

GREATER PHILADELPHIA CHRISTIAN WRITERS CONFERENCE
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WORKSHOP: "Revelation, Inspiration, or Perspiration?" (R-I-P)
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Scripture: "The Lord answered me: 'Write down the vision; write it clearly [plainly] on clay tablets so whoever reads it can run to tell others'" (Habakkuk 2:2, EXB).

Objective: Encourage attendees to "write on," whether by revelation, inspiration, or perspiration.

Introduction: How do I convey the message of my heart to the printed page? Whether by Divine revelation, Holy Spirit inspiration, or grueling perspiration, as Christian authors, we must represent Jesus Christ with excellence, and that requires discipline and perseverance.

Revelation: Holy Spirit download of information God impresses you to record—God seemingly reveals the words faster than you can write them.

Inspiration: Events such as reading the Word, watching a sunrise or sunset, observing a child at play, enjoying a family vacation, witnessing a miracle, going through a trial or hardship successfully, facing end of life issues, responding to encouragement from a pastor or friend, reacting to good or bad news...all can inspire and motivate you to write.

Perspiration: Pressure that can accrue from receiving a request from a publisher or group to produce an article or book, especially when you have procrastinated and the deadline is approaching. This can also occur when we attempt to share our "expertise" on a subject about which we are not qualified to write.

DON'T: Some Pitfalls to Avoid

- *Stop writing because the words are not flowing freely.*
- *Waste painful experiences that could be the catalyst for inspiring articles or books.*
- *Write condescendingly, as if you are on a spiritual plane above all your readers—show your humanness!*
- *Keep your readers guessing—communicate clearly.*
- *Use your best friend, who may lack editorial experience, to critique your work.*
- *Become discouraged by rejection letters.*
- *Expect to become a best-selling author overnight.*

DO: Some Habits to Cultivate

- *Know that God has called you to write, and trust Him to open the right doors in His time.*
- *Write with integrity and avoid plagiarizing another's copyrighted material.*
- *Provide enough suspense in a novel to keep your readers engaged, but avoid confusion of characters that necessitates looking backward to distinguish among them.*

- *Use dialogue and allow characters to verbalize what you are attempting to convey.*
- *Be yourself and write on subjects you understand and can articulate clearly.*
- *Touch people where they hurt, apply some healing balm, inviting them to return for more.*
- *Share experiences that demonstrate how you have faced and overcome obstacles, how you have grown in your relationship to Christ through them.*
- *Exercise discipline by setting deadlines and holding yourself accountable.*
- *Determine to be a person of excellence and acquire the necessary skills to write well.*
- *Hire a qualified editor before submitting your manuscript to a publisher.*
- *Find ways to encourage, inspire and build the faith of your audience.*
- *Remember, your book represents you to people you may never meet, and they will judge you by the quality of its content.*
- *Recognize this principle: God cannot work through us before we allow Him to work in us.*
- *Keep in mind that as Christian authors, we represent Jesus Christ, and we want to do it well!*
- *Invest time in the Word and prayer, and the energy necessary to produce a quality product that glorifies God and inspires readers.*

Some Questions to Ask:

- *What lessons have I learned about walking in faith, and how can they benefit others?*
- *What obstacles have I faced and overcome that could help my readers to grow spiritually?*
- *How is my book/article unique and authentic?*
- *How does my writing attempt to hold the interest of my target audience?*
- *How have I been honest and vulnerable in order to help readers avoid my mistakes? Or did I share only the parts of my story that make me look unreal and super spiritual?*
- *Do I have permission from others to share incidents that may be identifiable, especially those that may be embarrassing or harmful?*
- *If my writing is non-fiction, have I avoided the temptation to embellish and misrepresent the facts?*