Writer's Guidelines

Updated March 2019

The CHRISTIAN RESEARCH JOURNAL is the print publication of the Christian Research Institute (CRI), which is published four times per year. The JOURNAL specializes in in-depth research of religions, New Atheism, origins (design, theistic evolution, naturalism), aberrant Christian movements and teachings, general apologetics, ethical issues, and cultural apologetics (film, television, media, technology, and literature). Our goal is to equip the body of Christ in doctrine, discernment, and the defense of the Christian faith.

The specific nature of our focus means we do not accept poems, fiction, personal testimonies (except when they have exceptional apologetic applications), and articles on Scripture passages unrelated to our focus areas.

Almost nothing can better prepare you to write for the CHRISTIAN RESEARCH JOURNAL than familiarity with the JOURNAL itself. If you are not a regular reader of the JOURNAL, please read all the articles in recent issues that correspond to the type of article you wish to write (e.g., feature articles, Postmodern Realities, Practical Hermeneutics, Effective Evangelism, Viewpoint, and book reviews).

Articles should reflect a command of the subject at hand. Please be familiar with relevant primary source materials. Please make sure you have not missed some critical point relative to the subject and strive to make an original contribution, not just repeat what others have already written.

Unsolicited manuscripts and article queries are welcome. Please send your manuscript via e-mail to mcogdill@equip.org.

AUDIENCE

We aim to reach the thoughtful and inquisitive layperson, and also to be of service to the scholarly community. Please remember that although our audience includes many academics and specialists, it mainly consists of concerned laypersons.

SYNOPSES

Prepare a 250-300-word synopsis (i.e., abstract) for each feature article that is assigned at 3500 words or more. The synopsis word count should be included in the 3500 word total. *Please pay particular attention to the following rule, as it is one authors often fail to follow even after reading these guidelines*: the synopsis should not be a summary of the article per se. In other words, it should not summarize what the article *does* but rather what it *says*. It should present the gist of the article for those who want to get it at a glance. Do not introduce material in a synopsis that is not already mentioned in the article itself. Do not include citation numbers or references to notes in a synopsis; reserve such documentation for the text only.

QUALITY OF RESEARCH

- Use a variety of media (e.g., books, journals, websites) from a variety of sources (organizations, groups, authors) and viewpoints (Christian as well as non-Christian, where appropriate). If there is a discrepancy between Christian and secular sources, investigate the reasons for the discrepancy and address them in the article, bearing in mind that Christians as well as non-Christians have biases and can employ faulty research methods.
- Use only primary and original sources, except in rare cases where the use of other sources is

unavoidable. Quote sources directly; minimize the use of quotations from original authors "as quoted in" the works of other authors whenever the primary sources are obtainable. JOURNAL editors would lean toward rejecting an article based on overuse of secondary sources.

- Make sure all of your references are current (within the last five years, except for historical sources). Using references that are as up-to-the-minute as possible helps your article carry more weight and relevance for our readership.
- Your sources should have current references as well. If you must use a secondary source, even if it is less than five years old, the earlier primary source that you are citing from within it should be no more than a year or so older.

VOCABULARY/TONE

While JOURNAL articles are often longer than standard popular magazine features, our articles are thoroughly footnoted and documented, and at times of necessity use technical terms that are intellectually challenging and stretching for the lay reader. Since the lay reader *is* our primary targeted reader, it is important when dealing with technical content to not assume any background with the material on the part of readers. Seek to make your article as accessible to all readers as you possibly can. Do not submit a straight academic paper which can come across as dry and daunting to the lay reader.

- Avoid dry, merely descriptive article titles such as, "An Evaluation of Smith's Arguments."
- Please use technical terms only when necessary to the development of an article, and supply definitions for all such words the first time they appear in each article.
- Use Greek, Hebrew, and other foreign languages, only where absolutely necessary, with the same discretion (italicized and transliterated when applicable). Make the English translation of each word clear.
- We prefer the use of the singular first person ("I," "me") over the formal "this writer," and especially discourage use of the plural first person, unless you are clearly speaking on behalf of a collective entity. On the other hand, we discourage frequent use of the second person pronoun "you" in JOURNAL articles, except in more informal columns such as Effective Evangelism, Postmodern Realities and some Viewpoint articles.
- We desire that the JOURNAL be read by those whose positions we criticize. We therefore seek to avoid unnecessary offensiveness. Steer clear of the overuse of derogatory adjectives. We strive to "speak the truth in love," showing respect for the people whom we discuss, acknowledging whatever truth may be found in their overall teaching while exposing whatever error may underlie their beliefs and practices.

ORGANIZATION

- All articles 1700 words and longer should have subheadings.
- Please avoid the use of unimaginative, formal subheadings (e.g., "Introduction," "Conclusion") that merely announce to the reader what you are about to do. One of the purposes of subheads is to interest the selective reader (who is scanning through the magazine) in reading your article.
- All department articles of 1700 or more words (e.g., those written for Postmodern Realities, Effective Evangelism, Viewpoint, and Practical Hermeneutics) also should have subheadings, but only run-in sideheads, which flow right into the text on the same line.

