

A photograph of a person sitting on the floor with a silver laptop on their lap. The person is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and wide-leg, multi-colored striped pants. Their hands are on the laptop keyboard. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Notes to  
**Aspiring  
Writers**  
Your Dream      God's Plan

Brooke L. McGlothlin

# Notes to Aspiring Writers

Your Dream, God's Plan

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Brooke L. McGlothlin

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# A Note to Aspiring Writers

The writing dream lives in many hearts. It took me years to realize it, but sitting in a room of 500 other women who were all hoping for a chance to be seen, heard, and noticed ... the message was loud and clear.

*God may not plan to use me in the way I dreamed He would.*

I may never become a published author or inspire large groups of women. One in a million. Lost in the crowd. A nobody.

I know I'm not the only aspiring writer to have felt this way. Others too numerous to count have felt the sting of rejection, the sheer devastation of handing what amounts to your very soul, written in black and stamped "book proposal" to a person who has the power to make or break your dreams.

Some give up and never try again--the pain of rejection just too difficult to bear. Others continue trying, refusing to give up on what they believe is the next best-seller. And still others become content to write for an audience of One, learning valuable lessons along the way that have more to do with life than writing, more sanctification than publication.

*Notes to Aspiring Writers* is a compilation of five significant life lessons, sanctification lessons, I learned as I walked the publishing path. It is not a tips-and-tricks-of-the-trade kind of book, but rather a look at the writer's heart--the very thing our God cares about the most. It's written mainly for women who are mothers. But the message rings true for anyone hungry to see her name on a book, or with a dream in her heart.

To all of the aspiring writers, God sees you and hears you and you are more precious to Him than priceless jewels. In fact, He will go to any length, move any mountain, swim any ocean in pursuit of your heart. Perhaps this writing journey and all of its failures and flops is the very means He has chosen to make you more like His Son.

Brooke McGlothlin



*"Perhaps this writing journey is the very means God has chosen to make you more like His Son."*

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# A Story of Woe

I've wanted to write a book my entire life.

But not just any old book. I have a theme, outline, chapter names and a brilliant title (I think). For a time, I just knew it was how God wanted to use all that He's taught me over the course of the last ten years of ministering to women. Watching them struggle in the same basic areas over and over again left me with a thesis I knew I could prove, not just from life experience, but also from the Word in a fresh, life-giving way.

I set about writing this book last spring intent on having a proposal for it packaged and ready to go for the She Speaks Writer's Conference in July 2010. The passion I felt for this book was driving and I believed that it just might be my life's mission. I looked at this book and saw the quilt of my life: all the different pieces finally fitting together in a display of God's mercy, love, and forgiveness. A message I believed with all of my heart (and still believe) women need desperately to hear.

## **But God said no.**

One morning, after attempting to write a small sample piece of one chapter, I published it on my [blog](#). But I knew what I was trying to communicate wasn't coming across in the grace-filled way I was hoping for. By mid-morning I had taken the article down and found myself deep in prayer over what the Lord was showing me.

*I wasn't ready.*

Or more specifically, my heart wasn't ready. I hadn't learned all I needed to about Christ to be able to write the book in a way that would honor Him. And I knew it.

So, as Henry Blackaby suggests in the popular study *Experiencing God*, I stepped back to look at what God was already doing in my life and decided to join Him in it. What I saw was a booming and life-giving community for mothers of boys: [The M.O.B. Society](#) (FOR moms of boys, BY moms of boys) and [Warrior Prayers](#). So I began writing the book you may know as [Warrior Prayers: Praying the Word for Boys in the Areas They Need It Most](#).

Laying down the dream and desire of my heart, and picking up the calling God placed in my life changed me. I'm honestly not the same person I was one year ago. Total immersions in new levels of grace, conflicts over the very topics I hoped to write about that *had* to be resolved, and messages that no less than pierced me and left me undone, open, and exposed before my Father; these experiences have changed who I am at a fundamental level.

