



WHITAKER  
HOUSE

*Submission*

*Guidelines*

## WHITAKER HOUSE REVIEW POLICY

Whitaker House does not review unsolicited manuscripts or proposals. Material of this nature that has not been requested by a specific Whitaker House representative or that has not been sent by a recognized source will be sent a rejection letter. The materials sent will only be returned if a self-addressed envelope and postage are included along with the submission.

If you have already established contact with a Whitaker House representative and have been asked to submit a manuscript, you may do so by standard mail or e-mail (see following pages for specific guidelines on preparing manuscripts). Whitaker House does not accept manuscripts or proposals via fax.

In addition, you may find the following resources and tips helpful in your quest to be published:

1. **Literary Agents:** A literary agent may be valuable if you are a first-time author trying to break into publishing. If you submit your work to several agents and they choose not to represent you, it may be a good indication that your work is not yet strong enough to be considered for publication. When choosing an agent, find someone who is familiar with the Christian book publishing industry. A good place to start is *The Christian Writers' Market Guide*, an annual resource by Sally Stuart that lists agents as well as markets available to writers.
2. **Writers' Conferences:** Writers' conferences provide writers with high-quality teaching on the craft of writing. For more information on writers' conferences, consult *The Christian Writers' Market Guide*.
3. **Writers' Groups:** Joining a writers' group in your area will not only help you in the actual craft of writing, but it may also allow you to meet published authors and learn the basics of breaking into publishing. You can learn more about writers' groups that meet in your area at a local writers' conference or through an Internet search engine.
4. **Master the Craft of Writing:** Just as we progressively learn and grow in our Christian walks, so also must we learn and grow in our respective vocations. If you are an aspiring writer, this means doing two things regularly and without fail: writing and reading. While you should, of course, read as much as you can on the subject of writing, no substitute exists for simply creating the discipline to sit down and write. Consider, too, that it is often said that nearly ninety percent of writing is rewriting. Ideas can certainly be divinely inspired, but even the best ideas will need refinement in the writing process. In addition to reading books on writing, you should make a habit of regularly reading other books, especially books of the genre that you wish to publish. The old axiom "Good writers are good readers" holds true, and those writers who make the effort to read even a small portion of text each day will find their own skills being refined in the process.
5. **Study the Market:** Read as many best-selling books as you can. While poring over the written word, you will learn what types of books publishers are looking for. We encourage you to read several of our titles so that you are acquainted with the kind of material that we publish.

- 6. Develop Your Publishing Credentials:** By writing for smaller publishers or for periodicals, you not only can gain experience in writing, but also can build a portfolio that will help garner more attention for your manuscript.

### WHITAKER HOUSE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Whitaker House publishes Christian literature that generally falls into the following categories:

- Biography/autobiography
- Charismatic interest
- Christian living
- Devotions
- Fiction
- Gender-specific issues (for men or women)
- Inspiration
- Marriage/family/relationships
- Prayer
- Spiritual growth
- Spiritual warfare
- Theology

Please keep in mind that we do not publish books of poetry, children's or teen's books, or commentaries. If you feel confident that your manuscript fits into one of the accepted categories and is a well-crafted piece of writing, continue reading to find out how to submit your book to Whitaker House for consideration.

### ITEMS TO REMEMBER WHILE PREPARING YOUR SUBMISSION

While preparing your manuscript and your submissions package, please keep in mind the following critical items:

- 1. Content and Form:** Please be aware of the following details as they pertain to the preparation of your manuscript:
  - Strive for consistency in writing style, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.
  - Avoid trying to enhance the text's appearance by using boldface, italics, or different-sized fonts.
  - Place subheads throughout the text that will break chapters into more readable segments.
  - Use a standard dictionary and stylebook. The Whitaker House editorial department refers to *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*; *A Christian Writer's Manual of Style*; and *The Chicago Manual of Style* for questions related to spelling, style, and usage.
  - Ensure the accuracy of your submitted work by using a computer spell-check program and by double-checking all Scripture references, names, dates, and statements of fact found in your material. Also, be sure to reference all Bible versions used throughout your work.

