right, I have designated all my royalties to two different ministries. I wrote it because I had a burning passion inside to see others set free from the unhealthy pursuit of success—just as I had been.

The first printing was 2,500 copies of the original ninety-six-page manuscript. Out of that I gave away about 700 copies. I did nearly 100 radio and TV interviews from November to April, including Money Matters with Larry Burkett, Prime Time America with Jim Warren, and many other national and regional Christian talk shows.

As I did those interviews, the Lord continued to give me new insights to share during the interviews. Since most of the shows encouraged telephone calls from the audience, I heard hundreds of stories of others who had been deceived and victimized by the “get-rich-quick” programs that are running rampant through our churches. I knew after only a few months that I had enough material for an updated edition.

Having done more speaking than writing, I had never really considered myself to be a writer. I knew that if I wanted the book to be a quality work as well as a convicting message for the body of Christ, I would need some help. So I got together with an editor who helped strengthen the weak parts of the book and enhance the rest with additional dialogue and real-life stories of others who

had experienced the same things. The revised and expanded edition came out in May 1996 at 192 pages. With a new cover and a stronger message than ever, it is continuing to touch people where they live.

As we were going into our second printing, I whined to the Lord, “Why can’t we just get a publisher to buy it? Just think what another self-publishing success story would do for WinePress!”

But the Lord made it very clear to my heart that selling the book to a major publisher could end up misleading many people into the unrealistic expectation that if they just published with WinePress they would automatically get picked up by a major publisher. He impressed upon my heart that I needed to be faithful to practice what I preached, be an example for others, and have a successful self-published book that stays self-published for the time being.

I repented for my whining and got on with matters at hand. The book went into four printings within twenty-four months, and *Today’s Christian Woman*, *The Plain Truth*, and other well known magazines have published excerpts from the book giving the message incredible exposure. *The Bookstore Journal* (now known as the *CBA Marketplace*) also ran a book review encouraging all buyers to keep the book in stock. As I continue to be faithful with the message He has given me, God is faithful to open the doors needed to get the message out.

The account of how the *Living Bible* was published is another amazing story. Back in the early sixties, Ken Taylor completed his new translation of the Bible. He shopped it around to different publishers and got nothing but rejections. He believed so strongly in the project that he printed up 2,000 copies on his own. It wasn’t long before Billy Graham obtained a copy and held it up at a crusade. The rest is history! Tyndale House Publishers hit the map in the publishing industry as the result of this self-published book.

Joseph Girzone is another self-publishing victory in the Christian publishing world. His novel, *Joshua*, was rejected many times. He published it himself and sold 60,000 copies before selling the rights to a major publisher. Since that time he has written a number of successful sequels.

WinePress author Peter Jones wrote *Spirit Wars, Pagan Revival in Christian America* and turned down an offer from Bethany House to self-publish with WinePress. After selling over 15,000 copies, Regal bought the rights and retitled the work, *Pagans in the Pews*. Another WinePress author who had a similar experience recently was Holly Wagner. Her book, *Dumb Things She Does . . . Dumb Things He Does* accompanied her on her travels to speak to women's groups in Australia. Her book was so well received that HarperCollins in Australia bought the rights and published two books from the one, entitled *Dumb Things We Do*, and another entitled, *She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not*. Not long thereafter, Thomas Nelson bought the U.S. rights to the book and republished it with the title *Dumb Things He Does / Dumb Things She Does: How to Stop Doing the Things that Drive Women / Men Crazy*. Since that time, Holly has signed a multiple-book contract with Thomas Nelson and is being heavily promoted as one of their new up and coming authors.

We released a book entitled *When Duty Calls: A Guide to Equip Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve Personnel and Their Loved Ones for Military Separations* by Carol Vandesteege in late August, 2001. With the aftermath of 9/11 and the deployment of troops to fight terrorism, the book became an immediate hit. WinePress was able to sign contracts with the big distributors that sell to the PXs around the world and other wholesalers who sell directly to the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. She sold out of 5,000 books in less than six months and immediately reprinted another 10,000. Her first check from the WinePress order fulfillment department for her initial sales in the first month was over \$7,000.

One of the most exciting WinePress success stories is Rosey Dow's *Reaping the Whirlwind*. Her historical fiction / murder mystery centered around the Scopes Trials won a Christy Award in 2001, tying for first place in her category with Gilbert Morris. What a giant step that was for self-publishing, to have a fiction title win a national award along side traditional publishers like Zondervan, Thomas Nelson, Multnomah and Broadman and Holman!

Maggie Kinney of Dallas, Texas, has been helping local authors self-publish for many years. In 1993 her pastor had an idea for a book of quotations about God and America and began putting the information together. She packaged the book for him, and they named it *America's God and Country*. Since that time they have sold more than 100,000 copies. They're not interested in selling it to a publisher—they're doing just fine without one!

Colene Copeland, author of the *Priscilla the Pig* series, cheerfully admits that she's self-published and that after selling nearly 700,000 copies of the first book alone, she remains self-published "to keep more of the money."

Consider the phenomenal story of *The Christmas Box*.

The saga of *The Christmas Box* has only begun. Utah advertising writer Richard Paul Evans originally printed [twenty] copies of his short parable about a parent's love for a child to share with family members. When people around his home began asking local bookstores for it (one bookseller received [ten] orders for it), Evans decided to find a publisher. After repeated rejections ("uncategorizable," "too long," "too short"), he published himself, starting with 3,000 paperback copies distributed mainly in the West. By the time Simon & Schuster bought hardcover rights in a frenzied auction last February, Evans had sold 700,000 copies.²

WinePress author Dan Miller, whose inspirational life story *Living Laughing and Loving Life!* has sold almost 50,000 copies, has been offered royalty contracts over and over again, but chooses to remain self-published.

Print-on-Demand Successes

AFTER spending a year trying to sell her book to publishers and receiving 70 rejection letters as a reward, Laurie Notaro, a newspaper columnist in Phoenix, decided to do it herself. Working with iUniverse, one of many companies that offer “print on demand” services... Several months later she sold the rights to her book, plus the concept for a new one, to a major publisher for a six-figure sum.

Joe Vitale, on the other hand, had already published several business books with traditional publishers. But for a new book, Mr. Vitale, a marketing consultant in Austin, Tex., decided to try a print-on-demand company, 1stBooks Library. For two days in June, Mr. Vitale’s book was the best-selling title on Amazon.com.

In the same way that the home computer gave users the ability to create documents that looked good, even if they didn’t necessarily read well, print-on-demand services now enable people to publish a book with ease, regardless of whether anyone else would want to read it.

For \$99 to \$1,600, such companies offer a professionally laid-out book, a choice of stock or customized covers and an International Standard Book Number, or I.S.B.N., which is used to list the book in databases open to traditional and online bookstores.

For those fees, authors also get up to 10 copies of their book, and can buy additional copies, typically for 60 percent of the retail price. With the print-on-demand model, there is no minimum print run; books do not end up stored in a warehouse and possibly destroyed after a few months’ run. Yet they

never go out of print; the digital file is stored indefinitely, always available for creating another hardback or paperback book when needed.

Marketing the print-on-demand book is up to the author, which is one reason why most do not sell.

“The P.O.D. books that succeed are not the best books,” said Mr. Feldcamp of Xlibris. “They’re the ones that have been pushed most successfully by their authors.”

As an experienced newspaper columnist, Ms. Notaro knew that traditional marketing techniques would get her nowhere. She did not bother to send her book, a collection of humorous essays called “The Idiot Girls’ Action Adventure Club,” to newspapers to be reviewed.

“I knew how the process worked,” she said. “My book would fall to the bottom of the pile.” She rejected iUniverse’s stock covers and designed one of her own. Trading on her name recognition in Phoenix, Ms. Notaro organized readings at libraries, schools and women’s groups, also handing out fliers telling people to order her book at Amazon.com. Using a now-defunct Amazon.com marketing program, she created a “sponsored link” on the Web site. A literary agent noticed it, contacted her and eventually sold her book to Villard, one of the publishers that had originally rejected it. As a paperback from a mainstream publisher, it made the New York Times best-seller list for several weeks last summer.

Mr. Vitale sent 8,000 e-mail messages asking people to buy his book, “Spiritual Marketing: A Proven Five-Step Formula for Easily Creating Wealth from the Inside Out,” from Amazon.com on one of two specified days last June; in return he offered them access to marketing articles posted at his Web site that normally were not available without a fee. He also recommended his own book on an Amazon.com page featuring a competitor’s work.

Mr. Vitale's guerrilla marketing tactics paid off. He sold 5,000 copies on his two requested days, plus an additional 2,500 to date. "I didn't care about getting reviews," he said. "I was easily able to drive people to Amazon.com, and by becoming the best-selling book for two days, I got a lot of attention."

Too often, writers who use print-on-demand services do not put enough energy or money into their efforts, expecting that somehow their work will become known. "People who flock to print on demand are very frequently planning to fail," said Richard Galli, a writer. His first book, "Rescuing Jeffrey," was bought by an established publisher.

For his next book, a novel, Mr. Galli wanted to keep his ownership rights and all the profits, so he chose to use a subsidy press and print thousands of copies at once.³

Other self-publishing successes include *The One-Minute Manager*, *What Color Is Your Parachute?* and *Managing from the Heart*, plus many secular blockbusters, like *The Celestine Prophecy*, *Mutant Message Down Under*, and *Surfing the Himalayas*.

I don't want to give a false hope that every self-published author should expect to get picked up by a royalty publisher. It has happened to some, but to most it does not. The article "Self-Publishing Successes" cited earlier in this chapter, notes that larger publishers are always on the lookout for successful books. However, I would encourage you to look at the possibility of self-publishing as an end in itself. If you expect to self-publish with the intention of being picked up by a royalty house, your expectation is an unrealistic one and you are bound to be disappointed. The self-publishing experience should be a positive one for you, not a nightmare! To begin with, you need realistic expectations along with pure heart motives.

What's Your Heart Motive?

WHY DO YOU WRITE? Have you ever thought about your bottom-line motivations for becoming a published author? Scripture states, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9). We need to be willing to ask the Lord to purify our motives and to warn “if there is any wicked way” in us (Ps. 139:24). If we truly want the Lord to use our writing to minister to others, we must ensure that our writing flows from a clean and pure heart.

Why do you write? Is it for personal enjoyment? Is it to aid in and record your spiritual growth? (Journaling is a good example of this.) Is it to earn part- or full-time income (tentmaking)? Is it to teach or help others? Or is it for ministry purposes? Once you have established your reason for writing, ask the Lord to purify your motives.

No matter what we do in life, it is going to be motivated by one of two things: God or self. I know that sounds hard, but think about it. In everything we do, we are striving to please either ourselves or God. When our motives truly become selfless instead of selfish, and we begin to seek God's face and hear directly from

Him on what we are to write and how we are to write it, we can be sure that the Lord will bring life to those who read our work.

Another area that must be checked is the root of our message. Are we telling our story to make a killing (greed)? To set the record straight (anger)? To right a wrong (unforgiveness, bitterness, or revenge)? To see our name in lights (pride)? Because something terrible may happen if we don't get this word out (fear)?

A woman once asked us to design and publish her book. It had already been mentioned in a denominational magazine as a "must read," and she was adamant that we help her get it into book form. It turned out that the book was an exposé of a denomination's financial mismanagement at their regional headquarters, which resulted in many pastors losing their retirement income after years of faithful service in the ministry. The more I listened to this woman, the more evident it became that her manuscript was written out of revenge and bitterness. She was the wife of one of those pastors and wanted to tell the truth so that the denomination would take responsibility for its sin. Even though she had her money in hand and wanted WinePress to publish her book, I knew that God would not honor that message if it was written from a root of bitterness. We chose not to co-labor in that particular project since it would have given God's work a "black eye" in our area of the Pacific Northwest. Even though we could have used the money at the time, I knew the Lord would bring other jobs to meet our obligations.

Sometimes I meet people in the Christian publishing world who turn their noses up at self-publishing with the attitude: "I would never consider spending my own money to print my books. I wouldn't lower myself to that." I see pride written all over their faces and am always saddened that people confessing to be Christians could be so puffed up and full of self.

The root of pride is visible when writers tell me they are convinced God gave them their manuscript word for word and it doesn't need any editing. Sometimes I want to ask, "If the God who dictated your book is the same God of the universe who created all

things, then how come He doesn't know how to spell?" We need to be willing to be teachable and to take honest criticism so that our work becomes the best that it can be for God. Joining a Christian writers' critique group may be the first step in crucifying the flesh, dealing a death blow to our pride, and being willing to be accountable to others who are going in the same direction with their writing.

In 1995, while I was teaching at Seattle Pacific University's writers' conference, I heard a creative song with a lot of truth. It was written by two attendees.

If I Were An Author

© 1995 by Margaret D. Smith and Janet Lee Carey
Used by permission

(To the tune of "If I Were A Rich Man")

If I were an author
Diga-diga-diga-diga-diga-deeze.
All day long I'd fax a little book,
Keep Oprah on hold,
Stacking up my royalties.

I wouldn't have to work hard
With my staff of twelve to handle all my
photographic crew.
All day long I'd think immortal thoughts,
Make up brilliant plots,
With characters too vivid to be true.

Bridge:

I'd call my publishers at home at midnight
Just to chat a little bit.
They'd have to sit and listen to all my dreams.

And when New Yorker came to beg forgiveness
 For ignoring childhood genius in my poems,
 I'd grant them an exclusive interview.
 Ya-da-da-dee-da-da
 Ya-da-da-dee-da-da
 I wouldn't be rejected,
 Neener-neener-neener-neener-neener-neener-neener-noo.
 Everyone would ask for my next book,
 I'd keep them on the hook,
 And tell them I had better things to do . . . like . . .
 Going on vacation
 To the south of France or maybe on a little yacht in Spain.
 Hey here comes the mailman with my book,
 Here, let's take a look. . . .
 Guess I'll have to send it out again.

Bridge:
 Until they finally recognize my potential,
 Talent dripping from my every pore,
 I'll have to stop this song and write . . .
 Some . . . more!

Ya-da-da-da-da-da
 Ya-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da

Hiya!

This song makes gentle fun of the vain imaginations of seeing our name in lights. If our motivation is rooted in pride, sooner or later we will be disappointed!

Is your motive to get published, no matter what it takes? To see your name on a book, whatever the cost? To be an author rather than “merely” a writer?

Sometimes, when participating on editorial panels at various Christian writers' conferences, I hear interesting suggestions offered by Christian publishing "experts." Someone in the audience may ask what the represented publishing houses are looking for in the way of publishable material. Inevitably someone on the panel will suggest that the person do his homework and see what is selling in the American Booksellers Association (ABA) market, the secular counterpart to the Christian Booksellers Association. Once they determine what is selling there, they should assume a similar trend is in the future for the Christian market and write toward that end. Only rarely do I hear editors on these panels encourage Christian writers to write from their passion.

Writing may or may not turn out to be a profit-making venture, but for Christians, writing should be a ministry aimed at bringing life to those who read the message. If we are not anointed by the Holy Spirit to write on a subject, then it will all be the "wood, hay and stubble" that 1 Corinthians 3:12 speaks about. Yes, you might be able to sell the manuscript to a publisher, but unless it has come as a result of the passion burning within you to share the message God has given you, it will fall short of the glory of God. It will be just another book with no anointing, no power through the Holy Spirit to bring change to its readers.