The reality of my dream book is this: if I had pushed outside of God's leading and written the book that was on my heart, it would've lacked the grace it needed to balance a difficult subject. I know down in my knower that you, the readers, would've felt judged and condemned.

I'd like to share with you--my friends and aspiring writers--all that God has shown me so far and how He has changed me from the inside out. Step with me through the next several pages as I share about

these topics and more:

- Your Life's Mission
- Comparisons & Striving
- Living in God's Leading
- The Kindness of God
- The REAL Reason You're Not Getting Published



*"Has God ever said "no" to your dreams?"*

## Study Questions

1. Describe your journey to publication so far. What are some of the ups and downs you've endured?
2. How long have you held on to the writing dream?
3. Look around you. What does God seem to be doing in your life? Is there a way you can join Him in it from a writing perspective?
4. Linda Gildea says, "*When I write I feel God's pleasure.*" Can you relate?
5. Have you ever thought about the writer's journey as part of the sanctification process?

## Your Life's Mission?

*"You can do anything you set your mind to ... "*

*"Surround yourself with positive people ... "*

*"Don't allow people to tell you you can't do something ... "*

*"Reach for your dreams ... "*

When we're feeling down, useless or depressed, we're invigorated by words of affirmation. They help us stay the course, keep the goal in sight, and remember what we're after in life: our dreams. And dreams give us something to look forward to, something to work toward. *But are our dreams always the same as God's plans?*

I had believed that writing a traditionally published book was my life's mission. A way for the Lord to pull together everything He had taught me, to create the quilt that held all of the patches of my life: the ones that matched and the ones that didn't.

But God said no. At least "not yet," or "not in the way you might think." He showed me how to exchange my temporal dreams for His eternal ones, which changed my understanding of what it means to live the Christian life. The definition of "Christian," is no definition at all if it doesn't include the word "sacrifice."

I made a choice almost nine years ago to place a band of white gold on my hand. Three years later I made a choice to bring a child into the world ... 23 months later, another. And with those choices came a fundamental, inescapable sacrifice:

My dreams.

You might think that sounds harsh. In a world where two incomes and women's rights prevail it may seem silly for a wife and mother to think she can't "have it all." Never before has it been so easy for a woman to have a marriage, family, and the career of her dreams. \*\*Never before have rates of divorce and children leaving the faith of their family been so high. In light of this, does sacrificing my dreams sound so harsh? Difficult, maybe, but harsh? No, never. For when Christ chose me as His own, He called me to a life of laying down, surrender and sacrifice. A putting off exchanged for a putting on. The old Brooke for the new.

It's an unfair trade. He gets my selfish dreams, I get His dreams for a better me than I could ever imagine or ever create on my own.

A Christian life's mission isn't about getting, but giving. Not about keeping, but letting go.

When the back that won't be little long needs scratching, I leave my dreams at the computer screen and scratch. When the little mind soaking up the world around him needs mommy to help him sound out the words, I lay down my dreams and rejoice in his victories. When that sweet little voice says, "Mommy, come be with me," I close down Twitter and walk away from the world of my dreams and into the world of his. When the bigger man in my life needs someone to talk to, love, laugh with, I click save and walk away ...

Because my dreams are bigger than just writing, and my life's mission is more than a book.

Nineteen years of education, a BS and an MA, yet most days find me wiping noses, kissing boobos, and holding little hearts in the palm of my hand.

For the mom, what is real success?

In the midst of an unusually tough day the thoughts come to me: how did I get from there to here? It's the warm weather that reminds me of the freedom I felt in those days as I traveled to grad school with the windows down. My long hair blew in the breeze, whipping its way across my face and making me feel like I could do anything. Be anything.

The whole world was ahead of me. My family believed in me, my boyfriend (now husband) cherished me, and I felt good about who God was creating from the garbled ingredients that were my life. Crystal Lewis and I belted out "*I will go wherever You lead, be light in the dark and be salt in the street.*" I knew I could do or be anything God wanted.