- 2. Source Citation:** In consideration of documentation and permissions, please be aware that it is the author's responsibility to ensure that all quotations are accurate and that the necessary permissions have been secured for usage, if applicable.
- When quoting a source, give the original source credit either in a footnote or endnote that includes the person's name; the title of the article, book, or other document that the quotation appeared in (if an article, also list name of periodical); the publisher and its location and the copyright date (for a book) or publication information (for a periodical); and the page number(s). If using Internet sources, be sure to include the URL address as well as the date that the material was accessed.
  - Please note that, for longer quotations and extensive use of another person's material, you will likely need to secure permission from the author and/or publisher. While we do not require you to secure permissions before submitting your work, please be aware that, if your book is accepted for publication, securing such permissions is your responsibility. The publication of your book by Whitaker House will be contingent on your gaining all the necessary permissions. Also, recognize that you may be required to pay a usage fee to the publisher of the original material. Finally, remember that some publishers do not grant permission to quote from their publications until an author has secured a publisher for his or her work.
  - Permission and source material for photos used in book.
- 3. Questionable Content:** Because Whitaker House is a publisher of Christian literature, we require that our books be free of morally offensive and biblically questionable content. This includes the following:
- **Sex, Violence, and Profanity:** Avoid any gratuitous and graphic references to sex and violence, as well as language that could be considered offensive. We understand that references to sex and violence may have to be made in certain instances (for example, in a book dealing with issues of abuse). However, these references should be made matter-of-factly with tact and sensitivity. In the instance of language, Whitaker House does not allow the use of any profanity in its books, including taking the Lord's name in vain.
  - **Doctrine:** Avoid focusing on doctrinal (or denominational) issues that could bring strife and division to the body of Christ. While we certainly encourage open-minded thinking and are eager to hear from writers with a wide variety of Christian backgrounds and experiences, the goal should be to edify and encourage the body, not cause unnecessary conflict that could lead to division. You may include historical material that purveys a particular doctrinal stance (for example, including material about Martin Luther and his struggle against the Catholic Church of his day would be admissible). However, even in these cases, care must be taken not to allow your text to dwell on such issues to the degree that it becomes inflammatory in the minds of our readers.
- 4. Front Matter:** While preparing your submission, keep in mind the dedication, acknowledgments, and foreword. You need not include these with your initial submission, but we will need them if we agree to publish your book. In particular, think about a recognized individual whom you know personally and who may be willing to write a foreword to your book.

5. **Biography/Photos:** If we agree to publish your book, we will also need a detailed biography that includes your educational background, career experience, past and current ministry experience (if applicable), and the names of any immediate family members whom you would like to include for the About the Author section of the book. We will also need several photos of you that we can use along with your biography (please be aware that professionally shot photographs are copyrighted in the photographer's name and that you will need to check into securing permission to use such photos). The photos need not be included with your initial submission package, but please include a detailed biography with your submission.
6. **Title/Cover:** While we certainly value your creative input and will consider your suggestions in regard to decisions concerning your book, please be aware that, as with the majority of publishers, it is our prerogative to determine the final title, cover design, and back cover material of all our books.

### **PUTTING TOGETHER YOUR SUBMISSION PACKAGE**

Whitaker House prefers to receive full manuscripts rather than basic proposals. The following are the individual elements required for submitting a manuscript, all of which must be printed on plain white paper if you are submitting your work via mail (see No. 7 below for specific mechanical requirements):

1. **Cover Letter:** In a business letter addressed to your Whitaker House contact, briefly introduce yourself and the work you would like us to review. Also, if you are simultaneously submitting your work to another publisher, please let us know.
2. **Author's Information:** In a document titled Author's Information, please list the following information using the headings found below:
  - **Name:** List your full name as you would like it to be published.
  - **Contact Information:** List your contact information (including mailing address, e-mail address, phone numbers where we can reach you, fax number, and personal website, if applicable). Also, indicate specifically which contact information you would like included in the book. You may include whatever information you would like, but keep in mind that the information you choose will be your point of contact with readers of your book.
  - **Qualifications:** List your qualifications for writing this book, including previous publications, educational degrees, past and current ministry experience, and any other relevant experiences that you feel add to your credentials for writing a book.
  - **Reason for Writing:** Identify the one key reason why you desire to publish your book.
  - **Book Summary:** Present a short, one-paragraph summary of your book, including the category of books it would fall under. See page 3 of these guidelines for categories list.
  - **Audience:** Identify your target audience. Tell us what you believe the reader will learn or receive from your book, as well as practical actions the reader can take after reading your book (if applicable to the genre of work being submitted).
  - **Similar Titles:** List titles from Whitaker House and other publishers that would be similar to your book. Tell us how your book is unique and why it will appeal to readers. Please limit your list to two pages.