These words may be offensive to some who make their living cranking out books for major Christian publishers, but as Leonard Goss shared at a writers' conference in Philadelphia:

... in Christian publishing, our sense of business may be taking over our sense of critical [judgment]. Maybe you have heard the phrase the publisher's smell. The publisher's smell is what we feel comfortable publishing. I'm afraid that the publisher's smell may be changing—even in Christian publishing. Many in Christian publishing today are unconcerned about the right choice of what to publish. Rather, they are concerned only with

sales and with bringing their wares to the market. This is the jackpot syndrome. When George Bernard Shaw once said of publishing that, “There is probably no other trade where there is so little relationship between profits and actual value or into which chance so largely enters” he had no clue what would become of Christian publishing in the 1990s, but Shaw certainly described Christian publishing in the 1990s. Now the idea is to package the books right so that they appeal only to the very general reader representing the blasé Christian mainstream. The idea is simply to publish more books that sell more, and fewer books that have a limited reading audience. The idea is to compete with the electronic media for the entertainment dollar, to bring all the glitz and all the visual appeal to books that one associates with the electronic media.

We need to learn to wait on God, hear His voice, and use the gift of writing in the way He instructs, not just plot what will sell or dream up a good idea or crank out a formula. We must learn to sit at Jesus’ feet and let Him refine us, mold us, purify us, and make us a vessel of honor. Then—and only then—can He use us to be effective messengers with the words He gives us.

Industry Terms

THE VOCABULARY OF the publishing industry may seem like a foreign language when you're first starting out. Sometimes I throw around terms assuming everyone knows what I'm talking about. Thankfully, someone will always bring me back down to earth by asking, "What is a subsidy publisher?" I think it would be a good idea to clarify some of the terms we have mentioned in the first few chapters. At the same time I define each term, I'll give you my take on the pro's and con's of each kind of publishing. Most of these definitions are excerpted from Dan Poynter's book, *The Self-Publishing Manual*, but some are more recent types of publishing available, of which I've written my own descriptions.

THE BIG PUBLISHING FIRMS are like department stores; they have something for everyone. They publish in many different fields and concentrate on books that anticipate audiences in the millions. . . . They put up the money, have the book produced, and use sales reps to get it into bookstores, but they will not promote the book. The author must do it. . . . They pay you an

average of 15 [percent] on the wholesale price collected for your book. . . .¹

The upside of getting a contract with a big publishing firm, or a “royalty publisher” is:

- 1) No risk: You put no money up and just go along for the ride.
- 2) Credibility: Getting a contract with a traditional royalty publisher certainly gives credibility to your message.
- 3) Almost guaranteed to get your book on the shelves: The reason I say almost is because this is still not a guarantee. With shelf space shrinking and celebrity authors increasing, even authors who land a deal with a royalty publisher have a hard time finding their books on the shelves of Christian bookstores.

The downside of getting a contract with a big publishing firm is:

- 1) You have no control. The editorial changes and decisions regarding the title and cover are not yours to make. You no longer have any ownership of the book. It belongs to the publisher now and since they are spending their money, they call the shots. You also have no control on how long it stays in print.
- 2) Since you are not risking your money on the project, you only receive a small royalty instead of the profits from the sales. A normal royalty for a first time author is between 10 and 15%, but that percentage is of the net not the retail price of your book. What that means is, if your book retails for \$12.00 your royalty would run anywhere from about .50 to a dollar per book. You would also have the opportu-

nity to buy your book at a discount ranging from 40% to maybe 60% from the publisher (or somewhere between \$5 a book and \$7.50 per book), which you can then sell for \$12 each when you go out to a speaking engagement. Just to illustrate the magnitude of this point, I'll share a story of the first book I worked on back in 1988. It was a ministry project and because the Executive Director of the ministry was not well known, no one was willing to offer a contract to publish it. The ministry finally found someone in the business who knew how to edit, typeset, do cover design, and establish an ISBN number, bar code, etc. The ministry paid \$11,000 for 10,000 copies of this 144 page book (that was before the paper prices skyrocketed in the early 90's!), and sold them all in two years. Many of them sold for a 50% discount, and the ministry gave at least 1,000 copies away. From those 10,000 copies the ministry made over \$40,000 in profits. Multnomah Press bought the rights to the book in 1991 and went on to sell almost 40,000 copies over the next nine years. Between the 15% royalty they paid the author and the copies the ministry bought back from the publisher to resell at events, the ministry only made \$21,000 on those 40,000 copies . . . that's right \$21,000 on 40,000 copies compared to \$40,000 on 10,000 copies!

- 3) It is very difficult to get a contract with a royalty publisher. As we discussed in earlier chapters, with the way the Christian publishing industry is going, the likelihood of getting published if you aren't a big name are slim to none. I just returned from a Christian Writers Conference at Seattle Pacific University with Francine Rivers and editors from Tyndale, Multnomah, and other big publishers. The editor from Tyndale shared in her class that they receive over 5,000 unsolicited manuscripts per year, and they only look at

maybe ten, and then they only take a chance on one new author per year.

- 4) Many still experience difficulty in getting on the shelves of Christian bookstores. I've quoted various sources in earlier chapters regarding this challenge, but on the panel at a recent SPU conference, there were two comments by booksellers, agents and editors that were another rude awakening for those who thought getting published might automatically get them in all the bookstores. One agent stated that two years ago Christian bookstores moved away from being booksellers and more to offering Christian "lifestyle products" (apparel, gifts, artwork, music, videos, etc.). Another book buyer from the local Family Christian Store admitted that only 15–20% of their sales volume is from books.

VANITY OR SUBSIDY PUBLISHERS [also called custom publishing and contract publishing] offer regular publishing services, but the author invests the money. . . . (\$10,000 to \$30,000). [Authors receive 40 percent of the retail price of the books sold.] . . . They don't make any promises regarding sales and usually the book sells fewer than 100 copies. The vanity publisher doesn't have to sell any books because the author has already paid him for his work. . . . Since binding is expensive, the subsidy publisher often binds a few hundred copies; the rest of the sheets remain unbound unless needed. The "advertising" promised in the contract normally turns out to be only a "tombstone" ad listing many titles in the New York Times.²

The only upside for this kind of publishing is:

- 1) You'll get your book into print!

The downside for this kind of publishing I could go on about for pages, but I'll keep it short and just list the most obvious reasons for now:

- 1) You pay big money but you still don't own your books! The fine print in the contract shows that you pay an enormous sum for the publishing services, but then you are paid a royalty from the books that sell. If you want copies you have to buy them at a set cost, and if they don't sell fast enough the publisher has the right to destroy the inventory.
- 2) Unprofessional product. Most of these kinds of publishers have no concern whether you ever sell copies of your book or not, so they really don't care whether they look good or not. The covers are unattractive, and the text is squeezed onto the page in a way that makes it hard on your eyes to read, and the editorial work is sloppy at best.
- 3) No credibility in the bookstore market. Bookstores are well aware of companies known for being "vanity presses" and won't carry product not up to today's standards in book publishing. If your book doesn't look like a book produced by a royalty publisher then your chances of getting them onto the shelves of a bookstore are slim to none.

BOOK PACKAGERS are graphic arts shops that specialize in the production of books. They will edit the manuscript, design the book, set the type and lay out the pages. When the book is printed, it is delivered to you. Book packagers (or producers) do not invest in books, they do not promote books, and they do not store or ship books. They only put them together. . . .³

The upside to using a book packager, which is what we used on that first book I worked on back in 1988, is:

- 1) You'll get a professional product. As long as the company has a reputation of working with many authors and producing quality products, you'll definitely end up with a book you're proud of.

The downside to using a book packager is:

- 1) No distribution. Book packagers don't help you get into the distributors or offer any help in making those necessary contacts and agreements. The books come to you and you must figure out how to get them out to the readers.
- 2) No promotional or marketing help. Book packagers will not help to get your book noticed, onto the online stores and available to the Christian bookstore market. They don't help you get radio or TV interviews or get reviews in local papers or Christian magazines.
- 3) You're on your own once the book is completed. The one thing many authors don't realize is once the book is done and off the press, that's when the work begins! That's when you need support and guidance, and advocates to help represent you to the media and trade.
- 4) It's almost impossible to get on the shelves of the bookstores or even available through them. Again, because you have no distribution or publisher behind you, there is no exposure to the bookstore market.

LITERARY AGENTS match manuscripts with the right publisher and negotiate the contract; most new material comes to big publishers through them. The agent has to serve the publisher well, for if he or she submits an inappropriate or poor manuscript, the publisher will never offer another appointment. Therefore, agents like sure bets, too, and many are reluctant to even consider an unpublished writer. Their normal commission is 15 [percent]. . . .

According to Literary Agent's Marketplace, about:

40% of the book agents will not read manuscripts by unpublished authors,
15% will not even answer query letters from them.

Of those agents who will read the manuscript of an unpublished author:

80% will charge for the service, but . . .
80% of the agents will not represent professional books;
93% will not touch reference works;
99% will not handle technical books;
98% will not represent regional books, satire, musicals and other specialized manuscripts;
20% are willing to take on either novelettes or short stories;
2% have a special interest in literature or quality fiction

On the fringe, there are several "agents" who charge a "reading fee," then pay students to read and critique the manuscript. They make their money on the fees, not from placing the manuscripts.⁴

The upside to having an agent is:

- 1) They have a better chance than you do on your own to get you a contract with a royalty publisher.
- 2) Having a literary agent lends credibility to your writing and message.

The downside to having an agent is:

- 1) They're not so easy to get. Most credible agents don't take on an author unless they are highly marketable to the publisher. The writing must be incredibly good, the author must have a platform from which to sell thousands of books (like

a speaking ministry) and they must be able to crank out more than just one book.

- 2) You give away 15% of your royalties.

SELF-PUBLISHING is where the author by-passes all the middlemen, deals directly with the printer and then handles the marketing and distribution. If you publish yourself, you will make more money, get to press sooner and keep control of your book. You will invest your time as well as your money, but the reward is greater; you will get it all.⁵

The statement “you will get it all” is true only if you choose the right printer and know how to market and promote your book without wasting your valuable time searching for the answers to all your questions. The statement is true if you don’t spend too much money on the wrong advertising or print more books than you could ever sell. There are many books on the market about self-publishing and marketing and distribution, but they are all geared to the secular market. If you try to market and distribute a Christian book through secular channels, you will waste valuable time and money.

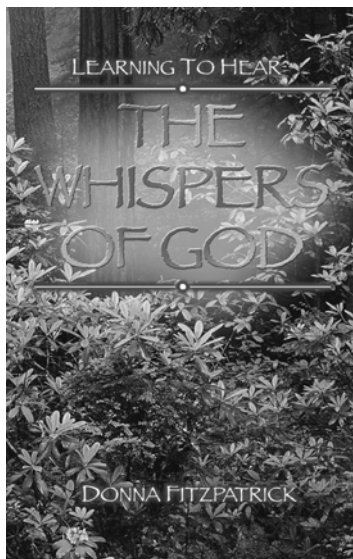
The upside to self-publishing is:

- 1) You have complete control. You call the shots regarding the editing, the formatting, the cover, the quantity, the overall production of the product.
- 2) This option seems most cost-effective initially. Unless, of course, you make a mistake that costs you in sales.

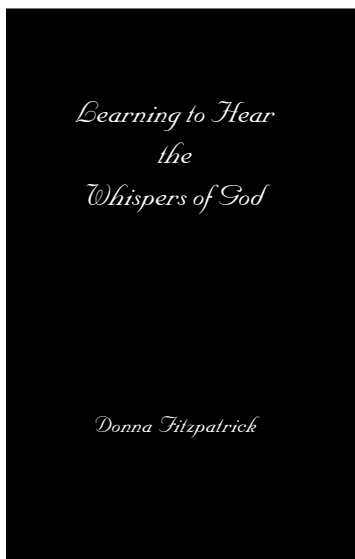
The downside to self-publishing is:

- 1) You are fully responsible for the product you end up with.
- 2) You can end up making very expensive mistakes. I can’t tell you how many times authors have come to us tell-

ing us what God has shown them needs to be on the cover, or what they know would be perfect. One example is Donna Fitzpatrick's "Learning to Hear the Whispers of God." She was sure the cover needed to be black and white, the white being God's voice coming through the darkness. I cringed when I heard that, knowing full well that a cover like that could never compete at CBA or in the bookstores. Even though she thought she knew what she wanted, I asked our designer to come up with another option, and allowed him to be creative. The cover he designed, rather than the black and white suggestion from the author, was so beautiful (see below) the author gasped the first time she saw it. There was no question as to which cover would be the right choice. If you self-publish on your own, there is no one to stop you from doing what you "think" is right, or what you "feel" is God's will. Donna may have paid more for our services at WinePress than if she had done it all on her own. . . . but she's glad she did. She would have wasted all the money spent on self-publishing with the black and white cover she would have ended up with!



Our design



The Author's Design

- 3) You're totally on your own. You've got to figure out how to get your book out there, you fill orders and handle bad checks and credit card declines. In order to promote your book, you've got to go to the media and ask for the interview. When you self-publish by yourself, you have no one to be your advocate or to represent you.
- 4) You have to know where to find a good editor. I've had more people tell me that their old high school teacher edited the book, so they don't need any editing! The book publishing industry goes by a whole different code and to have something edited well, it must be up to the Chicago Manual of Style 14th Edition. This is not the book that English teachers were trained with! If your editing is not done well by someone who really knows what they are doing, then you are shortchanging yourself and your message.
- 5) You have to know how to design and format the book or find someone else who does. The catch is, with today's rise in desktop publishing, everyone and their brother "knows how to" design and format a book. I've seen more "hokey looking" books that have supposedly already been formatted by someone claiming to be a professional. One of our authors (who happened to be a pastor) paid \$3,500 to a "professional" who typeset his 600 page book in 14 pt. Ariel (that's very unprofessional), with a different text block on every page. When we started on the book we had to undo everything he had paid for since it was done incorrectly. The author wanted to add a paragraph on page 29, and since the text did not flow throughout the document but had a separate text block on each page, the manuscript would not repaginate.
- 6) Again, it is almost impossible to get on the shelves of the bookstore. Because self-published books, when not packaged by a professional, are often missing the bar code or other

industry standards. Most distributors will not carry such books, since this makes it very difficult for bookstores to find the books to even special order them, let alone put them on the shelves. I happen to be the special order person for our church's local bookstore so I am always getting customers coming in and asking about a certain title, which I've never heard of. I will always check with the distributor I order from regularly. This happens to be Appalachian. They send me product in two days for the same cost as UPS ground, and they carry over 50,000 titles. If I can't find a product there, I'll go to Riverside, and if it's not there, I'll try the publisher. I know from experience, most special order people won't try that hard. If it's not available at their regular distributor, they won't bother to try to find it.

NEW ALTERNATIVES

Today's technology offers many new options for getting your book into print; from e-books to web publishing to print-on-demand; these options make your book accessible for people to read! Of these alternatives to traditional publishing, the print-on-demand option stays at the top of the list for small quantity runs because it still gives the reader a book to curl up with, unlike web publishing and e-books.

PRINT-ON-DEMAND: A company who takes your self-edited camera ready copy, typically designs a very plain cover for you, and then prints from one to 250 copies of the book, and makes it available to the author at a small discount as well as traditional and online bookstores. The author is also paid a small royalty based on the sales of the books by the publisher.

The upside to POD publishing is:

- 1) Very small cash outlay, normally \$200 to \$2000 set up charges.

- 2) If the market for your book is so small that you might not even sell 500 copies, then this is a very cost effective way to go.
- 3) Fast turn around for your initial printing and fast reprints.

The downside to POD publishing is:

- 1) Over time you pay more. If you actually go through close to 2,000 books, then you actually pay more with POD publishing.
- 2) Many bookstores have been disgusted with POD published books. You might remember the sources I cited earlier on in the book regarding the problems with small discounts, but the other issue is that some companies' POD books are not returnable. Bookstores are very leery of buying books that don't have the guarantee they can return if the customer changes their mind. This is one thing we determined early on in our POD division—our product is returnable and available at traditional bookstore discounts.
- 3) Questionable quality. While some POD printers are better than others, there are still limitations to what you can produce with this technology.
- 4) Little if any quality control. Most POD publishers take whatever you give them as text and put it into book format. Your book could be featured next to another book that is filled with typos and an ugly cover. Let's face it, you are judged by those you are associated with!

