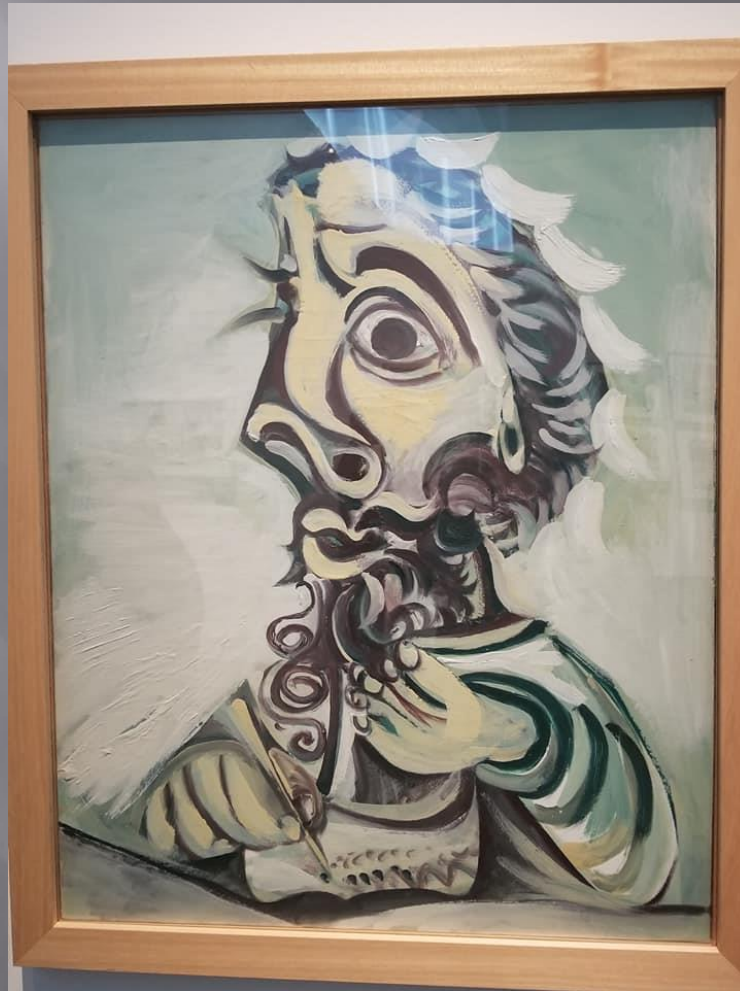


# WRITING AN ARTICLE

Dr. Charles W. Christian  
Managing Editor, *Holiness Today* and  
*Grace & Peace*



# Writer: “Someone Who Writes”



# Annie Dillard on Writing

“When you write, you lay out a line of words. The line of words is a miner’s pick, a woodcarver’s gouge, a surgeon’s probe. You wield it, and it digs a path you follow. Soon you find yourself deep in new territory. Is it a dead end, or have you located the real subject? You will know tomorrow, or this time next year.”

(Pulitzer Prize winner, Annie Dillard)



# New Testament Articles

- ▣ Many portions of the NT could be articles within bigger letters.
- ▣ Some of the letters (Philemon, Jude, 3 John, etc.) are more like articles.



# Just Write!

- ▣ Writing is a discipline. It is also an everyday means of expression.
- ▣ Combining the discipline of thinking like a writer with the art of good conversation produces a good article.
- ▣ Observe, think, write, and then... EDIT!



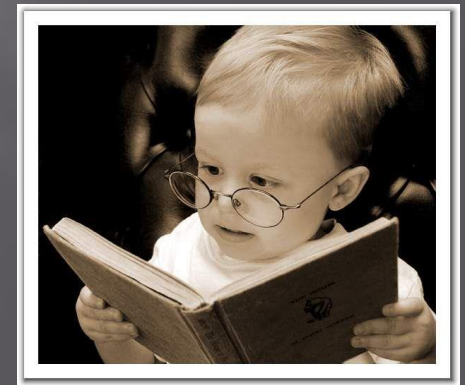
# Just Write!

- ▣ Journals
- ▣ Blogs
- ▣ Newsletters
- ▣ Local Newspapers
- ▣ Writing Clubs/Forums
- ▣ Writing Conferences (Workshops)
- ▣ Local Church Devotionals



# Read Good Writing!

- ▣ The more we read, the more we accumulate banks of words, ideas, and phrases.
- ▣ Read for variety and depth.
- ▣ Don't read just for information but also for formation and to be challenged.
- ▣ Read to explore more than one side or approach.



# Build in Time for Thinking and Praying





# Tell the Story

- ▣ Start at the end/ goal.
- ▣ Find interesting and even creative ways to get there!
- ▣ Stories are better than concepts (i.e., teach the concepts through the story where possible).
- ▣ Know your word count limits and use these limits as boundary lines, but be creative and engaging within those lines.



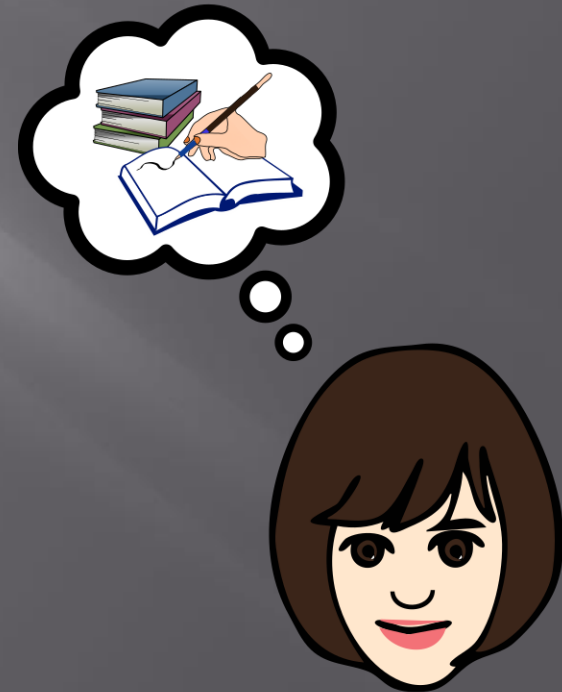
# Editing: The Key to Writing

- ▣ Writing usually begins with a catharsis – a pouring out of one's ideas and imagination
- ▣ Good writing ends with careful, often tedious editing.
- ▣ When we become stronger editors, we become better writers.
- ▣ Use the eyes of others, too!



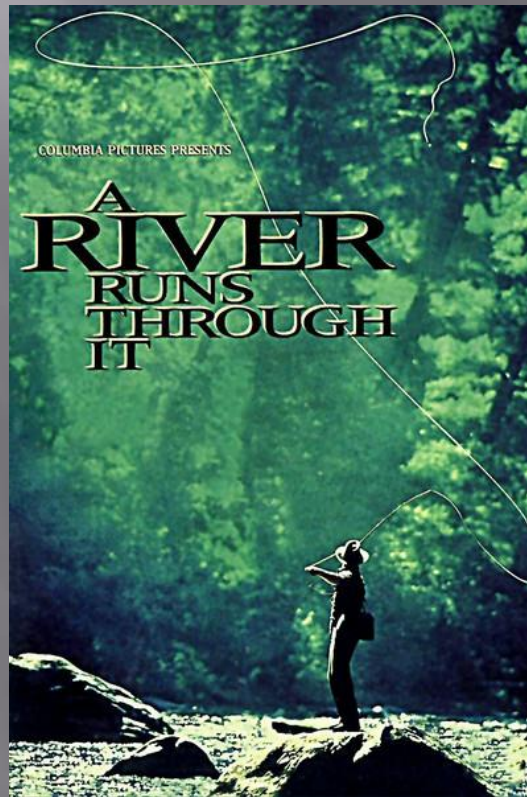
# Kurt Vonnegut on Editing

“Be merciless on yourself. If a sentence does not illuminate your subject in some new and useful way, scratch it out!”



