

Freelance submissions due by October 15, 2014

All about us: *SEEK*[®] is a magazine created to encourage adults in their walk with Jesus Christ. *SEEK*[®] corresponds to the topics of Standard Publishing'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 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 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 Fall 2015: Unit 1, *Seeds of New Growth* (Issues 1–4); Unit 2, *Giving Bold Testimony* (Issues 5–8); Unit 3, *Spreading the Gospel* (Issues 9–13).

Issue 1: Praying for Boldness (Be Bold)

September 6, 2015

Scripture: Acts 4:23-31

What to Write: At critical times in their lives, people search for strength to weather the storm. The earliest followers of Christ raised their voices together to God in prayer and were filled with strength from the Holy Spirit to speak God's Word with boldness. Share insights into prayer as the means through which the reader can remain a strong voice for change and effective ministry in the communities where they live. Encourage readers to go outside their comfort zone to minister to others in specific ways.

Issue 2: Sharing with Sincerity (Be Generous)

September 13, 2015

Scripture: Acts 4:34–5:10

What to Write: Help the reader to understand the sacrifices and rewards for willingness to share possessions with others who are in need. Christians understand that the church lives counterculturally, sacrificing for the common good and sharing rather than hoarding resources. Research and write true stories of people who have experienced satisfaction when they have made a difference in the lives of others by sharing. Encourage the reader to be a person of encouragement.

Issue 3: Speaking Up for God (Speak Out)

September 20, 2015

Scripture: Acts 5:27-29, 33-42

What to Write: Sometimes people are so dedicated to a cause that they will go to any length, even enduring pain and suffering, to advance that cause. The apostles were thus committed to teaching about Jesus as the Messiah, even though the authorities tried to stop them, because they were obeying God's call. Help the reader to compare their commitment to witnessing to that of the apostles. Discuss and overcome barriers to evangelism efforts within and without the church community. Is "civil disobedience" ever called for? Explore some insights on handling difficult situations. Readers are inspired by stories and accounts of courageous figures that stood up to authority figures for what was right and just.

Issue 4: Standing Firm Against Opposition (Stand Firm)

September 27, 2015

Scripture: Acts 7:2-4, 8-10, 17, 33, 34, 45-47, 52, 53

What to Write: Believers seek to understand the history of God's relationship with His people in order to understand what God is doing today. Expound on God's faithfulness through the ages. Explore parallels between the crucifixion of Jesus and the stoning of Stephen. What are the differences between human tradition and tradition based in biblical and theological teachings? Suggest ways a person can know when he or she is defending a human tradition and when he or she is taking a legitimate stand for what is right.

Issue 5: Simon Is Rebuked (The Source of True Power)

October 4, 2015

Scripture: Acts 8:9-24

What to Write: How can we, like Philip, be the presence of Christ to the "undesirable people" of this world? Discuss the levels of passion and maturity that believers experience on their faith journeys. The Samaritans went from being followers of a pretender to Spirit-filled believers in Christ. How would you compare their faith development to people today? Discuss the importance of genuine motives as it relates to our expectations of receiving spiritual power from God. The Samaritans were amazed and believed in Simon. They thought they were believing in the true divine power. How are people misled like that today? What can we do to show them the truth of God's love and the power of the Holy Spirit?

Issue 6: Saul Begins to Preach (Earning the Right to Be Heard)

October 11, 2015

Scripture: Acts 9:19b-31

What to Write: Discuss what it means to be an advocate for someone. What effects can it have on a person's life to know they have someone in their corner? Effective advocates boldly tell others about their deepest convictions. Paul's bold preaching of the gospel was powerful, amazed the people, gave peace to many churches, and caused an increase in the number of followers. How can we experience similar rewards to what Paul did in living out our zeal for the gospel?

Issue 7: Peter Preaches to Gentiles (Guess Who's Coming to Dinner)

October 18, 2015

Scripture: Acts 10:24-38

What to Write: It is very natural for humans to show partiality. Peter's recognition that God does not show partiality allowed him to share the good news with the Gentiles. How can the reader identify, support, and give voice to risk-takers for Christ in the local and world communities? Compare and contrast the risks Peter took in sharing the gospel with Cornelius with risks we may be asked to take today in sharing our faith. Discuss what it means to say that Christian belief is a "leap of faith."