While the print-on-demand technology continues to evolve, up until now it has remained somewhat deficient in quality control. Finally we have created a partnership with the leader in on-demand printing and feel great about what we are able to offer in

this arena. In fact, this copy of “You Can Do It” has been produced using the on-demand printing technology.

There are still other limitations, like the inability to offer high-end cover embellishments (embossing, matte & spot gloss lamination or foil stamping), special bindings such as layflat (Otabind) binding and French flaps, full color printing on text pages, and page counts fewer than forty-eight. But if those kinds of limitations don't pose a problem, then POD can be a great way to go in order to test market your project!

As I mentioned already, WinePress now offers a short-run service through its PLEASANT WORD Print-on-Demand division to offer you this option with the class you've come to expect from WinePress.

E-BOOKS / ONLINE PUBLISHING: The author submits their manuscript to an online publisher and it is created into a format that may be downloaded by customers. The company typically creates a cover, but does not edit your work. The author is paid a royalty for any copies that are downloaded off the publishers internet site.

The upside to E-Books / Online Publishing is:

- 1) Minimal or no cash outlay.
- 2) Some companies operate like traditional publishers and won't accept just anybody.

The downside is:

- 1) Most people won't bother to print out a large manuscript on their printer.
- 2) Rocket E-Books are available but the concept just hasn't really caught on.
- 3) Most people don't like reading a lot on the computer screen since it's hard on the eyes.
- 4) You just can't curl up in bed with your computer . . . unless of course it's a laptop!

Some additional industry definitions are:

COOPERATIVE PUBLISHING: A royalty publisher agrees to publish your book but requires you to collaborate in several specific ways.

You, as the author, commit to purchasing half of the 5,000 print run at a 43 [percent] discount off the assessed retail price of the book. The publisher retains the other half of the print run in [a] warehouse for distribution. The author is paid a quarterly royalty on the sale of those books. The royalty percentage is determined before contract signing. The publisher uses all its resources to produce a high quality book. The author is required to do everything possible to help market and publicize the book, being available for radio and television interviews the publisher may choose to schedule.⁶

The upside to going with a Cooperative Publisher is:

- 1) The publisher promotes at their own expense.

The downside is:

- 1) Over the years we have heard many reports of unfulfilled marketing promises. One author asked a cooperative publisher for some satisfied authors to check with before signing a contract. They refused. He did his homework and found five different authors who had published with this company and contacted them on his own. One for one, they all were disappointed with the follow through on the marketing and promotion promises the company agreed to.
- 2) Another author who published with a cooperative company said it took three years to get her book into print, and that

she has never received any royalties in the two years it has been out.

FULL SERVICE BOOK PACKAGER: A company offering all aspects of publishing, from transcribing taped sermons, to ghostwriting, to substantive editing, permissions, custom cover design, illustrations and special artwork, formatting, ISBN and Library of Congress numbers, and printing. Once the book is printed, this type of company will offer varying degrees of marketing, promotion, publicity, internet sales, order fulfillment, warehousing and distribution. The author funds the production of the book, retains all rights and receives the profit from all the sales. (This would be the best description of WinePress Publishing).

The upside to working with a full service book packager is:

- 1) You'll get a highly professional product. This can include, depending on your desire, cover embellishments like embossing, matte lamination with spot gloss on the title or front cover graphic, and foil or iridescent stamping on the title. Also, with WinePress, you get the advantage of highly professional designers creating your cover, up to the standards in the CBA marketplace.
- 2) An experienced staff helps you through each step of the process. We have specifically developed WinePress so that you don't have to make the same mistakes we and others have made in the past. Because we've tried different things that did, and some that did not, work in the past, we can make that advice available to our authors. This kind of professional guidance and advice is so important when you take an alternative route to getting your book published. There's a lot of money at stake, and without professional people walking you through the process, you can make some costly mistakes.

- 3) Back end support allows you to do what you do best. If you have a message you're passionate about, then you need to be talking about it, whether it's on the radio, on TV, or at the podium. *Only you* can sell your message with the zeal and passion you have, so why spend your valuable time answering phones, stuffing boxes and running to the post office? These are the details we take care of so you don't need to waste your time doing the things anyone can do!
- 4) This is a great way to prove the need for your message to a traditional publisher.

The downside to using a company like WinePress, a full service book packager, is:

- 1) It costs more. But like the old saying, "You get what you pay for."
- 2) It's still a challenge to get your book on the shelves. We have developed many ways to make up for this issue, such as sending our catalog out through Appalachian Distributors to 3,500 bookstores, having a booth at CBA (Christian Booksellers Association Convention held every year in July), selling directly to the largest Christian and secular distributors like Ingram / Spring Arbor, Appalachian, Riverside, Baker & Taylor, Christianbook.com, and more. We make sure your book is listed with the distributors as well as featuring basic information about your book on "Christian Books & More," a database that bookstores across the country subscribe to as a resource. So, while your book might not be on the shelves, it is easily accessible to anyone walking into a bookstore through the special order system each store utilizes.

CHRISTIAN PUBLICIST: A person or company that specializes in booking media interviews for book authors on Christian radio

and television. Publicists do not sell your book for you, they merely contact Christian radio and TV talk show hosts and producers and suggest your book as an upcoming topic to be addressed. They schedule as many interviews as possible for those authors who have an important message and the ability to communicate it. Some publicists work for a flat fee to promote an entire project, guaranteeing a minimum number of interviews for the fee; others charge a monthly fee plus expenses (shipping copies of your book to producers, long-distance calls, etc.) with a minimum of four to six months to complete the promotional campaign. At WinePress we have an in-house publicity department, WinePress Promotions, able to offer everything from hometown to regional or national campaigns.

The upside to using a publicist:

- 1) You have an advocate for your book, someone who aggressively pursues exposure for your message.
- 2) You are able to take advantage of the publicist's relationships, contacts, and media expertise.

The downside to using a publicist:

- 1) It is an additional expense.

FULFILLMENT: The activity of receiving inbound telephone inquiries about your book. Typically a toll-free number is supplied, and operators are on duty twenty-four hours per day. Order processing is completed for people who order using a credit card, and product is packaged and shipped. If customers want to pay by check, the operator gives them the mailing address and total price, including shipping and handling. Product is warehoused by the fulfillment company, and either a per-piece / per-service item handling charge or a percentage of the retail price is deducted from the sales income monthly as a service charge. You will find charges as high as 65% and as low as 20%.

These services are a great asset for authors who may have heavy media exposure or advertising and want to offer the convenience of a toll-free number to their potential customers. This is also helpful when a book is not readily available in the bookstore market but needs to be accessible to possible retail customers. The author can promote the book while someone else handles the details of answering phones, taking orders, processing charge cards, packing, shipping, and warehousing. However, remember that the fulfillment company doesn't promote your book—you have got to make that phone ring yourself!

CHRISTIAN BOOK DISTRIBUTORS: Companies that service the Christian bookstore market. Most Christian bookstore buyers are overworked and underpaid, and the last thing they want to do is buy books from every eager author who publishes his own book. For the most part, bookstore owners like to keep things simple: If a book isn't available through one of the major distributors, it isn't worth the hassle of carrying it in the store. The catch is that most of the Christian book distributors are pretty jaded about carrying self-published books, and rightly so. Many self-published books look self-published; and if a book looks bad, there is no way it can compete on the shelves of a Christian bookstore next to a book by someone like Max Lucado, whose publisher may spend \$3,000 or more to create a cover that will “jump off the shelf” and into the customer's hand!

The bottom line is that it is not easy to have your book picked up by a distributor. While we at WinePress have contracts with all the major Christian book distributors, we will only suggest that the distributors order larger quantities of titles that actually have the ability to compete nationally. The author must have a timely topic, the ability to communicate effectively via the media, and have a decent advertising / publicity budget. Most distributors ex-

pect a 55 to 60 percent discount, and if it's a distributor with a sales force, you're looking at a 65 percent discount so that they in turn can give a 40 to 45 percent discount to the Christian bookstores they serve. If a self-published author prints fewer than 3,500 copies, he cannot afford to give the discount required.

Budgeting Your Project

BEFORE YOU START working on a budget for your project you need to thoughtfully ask yourself, “How many books should I print?” Typically, first-time authors overestimate rather than underestimate their sales. I would rather see someone print 1,000 or 2,500 copies and have to print more, than print 5,000 or 10,000 and end up with a garage full of books! Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do you have an audience?
2. How are you going to reach them?
3. Are there any publications that zero in on that particular group?
4. Is your topic cutting edge or old news?
5. Are there any ministries or nonprofit organizations that promote a message similar to the one in your book?
6. Are you considered an expert in your field? (You don't have to have a Ph.D.)
7. Do you currently do any public speaking?
8. Have you done radio or TV interviews in the past?

9. Do you communicate effectively?
10. Do you have access to a mailing list of people who would need your book? (Targeted mailing lists are available for purchase, but you may already have a mailing list from your ministry activities, speaking engagements, etc.)
11. Do you have any other distribution channels through which your book might be sold?
12. Are you willing to spend additional money to promote and market your book?

By asking yourself these questions, you can get a feel for the number of books you should print. If the majority of your answers were no, you may want to consider going the print-on-demand route. If nothing else, you will get your message out to a limited degree and will have fulfilled, without a huge financial outlay, the calling God had for you to get it into print.

If you answered yes to at least three of the questions above, then you should seriously consider printing 2,500 copies. If you were able to give a positive answer to six or more of the questions, then I would suggest printing from 5,000 to 10,000 copies, which would give you the best rate per copy. Remember, the higher the quantity, the lower the price per copy.

When working up your budget to publish your book, you'll need to think about a number of things:

- 1) Cost per book (must include editing, formatting, cover design, ISBN & copyrights, and printing),
- 2) Reprint cost per book (assuming no changes to cover or interior, or also with a cost per page of corrections . . . this is good information to have to see long term how profitable your project will be),
- 3) Cost for overruns (All commercial printing has a ten percent margin that is legally billable to the client. This means

you could end up with ten percent more than you originally ordered, and you are required to pay for those additional books, but at a lower rate per copy. If the printer prints more than ten percent over, the additional copies are yours at no charge. This is a standard in the industry and is unavoidable. Over the last two years, our average overrun has been about five percent, but on occasion a full ten percent is received. We would rather have you be prepared to cover the entire ten percent and then not have to, than expect the five percent and end up with the full ten!

- 4) Cost to have the book shipped to you or to your publisher's warehouse,
- 5) Mailing costs for promotional materials (postage, purchase of a mailing list, printing of fliers or postcards),
- 6) Advertising costs (specifically targeted magazine or newsletter advertising, co-operative advertising, advertising to bookstores through distributors),
- 7) Phone bills for long distance calls for radio interviews,
- 8) Publicity services \$450 per month for 4–6 months / \$3000 flat fee up to as much as \$15,000 for some secular publicists,
- 9) Discount given to bookstores (30–45% off the retail price),
- 10) Discount given to distributors (50–60% off the retail price),
- 11) Warehousing and fulfillment fees,
- 12) The retail price of your book must be high enough so that you can give the needed discounts, but not so high that you lose buyers because of it.

For a 144 page book, if you start out with at least 2,500 copies, you could be paying anywhere from \$4 to \$6 per copy, depending on how much marketing and publicity support is included in your publishing package. If you start with 5,000 copies, you could pay

anywhere from \$2.75 to \$5 per copy. And if you start with as many as 10,000 copies, you will pay anywhere from \$1.80 up to \$3.50 per copy. Understanding this, let's think through what you can really afford to do in the discount department. If you want to make your book available to bookstores through distributors, you'll need to be willing to give away 55% of the cover price. If you charge \$12 for your 144 page book, you will net \$5.40 before any fulfillment fees are assessed. With WinePress, those would be somewhere around 25%, and sometimes lower, so your actual net on a distributor sale would be \$4.05 or more. So, what does that tell you? You might break even on 2,500 copies, but you could also end up losing money giving that large a discount. But on 5,000 to 10,000 copies, you actually stand to make a profit on sales to distributors. Of course, you will make much more on sales directly to bookstores (they only get a 30–40% discount), through the WinePress website, through the fulfillment service 800#, or sales made at the back of the room when you are speaking in churches or at local or national meetings. But keep in mind, all sales to online bookstores such as Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, Borders.com, Booksamillion.com and others have all made a shift to purchasing ONLY product that is available through Ingram or Baker & Taylor, so if you want to be available online in the well known stores, you have to be willing to give away that 55% off the retail price.

Recently, someone asked if I would work up some numbers to show the difference between going with WinePress and going with a royalty publisher. As I worked the numbers, I was amazed at how much more an author stands to make by going the non-traditional route, but with a company like WinePress that offers all the services of a royalty publisher!

When Sheep Are Shepherds—Softcover 144 pages

Assumes Suggested Retail Price at \$12.00

With WinePress, Standard Turnaround Time: 6 months

WinePress Cost	Quantity	Projected Expense	Projected Income
Initial run at \$1.78 each (Silver Package)	10,000 copies	\$17,800	
Overruns at \$1.48 each	1,000 copies	\$1,480	
Freight		\$1,200	
Extra money set aside for additional marketing		\$5,000	
Total Publishing Cost Projection		\$25,480	

Projected Sales

Retail sales

At full price or \$12.00 each 3,750 (speaking engagements) \$45,000

At 70% or \$8.40 each 2,000 (through 800# & website) \$16,800

Direct to Bookstores or Ministries

(75% of 40% discount or \$5.40 each) 2,000 \$10,800

Online Bookstores / Distributors

(75% of 55% discount or \$4.05 each) 3,000 \$12,150

Giveaway copies 250 \$0

Total Income Projection: \$84,750

Less Costs \$25,480

Equals Projected Profit: \$59,270

When Sheep Are Shepherds—Softcover 144 pages

Assumes Suggested Retail Price at \$12.00

Traditional Publisher—Standard Turnaround Time: 18–24 months

Projected Sales**Retail sales**

At full price (speaking engagements) 3,750 \$22,500

(The publisher will let you buy your books at 40–60% off, no royalties paid on these sales, only the 40–60% markup.)

Sales Made By Publisher

15% of net = .72 per book 7,230 \$5,205

Giveaway copies

The publisher might give you 20 books to give away

20 \$0

Total Income Projection: \$27,705

Less Costs \$0**Equals Projected Profit: \$27,705**

Difference between risking your own money and expecting a traditional publisher to risk theirs:

\$59,270 less \$27,205 = \$32,065

Sample POD Option**Pleasant Word Red Ribbon Package \$1,299****Softcover 144 pages**

Suggested Retail Price at \$13.99 - You receive 15 free copies

Author may purchase additional copies at 52% off or \$6.72 each plus \$.80 per copy for shipping.

If you sell your 15 free copies for \$13.99 each, you only have to sell another 150 copies to make all your money back.

27% royalties for retail sales are \$2.95 per book

27% royalties for traditional or online bookstore sales are .87 per book

Raising Funds for Your Book Project

ONE THING I KNOW for sure, our God owns the cattle on a thousand hills, and He's not broke! If He has called you to self-publish, He surely will provide the funds for you to do so. And if He doesn't provide a large sum to start off with 2,500 or more books, print-on-demand is always a great way to begin!

I've seen Him do some pretty miraculous financing to ensure His children get His message into print. Maggie Kubo contemplated taking out a loan to publish her children's book, *The Land of Broken Rainbows*. Right before she went that route, she received an unexpected inheritance that covered the exact cost of publishing her book! Jay Zinn put together a group of investors who believed in his end-times novel, *The Unveiling*. He promised them each a portion of the profits once the principal was paid back. So far, he's almost sold out the first printing of 8,000! Not to say that this happens for everyone, but I've really seen God be creative in providing for the publishing of many WinePress books!

