

The Plight of Christian Authors

Four years ago, I had a Holy Spirit encounter and following the encounter, I became a Holy Spirit inspired writer. I had no previous experience of book publishing therefore when I completed my first book I had no idea how to publish my book. My first book is a question and answer book with me asking God the questions on behalf of entire human race and God the maker providing all the answers. As far as I was concerned, this makes my book somehow unique and as such, I was confident it would be highly in demand not just by Christians but also by non-Christians everywhere. I was certain that Christian publishers everywhere will be full of excitement towards publishing the book if not for anything else to prove that not only is it that God still speaks today; he is willingly ready to answer any questions that we might have. With this mind of thinking, I began my journey into the world of book publishing in full confidence that my book will be on the shelves everywhere in no time.

Since I had no knowledge or experience whatsoever about book publishing the first place I looked to begin my publishing journey was on the internet. It was not long after I began my search on the internet that I realised that just as I thought I have a God given book so do thousands out there believe God has given them a unique book to publish. I also quickly discovered that not only do we all think that we have something unique we seem to be all looking for the same thing "publishers" As I delve deeper into the world of book publishing I realised there are different kinds of publishers out there ranging from Vanity press, traditional publishers to self-publishing. I was not at all clear at the beginning what the difference was between them. However, from all the information I could gather all over the place I realised that whilst self-publishing and vanity press means putting money on the table for the book to be published traditional publishing does not seem to require you paying upfront.

Paying to have my book published was the last thing on my mind besides I had no funds available as of the time to go into any self-publishing venture and I was totally unprepared for the amount some vanity press publishers were asking that I invest to have my book published. Therefore, I concluded the best option for an aspiring author like me is traditional publishing. Indeed, I could not understand why there are so many vanity press and self-publishing publishers' adverts all over the place when as far as I was concerned all you have to do is simply approach a traditional Christian publisher who will be happy to publish your book at no cost to you.

Looking for a traditional publisher was like diving into the Sea to find one pearl. I soon found that it is easier for me to dive into the Sea and find one pearl than ever finding a traditional publisher that will be interested in publishing my book. The first thing I noticed was you could not even approach most traditional publishers by yourself because they only accept manuscripts from literary agents. When I tried looking for literary agents I found that most literary agents already have all the clients they need and they are not looking for someone like myself with no fame, no brand name no nothing for them to go on. After several hours of searching, I found some Christian publishers who stated on their website that they will accept unsolicited materials. I copied their addresses and posted my manuscripts to them in the hope that they will all agree to publish my unique book once they read the manuscript. In matter of days after postage, they started returning my manuscript an obvious indication that they did not even bother to read it. As the rejection letters flows in, I began to realise that I am not the only one soliciting the publishers. My guess is most first time Christian writers most probably enter the publishing world with the kind of naïve mind that I had and if I have guessed right then only God knows how many manuscripts the traditional publishers must be getting in a week from the many hopefuls. One after the other the publishing companies all sent my manuscript back with rejection covering letters giving all sorts of excuses as to why they were not able to publish it. It felt at this stage as if I was sinking because what I had expected is the opposite of what I am now beginning to discover to be the true state of affairs.

The truth is Christian author or no Christian author I realised that the same rule that applies to a circular author is the same that applies to a Christian author. The publishing world is a business world and in business, it is all about moneymaking. When it comes to moneymaking I have discovered that it makes no difference whether you have gotten your inspiration from God or from the devil the real question is are you a sellable product. I said are you a

sellable product because what I have come to realise in the publishing business is that just like any business that involves the selling of talents the product is not the talent itself but the talented person. If the talented person has moneymaking potentials then everyone will be interested and if not no one cares whether or not you have a word from God.

God is a God of talents and we saw in the bible that most people got their promotion through their talents, Joseph being an obvious example. Today the church is full of people that are frustrated in their talents because instead of the church as a body promoting the talents so that we do not have to appear as beggars in the world, the church is too busy fighting. When it comes to God's things, everyone wants you to give it away for free. However, the same people who will crucify you for wanting to trade in your talents for the promotion of God's work will not hesitate when it comes to spending their money on all sorts of worldly things even though they call themselves Christians. No wonder it looks as if the world is getting richer day by day and majority of Christians are looking poorer and poorer. Many Christians today are still waiting for a manner to fall

from heaven when all they need is to tap into their unique gifts and use it for God's glory. Many that managed to discover their talents end up using it for worldly aims because of what the world has to offer them. Many end up in the world simply because the same people meant to promote the talented people in the church for the sake of glorification of the body of Christ are the same that compresses the people further into darkness.

The best selling book of all time, which is the bible, is a book of many Christian authors. Apostle Paul who wrote most of the New Testament would have faced many rejections from traditional Christian publishers today if he were to send his biblical books to publishers and Moses would not have had his books published particularly the law given the world's strong objection to God's righteousness in today's world. Writing is a very important talent and it is an effective way of taking the gospel from the church's four walls to the hearts of individuals in their private corners. God gave the saints their writing talents so that we continue to have the gospel from generation to generations. Today anyone can write anything and call themselves a Christian author and so long as they have the right literary agent and publisher they will sell millions of books all for worldly benefit and gain.

The fact is whilst I understand that the plight of traditional Christian publishers must be a tough one, we must not allow marketability to take priority over the main objective which is the promotion of God's word not just anything that can sell. If we begin to do God's work in mind of worldly business then it will no longer be for God's sake but for worldly gain. Thank God after all said and done I have so far managed to publish two books through self-publishing of course. After I managed to publish my book through a reputable Christian self-publishing company, I discovered it was even easier to publish than to promote. There are adverts on the internet for book promoters for a fee but most are not Christian based. The truth of the matter is the world expects people to use their talents to contribute into worldly purses and as Christians, we cannot expect the world to help promote our God-given talents for God's glory. Most websites on the internet with high traffic are circular and once they see the word God or Christ they want nothing to do with you. The circular world does not want to know anything pertaining to God or Christianity so as not to offend others that are not Godly or Christians.

Meanwhile in the Christian world, there is such terrible competition within the church walls and no one is prepared to help anyone. If you have talents and people cannot see your marketability potentials then you are on your own. Only if you manage to break through all the worldly barriers are you a true saint and only then will everyone be willingly ready both Christians and non-Christians to say yes to you. I thank God for his ways because if it is up to man I will not have the bible today. If people are making money from biblical materials today then the writers that God used to write the bible must be entitled to an everlasting royalty from God especially given that most of them ended up being killed in their time despite the fact that what they had on offer is in fact power of salvation to the souls. For me the possibility of receiving God's eternal royalty makes all of my sacrifice as a Christian worthwhile. My word to you if you are an aspiring Holy Spirit inspired author out there is that you focus on God's purpose for giving you the talent, which is salvation of souls. If your focus is on the purpose, I guarantee you will overcome every barrier that is in the way of you using your talent to reach out to a soul out there through your writing talents and it will all be for God's glory.

Due to my shocking publishing experience, I am currently in the process of starting an online New Christian author network and reader's book club. If you come across this article and you will like to join the New Christian author's network or participate in book reviews and other activities to help Christian authors get published and promote their books please email me at freedomhouse7@aol.com. If you have had an experience similar to mine, you will like to give suggestions as to how best the network and book club can better help support New Christian authors, I will also like to hear from you.

Pastor Olabisi Kufeji

Freedom House International

<http://www.freedom-house.org.uk>

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