But I never banked on Him asking me to give up my dreams.

I had defined success as capturing these dreams of mine. To teach women, share His Truth, and help them embrace it, live it and love it with everything they have. But as with most things, God's definition of success is laced with the giving up and laying down and the striving, and spending of a very different kind.

*On what are you spent?*

In Second Corinthians we find a Paul who has given up everything to share the Good News with a people all too often stubborn, disobedient, indifferent, disrespectful and unkind. Paul was called by God to the Corinthians. Through his willingness to sacrifice and spread the Gospel, we live a life with hope for something different. Paul lived a life offered up for the sake of his calling. And because of God's work through the hand of Paul, I am saved.

I look around my home and watch another people all too often stubborn, disobedient, indifferent, disrespectful, and unkind: my own little Corinthians. Paul was imprisoned, beaten, ignored and stripped of his dignity. He suffered, he prayed, he pleaded. He disciplined, encouraged, exhorted, and endured open rebellion. I read Paul's words and I know they were meant for me this day and every day:

*"I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls." ~2 Corinthians 12:15*

Is there ever anything so valuable to the mother's heart as the soul of her child? Is there ever anything that tempts her to feel more like a failure than to be with the ones she bore and be ignored, stripped? To suffer, pray, and plead for their souls? To discipline, encourage, exhort, and endure open rebellion from the ones who came from her own body? There's endless spending and being spent, and hoping to be found lovable and true in their eyes. Longing to be wanted and respected and loved: her dreams are laid to rest. Waiting--so there's time for the spending and being spent, and all this for the soul of her child?

*What is success?*

*I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls.* I see and hear these words in the emails and comments of 1300 women in seven different countries all gathered together on their knees for the [hearts of their sons](#) in the [21 Days of Prayer for Sons](#) challenge. Moms ache for their children, ache for their families and those they've been called to serve.

*"For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." ~Luke 9:24*

On the topic of knowing and being in the will of God, Henry Blackaby says, "look around you and see what God is already doing, then join Him in it" ([Experiencing God](#)). Could it be that God would call us to give up our own dreams for the sake of picking up His? Could it be that real success *does* lie in the spending and being spent? There's nothing glamorous about the spent life, but there *is* an undeniable grace and amazingly beautiful power and truth that screams out to the world "**there's something more!**" in this, the spent life.

No, I don't believe our dreams are always the same thing as God's plan for us. Sometimes, in His mercy and kindness, God places His dreams in our hearts from the beginning and brings them to fruition for His glory. But even then there will be a laying down along the way ... a sacrifice on the journey toward them.

A life's mission is a life sacrificed for *His* glory. A life's mission is a life spent following *His* dreams and laying mine down--the unfair trade.

*"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?" ~Matthew 16:26*

**\*\* For a grace-filled position on women working outside the home, please read [To Work or Not to Work...That is the Question](#).**



*"Writers, what is your life's mission?"*

## Study Questions

1. Have you ever considered the fact that God's dreams and your dreams might not be the same thing?
2. Perhaps you're not a young mother. But you probably do have relationships in your life that needs to take priority over your writing career. Can you relate to the calling Brooke describes to sacrifice in this chapter?

3. What do you feel God calling you to? Is it different than what you *want* to do?

4. In this chapter, Brooke describes a time when she felt she had the whole world in front of her. Have you experienced a season like that? Do you miss it?

5. Describe the season you're in now and how it affects your writing dream.

## Comparisons & Striving

When I started blogging I thought I was the only person in the world doing it.

*Laughable, I know.*

I started out like many of you, writing for the benefit of my family. We live an hour and a half away from them and they weren't getting to see every milestone in our children's lives. So, without even knowing I was doing it, I started my own little mom blog and posted whenever I felt inspired to equate something my children had done to a life lesson. My articles, if you can even call them that, were longish and in desperate need of editing. If a story can be told in the longest way possible, you can count on me to do it. I'm wordy, I enjoy writing "creatively" (which is "aspiring writer" for too many ellipses), and I didn't do it often enough to get better. It was an outlet, pure and simple.