Audrey Nally didn't know how in the world she would come up with the money she needed to publish her children's book . . . *In Heaven*. Out of the blue, her grandmother gave her a check for

\$10,000 to help her get the book published! Claire Vomhof had planned to publish his book of poetry for years but didn't have the funding. Recently a terminally ill man he knew offered to pay for the publishing so that Claire's dream could become a reality. The man died before he was able to give Claire the money, but his brother stepped up to the plate and donated the amount needed to get it into print. Michele Rickett applied for a small business loan to publish her mentoring curriculum, *Ordinary Women* . . . she had enough speaking engagements to prove to the bank that the amount she was borrowing would easily be paid back within the first 6 months of having the workbook available for sale. I could go on and on and on, but suffice it to say, He is able!

A number of years ago I heard an interview with Harry Green on this very topic. I pray that the ideas he shares are helpful to you.

Aside from any personal resources you may have, there are essentially three ways to generate capital to fund your project. They are sales, debt, and equity.

If you are fortunate enough to be able to get advanced orders for your product, you could fund your project with revenues produced by the sales. Because this is usually not possible, debt and equity funding represent the most used capital raising alternatives.

DEBT—BORROWING MONEY

Many people borrow money to finance their projects. Some people use their credit cards; others the equity line on their home; and some people borrow the money from friends, relatives, or a bank or credit union.

If your motive for sharing your gift or producing your product is strictly to make money or to pay bills, you are headed for trouble. Everyone I have worked with who has elected to go this route has just dug themselves in deeper. Producing and market-

ing your product takes time, patience, and perseverance. Borrowing money can impose timetables on your project that are unrealistic or are unattainable. Moreover, if you borrow from friends or relatives you can really strain your relationships if things do not go as expected. If your family or friends want to help you, you're better off having them as investors and using an equity form of financing. This form of funding will define your relationship in a formal document and will clearly point out the financial risks and rewards inherent in their involvement in your project.

EQUITY FUNDING

If structured properly, an equity arrangement with investors who share your vision can be the best method of funding your project. Under this arrangement, you essentially sell a percentage of future revenue or ownership of your project in exchange for the money for production and marketing. This arrangement could be structured in the form of a limited partnership or a closely held corporation. Provisions for establishing partnerships and corporations vary by state. You should work with an attorney to establish the appropriate vehicle for your situation.

I believe that the limited partnership offers the most attractive source of funding for the entrepreneur who is an author, musical artist, or creative product producer. It provides unlimited flexibility for structuring percentage payback to investors while enabling the product creator or talent to maintain control or ownership. It also provides a formalized structure that appeals to investors.

The typical arrangement that appeals to investors involves paying them back their initial investment out of the first sales that are generated. Once they have regained their principal investment, their percentage is reduced to 10 or 15 percent of sales or profits while you retain the balance. This type of arrangement reduces the investors risk and enables them to participate

in the long-term success of the project. Astute investors are always looking to reduce their downside risk and increase their upside potential. When you structure your deal, don't be greedy!

Try to get investors [who] can help you with more than money. People who believe in you that are constantly selling you are a great asset. People who put their "money where their mouth is" are by far the ultimate asset.

The limited partnership can also offer tax advantages to some investors. Your investors should seek the counsel of a good CPA or tax planner before you finalize the structure of your partnership. In this area, good advice is important. Don't try to save money by doing it yourself without the counsel of qualified professionals.

In addition to limited partnerships, there are a variety of corporate structures that can be considered as funding vehicles. I prefer partnerships in that they offer attractive methods for distributing revenues without selling the company or declaring dividends that could involve double taxation. The motion picture industry has been using partnerships for years to finance movies.

I cannot over emphasize the importance of seeking qualified counsel in structuring a financial relationship. Most states enable you to raise up to \$1 million without registering your fund-raising instrument with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Situations that involve fewer than [fifteen] investors are also usually exempt from such registrations.

Creating the right fund-raising vehicle is not as complicated as it may seem and is one of the most important steps you can take in ensuring the success of your project. Some attorneys and accountants may work with you on a percentage basis and provide services you need for a "piece of the action." Do not be afraid to ask . . . but don't expect it. I have learned the hard way that you get what you pay for.

Once you have established your financial arrangement and secured capital from your investors, it is important that you con-

tinue to communicate with your investors on a regular basis. Keep them apprised of your progress. Call them regularly or send them a newsletter. Share the good news and the bad news. Don't make them call you.

More importantly, when you achieve success . . . if you achieve success . . . don't forget who brought you to the dance.

While I have not inserted the full-sized document into this book, the following is a good example of the legal wording used and the overall format for the paperwork. After this we'll take a look at some things you can do during the publishing process.

**LIMITED LIABILITY
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT OF
_____ PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS, LLP**

THIS LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") is made as of February _____, 1998, by and among

_____ and

_____, (sometimes collectively referred to as the "Partners" or individually as "Partner"; the Managing Partner and the other Partners are sometimes referred to collectively as the "Partners"). THE SECURITIES OFFERED HEREBY HAVE NOT BEEN REGISTERED UNDER THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933, AS AMENDED (THE "FEDERAL ACT"), THE GEORGIA SECURITIES ACT OF 1973, AS AMENDED (THE "GEORGIA ACT"), OR THE SECURITIES LAWS OF ANY STATE, AND ARE BEING OFFERED AND SOLD IN RELIANCE ON EXEMPTIONS FROM THE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS OF THE FEDERAL ACT AND VARIOUS APPLICABLE STATE LAWS. IN ADDITION, THE TRANSFER OF THE SECURITIES IS SUBJECT TO THE RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSFER AND OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS SET FORTH IN THE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT. THESE SECURITIES MAY NOT BE OFFERED FOR SALE, PLEDGED, HYPOTHECATED, SOLD, ASSIGNED, OR TRANSFERRED EXCEPT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT. FURTHER, THESE SECURITIES MAY

NOT BE OFFERED FOR SALE, PLEDGED, HYPOTHECATED, SOLD, ASSIGNED, OR TRANSFERRED UNLESS SUCH TRANSFER IS UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF LEGAL COUNSEL ARE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PARTNERSHIP DO NOT REQUIRE THAT THE SECURITIES BE REGISTERED UNDER THE FEDERAL ACT OR ANY APPLICABLE STATE SECURITIES LAWS, OR SUCH TRANSFER IS PURSUANT TO AN EFFECTIVE REGISTRATION STATEMENT UNDER THE FEDERAL ACT OF ANY APPLICABLE STATE SECURITIES LAWS.

WHEREAS, the Partners desire to form a limited partnership pursuant to O.C.G.A. sec.14-8-62 and the Revised Uniform Limited Partnership Act of the State of Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the Partners desire to set forth their respective rights, duties, and responsibilities with respect to such limited partnership.

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the mutual promises, obligations, and agreements contained in this Agreement, and other good and valuable considerations, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged by each of the Partners, the Partners, intending to be and being legally bound, do hereby agree as follows:

1. Name of Partnership.

The name of the Partnership shall be _____
_____ Promotional Partners, LLP (the "Partnership").

2. Principal Office / Registered Agent.

The initial principal place of business and registered office of the Partnership shall be _____
_____.

The Partnership shall have such additional offices and may change its principal or registered office as the Managing Partner may designate. The initial registered agent of the Partnership is _____
_____.

Such registered agent may be changed from time to time by designation of the Managing Partner.

3. Names and Addresses of the Partners.

_____	_____
Managing Partner	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Term.

The term of the Partnership shall commence upon the filing of a Certificate of Limited Liability Partnership with the Secretary of State of Georgia, and an election as provided in O.C.G.A. sec. 14-8-62 and shall continue until the first to occur of the following: (a) December 31, 2002; (b) the election of the Partners to terminate the Partnership; (c) the sale by the Partnership of all of its assets, and the collection of all amounts derived from such sale, including all amounts payable to the Partnership under any promissory notes or other evidences of indebtedness derived by the Partnership from such sale; or

5. Purpose.

The purpose of the Partnership shall be (a) to promote artists and to sell their product(s) through television, radio and print media, and (b) to do any other lawful act permitted of the Partnership under governing law.

6. Capital; Percentage Interests.

(a) *Initial Capital.*

The initial capital contribution and percentage interest ("Percentage Interest") of each of the Partners is as follows:

(b) *Additional Capital.*

The Partners shall determine whether the Partnership requires additional capital in order to carry on its business. If the Partners unanimously determine such additional capital is required, such additional capital shall be contributed by the Partners pro rata and in proportion to their respective Percentage Interests in the Partnership.

(c) *Limited Liability.*

The Partners shall have no obligation to contribute or loan any capital whatsoever except as expressly provided in Subsection 6(b) above.

(d) *No Third Party Beneficiaries.*

The obligation of the Partners to contribute capital is solely for the benefit of the other Partners and the Partnership, and no third party shall have the right to enforce such obligations.

(e) *Capital Accounts.*

Separate capital accounts shall be maintained for each partner. Such capital accounts shall be maintained in accordance with applicable Internal Revenue Service Regulations.

7. Allocations of Profits and Losses and Distributions of Cash.

All allocations of profits and losses and all distributions shall be made to the Partners in accordance with their percentage interests. The Managing Partner shall determine when and if the Partnership has cash available for distribution to the Partners. The Managing Partner shall have the right to maintain reasonable reserves of cash for the partnership.

8. Management.

- (a) Subject to the limitations hereinafter set forth, the Managing Partner shall have, and is hereby granted, the power, authority, and discretion to take such action for and on behalf of the Partnership, and in its name, as the Managing Partner shall deem necessary and appropriate, to carry out the purposes for which the Partnership was organized, it being expressly understood that except as hereinafter provided, the actions of the Managing Partner shall in all events bind the Partnership.

- (b) The Managing Partner shall not have the authority to undertake the following actions unless such Partner has first obtained the consent of all the Partners:
 - (i) The creation of any mortgage, charge, or encumbrance on an asset of the Partnership other than any mortgage, lien, or encumbrance incurred in the ordinary course of business;
 - (ii) The sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Partnership;
 - (iii) The acquisition, financing, refinancing, lease, or sale of any real property;
 - (iv) The execution of any contract or loan agreement pursuant to which the Partnership will make an aggregate investment exceeding \$_____;
 - (v) The admission of any new partners in the Partnership; and
 - (vi) The undertaking, generally, to do any act which is in contravention of this Agreement or which would make it impossible to carry on the ordinary business of the Partnership.

- (c) Any person dealing with the Partnership or the Managing Partner may rely upon a certificate signed by the Managing Partner, as to:
 - (i) the identity of the Managing Partner or the other Partners;
 - (ii) the existence or nonexistence of any fact or facts which constitute conditions precedent to acts by the Managing Partner or which in any other manner are germane to the affairs of the Partnership; or
 - (iii) the persons who are authorized to execute and deliver any instrument or document of the Partnership.

- (d) Unless unanimously agreed by the Partners, no partner shall be entitled to receive any salary, fee, draw, or other compensation for services rendered on behalf of the Partnership in his, her or its capacity as a Partner.
- (e) Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, the other Partners shall not take part in the management of the Partnership business or transact any business of the Partnership and shall have no power to sign for or to bind the Partnership.

9. Liability of the Managing Partner.

The Managing Partner, and his or its designees, shall have no liability to any other Partner by virtue of any action taken by such Managing Partner in good faith and shall have liability only for acts of bad faith, gross negligence, or willful misconduct. The Partnership hereby covenants and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Managing Partner and its designee from any and all liability incurred by him or it in connection with the carrying out of its duties hereunder; provided that such Managing Partner or its designee, as the case may be, shall not have acted in bad faith, have been grossly negligent, or have committed an act of willful misconduct; and provided further that any indemnity hereunder shall be provided out of and only to the extent of Partnership assets (excluding the obligation of the Partners to contribute additional capital) and undistributed income therefrom and the Partners shall not have any personal liability on account thereof.

10. Liability of the Other Partners.

Subject to any requirements hereunder to provide additional capital, the liability to the Partnership of the other Partners shall be limited to their interest in the assets of the Partnership and any undistributed income therefrom.

11. Transferability of Interests.

No Partner shall transfer, assign, pledge, or otherwise dispose of or encumber all or any portion of their interest in the Partnership without the prior written consent of all the Partners. Any permitted transferee of a Partnership interest must accept and agree in writing to be bound by all the terms and provisions of this Agreement and all amendments thereof.

12. Admission of Partners.

No additional partners shall be admitted to the Partnership without the consent of the Partners.

13. Banking.

All funds of the Partnership are to be deposited in a Partnership bank account in such financial institution as may be designated by the Managing Partner.

14. Location of and Access to Books of Account and Other Information.

The Partnership's books of account shall be kept at such locations as may be designated by the Managing Partner, and each Partner shall have access thereto at all reasonable times during business hours, and shall have the right to make copies thereof at such Partner's expense. Upon the request of a Partner, the Managing Partner shall provide or make available at the registered office of the Partnership during ordinary business hours:

- (i) a current list of the full name and address of each Partner;
- (ii) a copy of the Certificate of Limited Liability Partnership and all amendments thereto;
- (iii) copies of the Partnership's federal, state, and local income tax returns and reports, if any, for the four most recent years;
- (iv) copies of this Agreement and all amendments hereto; and
- (v) other information regarding the financial condition and affairs of the Partnership as shall be reasonably requested by such Partner.

15. Tax Matters Partner.

The Partners hereby designate the Managing Partner as the "tax matters partner" in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.

16. Competing Activities.

Nothing in this Agreement shall be deemed to restrict in any way the freedom of any Partner to conduct any business or activity whatsoever without any accountability to the Partnership or the Partners even if such business or activity competes with the business of the Partnership.

17. Liquidation.

Upon the occurrence of any of the terminating events set forth in Section 4 hereof, the Managing Partner shall convert the Partnership's assets into cash, and all such cash shall be applied and distributed in the following manner and in the following order of priority:

- (a) to the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Partnership and to the expenses of liquidation in the order of priority as provided by law; then
- (b) to the establishment of, or addition to, any reserves deemed necessary by the Managing Partner, for any contingent or unforeseen liabilities or obligations of the Partnership; provided, however, that any such

reserves established hereunder shall be held in escrow for the purpose of paying any such contingent or unforeseen liabilities or obligations and, at the expiration of such period as the Managing Partner deems advisable, of distributing the balance of such reserves in the manner provided hereinafter in this Section; then

- (c) to the repayment of any liabilities or debts, other than Capital Accounts, of the Partnership to any of the Partners; and then
- (d) to the Partners in accordance with their Percentage Interests. A reasonable time shall be allowed for the orderly liquidation of the Partnership's assets above in order to minimize the losses normally attendant upon such a liquidation. The Partnership shall be terminated and dissolved when all of its assets have been converted into cash, all promissory notes or other evidences of indebtedness derived by the Partnership from such conversion of its assets or otherwise have been collected or otherwise converted into cash, and all such cash has been applied and distributed in accordance with the provisions of this Section. The establishment of any reserves in accordance herewith shall not have the effect of extending the term of the Partnership, but any such reserves shall be distributed in the manner herein provided upon expiration of the period of such reserve.

18. Waiver of Right of Partition.

Each of the Partners does hereby agree to and does hereby waive any right it might have to cause any of the assets of the Partnership to be partitioned among the Partners or to file any complaint or to institute any proceeding at law or in equity to cause such partition.

