



THE JOY OF WRITING DEVOTIONS

With Nancy C. Williams



Continue earnestly in prayer, being
vigilant in it with thanksgiving.
Colossians 4:2 NKJV

Always Start With Prayer

❖ Pray...then
listen to the
Holy Spirit



Opening Thoughts

- ❖ Please share—jot notes as I'm talking, and jump in during questions at the end
- Get notebook paper for exercises
- This is a general overview, how to get started



My Story



- ❖ Started in Madmen world of advertising, wrote all kinds of stuff
- Worked at FedEx for almost 10 years, corporate editor and feature writer
- Technology has changed, but persuasive writing is still the same

Before You Write



- ❖ Decide your specialty—what kind of reader do you want to address?
- Choose your subject matter (general or specific)
- Where do you want to submit your devotions?
 - On your website + Arise Daily, Crossmap, Christian Devotions, Chicken Soup, individuals—subscribe



❖ Ask yourself—

- How do I want to influence my readers for Christ?
- Always remember your reader's question—WIIFM?
What's In It For Me?
- Set a deadline for yourself
- Stick to it

- ❖ Shop website platforms—
choose one with good
options for posting blogs
- I use WordPress...has
reasonable rates and good
templates/support
- Anyone want to mention your
choice in the chat bar?



Shop for a Blogging Website



Choose Scripture

- ❖ Look for the right Scripture
 - Use a study Bible for insights on it
- Add the initials for the version
 - You can change versions, but be consistent in each blog; always identify it after the verse

- ❖ Use your headline to attract readers
 - It can be creative or straightforward
 - Start with draft, then revisit it after you're done
 - Keep it short



**Capture
Interest
With Your
Headline**



Story It Up!



❖ Hook your readers with a good story, something memorable

❖ Make your stories personal

- Be honest, humble, transparent
- Admit your faults, failures, mistakes, fears, and bad habits
- Not a place for dirty laundry
- Go back to **WIIFM?**



Story It Up!



Exercise #1

❖ *Name three people among family or friends who have an interesting story you could tell*

Exercise #2

❖ *Write down one fear
or one scary moment
you had in your
childhood*





Blessings and Joys



- Talk about a joy in the middle of pain or a lasting joy
- Use humor carefully—safest is about yourself (see Rhonda Rhea)

❖ *List three things that bring you joy or make you laugh and smile*



Exercise #3

Don't Preach



- ❖ Not a bully pulpit; give suggestions, not orders
 - Make sure doctrine is sound
 - Your job: encourage your readers and give them hope



When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. Acts 15:31 NKJV



Follow Other Bloggers

- ❖ Follow famous Christian authors who have devotions in their newsletters
 - Subscribe to devotion websites or Christian writing newsletters like Edie Melson's *The Write Conversation*

Take Your Own Photos



- ❖ Use photos to attract attention
 - Or go to Pexels, Pixabay, Adobe, Canva, Unsplash, etc.
 - Take horizontals, not verticals
 - Look for close-ups
 - Use AI as a last resort
 - Have fun!





AI still smells like AI...but ChatGPT came up with this image after I gave it only a few prompts!

Edit



Photo Ops Are All Around You



- Keep your eyes open for opportunities!







- ❖ Be careful of copyrights—
check before you publish
- Avoid song lyrics, unless
hymns in public domain (prior
to 1930)
- Do your footnotes...look it up
on Google's AI
- List credits on free photos

Beware of Copyrights



- ❖ Keep it short—only 400 to 500 words
- Run through AI to reduce
- Times New Roman 12
- Avoid ALL CAPS, excessive exclamation points
- 2-3 sentence paragraphs

Write Concisely





Give Gifts

- ❖ Make a gift like Scripture cards or trick-or-treater pamphlets
 - Rachael Colby...
<https://tattooitonyourheart.com>
 - Make it downloadable
 - Advertise on social media

Put a Bow on It



❖ Use a call to action--
invite your reader to
think, decide, act, or
simply relax

Tie up your text with a
closing phrase





Exercise #4



- ❖ Write a closing statement or question:
 - You're writing a devotion about bees and fascinating things about them. Write a single sentence to wrap it up; share in the chat.

❖ Add a prayer, if it fits the publisher's format

- Make it in first person
- Put it in italics
- End it in Jesus' name

◦ Use the name of Jesus in every blog

- Let your readers know you belong to Him

Include a Prayer



Proofread and Review



- ❖ Proofread 4-5 times
 - In Word document first, then as it appears in your layout onscreen
- Have someone else review your devotion
 - A mature Christian friend, an elder in your church, or a pastor



- ❖ Start an email list among your friends
- Market your devotions on your social media



Build Your Following



Pray About Commitment



- ❖ Find someone or a group of friends to pray for you in your endeavors
- Writing devotions may be only for a season...decide your length of commitment

What Defines Success?



- ❖ What are you going to get out of it?
 - Instant gratification
 - Key benefit is a platform to share the Gospel
 - Puts the Word of God into hands of someone else
 - A chance to be a “professor” in teaching about the Christian life

Spiritual Warfare



- ❖ Be prepared...if you write anything that exalts Jesus, the devil is poised to attack and discourage you

Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' " Matthew 4:10 NKJV



Victory, Not Comparison



- Don't measure success by comparison
 - Every finished/posted devotion is a victory
 - Every submission to a devotion website is a victory
 - Every devotion is a gift of encouragement

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:57