### **Until everything changed.**

The first of what would be four significant family deaths in three years happened on my youngest son's first birthday. Ten months later, just days before we lost the second of my dad's brothers to the same disease, I wrote a story called [\*The Brothers Three\*](#) (warning: it's raw). My family still talks about it. I cried big, hot tears through it and got so much feedback of the "you're a talented writer" variety that I kept going. And what started as a monthly sit down to blog quickly became a passionate, nightly pursuit of finding God in the everyday.

Up to that point, I'm sure I had never read another person's blog.

Then I joined Twitter, and an entire world that I hadn't known existed opened its doors to me. I began to tweet the link to my blog as well as read links from other people's tweets. I gained followers, and finally got past that eerie feeling that I was just talking to myself.

I quickly connected with other women on Twitter whose hearts beat similarly to mine. I spent all my "free" time learning the art of blogging and doing everything the "experts" said I absolutely HAD to do in order to get noticed.

- I connected with an encouragement group.
- I commented on other people's blogs.
- I wrote every weekday.
- I posted my blogs to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and everything else.
- I put myself out there by writing for online magazines, guest posting for like-minded blogs
- I chatted with "bigger" bloggers, begging for advice and help.

I did everything I possibly could to get noticed, sometimes feeling like I was standing in the middle of a crowded, noisy room screaming, "LOOK AT ME!" at the top of my lungs. And I waited ... waited ... waited ... and prayed for the comments to come.

Sometimes, they did, and I was happy. Sometimes, they didn't, and I was crushed. It seemed like the more effort and heart I put into a blog the fewer comments I got. I surfed the blogosphere and read articles getting a whole lot more traffic. I became jealous of friends who were able to do things before me, and always wanted to know how much traffic they were getting. If my stats were down, I took it personally. If they were up, I took it personally. I began ignoring my sweet husband at night because I

couldn't let anything come between me and my dreams ... and writing was my dream.

*But God's dreams for us aren't always the same as our dreams for us. And He will use the power of heaven to win back the heart of His beloved.*

If you follow [my blog](#) you know the rest of the story. God showed me that I was the [Chief of Sinners](#). He didn't grant [my dream](#) in the way I thought He should, and then He [turned my life upside down](#) at a [conference](#) I naively thought was going to teach me about blogging.

*One year of passionate pursuit by my Savior, and I am not the same woman.*

In October of last year the Lord lead me to [turn off my comments](#). He convicted me to lay down my dream of a book and to say no to an offer from a Publishing House that I love and esteem (yes, I had an offer, but I knew the type of offer wasn't right). He directed me to write for His glory alone and in the course of six months this has changed who I am as a writer and as a person.

As I committed to write only what I heard Him saying and listen to His voice for approval and correction, my writing began to change, and my heart along with it. I put away striving and chose to allow Him to show me the next right thing to do, which caused my perspective on success to radically change. I began to see the hand of God move ... sometimes in small ways that only meant something to me, other times in large ways that made much of His Name. And now I sit before you completely amazed at all He has done.

It's in the yielding and the laying down--the embracing of weakness--that opportunity for God's strength to be made perfect knocks on our door.

*"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me." ~2 Corinthians 12:9*

Oh friend, God's dreams aren't always ours. But they're so much better than ours could ever hope to be. If you're a new blogger or writer, may I speak to your heart for just a moment?

Relax.

Breathe.

Love your family. Make the sacrifices God requires of you to love them *well*. There will be time for your success later. And for the Christian, *your* success was never intended to be your life's pursuit.

Be faithful to that which God calls you each and every day. Write what you feel Him wanting to say through you. Don't be afraid to allow your writing to be critiqued, and don't worry if your writing doesn't get the attention you think it should.

