PWP Self-Editing Checklist

Theme Development
Determine your compelling message
Fine tune to a focused point
Prepare to write with well-researched details—mark sources for footnotes and bibliography
Apply Scripture in a proper and accurate manner—be theologically sound

Overall Structure
Create an opening hook to capture the reader and draw them in
Craft a strong beginning, meaty middle, memorable ending
Make clear transitions to guide readers through the flow of ideas
Tie all thoughts together in a sensible sequence—logical progression of thought
Include adequate details to thoroughly inform the reader—backstory, full-bodied descriptions

Clarity of Language
Show—don't tell—with vivid imagery, painting scenes and action in the reader's mind
Create crisp dialogue to put reader in the scene rather than simply stating what happened
Limit the use of "to be" verbs: is, are, was, were, etc.
Use sensory details—sight, sound, smell, taste, touch
Employ the figures of speech—simile, metaphor, personification, etc.
Don't over-use words in sentences—use a thesaurus
Use powerful, precise, descriptive words instead of weak words i.e. went, put, etc.
Vary sentence length and structure
Don't repeat starting words in sentences and paragraphs
Avoid redundancy of thought (saying the same thing in a different way once stated)
Delete unnecessary words, i.e. very, just, then, so, etc.
Delete adverbs for more precise action verbs—scant use of "ly" adverbs
Shorten run-on sentences

Writing Conventions
Check capital letters at the start of sentences and proper nouns
Check that pronouns reference the subject
Check subject and verb agreement in singulars and plurals
Check punctuation
Check spacing—only one space between sentences
Check spelling

Voice
Show awareness of purpose and target audience
Infuse with personality and passion