- **Networking Circles:** Identify local, national, and international networking possibilities, including personal friends, ministry affiliations, churches, church leaders, ministry organizations, bookstores, etc. (people and organizations that you are currently associated with that could help in the promotion of your book).
  - **Media Contacts:** Provide all local, national, and international media contacts you can in order to assist us in the publicity of your book (television, radio, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, Internet, etc.).
  - **Self-Promotion:** In a paragraph or list, identify the ways in which you will be able to assist Whitaker House in the promotion of your book. Include any ideas you may have in regard to building publicity for your book.
  - **Public Appearances:** If applicable, list any public appearances you will be making in the next twelve months (conferences, speaking engagements, guest appearances, etc.).
3. **Endorsements:** It is the responsibility of the author to secure endorsements. While preparing your submission, consider local, national, or international church and lay leaders with whom you have contact or personally know who would be willing to endorse your book. Please send all secured endorsements with your submission, and let us know of other pending endorsements. Because of the impact endorsements have on marketing a book, we encourage you to send out as many endorsement requests as possible. Please remember to have the endorser comment on both you and your book. Continue to seek out endorsements after your book has been published. We will include additional endorsements, especially those commenting on the book, in later printings.
4. **Synopsis:** Present a one-page synopsis of your book.
5. **Outline:** Present a full outline of your book.
6. **Hard Copy** If you are submitting your manuscript via mail, include a hard copy of your book. Please note the following mechanical requirements for submitting your written material:
- Use a basic word-processing program, such as Microsoft Word, to prepare your material.
  - Begin with a title page that includes the book's working title, working subtitle, your name, the date of submission, and a word count for your manuscript.
  - Follow this page with a listing of additional ideas for the book's title and subtitle.
  - Use 8 ½" x 11" paper with 1" margins on all sides.
  - Double-space all text.
  - Indent all paragraphs with one tab.
  - Use 12-point font, and choose a readable serif font such as Times New Roman or Courier.
  - Include the book's title and your last name in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
  - Number each page in the lower right-hand corner.
  - Begin each chapter on a new page.
  - Under no circumstances should you try to "design" or layout your book (this includes using fancy fonts, changing the margins, and special page layout). Use only a basic word-processing program, not a design program such as PageMaker, InDesign, or QuarkXPress. Keep your document simple.

- 7. Electronic Copy:** If you are submitting your manuscript via mail, along with the hard copy of your book, include a diskette that contains your document (as a text or RTF file). Please do not send Word Perfect files. You may also submit an electronic copy of your document on a CD-RW (please note that the CD must be a rewritable disc). Also, if you make last-minute changes to your manuscript, please be sure that both the hard copy and electronic copy of the document are updated so that the two versions match one another.
- 8. SASE:** If you are submitting your manuscript via mail and would like us to return your material in the event that we choose not to pursue publication of your book, please include a self-addressed manila envelope with appropriate postage. If you do not want your material returned, please include a self-addressed stamped business envelope so that we may send you a letter of reply. Your manuscript will be discarded within thirty days if we decline to publish it.

### **SUBMITTING YOUR WORK TO WHITAKER HOUSE**

When you have completed all the required elements for your submission, please mail your material to:

**Author Liaison  
Whitaker House Publishers  
1030 Hunt Valley Circle  
New Kensington, PA 15068**

Or e-mail your submission (as one document) to: **[publisher@whitakerhouse.com](mailto:publisher@whitakerhouse.com)**.

### **RECEIVING A REPLY FROM WHITAKER HOUSE**

Because of the large number of manuscripts we receive and review each year, it can take up to six months for you to receive a reply regarding your submission. After we have reviewed your submission, Whitaker House will contact you.

If we have chosen not to pursue publication of your book, we will send you a personal letter of decline in the SASE that you provided.

If we accept your submission, you will receive a phone call from a Whitaker House representative, and details of the ensuing publishing agreement will be discussed. After the signing of a contract, Whitaker House generally publishes the book within one year, but not earlier than six months from the time of finalization of a Publishing Agreement. Be prepared to work with our editorial department in refining your manuscript in preparation for final book form.

As a Whitaker House author, you can be assured that, as you do your part to produce and promote a quality book, we will be working hard to ensure that your book meets the highest publishing standards. Some of the benefits of working with us include:

- Competitive royalty rates
- Assistance in promotion of your book by our in-house publicist
- An editorial department that strives to make your book the best it can be while offering you the direction, support, and encouragement you need throughout the publishing process
- A graphics department that designs cutting-edge, eye-catching covers and ads that are sure to attract potential buyers

- A domestic and international sales and marketing team that will present your product to the major retail outlets in both the Christian and general marketplaces.
- Partnership with an established Christian publishing company that considers you to be not just an author or business affiliate, but also a brother or sister in the Lord and a co-laborer with us in our mission to reach the world with biblically based books that proclaim the enduring truth of God's love to a lost world.

### **WHITAKER HOUSE SUBMISSION CHECKLIST**

Feel free to use this checklist as you prepare your submission package for publication consideration with Whitaker House:

- Cover Letter**
- Author's Contact Information and Biography**
- Endorsements (received and pending)**
- Synopsis**
- Outline**
- Hard Copy of Manuscript (if using standard mail)**
  - All mechanical requirements followed**
  - Consistent content and form**
  - All sources cited (with footnotes or endnotes)**
  - All permissions (including secured, and those pending approval)**
  - Material free of questionable content**
- Electronic Copy of Manuscript (if using standard mail)**
- SASE (envelope with appropriate postage, if using standard mail)**
- Compilation of all material into one document (if submitting via e-mail)**