19. Power of Attorney.

- (a) Grant of Power. Each Partner does hereby irrevocably constitute and appoint the Managing Partner as his or her true and lawful attorney-in-fact, in their name, place, and stead, to make, execute, consent to, swear to, acknowledge, record, and file, in conformance with the terms and provisions of this Agreement, any certificate or amendment thereto or other instrument which may be required or appropriate to be filed by the Partnership or the Partners under the laws of the State of Georgia or under the applicable laws of any other jurisdiction, to the extent the Managing Partner deems such filing to be necessary or desirable to reflect the existence of the Partnership, the identities of the Partners, the dissolution and termination of the Partnership, or otherwise. Any third party may rely absolutely and without further inquiry on the power of attorney herein granted.
- (b) Irrevocability of Power. The power of attorney herein granted to the Managing Partner is coupled with an interest, is irrevocable, by death

or otherwise, and shall survive any assignment of a Partner's interest in the Partnership.

20. Investment Intent.

- (a) Each Partner hereby represents, warrants, and acknowledges that:
 - (i) He is acquiring his interest in the Partnership solely for his own account for investment purposes and not with a view or interest of participating, directly or indirectly, in the resale or distribution of all or any part thereof;
 - (ii) His interest in the Partnership is to be issued and sold to him without registration and in reliance upon certain exemptions under the Federal Act, the Georgia Act, and other applicable state securities law;
 - (iii) He has received copies of the Partnership Agreement and he has had an opportunity to review it or have it reviewed by his representative;
 - (iv) His investment in the Partnership has a high degree of risk and he has the net worth to sustain such risk; and
 - (v) He will make no transfer or assignment of his interest in the Partnership except in compliance with the Federal Act, the Georgia Act, and any other applicable securities laws.
- (b) The Partners acknowledge and agree that a legend reflecting the restrictions imposed upon the transfer of their limited partnership interests under this Agreement, the Federal Act, the Georgia Act, and under any applicable state securities laws has been placed on the first page of this Agreement.

21. Miscellaneous.

- (a) Notices: Any notice, election, or other communication provided for or required by this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been received when delivered by hand or on the third calendar day following its deposit in the United States Mail, certified or registered, return receipt requested, postage prepaid, properly addressed to the person to whom such notice is intended to be given at such address as such person may have previously furnished in writing to the Partnership or at such person's last known address.
- (b) Modifications: No change or modification of this Agreement shall be valid or binding upon the Partners, nor shall any waiver of any term or condition in the future, unless such change or modification or waiver shall be in writing and signed by all of the Partners.
- (c) Binding Effect: This Agreement shall insure to the benefit of, and shall be binding upon, the Partners, their legal representatives, transferees, heirs, successors, and assigns.

- (d) Construction: This Agreement shall be interpreted and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia. The titles of the Sections herein have been inserted as a matter of convenience of reference only and shall not control or affect the meaning or construction of any of the terms and provisions hereof.
- (e) Pronouns: All pronouns and any variations thereof shall be deemed to refer to the masculine, feminine, neuter, singular, or plural, as the identity of the person or entity may require.
- (f) Entire Agreement: This instrument contains all of the understandings and agreements of whatever kind and nature existing between the parties hereto with respect to this Agreement and the rights, interests, understandings, agreements and obligations of the respective parties pertaining to the continuing operations of the Partnership.
- (g) Severability: Each provision of this Agreement shall be considered separable and if for any reason any provision or provisions herein are determined to be invalid, unenforceable or illegal under any existing or future law, such invalidity, unenforceability, or illegality shall not impair the operation of or affect those portions of this Agreement which are valid, enforceable, and legal.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Limited Liability Partnership Agreement has been executed as of the date set forth above.

MANAGING PARTNER: _____(SEAL)

OTHER PARTNERS: _____(SEAL)

End of Document

Pre-Publication Promotion

I T IS IMPORTANT to think about promotion during the production phase rather than waiting until the cartons of books are unloaded at your doorstep. I have outlined the important steps for you in order.

Get the Word Out

While you are writing your book you should be getting the word out. Tell everyone you know what you are writing about. Get people praying for you and your project. If you know people at your local Christian bookstore, let them know what you are working on and when you plan to have your book completed.

Input

Be willing during the writing and editing process to get opinions, criticisms, testimonials, reviews, and comments. You want your message to be clear and your book to be the best possible. Be open to constructive criticism. Do not be close-minded or adamant that your message is exactly how God wants it written. Numerous rewrites are often necessary to ensure that your message is

crystal clear. Go to people you trust (don't throw your pearls before swine!) and ask for their input. Once the manuscript seems close to completion, start collecting written reviews and testimonials from the people who read it. Be sure that you receive permission if you plan to use their comments in your sales material.

The most important tip I can give you here is to be willing to spend extra money on a substantive edit. A great cover and beautiful formatting job won't cover up bad writing. Here are 21 tips to better writing from the editors at WinePress:

Follow these rules of good writing, even if you choose to obtain editing services from WinePress:

1. Determine the purpose of your writing and try to put it into one sentence. Make that purpose the "red thread" that you funnel all points through in your manuscript.
2. Determine your audience. Write to that person as if he or she was sitting in front of you.
3. Plan your writing and focus on organization.
4. Write an opening or lead that "hooks" the reader immediately. Use an anecdote, a fact, a dialogue, or a quote to grab the reader's attention. This is especially important for the first chapter, but is equally as important for every chapter in your book.
5. Write in simple sentences. Vary the length of your sentences and paragraphs. Watch out for *sentence fragments* (a group of words without a complete thought), *run-on sentences* (two sentences joined together without punctuation or connect-

ing word), and *rambling sentences* (too many short sentences connected with *and*).

6. To emphasize a word or phrase, put it at the beginning or end of a sentence or paragraph.
7. Choose a viewpoint and keep writing in it.
8. Show don't tell! Use dialogue, descriptive words, and all the senses to *show* what happens.
9. Use the *active voice* rather than the *passive voice*. The *dog bit* the man, instead of: The *man was bit* by the dog.
10. Use concrete nouns and action verbs. A city would be an example of a concrete noun: Instead of saying "East Coast city", say; *New York*. Look for "be" verbs— was, were, be, should, etc.— and replace with stronger verbs. (Ex.: Instead of; He *was* tired, say; He *felt* tired.)
11. Learn to use dialogue to draw the reader into your writing. Each new speaker gets a new paragraph. Use italics for thoughts, not quotation marks. Don't overuse the word "said." Instead, use action tags such as laughed, sighed, cried.
12. Avoid slang, jargon, and clichés.
13. Stay to the point. Don't take off on rabbit trails. In other words, write tight!
14. Pick a catchy title that explains the book's purpose. Sometimes a subtitle helps to explain the title.

15. Choose a tense and stay in it.
16. Check your spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Rules have changed. For instance, use a comma after a succession of three before *and*. Check the library for a good style book.
17. Ask someone besides your best friend, spouse or mother to read your writing and give honest suggestions for improvement.
18. Make sure your facts are right and that you quote people and books correctly. Especially take care to quote the Bible correctly.
19. Use the proper format when submitting a manuscript. (See Guidelines for Submission)
20. Don't make huge leaps between paragraphs. Use strong transitions to make your writing flow.
21. Stop when you reach the end. When you know that your purpose has been accomplished, it's time to stop and mail your manuscript.

Suggested writing tools:

Chicago Manual of Style (The University of Chicago Press) Available in the library.

Children's Writer's Word Book (Writer's Digest Books) by Alijandra Mogliner: a must-have if you write for children.

Writing Dramatic Non-Fiction (Writer's Digest Books) by William Noble.

Book Production

Now it is time to begin the production process. Submit your manuscript to a reputable book packager or consultant like WinePress for a quote. After researching your options start the process with the company that offers you a high quality product and the services you need for a fair price. In fact, I would go one step further. I would get into the prayer closet and ask the Lord who He wants you to work with. It may not be the company with the lowest price, or the best sales pitch. It's important, no matter what you do, to hear God's voice about who to work with.

The first thing you will need is the cover design first so that you have something to use for your sales literature. As I mentioned earlier, WinePress has worked hard to keep our cover designers producing covers that are top notch, to ensure our covers look like the "big guys" and give your message the creditability it deserves. As your book is going through the editing, formatting and printing process, you will want to be talking it up to everyone you know!

Price

It's a good idea to set a competitive retail price. Research similar products offered in the local Christian bookstores. One complaint bookstores have regarding self-published books is that they are typically overpriced. This is understandable when you realize how much some people have had to pay to get the job done! At WinePress we like to suggest that people use the following guideline:

48–64 pages -	\$8.99–\$9.99
96–120 pages -	\$11.99
144–168 pages -	\$12.99
176–192 pages -	\$13.99
208–240 pages -	\$14.99
256–288 pages -	\$15.99
304–356 pages -	\$16.99–\$18.99
368–408 pages -	\$19.99–\$21.99

Of course, if you choose to go the print-on-demand route, you give up the right to set your retail price, as that becomes the publisher's right. Usually the retail prices for our print-on-demand books are only about \$2 more than our suggested WinePress prices.

Some of our ministry titles set their price at "any donation of \$9 or more." It is amazing how many people will give \$10, \$20, \$50, and even \$100 for one book. For those who are in the ministry full time, this is a great way to set the price of your book.

If you're going to be doing a lot of back-of-the-room sales after speaking engagements, you might set your price to one round figure that would include any applicable sales tax—such as, \$10, \$15, \$20. This facilitates making change. In the seminar arena you can usually charge more for your book, and it will still sell because it is not competing with a hundred other books in a bookstore.

One of the biggest challenges with Print-on-Demand is the high retail price per book. Because of the way this industry works, the only way to make the print-on-demand option viable for small and large publishers alike, is to set a higher than normal retail price. For instance, Xlibris, one of the largest secular print-on-demand companies, set the price for a page count under 100 pages at \$16.99, a book between 101 and 199 pages at \$20.99, a book between 200 and 299 pages at \$21.99, a book between 300 and 399 at \$22.99 and a book between 400 and 499 at \$24.99. As you can see, these are quite a bit higher than the suggested retail prices I've listed, which are right in line with the prices you'll normally pay at a Christian bookstore. As I've mentioned above, we've made a point with our POD division to keep the retail prices as reasonable as possible. Certainly the last thing you want to do is have your book priced so high that no one will buy it!

If you plan to sell your book mainly through a toll-free number, or by mail order, you'll want to consider keeping the price lower. That way the total price, including your shipping and handling charge, won't scare off your customer.

Prepublication Order Form

With your cover design complete, write some promotional material for a sales flier. Include prepublication ordering information, which offers people an incentive to purchase a copy before the book is published. Some authors offer a 20 to 25 percent discount and free shipping if people pay in advance to order the book.

At WinePress, for our Silver packages and above, we create a pre-publication or sales flier that includes the intended page count of the book, its retail price, ISBN, cover artwork, and an overview with reviews and comments. We also include the prepublication discount information and cutoff date, along with other ordering information

Pastor Ray Hampton started his project at WinePress with a 50 percent down payment on book production costs, and then, using a prepublication order form, raised the balance through prepublication sales. He was pleasantly surprised to discover how quickly he was able to cover the remaining cost of his project.

Press Releases to Local Media

Media exposure is a great way to get free advertising for your book. When creating your press release, there are a few things you need to consider. First, you must focus on how your book will benefit the reader. Work hard at capsulation of the content into 100 words or less, emphasizing the importance of your book's thesis. Whenever I teach on this subject, I always encourage authors to memorize their 40-word-or-less explanation of their book, highlighting the benefits to the reader rather than the content. Everyone wants to know, "what's in it for me?" While the content is important, the most essential thing for the reader is what the book will do for them . . . what problem will it solve, what question will it answer, what benefit will it offer?

In our one-page press release, we include reviews and positive comments about the book. The most crucial point here is follow up. As I mentioned in an earlier chapter, we've learned a lot when it comes to promoting to the media, and it's great to have sharp looking, well written press releases going out to the media, but without prompt and persistent follow up, it's all wasted effort. That's why our inhouse publicity department works hard at following up with the media to make sure you get the exposure you need.

When an author works with our inhouse publicist, we ask you for 15–25 contacts of local or regional media. Assuming these contacts are appropriate for the type of book, this kind of publicity blitz is great for getting a jump start on promoting your book. A step up from this type of publicity blitz is a targeted national campaign where we send out press releases to 50 key radio stations, and follow up with them offering review copies and scheduling interviews. On an extended publicity campaign, 100–150 copies of your book are mailed out to radio stations across the country over a 4 – 6 month period and followed up on to schedule interviews about the book and it's message.

Page Proofs to Reviewers

If you are printing 5,000 or more copies, have committed to a publicity media campaign, and have an advertising budget / plan to make your book available in the Christian bookstore market, then it is a good idea to have a copy of your page proofs (the typeset version of your manuscript) and a sample cover sent to appropriate book reviewers. Appropriate means that if you are writing a book on moms leaving the workplace to stay home and raise their children, we wouldn't send your proofs to the book review editor for *Discipleship Journal*; we would send them to *Today's Christian Woman* or *Virtue* or *Christian Parenting Today*.

Remember, it's not easy to obtain a review. Don't get your hopes up that this is where all your sales are going to come from. I am very cautious in encouraging first-time authors toward this end, because the market is very competitive.

Some book reviewers are very picky about how they receive page proofs. They want them long before the book is released. Some even want them trimmed and bound. Again, unless you are printing 5,000 to 10,000 copies and will be doing a trade-market blitz with your book through the major Christian book distributors, I wouldn't spend a lot of time trying to get reviews in national Christian publications. You may, however, want to approach your local Christian newspaper to see if they would be interested in conducting an interview with you, using an excerpt from the book, or writing their own book review. Also, the religion editor for your local secular newspaper will often do book reviews.

Distribution Schedule

This step can be a Catch-22. If you are self-published, most Christian book distributors will not even look at your book. Spring Arbor Distributors are very direct with self-published authors. They tell you that it will take six months before they will even look at the finished product, and even then you should not count on them to pick it up.

I learned a lot in the process of distributing *Consumed by Success*. When you're self-published it seems like you have three strikes against you. Unfortunately, those out there who have created shoddy, unprofessional products have made it hard on the rest of us. Because WinePress has a commitment to the publicity and promotion of appropriate (truly marketable) titles, because of our reputation of producing high quality products, we have gained access to the major distributors and have set up contracts with them for

all our titles, as long as the author is willing to extend a 55% discount. Landing a Christian book distributor on your own is not altogether impossible, but very close to it. That's one very good reason to publish your book with WinePress! We've gone to the expense and trouble to contract with the major distributors at a 55% discount and the distributor pays the freight charges rather than the author. This makes a big difference to the author in being able to afford to make their books available to bookstores.

Direct Mail Campaign

If you believe that the Lord wants you to promote and market your book by purchasing a mailing list of prospective buyers, you don't want to wait too long to get started. My favorite direct mail campaign has been to use postcards. Since the cover artwork should now be completed, it can be used on the four-color glossy side of the postcard. The other side should have a short description of the book and a reason why people should buy it, along with simple ordering information: a toll-free number or an address, retail price, and shipping and handling charges.

The preference for using postcards is backed up by the statistics. *A Better Homes and Gardens* survey once found that an average of seventeen people read every postcard that is sent through the mail. That means sixteen people read your postcard before it actually gets to where it's going. That's great exposure!

Fulfillment Services

While your book is in production, we'll want to be sure we are prepared to fill orders. Most of you probably have a day job and a life other than authoring. If you want to be able to promote your book and not worry about the details of taking and filling orders, then you need a fulfillment service which is something we offer as a benefit to our authors. While some companies charge 50–65%,

WinePress rates range from 20–35%, the lowest in the industry. We recently added the service of sourcing for all sales completed by our order fulfillment department. That means if someone orders your book through WinePress, whether through the live operator call in number, or the website, we'll be asking them how they heard about your book and you'll get that information on your quarterly reports. This will help you keep an eye on where your sales are coming from and which advertisements and promotional campaigns are creating sales. If you're shopping around for a company to publish and provide fulfillment services, make sure you do your homework and see what all the fees mean, what they actually include, and what costs extra. One self-publishing company touts a sales force that will sell your books to bookstores (unfortunately, we have found from experience that these companies over promise and underdeliver) . . . the catch is that you have to give away 65% in fulfillment fees, even on retail sales (where John Doe calls the 800# and orders one copy of your book at full price)!

