

Prophecy, Evangelism or Discipleship?



Make informed choices in publishing materials for society and for the Church.

Effective Christian publishing organizations have a clear ministry focus to guide their publishing decisions. A literature ministry might publish evangelistic literature, or literature for discipleship, or prophetic literature. Decide what type of material your organization will publish. Your choices make a difference.

Three types of literature

In evangelistic publishing, ministries produce materials that bring people to a faith in Christ. This focus is critical in parts of the world where the vast majority of the population has not heard the gospel. However, evangelistic publishing often needs to be subsidized. Non-believers seldom pay for literature designed to bring them to Christ.

A publisher may publish works to contribute to the discipleship of believers. Such literature challenges readers to become disciples; it focuses on the needs expressed by the target market and shows how those needs can be met through following Christ. The Greek word for disciple literally means someone who follows in the footsteps of another. In this kind of publishing, evangelism is the result of discipleship.

Prophetic literature is not usually as personal. It focuses on the condition of the Church, the society, the culture. Prophetic works point out God's truths that may make us uncomfortable. The message of these books may make us angry, or it may stir us to action. There are publishers who have enough courage, and credibility with their audience, that they can publish prophetic works. However, such books may not be well received. If God has called you to only publish prophetic literature, you may need alternative sources of revenue.

Here at Cook, the core of our mission is discipleship—helping Christians learn to love God and love their neighbors as themselves.

Our focus makes it easier for us to make publishing decisions. Our editors understand our focus and look for appropriate manuscripts. In a sense, they serve as champions of our message on discipleship. Therefore, we publish Bible studies, Sunday school curriculum, ministry resources and books to help children, youth and adults grow into mature, vital Christians. We publish the Scripture Press Disciples' Bible Study Series, and Chariot Victor Books such as *Ignite the Fire: Kindling a Passion for Christ in Your Kids*. Our fiction titles focus on spiritual growth.

Our focus also helps us in identifying and relating to our authors. We primarily work with, and nurture, authors who have a heart for discipleship. When we come into contact with authors whose focus is evangelism, or prophecy, we encourage them to work with other publishers with a similar focus.

Making the choice

No one can deny the value of evangelistic literature. Every age and every country needs its prophets. We all want to be better disciples. The three types of literature discussed here are all necessary. However, we can generally be more effective if we focus.

What is your ministry focus? To be evangelistic? To be prophetic? Cook helps Christians to follow in the steps of Christ. Help your staff understand your publishing mission. Decide what kind of literature your company will publish—and make a difference. ❖

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