

Freelance submissions due by July 1, 2017

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 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, along with your complete name **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 Summer 2018: Unit 1, *God Is Just and Merciful* (Issues 1–4); Unit 2, *Jesus Calls for Justice and Mercy* (Issues 5–9); Unit 3, *Paul Teaches About New Life in Christ* (Issues 10–13).

Issue 1: Justice and Sabbath Laws (Compliance vs. Compassion)

June 3, 2018

Scripture: Matthew 12:1-14

What to Write: We sometimes think of only grand ways to meet needs—like foreign mission trips. Give readers ways/steps to respond to needs that are right in front of them. // Share a true story of a time when setting aside cherished traditions caused friction, and describe the positive outcome. // Explore other Scriptures in which Jesus' behavior drew some people to Him and angered other people. Help readers know how to “be like Jesus”—and what good/bad responses to expect. // Write something like “Twisted Scriptures,” in which readers are cautioned against adding to/misinterpreting/misusing God's Word.

Issue 2: Parables of God's Just Kingdom (You Reap What You Sow)

June 10, 2018

Scripture: Matthew 13:24-33

What to Write: Describe some Christian ministries that work in non-Christian settings to help with problems of poor water supply, health concerns, or sex trafficking—and particularly explain how they use those opportunities to introduce people to Jesus. // Analyze ways to help Christians decide when to step back from an “evil” situation and passively wait for God's help versus when to actively step in. // Relate a true story of a time when a Christian made a real difference with a group of unbelievers. Actual dialogue would be good.

Issue 3: Jesus Teaches About Justice (More Than Lip Service)

June 17, 2018 [Father's Day]

Scripture: Matthew 15:1-9

What to Write: Several points in today's Scripture lend themselves to a Father's Day tie-in. Compare true father-child love and obedience to the way our relationship to God should work. // A humorous twist on a Father's Day article about obedience/commands could focus on a list of silly rules dads may have; then bring it home with the idea that God the Father's rules are always for our good and we obey out of love. // Interview a minister about a change his congregation made in order to be more faithful to God's commands. // To discredit the idea of "keeping up appearances," recall a time when a home repair designed to just cover up a bigger problem caused trouble later.

Issue 4: Reaping God's Justice (The Tables Are Turned)

June 24, 2018

Scripture: Luke 16:19-31

What to Write: Research universalism (the teaching that all people will eventually be saved). Use today's Scriptures and others to gently challenge that view // Draw from the ideas in James 5 to discuss the importance of sharing our riches with the less fortunate. // Create a fictional "what if" rewrite of this Scripture, portraying the rich man as being caring and generous. // Reflect on how we can handle suffering in this world when we know Jesus and know that "we win" in the end.

Issue 5: Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (To Forgive and Be Forgiven)

July 1, 2018

Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

What to Write: Explore the difference between big things that need to be "forgiven" and the more minor things we get angry about, which really should just be excused/overlooked. // Report on some stories in the news, when someone forgave something big (like a victim's family forgiving the killer). // This Scripture indirectly speaks against the idea of trying to earn forgiveness from God. We could never do enough for that—yet world religions tend to operate on a system of merit/works. Compare some of those details with true Christianity. // How is forgiveness not the same as letting a person "get away with" a serious offense? // Share testimonies of people whose deep wounds at first prevented them from forgiving. What finally happened?

Issue 6: Jesus Criticizes Unjust Leaders (Hypocrites!)

July 8, 2018

Scripture: Matthew 23:1-4, 23-26 \

What to Write: Write something like "How NOT to Live!"—putting in modern context some of the criticisms in the various "woes" about the Pharisees in Matthew 23. // Today's key verses (2, 3) beg for an article along the lines of "Do as I say, not as I do" or "Practice what you preach." // Approach the Pharisees' over-attention to minutiae in a humorous "when to leave the gnat in the lemonade" way. // Celebrate the example of several of the Bible's sincere servant leaders (whose lives were so different from the Pharisees' lives).

Issue 7: The Widow and the Unjust Judge (Persistence Pays Off)

July 15, 2018

Scripture: Luke 18:1-8

What to Write: Create a week's worth of fictional entries from the widow's journal. // Tackle the problem of unanswered prayer, including testimonies of hope and victory from multiple sources. // Report on several famous people whose rags-to-riches stories illustrate persistence.