Book Signings

Once you have a release date for your book, start organizing book signings with local Christian bookstores, your church, or other affiliated organizations. Sometimes Christian bookstores will have a Local Authors' Day, where they invite all the local authors in for a two- to-four-hour period to autograph copies of their books. The store promotes the event in the community so people can come in to meet the authors and buy autographed books. If your local Christian bookstore hasn't done this, suggest it to them.

Some of our authors have set up publication parties, where they send out invitations to everyone they know and announce the new publication. They make it a festive event. You may even have friends who would want to have a signing party in their home

and invite all their friends over to meet you and hear about your book. Through scheduling events such as these, you'll find many opportunities to share the message the Lord has given you.

If your release date is October 1 and you expect to have your books in hand a week or two before that, build in some extra time as a buffer. We had one author who was expecting to receive his books on December 1 (a Friday). He set up an autographing party and invited a lot of people for the following Monday. Wouldn't you know it, the truck carrying his books broke down in Phoenix, and they couldn't get the part needed until Monday morning. Fortunately we had sent him five copies of the book on Thursday via overnight mail, so at least he had something to show the people who came!

Be prepared and be flexible. If your book is going to be effective in winning ground for Jesus and taking back ground from the enemy, you will experience opposition. If it can go wrong, it will. So think ahead and don't plan things too close to the publication date.

It's not my purpose to give the nitty-gritty details of producing a quality product. If you're like most people, you'll want to delegate this end of the publishing process to a professional company like WinePress. So at this juncture, we'll move right into marketing your book!

How to Market Your Book

WHEN YOU PROMOTE your book you are not promoting yourself, you are promoting the message God has given you!” These wise words were spoken by an author friend of mine not long ago, and they have influenced my perspective on writing and publishing ever since.

Many people say they feel funny about promoting their own book—they think it’s prideful and pushy. I felt the same way when my first book came out, until my friend spoke those words. All of a sudden I was boldly talking about my book, and you should be too. If the Lord has given you a message to communicate, you needn’t be shy about it. He wants you to get it to the people who need to hear it. The Lord’s plan for your life and your book probably does not include a long-term lease on a dusty storage space.

DEVELOP A MARKETING STRATEGY

When you begin to think about your marketing plan, you need to ask yourself these questions: What problem am I solving with the message in my book? Who needs to hear my message? Where can I find these people? How can I let them know about my book?

With the answers to these questions you should be able to effectively formulate your strategy.

There are four basic ways to let people know about your book.

1. **MEDIA EXPOSURE:** radio, TV, and print interviews; excerpts, articles, and reviews.
2. **ADVERTISING:** in trade publications; distributors; catalogs, magazines, niche newspapers; the Internet; and / or through direct mailings.
3. **IN-PERSON PROMOTION:** speaking engagements, book readings, and autograph parties.
4. **TRADE SHOWS:** setting up a booth at a trade show or convention, such as pastors' conventions or Sunday School workers conferences.

We'll talk more about the different venues for promotion in the next chapter, but first let's be sure you have the proper tools to present your product.

CREATE MARKETING TOOLS THAT STAND OUT

Let's face it, people are drawn to color. If all your marketing tools are created in black and white or one-color ink, their impact will be greatly diminished. That's why we always use the four-color process (full color) for our marketing tools.

Some of the most popular ways we've found to promote books are with the following four items. Sample prices are included for comparison, but prices are subject to change. These prices are available to our WinePress authors and include design and film charges.

1. **FOUR-COLOR POSTCARDS (3.5 x 5.5 inches).**

500	\$.55 each
1,000	\$.33 each

3,000	\$.19 each
5,000	\$.15 each

2. **FOUR-COLOR BOOKMARKS** (2 by 5 ³/₈ inches). They are a great way to promote your book. Readers love free bookmarks, and it's good advertising.

1,000	\$.30 each
3,000	\$.15 each
5,000	\$.10 each

3. **FOUR-COLOR BUSINESS CARDS** (2 by 3 ¹/₂ inches; four-color on one side, black text on back). Some authors will put their book cover on the full-color side and their name and ordering information on the other side. Pass them out everywhere.

1,000	\$.24 each
2,500	\$.13 each
5,000	\$.08 each

4. **FOUR-COLOR SALES FLIERS** (8.5 x 11 inches; four-color, one side). Design and film are included in these prices.

1,000	\$.40 each
2,500	\$.18 each
5,000	\$.12 each

Publicity Kits

At WinePress, for our Gold and Platinum authors, we design high-end, full-color publicity kits for our authors. Our kits start with a textured presentation folder and a color copy of the book's cover on the front.

For the contents we use a high quality paper stock to complement the front-cover colors. We then create a one-page summary of the author, a second page that describes the book, a third page that includes endorsements and positive comments, and a fourth page of suggested interview questions.

For marketing purposes we create a full-color sales flier that shows the cover of the book and gives all the primary information on one page: subject overview, selected endorsements, ordering information, etc. We also include a set of full-color postcards. Each kit is a polished and professional representation of an author, helping to build credibility and a great first impression with industry or media representatives.

Tabletop Displays and Signs

You can find a great variety of various tabletop displays that will give your book table a professional look. Also, if you have the potential of securing a booth at a trade show, which will attract your buying public, you may want to invest in a trade-show-style tabletop display.

Now that you understand the importance of looking sharp, it's time to get your book out there so the world can see and hear the message God has given you.

Creating a Demand for Your Book

I F YOU HAVE A MESSAGE that people need to hear, then, with the Lord's help and direction, you need to create a demand for your book. You need to expose your message to as many different markets as possible, in as many different ways as possible. I can't say enough about developing a speaking ministry—if you have that gift and it is confirmed that the Lord wants you to move in that direction.

If you feel you need some training in this area, I can recommend Christian Leaders, Authors & Speakers Services (CLASS). Their seminars are presented in major locations across the country by Florence and Fred Littauer, organized by their daughter Marita. CLASS seminars are usually in a three-day intense format. You might also consider joining a local Toastmasters group to polish your public speaking skills.

One example of creating a demand through a speaking ministry is from a 1994 *Writer's Digest* article:

When a computer search at my library revealed almost no books on how to develop a close grandparent / grandchild rela-

tionship, I decided to self-publish my first book, *Grandparents' Little Dividends: How to Keep in Touch*. I genuinely wanted to develop, in book form, my ideas on how to close the gap [with] my own seven grandchildren, particularly with the four that lived a considerable distance away from me. I also wanted to use the book in classes I'd be teaching in the fall. I knew that looking for a publisher was going to take time, more than I was willing to wait. I didn't even try to find a publisher. Here's how I went about the project.

First, I increased my visibility and credibility as a grandparent expert. I led seminars on grandparenting at local community centers, taught classes at local colleges, spoke to grandparents at retirement centers, churches, temples and corporations. In short, I created valid credentials. I reached the point where the Kansas City Star dubbed me the "guru of grandparenting" in a feature article.

I spent six months collecting information on creative ways to make the grandparent / grandchild connection. I gave out surveys and networked with grandparent groups around the country.

Nine months later, the writing of my book was completed, and I joined a critique group. I took a few worthwhile suggestions and made my revisions. . . . In 1989, I published my first 2,000 books at a production cost of \$3.50 per book. The softcover book sold for \$8 per copy. In less than one year, and with no advertising, I had sold all but 100 books.¹

My point in sharing that story is to illustrate the power of building a platform in the public speaking arena. This author found that selling her book was easy because of her visibility at many speaking engagements.

The following are some other avenues for creating a demand that you should prayerfully consider.

1. CHURCH LIBRARIANS. The best way to reach them is to have your book reviewed in *Church Libraries* (formerly *Librarians World*), a publication of the Evangelical Church Library Association (ECLA). I would also suggest that you place an ad in the issue in which your book review will be seen.
2. CHRISTIAN SCHOOL LIBRARIANS. If your book is appropriate for Christian school libraries, you will want to have *The Christian Library Journal* review your book. This publication is distributed to a large number of Christian school librarians, and it also accepts advertising.
3. MINISTRIES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS. Do your homework and see if there are ministries or nonprofit organizations that might be interested in offering your book as a premium (fund-raiser giveaway). Depending on your topic, your local church may even be able to use it as a fund-raiser for their missions, youth, or other departments. You would have to give them a 60 to 70 percent discount, but you would be selling books by the case.
4. MAGAZINE SUBSCRIBERS. If your advertising budget allows, one great way of reaching a specific audience is to query the magazine about using an excerpt—possibly allowing you to write the article—or having them write a book review. If any of these possibilities materialize, consider buying an ad in that issue. This can be a risk, however, since you have no guarantee of sales.
5. CHRISTIAN RADIO OR TV AUDIENCES. Your best shot at these markets is to launch a media blitz through a reputable Christian publicist. You must be a great communicator to be successful in this area. If your tendency is to speak in a monotone without much “pizzazz,” then you’ll probably be wasting your time and money trying this approach.

6. SECULAR RADIO OR TV AUDIENCES. If your book is geared to the secular market, is not overtly Christian (i.e., quoting Scripture and using Christian jargon), and you are an effective communicator, your best way to get booked on secular radio and TV is through Radio-TV Interview Report. This magazine is read by all the talk-show hosts and producers. It can really generate interest. The advertising is not overly expensive, and for the right topic, this can be an effective way to reach the masses with your message.
7. THE SECULAR LIBRARY MARKET. The best way to reach this market is through Quality Books, a distributor to both public and school libraries. Though they buy your books on consignment at a steep discount, this is still a great way to get into that market.
8. ONLINE SERVICES / INTERNET. The effectiveness of online advertising has not yet been accurately measured, but there are some possibilities. However, unless you are selling a get-rich-quick guide that tells how to make money on the Internet, the chances are slim that you'll recoup all of the expense of buying advertising space on the Internet.

To help authors minimize the financial risk of testing new waters, we have begun to include in some of our publishing packages an automatic listing in our WinePress Online Bookstore catalog as well as Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, Christianbook.com and others. It includes a dedicated Web page, full-color cover sample, book overview, author contact information, and an online order form. We also take the title and keywords and list them with 500 different search engines on the web. One neat story that shows the value of this goes back to mid-2001. We had listed key words “charmners” and “con-artists” for Sandra Scott’s book, *Charmners & Con-Artists and Their Flip Side*. Last year we got a call from Sally

Jesse Rafael's producer asking for Sandra to be the "expert" for a special show they were planning on con-artists. When we asked how they heard about Sandra and her book, they told us they typed in "con-artists" into their search engine and up popped the information about Sandra's book! They flew her into New York, had her on the show, and she sold over 2,000 books as a result!

Over the last year, our inhouse publicist has worked extensively with the internet to help our authors find ways to get their books out there. Here is an excerpt from our quarterly marketing newsletter where she shared some specific examples of how the internet paid off for our authors:

The following actual examples demonstrate how I use the internet to an author's advantage. Rob Carmack recently completed *Box of Letters*, a collection of 96 devotionals written by a teenager for other teens. Obviously, teenagers comprise the target audience . . . see how easy this is! In the search engine Yahoo.com I typed in Christian Youth Organizations. Excellent resources popped up such as Youth for Christ, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Youth With a Mission, Young Life, Youthworkers.net, Youth Specialities, and a whole host of other great contacts.

Where else do teenagers hang out? Christian summer camps, of course! The first camp I e-mailed immediately responded and asked for a review copy to consider as a resource. Here's an important tip: make sure you present your book as a helpful resource for their organizations' members. If they agree, their newsletter or other channels promote your book with little effort on your part.

Doris Lyon, author of *My Personal Prayer Journal*, attends a Lutheran church. I went to Yahoo.com and typed in Evangelical Lutheran Church. The first name on the list took me to elca.org. I then hit the "congregation" button and discovered that I could find all the Lutheran Churches within a 100 mile radius of a

specified town, with a complete list of addresses and phone numbers. What a gold mine!

David Leonardo battles with Multiple Sclerosis and his book *Inspiration for Peace and Strength* encourages people with long-term illnesses. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society web site features a map of the United States with detailed local state chapter information at the click of a button. By making a few phone calls I discovered that most chapter program directors were willing to review the book and consider a newsletter article. Additionally, some even committed to give out a flyer to group leaders who in turn let the members of their group know about David's book. BINGO! That's who we're trying to reach!²

One other nifty idea that doesn't cost much money is an online service like America Online (AOL). You can find the message boards of people who would most likely be interested in your book.

One area of AOL where this has been successful is Christianity Online. I found an area for pastoral research, posted messages about our publishing services, and began to get many responses. The key is to come up with the right wording for the subject line of your message. If the subject doesn't catch someone's eye, he or she will never bother to click on your item to read what's in the body of the message. My subject line read: "You Can Publish Your Book." When people opened the message they read my story of self-publishing *Consumed by Success*. They could then respond for more information.

9. NARROWLY TARGETED MAILING LISTS. There are a few Christian companies that specialize in selling the mailing lists of churches, ministries, people who have purchased a product out of XYZ Christian magazine, people who subscribe to XYZ Christian magazine, and so on. If you can narrow your target market to a category listed in one

demographic base, you won't waste money mailing advertisements to people who haven't historically been interested in your topic.

10. CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORES VIA DISTRIBUTORS. Very difficult market to tap if you self-publish without the help of a full service publisher or book packager, but with the right message, packaging, and marketing plan, it is possible. With WinePress you at least have the advantage of our contracts with all the major distributors, both Christian and secular.
11. CATALOGS FOR CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE CUSTOMERS. If you have a highly marketable product and a hefty advertising budget, you may want to consider buying a spot in some catalogs. Your ad could cost anywhere from \$3,000 (Family Bookstores) to \$1,800 (The Munce Buying Group). The nice thing about buying into a catalog is guaranteed sales. The bookstores that distribute the catalog ensure that they have stock on hand for all the products in the catalog. But again, it is not easy to get in. Your book has to really look good, and it has to be good. Many of the catalogs have committees to decide which titles should be accepted. From the limited tests I have done in this area, I'm not totally convinced that this is the best route for the money. WinePress offers our authors exposure to the bookstore market through our full color catalog. With each new semi-annual editon we pay to have 3,500 copies sent out to bookstore buyers nationally through one of our Christian distributors.

One last thing I'll mention before we move on is the importance of having your own website. While we offer our author's books for sale on the WinePress website (www.winepressbooks.com) we have many authors who have a more extended website who then link to ours to offer their book for sale. WinePress recently began it's own web design department offering a wide variety of options for getting

a website online quickly. Having your own website enables you to promote your book in a very professional manner (as long as it has been designed by a professional and doesn't look too "mom & pop!") For more information about our web design services, visit the WinePress Promotions website at www.wppromotions.com. Now it's time for the distribution end of things. Let's see how we can get your well-marketed book to your waiting customer in the quickest, most professional manner.

Making Your Book Available

ONE OF THE BIGGEST challenges for the self-published author is figuring out how to make his or her book available to those who need to read it. If you think that most people are going to take the time to write out a check, lick a stamp, address an envelope, and run up to the mailbox in order to get your book, you need to wake up and smell the coffee! Most people today want to be able to do one of two things to get their hands on a Christian book: call a toll-free number to order it with a credit card, or stop by their favorite Christian bookstore to pick it up.

It is wise to be extra efficient at making your book easy for people to obtain. If you're only planning to market at your speaking engagements, at meetings of organizations, or to the people you see on a daily basis, then this isn't a big issue. As long as you have books, people can purchase them easily. But those of you who are seeking a wider audience or national recognition need to prayerfully consider the following proven ways of making your books obtainable by the greater public.

