God Made You a Writer



The Christian gospel has a way of making us all writers in some way, shape, or form. From text messages, emails, and written notes, to church newsletters, missionary support letters, blogs, articles, and even books, everyday Christians do a lot of writing… and chances are you do too.

Christianity is a word-centered faith. Our God created the world through **words *(Hebrews 11:3; ten times Genesis 1 tell us "God said")*,** and just as he said, ***"Let there be light,"*** so he speaks our faith into existence (2 Corinthians 4:6).

God's own Son is called his Word (John 1:1). And our very faith is sustained by ***"the word of Christ,"*** the message of the gospel (Romans 10:13) and ongoing word-ministry in the life of the church. Christianity is not a quiet faith, but a loud one, full of words.

Write and Wrong… Writing, then, however formal or informal, is not the privilege of a few gifted Christian dignitaries, but an invitation to every believer. Just as we can't help but express to others in spoken words the glory of who God is and what he does, so also, we find ourselves making use of the remarkable litany of technologies that allow us to communicate in written words.

Broadly conceived, more Christians are writers than they think, even if it's just in personal correspondence.

Whether you think of yourself as a writer or not *(and on the whole, it might be better if less people did!),* I'd love to extend God's invitation to find your ways of proclaiming his excellencies (1 Peter 2:9) in written words.

1. Christians write because God has written… God has spoken, so we speak. God has written, so we write … not to eclipse God's words but to illumine them, expound them, celebrate them, and offer them to others.

Paul writes to his disciple Timothy, you have been acquainted with the sacred writing, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:15–17)

These words are both an encouragement and a challenge for Christian writing. The *encouragement* in that Scripture is… ***"profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training."*** God speaks to his people that they might hear, but not for us to be hearers only. God means for us to ***do something with his words.*** They are *profitable for* our actions… for our own words. ***"Writing is not the privilege of a few gifted Christian dignitaries, but an invitation to every believer."***

Tweet; Share on Facebook. God is speaking in his written word, and if we're listening, then we too will have something to say, and to write. The *challenge* is to stay on the lifeline. If our words of teaching, reproving, correcting, and training become disconnected from God's word, then we become part of the problem rather than the solution.

Which raises the regular question for Christians as we write, ***Am I being faithful to God's word in my words?*** We want to be part of the happy, clear-conscience collective with the apostle Paul who says, we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ. (2 Corinthians 2:17)

We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Corinthians 4:2)

Whether pastors or laymen, teaching or texting, we want to do our best to present ourselves ***"to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth"*** (2 Timothy 2:15).

2. Christian writing doesn't always publish… An important reality to keep clear in our minds, especially in a day when it's never been so easy to publish our words to the world, is that ***writing*** is not the same as ***publishing***. It's one thing to write in a journal, or to pen a private note to a spouse or family member, and it's another thing to write for all to see online or elsewhere.

Christian publishing, whether in print or on the Web, is public ministry. Perhaps you haven't thought of it that way, since the act of writing typically happens alone, out of the spotlight, but when we publish what we have written, we are doing public Christian ministry. It's a calling to undertake with serious joy.

3. Christian publishing serves others, not self… Christian publishing is fundamentally different than personal journaling. Often good journaling is mainly, if not only, for yourself. But other kinds of writing, and especially publishing, are not for mere self-expression, but for serving.

Christian writing, in this sense, embraces the spirit of 2 Corinthians 4:5… ***"What we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus's sake."*** God breathed out his words for us in Scripture that we may be ***"equipped for every good work"*** (2 Timothy 3:17).

Writing that is ***Christian,*** whether privately to friends and family, or publicly online or in print… has purpose. God's words in Scripture equip us ***for good works*** in loving service of others.

Christian writing is no mere existential release, but an act of love. It's not a private journal made public to win sympathy and admiration for ourselves, but a sacrifice of love… a kind of dying to self… to write not just the way we want to write on our own, but in such a way that other people are helped for Jesus's sake.

4. Boring writing lies about God… The invitation to write is not an easy one. Writing itself is not as simple as it may sound, and Christian writing ***(to benefit others, not just express self)*** is even harder.

Just as we must not lie about God and his world theologically, the same is true *emotionally*. When we ourselves aren't truly affected, and so we disaffect others with boring writing about the most wonderful truths in the universe, we lie about God.

So, when we write as Christians, we work… and do we ever work... to make it interesting and appropriately provocative to the regenerate palate. *"Boring writing about God borders on blasphemy."*

Tweet; Share on Facebook. And when our craft is at its most difficult, we have this great solace and assurance… we aren't left to ourselves to create from scratch. We don't have to speak first; indeed, we cannot… God has spoken first.

Christians who self-identify as *"writers"* may talk about being *"creatives,"* but we know that's not ultimately the case. More precisely, we are *"sub-creatives,"* to borrow a concept from Tolkien. We labor to find fresh approaches to formulate ancient truths. We expend energy for new ways to tell the old, old story.

5. God's words not only guide ours, but feed our souls… It is such good news for Christian writers that when we are empty, we have a place to go outside ourselves to refill... the words of God himself.

The place of Scripture in our writing is not just public, for our readers, but private, for our own souls. God's words do not just serve the personal or published ministry of writing by working through us, but they make *"the man of God… complete*" (2 Timothy 3:17) by working in us.

God's words first serve us. Before God's words work through* us as writers, they work in us as Christians. Then the Holy Spirit has his way of prompting us to put pen to paper, and fingers to keys, in our various ways, shapes, and forms.