There is One who sees it, and His gaze is the only one that really matters. In HIS time, He will bring HIS dreams to you. Focus most of your time and energy on knowing Him, loving Him, and walking in intimate pursuit of relationship with Him.

*Then, when He does bring dreams your way (often disguised as opportunities), you'll be ready.*



*“Are our dreams and God's plans always the same thing?”*

## Study Questions

1. Brooke shares an intimate look at how she got started in her writing career in this chapter. How did you get started?
2. Have you ever been to a writing conference? What was the experience like for you?
3. Have you ever considered writing for an audience of One? What does it feel like to know that God sees you and cares about your writing?
4. Have you yielded your writing dream to the Lord? Are you willing to be satisfied with what He has planned for your writing career?
5. Have you joined the world of Social Media? Has it helped or hindered your journey? Explain your experience here.

# How to Live in God's Leading

The light was red.

At the intersection of Orange and Little Caesar's we slowed to a stop. It was a warm day, and we had rolled our windows down and turned our radio up. On a whim, I turned my head to the left and looked down at the spring green grass growing in the median.

Zooming in closer, my eyes focused on one single blade of grass, a bit taller than the rest. I zoomed in tighter. This one blade of grass, among trillions of others, called me to look, and caused me to think, "will I ever see that blade of grass again?"

You might read that and think, "This woman has lost her mind!" Call it a quirk, but this ability to zoom in and take note of the minute things is something I've experienced all my life. As a young girl I often stared out the window of my parents' van only to see one single flower, a tree, a beautiful rose bush or a rock on the side of the road and wonder, "will I ever see that again?"

Pulling the small things close brings me comfort.

In our quest to hear God's voice, to believe that He is who He says He is, to trust that He cares about even the smallest details of our lives, how do we sift through all of the noise? How do we look past the dreams, details and distractions of life to see the One who rises above the rest and longs for our gaze?

## **How do we live in God's leading?**

The most profound words I've ever heard came from a woman I was supposed to be helping. A client at the Crisis Pregnancy Center where I served for eight years spilled her heart to me about her new walk with the Lord, and how her only goal was to listen for the "next right thing to do." Under extreme duress, putting out the fires of one crisis after another, she had dug in her heels and determined to live in God's leading.

Isn't living in God's leading more about listening for the next right thing to do, and less about the end result?

All of my life I've worked toward goals.

- Getting through High School at the top of my class (2nd in a big class of 72)
- Graduating from college
- Graduating from my master's program
- Getting married
- Getting a job
- Having children
- Staying at home to raise those children

Stepping--stones. Building blocks. Working toward my dreams. When one step was complete I set my sights on the next. And I knew exactly where I was going. A concrete ending, big picture, awaited me as I moved through life--goals always before me.

Striving.

But as you know from my story, there came a point where the striving stopped. I began to "be" where I was, not looking ahead to the next step, the next link in the chain of my success. And the funniest thing happened. As I committed to listening for the next right thing, I began to hear.

Inspired, I took a hands-off stance toward my dream, acknowledging that the plans God had for me were far better than my own, and knowing in my knower that *if* anything would come of this dream it would happen God's way, not mine. And for the first time ever, I really wanted it that way.

*"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." ~Jeremiah 29:11*

His plans for us are good, but do we believe it? And if we really do believe, do we listen for it? And if we're listening, do we full on tackle His plans for us with wholehearted devotion? Or is His leading all too often clouded by our own dreams for success or what we feel we deserve?

At its root, the Christian life is about dying. A dying to self and all that we ever dreamed was rightfully ours, and a raising up of a *new* creation and access to all that is rightfully His: the unfair trade.

**To live in God's leading, we have to die to our own.**

As I was in the process of writing my first eBook, [\*Warrior Prayers: Praying the Word for Boys in the Areas They Need it Most\*](#), I dedicated every step I took, every marketing effort, to God in prayer. Reasonable for a book on prayer, no? But don't discount it for your efforts. I had no marketing expertise and very little experience with eBooks when I started. I only knew that living in God's leading and waiting for Him to tell me the next right thing to do would ensure that the book would become everything God wanted it to be, and not just what I wanted it to be. I died to my dreams for this book over and over again, and God has made it His. That's where it needed to be all along.