Christian Bookstores

While the national market is getting harder and harder to break, you may do well with your local Christian bookstores. Some may be willing to purchase small quantities of your book for a 40 to 45 percent discount. Others may take them on consignment. Unfortunately, since larger corporations are buying up many of the small Christian bookstores, buyers are no longer employed at the local level. Purchasing is normally done in large quantities, at large discounts, directly from the big publishers and distributors.

One service many bookstores now offer is a kiosk in the store with a computer program called Quest. It's a touch-screen database where the customer can look up by author, artist, keyword or other subject and find every book, video, music tape or CD, bible, gift or resource available through distributors to the bookstores, including being able to view the front and back cover and table of contents, listen to sound bytes of the music, or watch clips from the video. We have this service available in our church's bookstore in downtown Enumclaw, and it is a great way to allow customers the opportunity to find the product they desire and special order it if it is not currently in stock. One of WinePress' services for our authors is sending in all the information to the database for this service so that our books are easily found at bookstores throughout the country.

Christian Book Distributors

I just can't stress this enough: Don't get your hopes up on this one! The Christian bookstore market is so competitive that your book must have national appeal (i.e., no poetry, missionary stories, or general testimonies—unless you are famous). Your book must also be extremely well written and have sufficient dollars behind it to support large advertising and media campaigns. Since most Christian book distributors won't even look at your book if they know that you're self-published and not an established au-

thor, chances are slim. At every conference I attend I hear new stories of new authors who have contracted with traditional publishers frustrated because people can't find their books on the shelves and many can't even be ordered through distributors!

Again, through test marketing and promoting my own book, I've found ways around this avenue that can be beneficial to WinePress authors, (just another good reason to publish with WinePress!).

In early 2000, due to the problems encountered with Spring Arbor, the largest Christian distributor, and its buyout by Ingram (a secular distributor), WinePress established a new option for distribution which proved to be little help to our authors. We contracted with what was then known as Christian Distribution Services, now known as FaithWorks, who touted a strong sales force hand-selling our books to the Christian bookstore buyers. The catch, of course, was that our authors had to give a 65–68% discount, pay the freight to get their books to the warehouse, pay a monthly warehousing fee, and pay to advertise in their catalog. When it came down to it, the majority of the sales were being made to the distributors, which quite frankly we could do ourselves . . . which is why we cancelled our contract with them and reverted back to a more effective solution to the challenge of making our books available. We now have contracts with all the major distributors at a 50–55% discount, where the distributor pays the freight (not the author) and then we do some extra promotion by sending out our catalog to all of the bookstore buyers twice a year, as well as passing out our catalog at the CBA international convention once a year.

Fulfillment

The best way to make your book easily available to the general public is through a fulfillment service. This gives customers a toll-free number they can call to order your book with their credit

card. The service includes warehousing the inventory, answering the phone, taking orders, and shipping the product. The average amount you'll pay for this kind of service is 35 to 65 percent of the retail price of the book. Our charge at WinePress is anywhere from 20% up to 35% for order taking, credit card processing, source coding, billing, collection, processing returns, bad checks, declined credit cards, mis-routed packages, lost or damaged shipments, insured inventory, etc. This is something I developed many years ago because I knew it was work I, as an author, didn't want to hassle with, and if I didn't want to, I knew there would be others who wouldn't want to either!

For my first printing of *Consumed by Success*, I fulfilled my orders through a secular company named Bookmasters. When all was said and done, I paid just over 50 percent of the book price for that service. They charged me for every little thing, including warehousing, insurance, inquiry calls (which do not necessarily turn into orders), charge-card fees, order fees, administrative fees, and so on. They are, however, a very reputable company, and I felt the service was a valuable one. When I did the Prime Time America show with Jim Warren on the Moody Network, we gave out the toll-free number and sold over 700 copies of my book in an afternoon. So it was important to have a company that could handle that kind of volume. I was certainly glad to have someone else taking those calls and handling the orders!

As you research fulfillment services, be sure to ask how many operators they have on duty. Some have only a few people answering the phones. If you land a syndicated radio interview, your service might not be able to handle all the calls. Every lost call is a lost sale. Also, be sure to request a statement of charges ahead of time to learn what will be covered.

I finally became so discouraged with what was available out there that I established a fulfillment service for WinePress authors. We are set up to be able to go from 2 operators on call at our

warehouse to 12 operators here at our main building if the situation demands it. We keep it simple: Don't nickel and dime people to death. And since it's not our main source of income, we are able to keep the cost down to a reasonable amount. In fact, through our WinePress Promotions division, we now offer our fulfillment services to clients who have not published their product with us. For more information, check out www.wppromotions.com.

One great success story happened when Dan Miller appeared on the Hour of Power show with Dr. Robert Schuller. He did a twenty-minute interview, and Dr. Schuller gave out our toll free number about ten times during the interview. Within four days we had about 2,500 orders for Dan's book, *Living, Laughing and Loving Life!* Even with the 30 percent fulfillment charge, the income he generated from that one show actually paid for the entire print run of 10,000 books.

Book Table

During speaking engagements, your book table at the back of the room is your primary means for making books available. Be sure the table looks good, with professionally produced signs and a handsome display of your books. You can usually find inexpensive, tabletop plate holders at craft shops to display your book in a way that looks sharp. Be prepared with lots of change, and keep several pens handy—people will often ask you to sign your book!

Order Information

Place your ordering information on the first available right-hand page that follows the last text or reference section of your book. Confused? See our order page at the end of this book.

And be sure to check out the laws in your state. Most states require that you establish a business license and a resale account with the Department of Revenue, since you are purchasing your books at a wholesale price and reselling them at a retail price. When

you sell to someone who lives in your state, you usually have to charge them the appropriate sales tax. Presently you don't have to charge sales tax when you sell to someone who is out of state. The simplest way to handle the bookkeeping is to keep track of the amount you take in for sales tax and set it aside in a savings account. Then, once a quarter or once a year when you have to fill out the paperwork to pay your sales taxes, you've got the money in hand.

Now that your book is well marketed and distributed, let's make sure we make the most of the media.

Getting the Most Out of the Media

IN PREVIOUS CHAPTERS I've emphasized the use of the media to help generate exposure for your book. My good friend and publicist Don Otis, from Creative Resources, has given me permission to edit and reprint some incredibly detailed and important publicity how-to information he has compiled but never published.

Part I: Getting Started

Language and Words: Using Words Effectively to Communicate Your Message

The goal of communication is to impart what you know or believe to your audience. This means selecting the words you use very carefully. Jesus used stories, parables, and allegories to communicate in ways that His hearers could understand. The words you choose can be powerful. They can also be dangerous. The art of using words to persuade is called rhetoric. This is a basic part of scholarly discipline. It is also necessary if you want to communicate your message. By using words in certain ways,

we can manipulate people to do just about anything. Hitler is proof enough. His two most potent weapons were sloganeering and repetition.

Author Steve Brown says, “The goal of communication is not to impress, but to communicate clearly.” And a major element of clear communication is simplicity. Cleverly chosen language has the effect of simplifying ideas rather than complicating them. Intellectualizing often confuses the listener instead of imparting ideas, concepts, or information. As writer E. B. White said, “Avoid the elaborate, the pretentious, the coy, and the cute.”

Language has been called the greatest drug known to humanity. Jesus said [that our words justify or condemn us] (Matt. 12:37). The way we use words, and how we define them, has an effect not just on what we think but on how we think. Politicians, social engineers, and the military are clever in cloaking the true meaning of their words in euphemisms. They obscure realities we’d rather not deal with. For example, “collateral damage” refers to civilian casualties. When the military “redeploys troops,” it often means retreat. Our prison system uses “honor ranches” in place of prisons and “boys’ homes” rather than juvenile detention. Each of these [is an] example of hiding the truth with words.

Words are powerful. They are so powerful that God confused languages to control the effect words had on the human race. [Words] put into languages are the most complex creation of the human mind. Babel is testament to the creative power and influence of words. God used words to create the world and all that it contains (Ps. 33:6). By our words we can create and build. And by our words we can dismantle or inflict pain. It is not by accident that the countries with the most advanced technology also have the fewest languages. And the world’s 6,000 languages are gradually disappearing. This global language extinction is leading us back to the place where communication was first scrambled in Babel.

EXPECTATIONS

Working with a publicist will help you get the most out of your publishing experience. Even before your book is off the press, the work to promote it has begun. Once it is off the press, promotion moves into a more aggressive mode. Publicists view the promotion of your book as a joint venture. By this I mean a positive author-publicity relationship will ensure that your book gets the best media coverage. Your participation in the media and promotion process will directly influence the sales and success of your book.

Here is what you can expect from a good publicist.

They will . . .

- Write and prepare press materials. These are written to attract the attention of a host or producer. They do not try to portray every major aspect of your book.
- Prepare questions for your interviews.
- Mail information about your book to appropriate media sources.
- Provide a review copy of your book to interested media.
- Work with you to schedule media opportunities.
- Send review copies of your book to book reviewers.
- Send review copies to key influencers and opinion makers.
- Provide “coaching” help for interviews.

Publicists do not . . .

- Handle the shipping or mailing of your books for special meetings or events.
- Serve as a public speaking agency.
- Place space ads in magazines or newspapers.

PUBLICITY: WHAT IS IT?

We define publicity broadly to mean “any reasonable opportunity to gain public exposure for an author to promote their product.” The idea is to attract public interest in your book. A good publicist focuses most [available] resources in three main areas: radio, television, and print media.

Radio

There are more than 1,300 Christian radio stations scattered throughout the United States. Christian radio now represents the nation’s third largest format. Many of these stations have regional talk shows. A good publicist will use whatever creative means available to position you for an appearance on these regional or national programs. It is a publicist’s job to secure air-time for you. It is your job to promote your book or product. Most radio talk programs fall into issue-related classifications like family, theology, politics, or current events.

Let’s take a brief look at some characteristics of radio interviews. Your interviews will last between 15 minutes and one hour. Most interviews can be done by phone from your home or office. Radio interviews will be either taped or live. When your publicist confirms an interview with you, the form will tell you which it is.

- Radio is fast moving. Be prepared to respond as quickly as possible to questions.
- Some live radio programs will open phone lines for callers.
- Radio is personal. Though many people are listening at any given time, you are being heard by one person at a time. Individuals are listening in their cars, on the job, or at home.
- Radio is an effective tool for communicating your message.

- Some radio hosts will be excited [by] or sympathetic with your topic. Others may disagree or sound disinterested.

Here are a few items to remember when you're doing an interview:

- Be enthusiastic. Be positive and energetic.
- Be relational. Try to identify with the host or the city you are being heard in.
- Use short examples, stories, or research findings to bolster your main points.
- Keep a marked-up copy of your book close by. Flag the pages you might quote from.
- Be on time.
- Be prepared. If you use notes, keep them close by. For call-in programs, we suggest you keep a notepad nearby. Write down the names of callers so you can respond to them by name.
- Keep a glass of water nearby.
- If you are doing a phone interview, be sure to eliminate any distractions ahead of time. Find a quiet place away from children or noise. If you have call waiting on your phone, have it turned off during your interviews.
- Listen to the questions carefully and respond appropriately and you'll do fine.
- Be timely. If your book or product can be tied to a particular current event, use it.
- Be courteous to the host and callers.
- Be gracious. Be sure [to] thank the host for having you on.

Now that we've covered what you should do, let's look at what you should avoid during a radio interview.

- Avoid euphemisms. This is a Greek word meaning “using auspicious words.” Make yourself understandable to as many people as possible.
- Avoid using legal terms (unless you explain what they mean and they are relevant to the interview).
- Avoid theological terms (same rule applies).
- Avoid medical or psychological terms.
- Don’t insult your host either directly or indirectly.
- Do not assume people know what you’re talking about. No one knows your book (or subject) as well as you. Your tendency will be to assume that the people listening know more than they do. A word of caution: Be careful not to patronize or talk down to the host or audience just because you do know more.
- Don’t use clichés.
- Avoid name dropping.
- Do not embellish or exaggerate.
- Avoid gossip or talking down about others.
- Be careful not to “over promote” yourself. Some hosts will cut you off immediately if they feel you’re using their show as an extended commercial.

Television

There are fewer than 200 Christian television programs in the United States. While most of these are regional, some are national like The 700 Club. Television is also distinctive because it engages several senses at the same time. Television is also very different from radio because you have to be there to do the interview. That’s why it’s important that you let your publicist know about any travel plans you may have as far in advance of a trip as possible. Sometimes your publicist can schedule you on television during your travel.

Here are some things to remember when doing television interviews:

- Avoid bright colors, especially white.
- Respond to the host rather than looking toward the camera.
- Arrive early for television tapings.
- Don't take notes with you.
- Bring at least one or two copies of your book with you.
- Bring a set of questions.
- Body language is important on TV. Don't slouch or fidget. Never assume the camera is not on you.

Print

Books, newspapers, and magazines are the primary print media. The print media fall into several classifications: Christian tabloids, Christian magazines, secular newspapers and magazines, and ministry newsletters or magazines. In each case, remember who you are talking to. Be relevant. If you do an interview with a secular publication, learn as much as you can beforehand about the person who is interviewing you. Try to find out the angle they are looking for. What can you find out about their own beliefs? How will they use [them]? Have they interviewed anyone else on the subject? Use words sparingly and use them carefully when talking with secular journalists.

Usually your publicist works to obtain book reviews on every title they represent. This does not mean that every book will be reviewed in major publications. However, some local secular newspapers and Christian newspapers will review your book. Sometimes when review copies of your book are sent out, a publication will decide to run an excerpt. If you have contacts with either local Christian or secular print media, let your publicist know. [Your publicist] will work with your local newspapers.

PUBLICITY: WHAT YOU CAN DO

Typically, authors believe their job is over when their book goes to press. As mentioned before, promotion is a team effort.

Even during the height of a publicity campaign there are things you can do to provide an extra publicity boost.

- Always carry a couple copies of your book with you. If you travel, keep one in your car or carry-on bag.
- Introduce yourself to local bookstore owners or buyers. If they are not carrying your book, ask them to.
- Ask your friends or family living in different areas to call their local bookstores and ask them to carry your book.
- If you do public speaking, be sure to have plenty of copies of your book on hand for your meetings. Most churches will provide someone to handle a book table for you. If you're invited to speak at a church meeting or seminar, ask the host to provide a table. When speaking publicly, be sure to mention the availability of your book.

Part Two: The Interview Process

Working with Your Publicist: Getting the Most Out of Your Media Campaign

What is a media campaign? Most would define a campaign as a four- to six-month effort to provide the greatest possible media exposure for your book. Here are a few quick tips to help you work effectively with your publicist.

- Provide a travel itinerary.
- Provide a list of the best or worst times for doing interviews.
- Respond quickly. An interview can be lost when an author takes too much time to respond to an interview opportunity. If you are exceptionally busy, provide your publicist with “the holes in your schedule” and they'll do their best to work with you. If you have done interviews before, let them know about it. It is easier to go

back to “good interviewers” and avoid those [who] were unpleasant. If you have contacts with any media, let your publicist know about them.

- If you have specific questions you want to be asked about your book, be sure to let your publicist know before they put your prepared questions together.
- They can do a better job for you if you take the time to let them know your ideas up front.

A TYPICAL INTERVIEW: WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

If you’ve never done a media interview before, don’t worry. Just remember, you’re the expert! After you’ve done several interviews you will find yourself repeating many of the same things. You will also discover there are good and bad interviewers. The best interviews are those where the person who interviews you has actually read your book. However, sometimes you will find hosts who have just skimmed your materials. Once in a while, you will find yourself in an interview with a host who hardly remembers your name! If this happens, take control of the interview by discussing your book or topic. In many instances, this will bring relief to a host and salvage an otherwise wasted interview.