# Again...Half as Long

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vRhOdf-6co>



# Description, not just Prescription

- ▣ “Her eyes filled with tears, and she blinked as she tried to fight the onslaught of emotion that accompanied the news of her brother’s cancer.”
- ▣ She was sad to learn that her brother `had cancer.

WHICH SENTENCE DRAWS YOU IN?

# The Nuts and Bolts

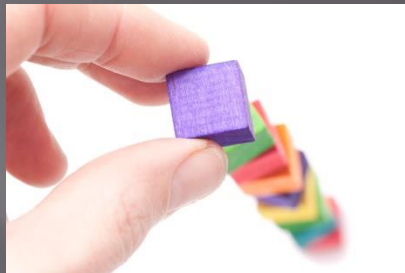
- ▣ Have a place (a place to sit, think, pray, and write)
- ▣ Have a time (When are you the most focused and energetic? Make use of that!)
- ▣ Have a goal...but don't be a slave to it.
- ▣ Think of what the reader will hear, NOT just about what you will say! This is the key to being a mature writer!





# Your Words are Your Tools

- ▣ Remember the difference between something *said* and something *written*.
- ▣ Non-verbal communication will be absent from your article/book, SO...
- ▣ YOUR WORDS have to engage the imagination and interest of your readers.
- ▣ Read what you write with different tones and experiment with ways of saying what you have said!



# Outline or Stream of Thought?

ANSWER: It depends....

- ▣ Your personality
- ▣ Your style
- ▣ The goal of the article/book
- ▣ The time you have

EITHER WAY... Don't be afraid to write a "bad" first draft. Just write, whether you use an outline or stream of thought. THEN, edit. THEN, have a trusted person look it over. THEN, edit again!

# Getting Publishers Interested

- ▣ Book Reviews!
- ▣ Themes list (an editor can provide these)
- ▣ Know the kind of magazine (formal/informal, popular/academic, religious/secular, etc.)
- ▣ Find Submission guidelines and follow them.
- ▣ Book reviews usually range from 300-750 words.
- ▣ Articles can range from 750-2500 words.

# Book Reviews

- ▣ Contact Book Review Editor or (for smaller publications) the editorial staff
- ▣ Inquire about books submitted for review
- ▣ Alternate: Contact publishers and ask for a “review copy” of a particular book.
- ▣ Payment is usually the book.
- ▣ Book reviews can be a “gateway” to opening future doors for articles.

# Structure

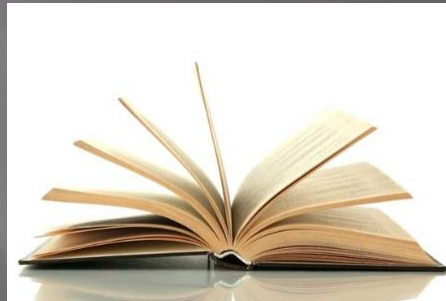
- ▣ Attention-getting introduction (some people write this after the whole article is written)
- ▣ Body – Descriptive of the theme; make use stories and creative descriptions where possible.
- ▣ Conclusion – Summary provides clarity



# What to Write?

Three Options:

- ▣ An area of expertise (Education, Experience)
- ▣ Personal Experience/Perspective (Something Unique to YOU)
- ▣ Report- Become knowledgeable by doing research (rely upon noted experts, etc.)





# Bigger Projects

- ▣ Most books begin with articles
- ▣ Articles can come from good books!
- ▣ Articles (including book reviews) have a faster track for publication
- ▣ Books can take a very long time to be evaluated by most publishers – very competitive!
- ▣ Self-publishing: pros and cons
- ▣ E-books – important trend

# Happy Writing!

▣ Questions?