What is the last thing you truly know God asked you to do? It doesn't have to be something big or profound. Perhaps it was as simple as hugging a difficult child, or making that phone call you've put off for months. Maybe you heard Him say "*forgive as I forgave,*" or "*serve as I served.*" Can you remember?

Whatever it was, did you do it? If not, start there.

But what if you don't know how to recognize God's voice? If you struggle to know and hear Him, read His Word.

*"... but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" ~Hebrews 1:1*

The Bible is God's Word. The Word, according to John 1:14, is Jesus. If God speaks to us by His Son, who *is* the Word made flesh (John 1:14), then to hear we must read that Word and pursue knowing Him. If you don't know how to hear God's voice, then listen, read in the Word, and obey. You won't go wrong through simple and faithful obedience. And as you draw near to Him, He will draw near to you, pulling the small things close, sifting through the noise of the world, showing you the next right thing to do.



*“To live in God's leading, we have to die to our own.”*

## Study Questions

1. What does it mean to you to “live in God’s leading?” Is this a foreign concept, or one you’re familiar with?
2. What are some of the goals you’ve had in life? What goals are you working toward right now?
3. Would it be a huge step of faith for you to stop striving in your writing career, and consider letting God bring the right opportunities to you instead?
4. What would it be like if you dedicated every single decision you made about your writing career to God? Not just one time, but every time an opportunity presents itself?
5. What was the last thing you truly know God asked you to do? Did you do it? If not, commit to doing it to the best of your ability now.

## The Kindness of God Leads You To...

It is wildly easy in this blogging and writing world to want what someone else has.

Especially for us "smaller bloggers." We see friends and colleagues "making it," or even "making it big," and we simply want what they have. Almost a gut-response, this coveting of others' successes and fame can be the root of innumerable problems. And over time it will destroy our chance at getting the very things we so badly want.

*How do I know?*

For as long as I can remember I've wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. I remember as early as the 8th grade telling someone I wanted to be a Christian counselor. Sounds lofty and noble, right? Don't be impressed: I really had no idea what I was getting into. But I did pursue that dream, attained it, and have the degrees on the wall to prove it (at my dad's house ... he said he paid for them, so he gets to keep them ... humph).

Later in my life, my desire to help focused on reaching out to women in unplanned pregnancy. Then God turned my heart toward home and gave me a passion to help my children and husband. But through it all, I have never lost the desire to help women walk out their faith, applying the truth they read in the Bible to their everyday lives.

*Only problem?*

I'm one of a million in blogland that want to do the exact same thing. And at times I find this fact disconcerting. Did I say disconcerting? What I actually meant to say was TOTALLY OVERWHELMING. Can we be honest enough here to admit that it hurts to see what we thought was a spectacular idea grabbed by someone bigger and better? It hurts to see someone try his or her hand at what you've already done and hit the ball out of the park, when you barely made it to first base.

Just recently I experienced something like this. A chat, if you will, that exposed how very little and insignificant I truly am, exposed my sin, and broke my heart. Silly, no? That one small chat could break my heart? But when it's our hearts we've laid bare in our writing, and offered them up to the takers, it can leave us broken. And during that chat? During that chat my desire to have what someone else has was laid bare.

**Confession:** I am a bitter, jealous person with a heart full of selfish ambition. *Are you?*

What I'm about to say may shock or offend you. But it's the truth.

*Do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual and demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.*

Sound familiar? It should. It comes from James 3:14-16.

Are you an aspiring writer or blogger? I don't think it's too strong of a statement for me to say, "beware." Why beware? Because all that I've learned from all my degrees and all my experiences is this:

*God cares more about changing, wooing, and loving you, than He does using you and your message.*

And if He does decide to use you, He will dig down deep into the parts of your heart you never knew were there ... the sins with cobwebs, whose roots grow so deep it takes the kindness of God to pull them out.

As I reeled in the aftermath of my own exposed sin I began to feel an old familiar weight settle on my heart. I knew that this was no new thing I was experiencing, but an old sin manifesting in a new way. Same root. But this time, instead of pressing into my sin and allowing it to rule me, I rejected it. I immediately closed my laptop, opened the Word of God and *thanked* Him for laying me bare.

*Thanked God?*

Yes. For the longer I walk with Christ, the more layers of my sin He peels away, the more I realize it is His kindness that leads me to repentance. Or maybe that it is His kindness TO lead me to repentance.

Maybe you don't struggle with what I've described above. Maybe your writing/blogging frustrations come from other directions or are rooted in another type of sin. Whatever your lot, God *will* expose you. Maybe in public, maybe in private, but count on this: He loves you too much to leave you the way you are.

*True freedom is only found in obedience to Christ. Indeed, it is for freedom that He has set us free (Galatians 5:1).*

I polled a few of my friends on Twitter to see how they cope with feeling like 1 in 1,000,000,000,000 ... (you get the point). There's wisdom in a multitude of counselors. This is what they had to say:

**Kristin (@theschellcafe)** - *i try to remember my audience isn't the many who are all hearing the same thing but the one who hasn't heard at all.*

**Angela (@rethinkingme)** - *if I don't say/blog what God has given me to say/blog. It burns in me like a fire and I get weary of holding it like Jeremiah.*

**Shannon (@sdmiller79)** - *If its God's calling, you won't be the one writing it #DivinelyInspired!*

**Kristi (@krististephens)** - *God uses a lot of voices to reach different people. There are certain ones, not all, I'm made to reach that others can't.*

**Kasondra (@themorinhouse)** - *if I can touch one person with my words I consider it all worthwhile.*

These words, and others like them, help me keep my writing/blogging world in perspective. They give me discernment as I ponder God's plan for me and why He's keeping me where I am.

The answer to that is in the last chapter.



*"Writers, what are your biggest heart struggles?"*

## Study Questions

1. Have you ever been jealous of another writer's success? Describe your feelings here. How did you deal with it?
2. In this chapter, Brooke describes feeling like one in a million (or more) women all trying to accomplish the same thing. Have you ever felt discouraged at the sheer volume of writers trying to get published?
3. Have you ever thanked God for loving you enough to expose the inner workings of your heart? If not, consider doing it now.
4. Do you ever think of yourself as a bitter, jealous person with a heart full of selfish ambition? If so, what do you need to do about it?
5. Why might struggling in this area be a hindrance to your writing career? Why might God want to weed it out?

# The REAL Reason You're Not Getting Published

Since I began this writing journey, there have been many times that I've asked the question, "Why are You keeping me here Lord? Why don't I have more success, more followers, more impact for Your Kingdom?" Ever asked that question?

The traditional publishing world would tell me that I need an agent, or to take more writing classes to strengthen my skill. They would tell me to attend writer's conferences, learn about the industry, or even give up--because, let's face it, my writing is decent, but it's not award-winning material.

All of this wisdom is valuable and has proven itself a successful method over the years. But I truly believe that there is no absolute method when it comes to publishing. In other words, I don't believe that what works for one person will always work for everyone else.

Friend, the bottom, sometimes difficult, line, is this: God has lifted up some and not others. Maybe it's because they're more humble, better writers, more able to handle the stress of the spotlight, or in a different season of life where it's easier to be in the spotlight with grace. Maybe.

But I believe it has more to do with what's in their hearts. God still opposes the proud and still lifts up the humble (James 4:6). More important than asking "why" when faced with disappointment is to humbly seek God's glory.