A typical interview includes at least three sections: an opening (this is where having a good bio is important), the body of the interview (the content), and the close (the wrap-up). If you are on a live call-in program, a fourth ingredient will include the callers.

The opening is important since it sets the stage for both the host and the listeners (or viewers). The introduction establishes your credibility to say what you have to say. If this is done ineffectively, you can recall your credentials without sounding arrogant. For example, “While I was conducting my research at Harvard, I discovered . . .” Or, “When I studied law the two things

I found most disturbing were . . .” If a host has your biography and does [his or her] job well, you can stick to the subject.

The body of the interview will generally follow [one of] two directions: [The interviewer will] use the prepared questions or [he or she will] use a more spontaneous approach. A good host will gently challenge your assumptions by asking questions anyone in the audience would ask if they were there. Don't be offended by the “devil's advocate” questions. These do not necessarily mean a host disagrees with you.

The close of the interview should consist of a brief recap of what your book is about. It must also include a mention of the book and where listeners can get a copy. . . . [T]he onus is on you, not the host. If the book has not been mentioned, you might ask (on the air), “May I mention where your listeners (viewers) can find my book?” If you have time before the interview, ask the host if you can mention where to find the book.

A final word about the interview process. You will find some radio interviews are on commercial stations and some are on [noncommercial] stations. On commercial stations you can expect frequent interruptions (every 7 to 12 minutes) for a commercial break. Use this time to gather your thoughts and prepare for the next segment. Interviews on [noncommercial] stations will generally have few if any interruptions.

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

There is an English proverb that says, “Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.” Just like any other job, interviewers have good days and bad days. If you happen to hit one on a bad day, try to make the best of your time. And just as interviewers have bad days, so do authors. Authors don't do interviews for a living, so the likelihood of something going wrong is even greater. This shouldn't scare you but it should keep you on your toes. The best interviews are with authors who are rested and alert.

Your interview will be as successful as you are prepared—mentally and spiritually.

What to avoid during an interview

The best advice I can offer is to “be yourself.” Be who you are without any pretense. Be natural and relaxed. Too much anxiety will rob you of your ability to think clearly. However, having said this, a little fear can also be a good thing. It is also very normal. Author Steve Brown calls fear “a wonderful motivator.” It can be an encouragement to keep you mentally alert.

Here are some tips to help you relax:

- Imagine that you are talking with only one person.
- Take a deep breath before you go on the air and during any commercial breaks.
- Take a moment to pray before you go on the air. If you can, pray with the host this is even better.
- Know your material. You are at an advantage because it is your material you’re discussing. Don’t be led into discussions on topics you don’t know anything about. If you are an expert on “home schooling,” don’t be pulled into a discussion about “How to discipline children.” If you find yourself “off track,” don’t be afraid to say something like, “I’m sure there are better qualified people to discuss that subject, but I can tell you more about . . .” This can get you and the host back on track and away from things that are unconnected to your book.
- Finally, don’t act bored by the interview. If you’re bored, chances are good that the audience and host will also be bored. Enthusiasm can make even the most trivial conversations seem more interesting. Frank Sinatra once said to his son, “Don’t ever let me catch you singing like that again, without enthusiasm. You’re nothing if you’re not excited about what you’re doing.”

What to remember during an interview

The most important thing to remember is that you don't have to be perfect to be effective. Keep your answers simple. Keep them short. Remember that your job is to hook the listener so that he will want to know more about what you have to say. You don't have to cover everything in your book in a thirty-minute interview. That's not possible anyway. If you feel pressed for time, you can say, "I cover this issue more fully in chapter 7 of my book. . . ."

The beginning of your interview is like the beginning of a speech. Your audience will make a quick judgement about whether they want to listen to you. Your opening comments will set the stage for anything else you have to say. In his book *How to Talk So People Will Listen* (Baker Books), Steve Brown offers the following do's and don'ts for speeches. They are equally applicable for media interviews.

- Don't apologize. Do not say, "I haven't done very many interviews before so I'm rather nervous." If you are doing an interview by phone, just pretend you're having a normal conversation with a friend.
- Don't demean. The audience is giving you their time. You owe them something. Don't insult them.
- Don't patronize. The audience will tune you out if you come across as arrogant.
- Do get the listener's attention. Start by citing something to perk the audience's attention. This can include a piece of research, a quote, or simply an enticing opening comment.
- Do whet the listener's appetite. Asking the listeners a question is a good way to keep them thinking. You can "bait" and keep an audience by saying something like, "I'll explain this in further detail later, but first . . ."

- Do give the listeners your theme. Be sure you state and restate what your book is about. Ask yourself, “Why would a person want to hear what I have to say?”

Afterward: What to do when you hang up the phone

Some authors actually take notes during an interview. This makes sense if you want to remember names or keep on track during the interview. [They are] also very helpful to use . . . if you write the interviewer a note of thanks. Most of us are like the nine lepers who after they were healed by Jesus went on their way. Set yourself apart by sending a brief note of thanks to the interviewer. The form your publicist sends you to notify you [about] your interview will have the name and address of the person you do [the] interview with.

Part III: Interview Tactics and Questions

How to Promote Your Book without Sounding Like a Commercial

Many of us have difficulty promoting ourselves. That’s normal. The trick is to find ways that accomplish your purpose (promoting your book) without sounding like an infomercial. It’s actually much easier than you might think.

If you do an adequate job of creating an appetite for your book, the host will be more assertive in asking you where your book can be purchased. The better you are at tantalizing the listeners, the greater the motivation to buy your book. For example, let’s say you have a book called *Seven Godly Principles to a More Fulfilling Marriage*. If you simply give all these principles away during an interview, the listener has no need to buy your book. A smart way to create interest is with a comment or phrase. Using the example above, you might say something like, “My fifth principle has to do with sex, but it’s not what you think.” This statement creates more curiosity or a desire to know more.

The most difficult thing most authors face is how to promote their book during an interview. The interview itself should take care of this dilemma. As you are asked specific questions, answer them succinctly without going into too much detail. Use the end of your comment to say something like “I wish we had time to go into further detail on this, but if you’d like more information on this you can find it in chapter 3 of my book.” This does not sound overly promotional but does leave the listener with the idea that he is far better off to get the book if he wants to know more.

Depending on the availability of your book, you’ll want to encourage listeners to call your toll-free number rather than going to their local bookstore to purchase your book.

DIPLOMACY: HOW TO HANDLE TRICKY QUESTIONS

There are several useful rules for handling tricky or difficult questions during an interview. If you remember these rules, you can get out of almost any tough situation.

- **RULE #1:** You don’t have to answer every question. This may sound odd if you’re doing an interview. However, there will be some questions that are not relevant to your book. If they are “out of bounds,” don’t be afraid to say so. For example, “I wish I had an answer to that question myself!”
- **RULE #2:** You are not an expert on everything. Isn’t that a relief? If you don’t have an answer, don’t pretend you do. There is nothing wrong with saying “I don’t know.” You will get into far more trouble trying to answer questions you know nothing about.
- **RULE #3:** Don’t argue with the host. This does not mean you can’t disagree. The key word here is argue. This will quickly destroy an interview. How do you avoid arguments? One of the simplest ways is to ignore state-

ments you might otherwise feel compelled to correct. If it is important, disagree with it. If you do, be willing to cite your reasons, research, or sources. Remember the old adage, “The customer is always right.” The same rule applies to interviews, unless the host is stealing your wallet!

- **RULE #4:** Diversion is the best method to avoid confrontation. If you are asked a question you don’t want to answer, then answer something else. What do you do if the host asks you, “Have you beaten your wife lately?”

Since no answer is a good answer, you might respond by saying, “That’s a good question, but what my book is really about is how to minimize the effects of violence in the family.”

LIVE SHOWS: WHAT TO DO WITH ANNOYING CALLERS

The job of the producer is to screen callers. The job of a good host is to keep the interview from getting off track. It’s their job to control the interview. Callers often have their “own agenda.” If the host doesn’t keep things on track, then don’t be afraid to do it yourself. A caller may ask, “Do you believe that UFOs are sent from the devil?” If your subject is about marriage, you might say, “I have no idea, but I would be glad to answer any questions about marriage.”

There are different types of callers. They are lonely, argumentative, fixated [on some subject other than yours!], and those who really are interested. You never know for sure which one you’ll have until they’re on the line. But that’s what makes talk-radio so interesting.

You must immediately assess which category the caller falls into. If someone wants to argue, don’t argue back. Try to be soft and gentle without compromising your position. The key is to pacify the caller. When you use an angry caller’s first name, [that] can [work] wonders to soothe his anger. For example, “Steve,

that's your name, isn't it? I know you're frustrated by what I've said, but please try to see it from a different perspective." In almost every instance you can win the heart of a caller by identifying with them in some way. This is not just clever manipulation but show[s] genuine interest in them or the difficulty they're facing.

FIVE QUESTIONS AUTHORS ASK MOST

1. Do interviews really sell books? The answer is yes. [They are] second only to public endorsements from others or your own meetings.
2. How many interviews will I do? The answer to this question depends upon the subject of your book. The range of interviews is anywhere from [twenty] to [seventy] interviews, with [thirty] to [thirty-five] being about average.
3. What if I need to cancel an interview? If you cannot do an interview that has already been scheduled, call your publicist right away. Don't wait until the last minute.
4. Can I get a copy of my interview? In most cases the answer is yes. Let the host know in advance that you want a copy of the interview. If you are doing a television taping, take an extra video cassette along with you.
5. When will I be on Focus on the Family, The 700 Club or Oprah? The larger the program the harder it is to schedule an interview. For example, The 700 Club receives 300 to 400 program suggestions every week. With only five or ten guest openings per week, they schedule between [1] and [3] percent of the program ideas they receive.

Part IV: Speaking from Experience

What Makes a Good Interview: A Host's Perspective

"I look for someone who can bring a biblical perspective to an issue. I want them to focus on a real life issue."

—*Bill Feltner, KNIS Radio*

“An author needs to be able to express the essence of their book. I like an author who will deliberately connect with me as a person.”

—Ron Reed, *Lifetime Radio*

“The author should always be more prepared for an interview because there is no guarantee the host will grasp all the content. Always provide a solid, firm answer to a question. Keep it simple for the audience. Remember that your personality is a turn on or turn off to the listener.”

—John Young, *WNIV Radio*

SOME FINAL ADVICE FROM TALK-SHOW HOSTS

- Send a thank-you note.
- Don't assume the audience knows who you are. Most people have probably never heard about you before.
- Don't over promote your book.
- Every interview is a new interview. If you act disinterested, it will turn off the audience.
- Ask for a cassette copy of your interview and then critique it. Ask yourself, “Would I listen to myself?”
- Make sure the audience knows your name. If they can't remember the title of your book, they may remember your name.
- Make sure the listener knows how to get a copy of your book.

Well, now that we've covered all your options, I'll close with a few words of encouragement.

Epilogue

HOPE THIS BOOK has encouraged you to move ahead with the publishing of the message God has given you. I hope it has been informative, helpful, and interesting to read. It has been my prayer that this message would benefit Christian writers. I want to inform you of your best options and give you the information you'll need to prayerfully make the right decision.

This book is meant to augment other more detailed books on self-publishing and to amplify the specifics as they relate to the Christian market. While many of the other books I have recommended are excellent, they still cite secular resources for advertising, distribution, and other facets of publishing. This normally won't do you any good if you've written a book with an overtly Christian message. Thus the need for information geared to the Christian writer. In sharing this information my hope is that you have gained the confidence to do it!

I'd like to close with the following quotation, which was forwarded from the Internet. The author is unknown, but I am sure it will encourage you to keep on keepin' on!

Your Work

The Lord has given to every man his work. It is his business to do it—and the devil's business to hinder him if he can. So, sure as God has given you a work to do, Satan will try to hinder you. He may present other things more promising, he may allure you by worldly prospects, he may assault you with slander, torment you with false accusations, set you to work defending your character, employ pious persons to lie about you, editors to assail you, and excellent men to slander you. You may have Pilate, Herod, Annas, and Caiaphas all combined against you, and Judas standing by ready to sell you for thirty pieces of silver. You may wonder why all these things come upon you. Can you not see that the whole thing is brought about through the craft of the devil to draw you off from your work and hinder your obedience to God?

Keep about your work. Do not flinch because the lion roars; do not stop to stone the devil's dogs; do not fool away your time chasing the devil's rabbits. Do your work. Let liars lie, let sectarians quarrel, let corporations resolve, let editors publish, let the devil do his worst; but, see to it that nothing hinders you from fulfilling the work that God has given you.

He has not sent you to make money. He has not commanded you to get rich. He has never bidden you to defend your character. He has not set you at work to contradict falsehoods that Satan and his servants may start to peddle. If you do these things, you will do nothing else; you will be at work for yourself and not for the Lord.

Keep about your work. Let your aim be as steady as a star. Let the world brawl and bubble. You may be assaulted, wronged, insulted, slandered, wounded, and rejected; you may be abused by foes, forsaken by friends, and despised and rejected of men; but see to it with steadfast determination, with unflinching zeal, that you pursue the great purpose of your life and the object of

your being until at last you can say, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.” Amen.

In parting, I'll leave you with just one word of caution. We often think our message is from God when in reality it is just “self” speaking loud and clear. I encourage you to get into the prayer closet and seek the Living God to make sure what you have is from Him, and if it is, then be obedient to get the message out no matter what the obstacles!

Endnotes

Chapter 1

1. "Downsizing Hits Thomas Nelson," *Publisher's Weekly*, (October 16, 1995), 11.
2. *Writers Information Network Newsletter*, (February–March, 1996), 4.
3. *The Written Word*, WinePress Publishing, (vol. 1, no. 1, Summer 1995), 6–7.
4. "Whatever Happened to Christian Publishing?" Gene Edward Veith, *World*, (July 12 / 19, 1997), 13–15.
5. "No Longer Left Behind" Steve Rabey, *Christianity Today*, (April 22, 2002, Vol. 46, No. 5), 26
6. "Not-by-the-Books," *U.S. News & World Report*, (vol. 112, no. 22, June 8, 1992), 73.
7. "Real Writers Losing Out on Contracts" *Dallas Morning News* (July 26, 1997)
8. *The Self-Publishing Manual*, Dan Poynter (Santa Barbara, CA: Para Publishing, 9th ed., 1996), 25–28.
9. *Is There a Book Inside of You?* Dan Poynter and Mindy Bingham (Santa Barbara, CA: Para Publishing, 4th ed., 1997), 26–27.

Chapter 2

1. Advanced Christian Writer, (November–December, 2001) 11.
2. “Self-Publishing Successes,” Publisher’s Weekly, (May 22, 1995)
3. “Books for the Asking,” New York Times, (October 17, 2002)

Chapter 4

- 1–5. The Self-Publishing Manual, 16, 19, 22–25.
6. An excerpt from a letter dated February 28, 1996, from the acquisitions editor, Bridge-Logos Publishers

Chapter 9

1. “Self-Publishing Technique,” The Writer’s Digest (vol. 74, no. 11, November 1994), 36.
2. WinePress Partnership Newsletter (Vol. 3, Issue 1, Winter 2001).

To order additional copies of

You Can Do It!

Have your credit card ready and call

Toll free: (877) 421-READ (7323)

or send \$9.99* each plus \$5.95 S&H** to

Pleasant Word, a Division of
WinePress Publishing
PO Box 428
Enumclaw, WA 98022

or order online at: www.pleasantwordbooks.com

*WA residents, add 8.4% sales tax

**add \$1.50 S&H for each additional book ordered

OR

For more information on:



Please visit our website at www.winepresspub.com
or call 800.326.4674

