

## **So You Want to Be a Devotional Writer · Carlton Hughes Kentucky Christian Writers Conference 2020**

### **Devotional Ideas**

1. Look for the God moments in life—as simple as a butterfly.
2. God is in everything, with us all of the time—tap into His sovereignty.
3. Study the Bible, think of “life verses,” those that stick out to you.
4. Mine your memories—what was God doing? What did He teach you? Related Scriptures?

### **Mechanics/How-To: Writing the Devotion**

1. Use the fiction techniques if applicable—POV, scene setting, dialogue
2. I start with the basic idea/idea, rough that out.
3. What is a related Scripture (sometimes clear, sometimes use Google, Bible Gateway).
4. What lesson did I learn from this experience? What was God saying or doing?
5. Refining the Devotion (Dress it Up): Set the scene, tell the story in a vivid way, fiction techniques, give readers the feeling they are “there.”
6. Hook-Book-Look-Took Method.
  - a. **HOOK:** Get attention, “hook” readers
  - b. **BOOK:** Relate to the Truth—the Bible!
  - c. **LOOK:** “Contend with truth,” look further, how it relates to me (and to your reader)
  - d. **TOOK:** The takeaway, how readers can use it in everyday life

### **What about Preachiness?**

1. Should a devotion be “preachy”? **Yes** and **no**.
2. **Shouldn’t** point fingers, like a bossy teacher: YOU HAVE TO DO THIS!!!
3. **Shouldn’t** intimidate or accuse readers: I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU DID THAT!!!!
4. **Should** be about your experience, what you did and what you learned.
5. **Should** talk about how you applied the truth to your life.
6. **Should** talk about how others can apply the truth in a similar way/situation.
7. **Should** be about Jesus and point to Him.

### **Considering a Devotional Book?**

1. Start with a theme/hook/big idea—mine was fatherhood.
2. Do a proposal.
3. Develop a one-sheet: summarize idea (back-cover copy), contact information.
4. Write at least 5 sample devotions.
5. Research publishers: what are they looking for, how do they operate, read their stuff.
6. What are guidelines: submission, word count, format, limit of total devotions in book, Bible translation preference.
7. How to submit: agent, blind submission, writers conference contact.
8. Plan your devotions.
9. Write: rough draft, final draft, editing.
10. Consider your scriptures: avoid duplication, “sameness” (everything from one Bible book).

## Looking for a place to submit?

1. Sign up for The Write Life Newsletter: [writelifeworkshops.com](http://writelifeworkshops.com).
2. [Christiandevotions.us](http://Christiandevotions.us) (non-paying but a great credit).
3. [Cbn.com](http://Cbn.com) (non-paying but a great credit).
4. [Inspiration.org](http://Inspiration.org) (Craig Von Buseck).
5. Chicken Soup for the Soul—not exactly devotions but similar, good practice, \$200 per story plus free books.
6. Pitch to agents/publishers.
7. Some publishing companies like Worthy/Hachette/Ellie Claire will accept unsolicited.
8. “Moments” series—Yvonne Lehman (non-paying, proceeds to Samaritans Purse).
9. The Write Life—Tracey Crump <https://www.writelifeworkshops.com/>.
10. The Upper Room: [upperroom.org](http://upperroom.org).
11. The Secret Place (Judson Press):  
<https://www.judsonpress.com/Products/CategoryCenter/JPSEC/The-Secret-Place.aspx>.
12. Other websites/blogs—do some research.

Contact for Carlton Hughes: [carltonwhughes@gmail.com](mailto:carltonwhughes@gmail.com)

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