Issue 8: Peter Defends His Actions (The Welcoming Committee)

October 25, 2015

Scripture: Acts 11:1-18a

What to Write: When someone's actions are contrary to community norms, they will be required to report the results of their work. Peter's report of how the Holy Spirit had fallen on the Gentiles led to the Jerusalem church's endorsement of his actions. Help the reader to identify and live out New Testament Scriptures that emphasize inclusion of all people in the body of Christ. Discuss ways human prejudices can become hindrances to the work of God. Use real-life examples as evidence. How can we best confront these prejudices in others and ourselves when we discover them? Discuss various ways that God works in spite of human prejudice. How does this inform us about God's willingness to use imperfect vessels to accomplish God's purposes? Give examples of how believers can praise God by acknowledging the good works of others.

Issue 9: God Rescues Peter (Who Will Come to the Rescue?)

November 1, 2015

Scripture: Acts 12:1-11

What to Write: In the midst of perilous life situations, deliverance sometimes appears to come through miraculous means. Acts shows that the fervent prayer of the church and the work of an angel provided Peter's deliverance. Identify places where Christian believers are persecuted for their faith. Encourage the reader to commit to pray for these fellow believers on a regular basis. Consider the difference between what happened to James (killed) and what happened to Peter (rescued). Discuss why God seems to answer prayers for some Christians with release, healing, "success," etc. but not for other (equally faithful) Christians, who suffer pain, sickness, financial ruin, and death in spite of the intercessions being made on their behalf.

Issue 10: Saved by Grace (A New Way for a New Day)

November 8, 2015

Scripture: Acts 15:1-12

What to Write: Because the new covenant is not based on law keeping, certain aspects of the old covenant are no longer valid. The Jerusalem Council affirmed the role of grace in salvation and freed Gentiles from keeping Jewish ritual. Adults can be very committed to their knowledge of "the right way to do things," traditions, and religious observances. Help the reader to initiate a process of discernment of God's will when tradition and evangelism appear in conflict. Construct a model for conflict resolution based on Acts 15.

Issue 11: From Derbe to Philippi (Ready, Set, Go!)

November 15, 2015

Scripture: Acts 16:1-5, 8-15

What to Write: Sometimes what starts as one thing grows and changes into something else—something more extensive than one's original intent. Because Paul was open to the Lord's leading, his preaching resulted in the good news going into new regions, including the first preaching in Europe. Challenge the reader to spread the gospel in every aspect of his or her life. Raise issues of gender in the leadership roles in church ministries and dialogue on these and how problems of discrimination and prejudice may be overcome; incorporate 1 Timothy 2:12 into the discussion.

Issue 12: Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens (Turning the World Upside Down)

November 22, 2015

Scripture: Acts 17:1-4, 10-12, 22-25, 28

What to Write: When we pass on our convictions to others, some are convinced and others reject the message. Luke shows that Paul was undeterred and continued telling the good news, preaching with passion and conviction. People of faith regularly encounter the clash between contemporary

culture and Christian faith. Share ways to handle rejection of their presentation of the gospel so that they are not deterred but continue telling the good news with growing passion and conviction. What are some strategies for implementing Berean-style Bible study, including eagerly receiving the Word, daily examining Scriptures to test teachings, believing and acting on what is learned? Give examples of well-known and lesser-known defenders of Christian faith. How can we learn to give thoughtful, positive defenses of our faith?

Issue 13: Teaching God's Word (Speak Without Fear)

November 29, 2015

Scripture: Acts 18:1-11, 18-21a

What to Write: People can be persistent when they really believe that what they are doing and saying is the right thing. The success in Paul's Corinthian mission and God's affirmation led Paul to extend his mission of proclaiming the good news there for 18 months before moving on to Ephesus. Encourage the reader to pray for the success of those whom God has placed in a new and challenging situation. Interview someone about his or her personal experiences in ministry, including: how prayer informed his or her decision, how they perceived the call; the questions and struggles they faced, the sacrifices they made; the transitions they had to make; the doubts they experienced; the opposition, if any, they encountered; the successes they experienced. List ways that Paul's enthusiasm for the task was manifested. Then discuss how to distinguish between enthusiasm and fanaticism.