

Word Aflame Publications

Guidelines for Freelance Writers

I. General Guidelines

- A. Address all correspondence to Word Aflame Publications
8855 Dunn Road
Hazelwood, MO 63042
- B. Word Aflame Publications reserves the right to edit all materials.
- C. Please study carefully the nature and content of *The Vision* (adult take-home paper). (Free sample available upon request. Please enclose a business-size self-addressed, stamped envelope.) Choose relevant subjects. Current and normal life situations may be depicted, showing their relationship to vital Christian principles.

II. Area of Need—*The Vision*

- A. Personal experiences, interviews, fictional stories (500 to 1,500 words)
- B. Poems (twelve lines or less)
- C. Devotionals for the “Word Aglow” feature (See page 3 for further information.)

III. Style

- A. Include the following information in the upper left-hand corner on the first page of the manuscript. (See example on page 4.)
 - Name of writer
 - Address of writer
 - Number of words in the manuscript
- B. Type the manuscript, double-spaced, on only one side of the paper. Use regular style 11- or 12-point type (not italic, all capitals, bold, or fancy type) with normal spacing between letters. Italics should be used only to distinguish book or magazine titles.
- C. Type all lines approximately the same length. Type the same number of lines on each full page. Number each page.

IV. Regulations

- A. Use the King James Version when quoting Scriptures. Double-check all scriptural quotations and references. Use the Cambridge Bible as a guide for punctuation and capitalization of scriptural quotations.
- B. In general, do not abbreviate. This includes scriptural references. Of course AM, PM, AD, and BC are appropriate.
- C. Please do not “borrow” titles, copy, or art. However, other publications may give you ideas. Be creative! To quote from copyrighted sources, the author must obtain written permission from the owner of the copyright, usually the publisher. When requesting permission to quote, mention the author, title, editor, page number, and the amount of quotation, noting with what words the quotation begins. The letters of permission are to be turned over to Word Aflame Publications for filing. (It would be wise to keep a copy for your own files.) It is a common practice among most publishers to quote a maximum of fifty consecutive words (or in the case of songs and poetry, two lines) from a copyrighted source without obtaining permission. However, the writer must give appropriate attribution to the source. Material published in the U.S. before December 31, 1922, may be quoted freely without permission as it belongs to public domain. To pick up another’s work, whether copyrighted or not, and pawn it off as one’s own is unethical in any case.

D. Before sending the manuscript to Word Aflame Publications, please make a copy to keep in your files. This is vital in case the manuscript should be lost in transit.

V. Methods of Submission

A. You may submit your manuscript via U.S. mail. Please include a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope (SASE).

B. We welcome digital manuscripts by email as long as the following guidelines are carefully followed:

1. If this is your first submission to Word Aflame Publications, you must submit the manuscript the traditional way via U.S. mail. This is to protect us from destructive viruses distributed through the Internet. Once you have submitted and published with us, we will consider you a familiar and friendly source for email submissions. Request permission to submit manuscripts via email attachments, and we will grant you the necessary security clearance.
2. When submitting a manuscript via email as an attachment, the manuscript must (a) be sent to *wap@upci.org*; (b) include a cover memo clearly identifying the nature of the submission (we do not download attached files from unfamiliar sources); and (c) be saved in Rich Text Format (RTF) or text only format.

VI. Writing Hints

A. Read widely and live “in-depth.”

B. Before writing, make sure you have a good story item. Know where you are taking your reader.

C. Begin with a strong opening sentence. The first paragraph must grab the reader’s attention, making him want to read on.

D. Write with a positive outlook.

E. Use active verbs and modern language, but do not use slang.

F. Select picturesque names for people, places, and things.

G. Do not generalize—be specific!

H. Write precisely and to the point.

I. Use anecdotes and illustrations. Show what you mean rather than telling it.

J. Be consistent in style.

K. Be sensitive and creative.

L. Avoid preachiness.

M. A good story must have conflict—deal with it in a realistic manner.

N. Conclude the story or article with a strong, memorable ending.

O. Stories must be original—no copied work or copyright infringements!

P. Reprints or first rights are accepted.

Q. Photos are welcome to illustrate the material submitted.

R. Keep within the word-length requirement.

S. Remember our primary objective: inspiration—to portray happy, victorious living through faith in God.

VII. Payment

A. Payment depends on quality and length. Items complying with the stipulated length and requiring minimal editing are purchased at a higher rate than material that needs extra work.

B. Payment will be made upon publication of accepted manuscripts. A copy of the published manuscript will be sent to the author with the payment.

