

stuff you wish they taught in seminary



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## *5 Reasons*

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# **PASTORS SHOULD SELF-PUBLISH A BOOK THIS YEAR**

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RICH BIRCH



## 5 REASONS PASTORS SHOULD SELF-PUBLISH A BOOK THIS YEAR



According to *The New York Times*, 81% of people surveyed believe they have a book in them ... that number has to be a lot higher for pastors and church leaders!

This is the year that you should set aside time and pull together a book to self-publish and share with your church. When church leaders get into book publishing, it helps extend their influence in their local community and beyond. Before you write off this idea as crazy or just for those "super-mega church leaders," here are some reasons I think every pastor should write a book in the next year.

- **Ease & Credibility** // There was a time when publishing a book was blocked by a series of gatekeepers. You needed to find a literary agent who thought your ideas were relevant enough to spread. From there you needed to convince a publisher that your platform was large enough to sell enough books. Publishing has been greatly democratized. People who have ideas can directly reach the people around them with those ideas. At one point, self-publishing was seen as a "vanity product" that was not taken seriously. Now it's a much more widely respected process. When was the last time you checked who published a book? While self-publishing is now accessible to lots of people, the credibility-building factor of being published remains. It's a great way to extend the influence and reach of your teaching ministry.

- **Codify Core Teaching** // Many pastors have core messages and themes that they come back to time and again. Publishing a book around those core ideas helps you hone them. There's something about taking time to write and explain big ideas that helps a communicator gain clarity. Taking time to commit the words to written form helps you explore and explain the ideas in new and fresh ways. Getting the words into a book form also tends to solidify the ideas in the life of a community, because you literally made them into a more permanent mode of communication.

● **Passive & Portable** // Sermons are often thirty to forty minutes of spoken word, which is a difficult form for spreading ideas. The modern "message" is designed to be experienced in community as part of a broader service but the ideas are locked up within that message and can't be easily spread to friends and family. This is a problem because in a day and age when "viral ideas that spread" are core to how culture is shaped, we spend most of our "content creation energy" on a form that isn't easily passed around. Books are designed to be transported and shared. You can highlight sections that you like and you can give them to other people. They are also passive media, so you can dip in and out of them over time. A well-designed book has more "viral spread potential" than a series of messages from a weekend service.

● **Great "New Here" Tool** // Do your guests really need one more coffee mug? What do people do with all those plastic water bottles, anyway? A book produced by your church is a great tool in your "new here" process. Maybe it's a gift that visitors can pick up on their way

### **Free Webinar // Self-Publishing Step-by Step-for Pastors**

[Click here to check out this 32-minute webinar, in which we dive deep into the nitty-gritty of self-publishing for pastors and church leaders.]

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out. You could have teams drop off books at the homes of guests who attend your church. I know of one church that uses their pastor's book as the core of "new here" class. They give away the book to guests and then run regular classes in which people can walk through it together. Rather than a generic "swag" giveaway, these books make a great connection and drive home the core message of the church.

● **Amazon is the "Ideas Search Engine"** // Once the book is published, make sure it gets listed on Amazon because that's where people search for ideas. As they rate and review the book on that platform, others will begin to hear about it and your church's reach will extend. Listing the book on Amazon also establishes the writer as a leader on the topic. People will associate the church leader with other authors who also wrote on the topic. Amazon listings also rank quite well on Google so when people are looking for information about your church or pastor, listings for books will often be among the top listings.