

A Study in Failure, Part 2

God had called me to start my own specialized publishing company, growing out of our involvement in evangelism at our local church. We were to focus on reaching people who wouldn't walk into a Christian bookstore and buy and read a book. (See "A Study in Failure, Part 1" below.)

How do you get Christian materials into the hands of people who aren't looking for them? One way is to provide such materials to Christ's followers and partner with them in reaching the people they know. That's the approach I felt led to take.

I wanted to provide more than a tract. If I were a non-believer, I wouldn't be interested in catchy come-ons or scare tactics. Tracts are doubtless very effective with some, but I felt they wouldn't work with me. I wanted to provide something more thought-provoking, something interesting and reasonable that would engage the mind.

So after much thought and prayer, Gloria and I came up with an idea for pocket-size books. Their trim size would be 3" X 4.5", small enough to fit in a man's shirt-pocket or a lady's purse. Each book would be 64 pages—long enough to provide information and reasoning, but short enough to be easily and quickly read. We worked with an artist friend of mine, Paul Franitza, who gave them very attractive, full-color covers.

We priced them for quantity sale. We offered them in lots of 12, 40, and 100, with the price dropping to \$1.00 per book for the 100-packs. Our plan was to market them to pastors, chaplains, and missionaries, as well as to interested individuals.

As I explained earlier, I am not an entrepreneur by nature. So having firmed up our idea, I approached my employer, a Christian publisher. I thought perhaps they might be interested in working with me on these books. I got a meeting with the president of the company, explained what I had in mind, and gave him everything in writing. Weeks of waiting turned into six months, and still no response whatsoever, despite reminders. Finally, I saw the handwriting on the wall and wrote him again, this time pulling the proposal off the table. In the end, however, they did agree to handle order fulfillment for us, and at a reasonable cost. They proved to be a real God-send in that area.

We needed a company name, and I was extremely conscious about finding one that would speak to non-believers picking up the books. I was determined to avoid anything like "Bible Thumpers International". So we decided to use the name of the second series of mailers we had written for our local church evangelism program. "Living the Natural Way" thus became the name of the company. In daily usage, it was often shorted to "LNW", which is the reason the book line eventually took the name "LNWbooks" and later, our hymns were published under "LNWhymns.com".

To clarify the overall intent of our materials, we started using this phrase beneath the company name: "Innovative Resources for Drawing People to Christ".

God had faithfully led us through the planning stages—concept, product, incorporation, order fulfillment, phone lines, pricing, and more. But the battle was just beginning.

© 2013 by Ken Bible