C. Unaccepted manuscripts will be returned if an SASE has been provided.

D. Writers submitting by email may inquire as to the status of their manuscripts.

Word Aglow Guidelines

Follow the general guidelines for style and format of manuscripts. Additional considerations are given below. A sample devotional is provided on the next two pages.

1. Due to space limitations, devotionals should contain 350-400 words.
2. Begin each devotional with a Scripture reference (usually one verse).
3. The opening paragraph should contain an anecdote or illustration that will lead the reader into the body of the message.
4. The devotional should be inspirational in nature, designed to uplift, utilizing a positive message that will attract the attention of today's busy people. Spiritual inspiration, effectively communicated, produces maturity and energizes growth.
5. Insights from practical day-to-day Christian living, when shared with others, continue to increase and produce the fruit of the Spirit abundantly.
6. The devotional should conclude with a single statement that summarizes the central theme of the article.

T. M. Jackson
2253 Oak Street
Bridgeton, MO 63022
360 words

(author's name)
(author's address)
(number of words)

Sample Devotional

*(Begin the manuscript
approximately one-third
of the way down the page.)*

He Found Me!
by T. M. Jackson

“And they brought young children to him . . .” (Mark 10:13).

My five-year-old brother David decided he was big enough to visit Grandpa's farm all by himself. He chose a late afternoon to make the trek down a dusty country road. He didn't even tell anyone where he was going; he thought he was big enough to make his own decisions. Suddenly, he realized he was lost, the sun was setting, and he was a confused little boy. "I'm lost," he whimpered. "Momma doesn't know where I am."

He realized that no one knew where he was and wondered if anyone would care enough to find him.

Jesus exhibited His love and concern for lost sons and daughters when He forbade the disciples to turn the little children away. He said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Little children have most imaginative minds, and they can visualize extreme situations as if they are real. It is, therefore, very easy for children to have faith for the "impossible."

Jesus is aware of our most secret and intimate thoughts. He expects us to expand our thought patterns to include expectation for the difficult things that we need. Children can easily have faith in God, and we should be no exception. The most difficult of life's situations become simple and possible to endure when laid at Jesus' feet.

(more)

Our Lord knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts and is well aware of each vital decision. He knows when we stray, when we fail to seek divine direction, and He certainly knows when we are lost and lonely.

Many have made their own decisions without asking or seeking divine guidance. At the fork in life's road, they turned the wrong way and are now suffering frustration and helplessness.

The five-year-old's knowledge was not sufficient, and he took a wrong turn. A kind neighbor, who had joined the search, found him just before darkness closed in. By his side was King, his big collie dog. King could not give the little fellow direction, but he could keep him company and secure from other dangers.

Our Lord does more than keep us company. He provides a means for us to be set free from our bonds of darkness. He patiently waits and beckons us to return to Him. When we return to Him as a little child, trusting and believing, He will take us in His arms and bless us.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians and revealed a beautiful insight regarding life. He stated, "I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me . . . I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

The important aspect of living is not in finding but in being found—by Jesus Christ.

Writer's Resources

Reference Books

Dictionary (a good one)
Random House *Roget's College Thesaurus*
A Bible dictionary and/or encyclopedia

Periodicals

The Writer, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116
Writer's Digest, 993 Alliance Road, Cincinnati, OH 45242

Books about Writing

A Step in the Write Direction: The Complete How-to Book for Christian Writers
by Donna Clark Goodrich (UpWrite Books)
Children's Writer's Word Book by Alijandra Mogilner (Writer's Digest)
Writing for Children and Teenagers by Wyndham & Madison (Writer's Digest)
How to Write the Story of Your Life by Frank P. Thomas (Writer's Digest)
The Art of Readable Writing by Rudolf Flesch (Macmillan)
How to Prepare Your Manuscript for a Publisher by David Carroll (Paragon House)
Writing for the Soul by Jerry Jenkins (Writer's Digest)

Books on Style

The Elements of Style by Strunk & White (Macmillan)
On Writing Well by William Zinsser (HarperResource)
Writing Tools: 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer by Roy Peter Clark (Little, Brown, and Company)
A Writer's Reference by Diana Hacker (Bedford/St. Martin's)
Grammatically Correct: The Writer's Essential Guide to Punctuation, Spelling, Style, Usage and Grammar by Anne Stilman
Chicago Manual of Style (University of Chicago Press)

Websites

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/> (guide to grammar and writing)
www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/index.html (lists words commonly confused with each other and explains correct usage)
www.writersdigest.com (website for *Writer's Digest* with links to 101 Best Websites for Writers)
www.quotationspage.com (search for quotes by author or subject)
www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html
(website for *Chicago Manual of Style* "Most Frequently Asked Questions")