



CHOOSING HOW TO PUBLISH

Why Smith For Christ Publishing

Going it alone, a vanity press, or a partner who keeps your book yours

When you decide to publish, you face three roads. They are not the same — in what they cost you, in what they ask of you, and in whether the book stays truly yours. This is an honest look at all three.

WHY SMITH FOR CHRIST • 2026

THE DECISION

Three roads to a published book

Every author who decides to publish chooses one of three paths. The difference between them is not small.

You can do it all yourself. You can hand it to a vanity or subsidy press. Or you can work with a true publishing partner. Each road leads to a book — but they ask very different things of you, and they leave you in very different places. Here is what each one really looks like.

ROAD ONE

Going it alone

Self-publishing on your own is the most independent road, and for some books it is the right one. But it asks you to become, overnight, an editor, a designer, a typesetter, a print-production specialist, and a project manager — on top of being the author.

- ◆ **You carry every decision.** Dozens of choices, in order, each depending on the last, most of them outside a writer's training.
- ◆ **You hit the technical wall.** Printer specifications, file formats, ISBN rules, cover geometry — one wrong number and the book is rejected.
- ◆ **You assemble the team.** Finding, vetting, and coordinating freelancers, and hoping the pieces fit together.
- ◆ **You risk the quality gap.** The visible difference between a book that looks self-published and one that does not.

You keep all your rights — which matters — but you also keep all of the friction. The message can get lost not on its merits, but in everything around it.

ROAD TWO

A vanity or subsidy press

A vanity or subsidy press takes the work off your hands — and that relief is real. But it often comes at a cost that is not obvious until later.

- ◆ **High packages, sometimes padded.** Large up-front fees, and sometimes charges that are hard to account for.
- ◆ **Your rights, or your freedom, may go with it.** Some presses take rights in the book, or lock it to their platform, so it is no longer fully yours to move.
- ◆ **Generic production.** Your book may be produced on a template, one of thousands, with little that is truly designed for it.
- ◆ **You become an account, not a partner.** The relationship is transactional, and you have little say once you have signed.

The work gets done. But you can finish the process having paid a great deal and no longer holding your book the way you started.

ROAD THREE

Smith For Christ Publishing — a true partner

Smith For Christ Publishing is built to be the third road: the relief of having it carried, without giving up the book to get it.

- ◆ **You keep every right.** We are paid for services, not for a share of your work. Your name and the SFC imprint stand on the result, and the book remains yours.
- ◆ **One partner, the whole journey.** Not a scattered team of freelancers — one partner who carries the book from idea to shelf, every stage accounted for.
- ◆ **Built systems, real craft.** A defined process, our own production tools, exact specifications — professional quality, consistently.
- ◆ **Checkpoints, not surprises.** You review and approve at every stage. Nothing moves forward without your sign-off.
- ◆ **Honest, per-project pricing.** A clear written quote before anything begins — and an honest word about where your book stands, always.
- ◆ **Faith-driven.** We hold the work to a professional standard because the message deserves it. Excellence here is stewardship.

SIDE BY SIDE

The three roads compared

The same book, the same author — three very different experiences and outcomes.

	GOING IT ALONE	A VANITY / SUBSIDY PRESS	SMITH FOR CHRIST
Who keeps the rights to your book	You do — but you carry everything else alone.	Often the press takes rights or locks you in.	You keep every right. We are paid for services, not a share of your book.
Who carries the logistics	You — sourcing freelancers, learning the specs, managing it all.	The press does — but on its terms, with little say for you.	We do — one partner, the whole journey, with you at every approval gate.
Production quality	Depends entirely on what you can assemble and judge yourself.	Often generic — your book is one of thousands on a template.	Professional and consistent — built systems, exact specifications, real craft.
Cost model	Lower out-of-pocket, paid in your time, stress, and the quality gap.	High packages, sometimes padded, sometimes with hidden terms.	A clear, written, per-project quote — you approve it before anything starts.
The relationship	Isolated — you are the project manager of your own book.	Transactional — you are an account, not a partner.	A partnership — faith-driven, attentive, and honest about where the book stands.

The relief of having it carried — without giving up the book to get it.

THE DIFFERENCE

Why authors choose us

The authors who choose Smith For Christ Publishing are usually the ones who care about two things at once: that the book is produced with real excellence, and that it stays truly theirs. They do not want to spend a year becoming a production specialist, and they do not want to hand their book to a press that treats it — and them — as a transaction.

They want a partner who carries the machine, holds the work to a high standard, keeps every right in their hands, and remembers the whole time that the book is a *message*, not just a product.

If that is what you are looking for, that is what we were built to be. Wherever your book is today — an idea, a draft, or a finished manuscript — there is a place we can begin.

Walk well.

SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING