

Freelance submissions due by January 10, 2018

All about us: *SEEK*[®] is a magazine created to encourage adults in their walk with Jesus Christ. *SEEK*[®] corresponds to the topics of David C Cook's adult curriculum line and is designed to further apply these topics to everyday life.

Dos and Don'ts of writing articles/stories for this theme list:

DO read the Scriptures (these will be studied in class), as well as the suggestions of *What to Write*.

DO dig in deeper. DON'T use obvious material the students will likely have studied in class.

DO employ supplemental Scriptures beyond the most well known passages.

DO quote from the *King James Version*.

DON'T put words in God's mouth or suggest what God thinks. Quote what He says.

DON'T submit your first thoughts.

DO some research (include the sources that verify your information).

DO get written permission from people whose real stories you tell.

DO stick to the desired word count: 850 words minimum, 1000 maximum.

DO use good grammar and spelling. DO rewrite, tighten, and proofread your work.

Do include a suggested title on your manuscript.

DO put the intended issue number and its date at the top of your manuscript, **or it will be rejected.**

No decision will be made on any manuscript prior to the submission due cutoff date. Please e-mail your submissions to seek@standardpub.com.

Quarter titles for Winter 2018–19: Unit 1, *God Is Worthy of Our Love* (Issues 1–5); Unit 2, *Loving God by Trusting Christ* (Issues 6–10); Unit 3, *Songs That Glorify the God of Love* (Issues 11–13).

Issue 1: Love and Obey God (Complete Devotion)

December 2, 2018

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:1-9

What to Write: Research the Bible meaning of verse 5's "heart" and "soul" and "might," and specify how we can, in real life, love the Lord with ALL of each. // Focusing on the scenarios in verse 7, interview people and compile "the best ideas" for talking with others (not just children) about the Lord's ways and His works. Include actual dialogue. // Sometimes people say, "It's not about keeping rules; it's about relationship." Correct—from Scripture and real experience—the mistaken notion that our love relationship with the Lord eliminates the need for obedience. // Compare/contrast the Lord's wonderful interaction with His children to how believers of the world religions are to interact with their "gods."

Issue 2: Love and Serve God (Keep Your Promise)

December 9, 2018

Scripture: Joshua 24:1-3 [end with "seed"], 13-15, 21-24

What to Write: Describe (and include some true stories about) how the way believers live can show the people we meet that "me and my house" serve the Lord. How can we stand out and be different in a good way? Be specific. // Though we might argue that we don't worship idols, the purpose of verse 14 was to distinguish the behavior of God's people from that of people who followed other gods. Expound on the difficulty today of following God when we're among

unbelieving family members, friends, coworkers, neighbors. What helps? // There's a common view today that all religions are basically the same (and the teachings can mingle). Joshua didn't think so! Study some of the ancient religious practices and give evidence to the superiority of God's way.

Issue 3: Love and Worship God (Credit Where Credit Is Due)

December 16, 2018

Scripture: Psalm 103:1-17a [end with "him"], 21, 22

What to Write: Explore the Lord's compassion from the perspective of His supposedly overly angry persona that some people believe in. To do this, showcase Bible events in which God repeatedly (and over time) withheld His wrath in order to give them a chance. // Focusing on verse 12, contrast the human tendency to hold a grudge/seek revenge with God's removing and forgetting about our sins. // Help readers plan more times (even at extended-family holiday gatherings) to give God credit for His steadfast love and help. Give practical ideas (ex: families could go through photo albums together and recall what God has done).

Issue 4: Love God for the Gift of Jesus (Waiting Is Rewarded)

December 23, 2018 (Christmas Sunday)

Scripture: Luke 1:26-31; 2:22, 25-35

What to Write: The key for articles for this issue is: unique! There is usually an abundance of submissions for the Christmas issue—many of the same type. Carefully review the Scripture. Create an imaginary portrayal of the thoughts of the cast of characters in today's Scripture—from their own "best thing" and "worst thing" perspective of what was happening. // Pull out the various prophecies and roles mentioned about Jesus and show how He fulfilled those. At Christmas we speak of the gift of Jesus, but connect the article idea to what a gift it is to have the trustworthy Word of God.

Issue 5: Love God and Serve Others (Everyone Matters)

December 30, 2018 (New Year's Sunday)

Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46

What to Write: Characterize those whom God considers the "least of these." Use the following Scriptures as starting points: Isaiah 58:6-7; James 1:27; Matthew 10:42; Hebrews 13:1-3. // Explain the importance of Christians helping the needy within the church family, because it shows nonbelievers the benefits of being part of the church family. // Give real-life examples of Christians who helped others with physical needs while ALSO using those opportunities to introduce people to Jesus. // Since it's New Year's resolution time, help people be practical about time commitments for service projects. (This is especially important in an era of single-parent families and households where both husband and wife are employed full-time.)

Issue 6: Walk in Love (Steadfast Love)

January 6, 2019

Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5; 2 John 4-11

What to Write: Read up on Christians who were formerly into the occult/New Age/Eastern religions, and list some deceptions they fell prey to within those systems. Relate how they came to the truth of Christ. // Acts 20:30 is a reminder that spiritual deception can come from *inside*

the church. How can we help each other remain on alert? How should suspected false teaching be addressed? // In light of 2 John 10, how do we witness to people in cults who approach us? (Clarify the context of this verse.) // Today's passages feel heavy in regard to commandments and false teaching. Yet there is an overarching theme of steadfast love. What's up with that?

Issue 7: Submit to God (Humility in Love)

January 13, 2019

Scripture: James 4:1-10

What to Write: Today's passage lends itself to an "I think . . . but God says . . ." series of subpoints. (For example, I think I need more money. But (per verse 3) God says ____.) Give several of these, showing what our real problems are. // Use Romans 16:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 3:3; Philippians 4:2; Titus 3:10; and/or 3 John 9, 10 to illustrate and expand the discussion of the "wars and fightings among you" of James 4:1. // Christians sometimes speak of feeling far from God. Yet James 4:8 would indicate that any such "distance" wouldn't be initiated by God. Explore things that might make us feel far from God—and how to remedy that. // Report a true story of a church quarrel that was happily resolved by seeking to selflessly do God's will.

Issue 8: Rejoice in All Circumstances (Good from Bad)

January 20, 2019

Scripture: Philippians 1:12-21

What to Write: Paul saw in unfortunate circumstances the opportunities to do something for God. Explore the lives of other Bible characters and contemporary people who did this. Portray each from the viewpoint of "Since I'm <describe situation>, maybe I can <describe potential opportunities>." // Interview several friends who can look back on a bad time and now see how God used it for good. // Verse 12's Paul of courage and a positive attitude seems at odds with the "afraid of being afraid" Paul of verse 20. Explain how we can feel nervous or afraid while still pressing on as good soldiers. // Philippians speaks often of joy. "Match" some of those "joy" verses with some of Paul's many tribulations (for example, in 2 Corinthians 11:23-29) to inspire and motivate readers. // Explore case studies of modern-day missionaries, ministers, or just average church members whose suffering served to advance the gospel.

Issue 9: Imitate Christ (Sacrificial Love)

January 27, 2019

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-11

What to Write: This deep topic also affords the opportunity to do a humorous send-up of self-help. Exaggerate our modern-day attention to personality tests, discovering our passion, getting a job that's worthy of us, "feeling" fulfilled, etc. Then point out that Jesus didn't do any of that and—wow—still managed to have a purposeful life! // Do one or more case studies on people who left an affluent culture to serve as missionaries to impoverished people. // How can people in the church be of the same mind without all being identical? Distinguish between *unity* and *uniformity*.

Issue 10: Press On in Christ (Eyes on the Prize)

February 3, 2019

Scripture: Philippians 3:7-14

What to Write: There's George Santayana's famous quote "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." But Paul's verse 13 here seems to stress forgetting the past. How are

both statements true? // Ask 20 different people (different ages; Christians and non-Christians) to complete this sentence: “In the end, the only thing that matters is ____.” List your 20 findings, and explain how today’s passage relates to the attitudes you encountered. // How do we know when to persevere and push through trouble vs. when we’re maybe on the wrong track and should give up? // Delve into the topic of short-term sacrifice for long-term goal. This could feature stories of famous people who sacrificed and were later rewarded.

Issue 11: Our Loving God (Some Things Never Change)

February 10, 2019

Scripture: Psalm 48:1-3, 9-14

What to Write: One specific suggestion: Begin an article with “5 Things That Never Change—But Should!” (ex: The boss never listens) and then “5 Things That Never Change—and Aren’t We Glad!” (ex: Puppies make us smile). Then segue into the unchanging love of God. // Discuss the spiritual and emotional benefits of corporate worship. Address the often-heard sentiment “I don’t have to go to church; I can worship by myself in the woods.” // Describe and give examples of God’s love that—if we truly grasp the significance—will surely evoke joyful worship and thanks.

Issue 12: Our Mighty God (Makes Me Want to Shout!)

February 17, 2019

Scripture: Psalm 66:1-9, 16-20

What to Write: Verse 16 essentially says, “Hey, let me tell you what God’s done for me!” Round up a few testimonies from friends—especially about events that demonstrate God’s power. // Review other psalms, like this one, that invite a worldwide response (ex: Psalms 47:1; 96:1; 97:1; 100:1; 117:1; 148:1, 2). How can the world praise the Lord when they don’t know Him? Recall Bible examples of times when surrounding nations had heard about what the Lord had done for Israel. // Some scholars believe the background of this psalm is the Assyrian crisis of 701 BC, involving Sennacherib’s siege of Jerusalem and King Hezekiah’s faithfulness in trusting for God’s deliverance (Isaiah 36, 37; 2 Kings 18:13, 17-37; 2 Chronicles 32:9-19). Detail key scenes from that event and apply phrases of Psalm 66 to each. // The hint in verse 18 is a reminder that we are to be in an obedience relationship with God, not just calling on Him when we want rescue. Further explain that connection.

Issue 13: Our Rescuing God (You’re in Good Hands)

February 24, 2019

Scripture: Psalm 91:1-8, 11-16

What to Write: List the most common fears of modern people (public speaking, being alone, etc.) and, for each, parallel a Bible character and what he did (right or wrong!) when found in those circumstances. // Describe the most likely people we run to when trouble hits . . . and the limitations of each when compared to God as “my refuge and my fortress” (v. 2). // People often express fear of “the God of the Old Testament.” What “scary” qualities/characteristics of God (give Scriptures) make Him exactly the one you want on your side when trouble comes? // Prove that our prayers (for self and others) typically involve pleas for physical benefits (health, job, safety). Then challenge readers to shift their prayer times to a spiritual focus on remaining in God’s will. Create a few sample prayers, using phrases from Psalm 91.