



TOOL TIME

Number 20

Tips, tools, and timely tidbits to make your publishing job easier

The Discipline of Writing

The old adage says, "Writing is 10 percent inspiration and 90 percent perspiration."

It is easy! Or at least that is what we think when we have that sudden burst of inspiration that sends us scurrying to our computer. "Boy, with this new program I have and the really great printer I just bought, this is going to be a breeze! It is just going to flow out of my fingers onto the page, and it will change the world overnight." Right? Wrong!

Those who have successfully written a book know it takes hours of concentrated effort followed by rewrites, more rewrites and then still more rewrites to produce something worthwhile. During the process, interruptions come, other responsibilities take precedence, and a loss of concentration occurs. All too soon that great moment of clarity, which so highly motivated you, is gone. You've lost your inspiration.

Now the real work begins.

Ultimate success lies in recognizing that writing requires planning and perseverance. Inspiration is important; it is the spark which begins the process and provides the initial motivation. But good writing, whether it is for a book, class materials or that all-important newsletter, depends in large part on your willingness and ability to focus and work through the inevitable, hard spots.

To be a writer, you must identify and then target your prospective audience. You must also clearly understand the subject material and be able to articulate the reason why it is necessary to express your ideas. Then you must decide how to translate what is in your heart in order to inspire others. At the same time, you have to give your material a cohesive structure and point of focus.

Writing takes planning. It requires a method. Writers must be able to carve time out of their

normal schedules to properly prepare the materials and complete the task. They must devise a method of capturing those special, touchstone moments of inspiration so they can revisit them at will. Writing is as much a discipline as it is a talent. It may take time to develop the habits that work best for you.

Well-constructed writing does NOT happen by accident. Inspiration is only the beginning. A writer cannot depend on computers or even divine revelation to strike just in time to meet a deadline. Get inspired, identify your audience, do the research, and make what you are writing worthwhile to read. Read aloud what you have written, so you can hear how it flows. Don't be afraid of rewrites. A good editor can help you write so that you can change the world by inspiring others, stimulating good works and ultimately leading others to Christ.



Bruce Braithwaite
Director of Special Projects



PUBLISHERS INTERNATIONAL

1625 N. Robberson Ave.

Springfield, MO 65803-2810

Phone: 417.831.7766

Toll-free: 1.888.776.2425

E-mail: info@lifepublishers.org

Online Help for Developing Writing Skills

Here are some interesting articles and links to study helps, if you are interested in developing your writing skills:

THE KEYS TO EFFECTIVE WRITING

<http://www.collegeboard.com/article/0,3868,2-8-0-122,00.html>

GUIDE TO WRITING A BASIC ESSAY

(Or anything else - editor)

<http://members.tripod.com/~lklivingston/essay/>

WRITER'S HANDBOOK

(Designed for college students, but good ideas - editor)

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/>

THE ASSOCIATION OF WRITERS AND WRITING PROGRAMS

(A gateway to much more information - editor)

<http://www.awpwriter.org/>

WRITING NEWSLETTERS - TRICKS OF THE TRADE

http://www.clickfire.com/viewpoints/articles/writing/writing_newsletters.php

101 NEWSLETTER ANSWERS

http://www.101newsletteranswers.com/t_ritenl.htm

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