



# Making Money from Writing

## INCOME STREAMS

### 1. Published: Traditional or Self-Published

- Traditional -- advance (and royalties if you earn out your advance)
- Self-Published -- a higher percentage of sales is your income; however there can be significant investment involved, and you may not have the same reach as a traditional publisher
- Literary Magazines
- Blogs or online magazines

### 2. Employed

- Sure, you can get a job at an advertising office -- or as a magazine editor. But you could also be an in-house copywriter for a tech company. You could write manuals for assembling furniture. Look around -- everywhere you look, someone is writing something that you are using or are being exposed to. Get creative as you look for jobs.
- Look to the periphery: You have acquired a lot of skills while learning and practicing your writing. Keep an eye out for jobs editing, proofreading, designing, managing social media, being a personal assistant, coaching, podcast assistant, etc.

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### 3. Freelance

- Perks: flexibility and control. Cons: All the responsibility and income can be feast or famine.

4. Sponsorships: Patreon, sponsored posts, sponsored social media, sponsorship campaigns on your social media featuring their product, social media takeovers for other clients, online tip jars, ad space on your website

5. Subsidiary products and programs: e-books, t-shirts, bonus content, etc.

6. Speaking (be sure to ask for a product table at the back to increase your income from the event.)

## OBSTACLES TO MAKING MONEY WRITING

- Confusing engagement and exposure with income. They are not the same thing. And they do not always correlate.
- Not considering the long-term cost. So you heard you need to start an email list -- are you prepared to pay the monthly amount for that list and the associated website fees? Have you considered what it will take to upkeep your blog? Are you prepared to pay for your writing if your writing is not yet paying you?
- Getting preoccupied with the appearance of success -- versus creating actual income. Social media numbers do not (usually) pay.
- Giving away too much free content because the engagement makes you feel good, even if it never budges your bottom line.
- Paying other people before you ever pay yourself.

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- Not charging enough: Failing to account for how much time something takes; assuming someone is unable to pay you what you are worth; charging ONLY for the amount of time it takes to do the job -- not including your experience, education, etc, that warrants higher pay, or for the additional expenses it will cost you in materials, childcare, etc. Also, consider if this is taking away from the time you would spend on a higher-paying job.
- Trading work for exposure (hint: Online "summits" are notorious for asking for a lot of work and time from you for exposure.) Sometimes exposure is worth it. Often, it's not. Especially if this is the bulk of your work, not the exception.
- Allowing comparison and jealousy to keep you from ever starting.
- Saying yes too soon out of people-pleasing or a false obligation because, as Christian communicators, shouldn't the only thing that matter is that the love of God is shared? No.
- Not having a clear-cut contract at the outset of the project that explains deadlines, lays out the formal commitment you are making, clarifies details such as how many edits you will perform, and when and how payment will be made.
- Not being clear on your goals or overall desired outcome from your writing career. (See "questions to ask yourself" below).
- Not restricting the amount of training you are paying for -- there will be endless opportunities you will want to take advantage of, and an endless number of people who want to sell products to you as a communicator. You cannot nor should not do it all.
- Letting perfection be the enemy of good enough.

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## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- What am I uniquely gifted at, trained for, experienced in, and successful with?
- Who can I look to for mentorship?
- What kind of time and energy can I realistically commit to this endeavor?
- What is successful for me at this stage? Just covering expenses? Having my writing open up new opportunities for things like collectives and conferences? Earning a part-time income? Being my full-time career?
- Am I prepared to pay for my writing if my writing is not yet or is no longer paying me? If so, how will I pay those fees long-term? How long will I commit to going until my writing must pay for itself or pay me an income?
- Is this a hobby? Or a profession? If it's a profession, have I practiced writing on a strict deadline? Do I have all the tools I need? (ie, invoicing software, time tracking software, Canva, etc).
- How can I diversify my income?