Are there lessons you have left to learn? Are there parts of the character of God you need to know? Are you spiritually ready for what being published might bring? And can you humbly accept that God may not have the same plans for you as He does for someone else? That another writer may be more spiritually ready than you are, and therefore better able to hear God's voice and relay the message He wants communicated to an audience?

Maybe we're just not ready, you and I.

And maybe we just can't know or fully understand the infinite mind of God. Books that declare a sure fire publishing path are good. Secrets from top writers that have helped make them successful are wonderful and useful. We can learn much from those who have forged a path before us, but there is a spiritual element to this journey that we just can't ignore: God is sovereign and He does what He pleases. Our life plans are less about us, and more about how He receives the greatest glory.

And I think until we embrace this, we will always wonder where we fit ... or why we don't.

Thanks for joining me on the writing journey ...

## Study Questions

1. In this chapter, Brooke states that the bottom, sometimes difficult, line is that God has lifted up some and not others. What do you think about this? Do you agree or disagree?
2. Have you tried all of the methods above to make it in the traditional publishing world? How has it gone so far?
3. Are you proud or humble?
4. What does it feel like to know that God may not have the same plans for you as He does for another writer?
5. Do you have growing to do as a writer? As a person? As a Believer? Write some growth goals here for the next year.

## The Favor of a Review

I appreciate reviews, ratings and comments about this book on Amazon more than you know. Your kindness in taking a moment to share your opinion about this book can help spread the word to other aspiring writers who need a word of grace on their journey. If you've been blessed by this book, feel free to leave a review [here](#) or directly on its Amazon page next time you're at the computer.

You will also see a “Retweet this!” button at the bottom of this page. If you use Twitter, please share about this book with your friends.

I see all of your reviews and tweets and take them to heart. If you have a moment to help, I would appreciate your time.

Be blessed!

Brooke



*“I just finished Notes to Aspiring Writers: Your Dream, God's Plan by @BrookeWrites...”*

# Resources for Aspiring Writers

[\*Get Thyself to an Editor\*](#) (a word of thanks and wholehearted recommendation for [She Marks in Red](#))

[Notes to Aspiring Writers on Facebook](#)

[\*The Elevator Pitch\*](#) by Cliff Graham

[The Writing Spa](#)

[\*Write a Winning Book Proposal\*](#), by Michael Hyatt

[\*For the Write Reason\*](#), by Mary Beth Whalen

[\*How to Market and Sell Your eBook\*](#), by Sarah Mae

[Novel Rocket](#)

[Cec Murphey's Writer-to-Writer](#)

[She Speaks Writer's Conference](#)

[Design by Insight](#)

[\*Four Reasons Why You Must Take Responsibility for Your Own Marketing\*](#), by Michael Hyatt

[DuoLit Self-Publishing Services](#)

[\*The 11 Secrets of Getting Published\*](#), by Mary DeMuth

## About the Author

Brooke McGlothlin received her B.S. in Psychology from Virginia Tech (1999) and her Masters in Counseling from Liberty University (2003). A homeschooling mother of two young sons, Brooke is the Co-creator and Founder of the well-loved online community for moms of boys, the [M.O.B. Society](#), and offers hope for change to the hearts of women at her blog, [A Life in Need of Change](#).



*Notes to Aspiring Writers* was born out of her own writing journey, and her desire to help other aspiring writers see the process of sanctification behind the road to publication.

Brooke is also the author of [Warrior Prayers: Praying the Word for Boys in the Areas They Need it Most](#), the [21 Days of Prayer for Sons Leader's Guide](#) and the [21 Days of Prayer for Sons](#) prayer challenge.

She currently resides in Virginia with her husband--the man she's had a crush on since the 3rd grade--two sons, and their beloved English Bulldog, Deacon.

In the fall, Brooke morphs into a slightly different person. Most Saturdays you can find her jumping around the room and screaming at the television as she watches her beloved Virginia Tech Hokies play football.

You can follow her on Twitter as [@BrookeWrites](#) and see more of her work at [www.brookemcglathlin.com](http://www.brookemcglathlin.com).