// Explore Scriptures that tell us to “wait” on/for the Lord, and explain the apparent contradiction with this Scripture that says the Lord acts “quickly.”

Issue 8: Entering God’s Kingdom (Come In)

July 22, 2018

Scripture: Luke 13:22-30

What to Write: The background Scripture for today (Matthew 7:15-23) warns of being led astray by false prophets. Expound on the need for Christians to be discerning about whom they follow—making sure that their mentors are on Jesus’ true path and leading into, not away from, the kingdom. // Use some Old Testament accounts of God’s giving people multiple merciful chances, and, bringing in Scriptures like John 3:16 (showing God’s invitation to all), debunk the idea that Christianity wants to exclude people from the kingdom. // List some “wrong doors” that people try to go through for salvation.

Issue 9: Parable of the Great Dinner (Join the Party)

July 29, 2018

Scripture: Luke 14:15-24

What to Write: This Scripture teaches us that there are people who refuse Jesus’ invitation of their own free will. Give readers some kind/diplomatic ways to help friends lay aside their flimsy excuses and accept Him. Use actual sample dialogue. // Describe events your church has used to invite “outsiders” to fellowship with your group and learn more about Jesus. // Write a modern-day skit that involves incredible free tickets offered and flimsy rejections of those. // Recount true missionary stories that illustrate the ideas in this Scripture.

Issue 10: God’s Justice (No Favoritism)

August 5, 2018

Scripture: Romans 2:1-12

What to Write: How can we distinguish between the unscriptural kind of judging presented in this passage and a discernment that helps Christian friends stay on track? // People sometimes have a wrong idea of God as a harsh/unfair judge. Share some ways that we typically judge people unfairly (based on skin color, hairstyle, etc.), and help readers find reassurance in the fact that God does not have prejudices, that His judgments are righteous/perfect. // Create an acrostic article, using the letters of JUDGE or JUDGMENT to start each key point. // Express the ideas of this topic in the form of a prayer to God, confessing and repenting of judgmental behavior.

Issue 11: Giving Justly (Charitable Equity for All)

August 12, 2018

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15

What to Write: How should believers calculate what constitutes “generous”? // Interview several people who were moved at some time to give “beyond their means”—and report on how God blessed that action. // Verse 15 reflects back to the manna provision in Exodus 16:18. This “math” doesn’t match literal bookkeeping at all. Write a “God’s Math” piece, using wild math formulas to describe several Bible accounts in which God broke the rules of math. // Help readers consider viewing themselves as managers, not owners, of what God has given them. How would that change what they do? // “What If . . . ?” I cleaned out my cupboards, closets, basement, garage, and self-storage units and put all the items where they would do the most good?

Issue 12: Loving and Just Behavior (Equity in Conduct)

August 19, 2018

Scripture: Romans 12:9-21

What to Write: Focus on some of the opposites in this passage and write a love/hate article (Love humility . . . Hate pride, etc.). // Rewrite some of the listed things in a Ten Commandments sort of way (Thou shalt . . . Thou shalt not). But also illustrate the meanings by giving modern-day, true examples of people living those out. // If love is to be “without dissimulation” (sincere, genuine; v. 9), how can we exhibit love and live in harmony even when we don’t feel like it? Does practice make perfect?

Issue 13: Practicing Justice (Equity in Character)

August 26, 2018

Scripture: Colossians 3:5-17

What to Write: Note: Anything written for this issue needs to convey that the good we do is because we have Jesus (Colossians 3:1). // Illustrate the principles of this passage in an article titled “Think It, Say It, Do It.” // The “put on” in this Scripture is reminiscent of the armor of God in Ephesians 6. Create a “Getting Dressed” scenario to help readers associate items of clothing with the characteristics here (ex: shoes remind me to walk toward someone who needs mercy; sweater reminds me to exhibit warmth and kindness). // Verse 17 is a reminder that we have the high status of being ambassadors for Jesus. Show readers how to see themselves in the honored role of doing everything “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (v. 17). How would that make certain life situations easier? // Praise the Lord that we can live joyfully for Him (singing to Him) *because* we are saved, not in order to earn salvation.