ARTICLE LENGTH

- Unless otherwise assigned by the editor, JOURNAL articles should have the following number of words:

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Feature articles:	3,500 or 2,200 (as assigned)
Summary Critique Review:	1,700
Standard Review:	800

Effective Evangelism:	1,700
Postmodern Realities:	1,700
Practical Hermeneutics:	1,700
Viewpoint:	1,700

- Word counts *include* footnotes, the synopsis (if applicable), and a one- or two-sentence bioline. In other words, every word in the document you submit to us is included in our computation of your article's word total and *that total must be within twenty-five words of the word limit we gave you*. When checking your word count, *be sure that you have selected for the word count of the notes to be included in the total*.
- If an article is submitted that is substantially over length, the editors will return it to you unedited to be cut to the assigned length.
- Do not provide information on the article's word length in the actual article document itself.

BIBLE VERSIONS

- Always indicate which version of the Bible you are using in your article.
- If you use the same Bible version throughout your article, please insert a footnote after the first Bible reference as follows: "All Bible quotations are from the New International Version [or whatever version]."
- If one version is predominantly used but others are also cited, in the footnote please state, "All Bible quotations are from [name the version you are using] unless otherwise noted," and then note the exceptions parenthetically in the text.
- When an article uses multiple Bible versions, indicate the abbreviation for the version used for a particular verse in parentheses immediately after the verse.

BYLINES, BIOLINES

- For feature articles, place your byline (e.g., "by Elliot Miller") directly under the article title.
- For all other articles, place your name at the end, italicized, and preceded by an em dash (e.g., "— *Elliot Miller*").
- Do not affix personal titles ("Dr.," "Rev.," etc.) or educational degrees to your name. You may include such information in your short end-of-article biography (bioline).
- Include a one- or two-sentence biography (bioline) on a separate line after the byline with your name boldfaced that includes relevant personal background information (e.g., degrees, publications, positions, affiliations and their locations) at the end of the article. Do not include any such personal information in the article text. Be sure the bioline emphasizes those aspects of your résumé that qualify you to write on the particular topic of the article at hand.

MECHANICS/STYLE

The JOURNAL generally follows the *Chicago Manual of Style*. This manual is a worthwhile investment for any writer, and would answer most questions that these guidelines do not address.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- When noting the use of a specific Bible version, place its abbreviation in parentheses immediately after the verse (either alone, if the reference was spelled out earlier in the regular text, or following the abbreviated Scripture reference citation, if the reference is included in the parentheses).
- Place all Scripture reference citations in the text, never in the footnotes.
- Spell out Bible books in regular text; abbreviate them when mentioned in parentheses and

footnotes.

LONG QUOTATIONS

- Quotes of more than eighty words should be indented in full, one-half inch from the left margin with no quotation marks. Do not indent them at the right margins; these are considered extracts, not strictly block quotations.

DOCUMENTATION

Standard References

- Use footnotes (rather than endnotes or parenthetical notes within the text) for all feature articles.
- Use footnotes for all department articles that quote from four or more sources. For articles that have only three or fewer quotes, include documentation parenthetically within the text, giving all of the facts of publication.
- Footnotes should follow the current edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- Keep content footnotes short and display them as continuous text; never more than one single one-hundred-word paragraph in length.
- Try not to use more than one or two sources per reference.

Web References

- When citing a Web page or Web article, include as much of the following information as possible: the author's name, the title of the article and of the Web page (sometimes these are different), the name of the website; in the case of online publications, the publication name, the date published, and the specific URL for the portion of the site that you are quoting.
- Do not use the URL of a main website when citing a specific page within that site. For example, when referencing a JOURNAL article from the CRI website, do not simply cite http://www.equip.org; use the article's specific URL: http://www.equip.org/free/JAI001.htm.
- Concerning the use of Wikipedia: it can be helpful in research but, by its own admission, it is not an authoritative source. The greatest value Wikipedia has in research is the links it provides to authoritative sources. Because it is not authoritative, there is no reason why the reader should trust its assertions of fact.

NUMBERS

- Spell out numbers between zero and one hundred and multiples of one hundred. Use numerals for numbers 101 and greater.

ADDITIONAL SPECIFICATIONS

- Please e-mail your scheduled or solicited article in Microsoft Word format to the managing editor (send to mcogdill@equip.org).

PAYMENT

We pay you for your article if accepted a flat-rate honorarium, according to the rates below, to be paid net 60 from the date on the invoice. You will receive a copy of your invoice via e-mail for your files. As part of your payment, you will also receive a complimentary one-year subscription to our journal.

FA=Feature Article	VP=Viewpoint
RV=Review	PH=Practical Hermeneutics
EE=Effective Evangelism	

Word Count	Payment Rate for Print Articles
3500 FA	$500
2200 FA	$300
1200 FA	$225
800 FA	$135
1700 VP	$250
1700 EE	$250
1700 PH	$250
1700 RV	$275
800 RV	$125

NOTE: If you are submitting an article specially formatted for the JOURNAL, but previously published elsewhere, the rate for features is $50 less than listed above.

ONLINE ARICLE PAYMENT RATE: The payment rate for articles that are online web exclusives at our website equip.org is $0.10 per word with a maximum payment of $500. Print article word counts have very little room for flexibility. However, online articles do have potential word count flexibility. If we contract you to write an online article for 1700 words and you turn in a 2500 word article that you do not think you can cut further, we can potentially publish your article at 2500 words. Our budget only allows for the $170 payment (the payment at the assigned word count) even though your published word count online is 2500 words.

If we, in our sole discretion, determine not to accept the article, you shall receive, and you agree to accept as full and complete consideration to you, the amount of fifty percent (50%) of the fee.

We appreciate your interest in contributing to the CHRISTIAN RESEARCH JOURNAL.