



Welcome to Illative House Press! Now managed by James and Dr. Sarah Byerley, we began in 2018 as a personal publishing outreach of Dr. T. J. Gentry (more about us below). And since 2023, Illative House Press (IHP) has expanded our ministry reach! Before we tell you about our hopes and plans, here's a bit more about who we are.

Our Commitment: IHP is committed to publishing books and resources that are faithful to the historic evangelical Christian “faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

Our Mission: IHP has a two-fold mission: 1) to provide an array of affordable and professionally produced Christian resources through books and other media to help the Church “make disciples of the nations” (Matt 28:18); and 2) to make publishing opportunities available to first-time authors and veteran writers so they may fulfill their God-given calling.

Though we have pursued our commitment and mission since 2018, we are still in the early stages of what we believe is a growing opportunity to share Christian truth with a world increasingly looking for answers that only the Gospel provides.

Why Illative House? Illative (pronounced il-uh-tiv) is from the Latin *illativus*, which means to conclude or infer. Regarding matters of Christian faith, all people have an *illative sense* of how beliefs form when the mind and heart align through the prevenient grace God shows to each person. Such whole-person alignment makes possible a willing acceptance of the claims of the Gospel and a personal trust in Jesus Christ, as one realizes that biblical truth is entirely reasonable. We hold that it truly makes sense and is humanity's highest good to believe what God reveals in nature and Scripture. Thus, the *Illative* in IHP identifies us as a publishing ministry committed to providing books and other media to help Christians and seekers grow in a fully formed faith that involves both the mind and the heart.

The *House* in IHP describes the different imprints and expressions of our publishing ministry. Just as a house has rooms for different purposes, IHP includes the following imprints, and all works are either published under one of these imprints or under the general name of Illative House Press:

- *Academia* (works promoting theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works)
- *Influentia* (works focused on biblical leadership and counseling)
- *Imaginari* (works using fiction as a platform to communicate the Christian worldview)
- *Practica* (works dedicated to practical Christian living)
- *Testamentum* (works of biblical commentary)
- *Nexus* (works demonstrating the practical integration of apologetics and ministry)

Our Team's Story: Now that you know a bit more about what we do, here is how Illative House Press came to be.

Our founder is Dr. T. J. Gentry. He became a Christian and was called to ministry in the summer of 1978. He began preaching in 1984. Soon after, T. J. began preaching and working in various ministry roles in the local church, and he developed a growing interest in writing.

At first, T. J. wrote short devotions and Bible study guides for the youth groups he served and the churches he pastored, but the scope of his writing grew to include booklets, position papers, and even short fiction stories. As he wrote, T. J. continued learning, and as he learned, he continued writing. All this was well before the advent of online publishing, and then, as now, opportunities with longstanding traditional publishing houses were difficult to secure. However, T. J. was undeterred as he realized he was not only interested in writing—he also had a calling to write. The initial works he produced were created on his desktop computer and printed on the church office copier, with the center binding stapled and sufficient copies made to hand out to his students and friends. Nothing fancy, but it was effective.

As his journey continued, T. J. began formal theological and ministry training and, at the same time, started a family and served in the Army National Guard Chaplain Corps while pastoring. The one constant during all these experiences was his writing as he learned and his learning as he wrote. Though he still valued the devotions and Bible study guides he had developed, T. J. set out to write his first book in 2006. By then, online publishing platforms were proliferating, and he found his way to the self-publishing platform Lulu, where he published his first book, *Thinking of Worship: A Liturgical Miscellany*. His next book, *God Help Us: Reflections on Evangelism*, was released a few years later through Amazon's CreateSpace self-publishing platform. *God Help Us* has since been revised and published as *You Shall Be My Witnesses, the first book produced under the IHP banner (2018)*, with the second book a revised edition of *Thinking of Worship* (also in 2018). In addition to writing these works and his three master's theses and five doctoral dissertations published through academic libraries, T. J. has two books published with Wipf and Stock Publishers in Eugene, Oregon: *Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord: A Critique of Purgatory* (2018) and *Pulpit Apologist: The Essential Relationship between Preaching and Apologetics* (2019). T. J.'s additional published works include numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals of theology, biblical studies, apologetics, and ministry. He holds the following degrees: BA in Political Science (Southern Illinois University); MAR in Church Ministries, MDiv in Chaplaincy, ThM in Theology, PhD in Theology and Apologetics (Liberty University); MA in Philosophy (Holy Apostles College and Seminary); MA in Apologetics (Luther Rice College and Seminary); DMin in Pastoral Counseling, PhD in Leadership, PhD in Biblical Studies (Carolina University); and PhD in Theology (North-West University). T. J. is married with five children and has one grandson and one granddaughter. He is the senior minister at First Christian Church of West Frankfort, Illinois, and superintendent of New Covenant Christian School, also in West Frankfort.

In the Spring of 2026, James and Dr. Sarah Byerley stepped in as stewards of TJ's vision. They brought more than 50 years of combined experience in education, ministry, writing, and leadership.

United by a shared commitment to the Great Commission, they view publishing as biblical stewardship that shapes minds, strengthens the Church, and glorifies God.

Visionary Leadership & Biblical Foundation

Rooted in their shared biblical beliefs, the Byerleys integrate their faith and experience into IHP's mission and vision. As authors and educators, they are committed to ensuring that IHP reflects God's truth, serves its authors well, and produces works that are intellectually rigorous, spiritually formative, and culturally engaged.

Publishing & Literary Expertise

The Byerleys provide broad strategic editorial direction, ensuring that literary and business goals are consistently aligned with IHP's vision.

- (Nonfiction) - Dr. Sarah Byerley specializes in nonfiction focused on the Church, ministry, and discipleship. She advocates for works that combine theological depth, academic integrity, excellence, and practical application.
- (Imaginari) - James Byerley is an author with IHP. He specializes in fiction and holds three current contracts with IHP, including a finished manuscript awaiting publication. The three contracts are installments in his upcoming *A Battle at the Fingertips* series.

Mission-Driven Impact

Guided by faith, lifelong learning, and service, James and Sarah are committed to fostering a publishing culture marked by integrity, innovation, and excellence. Their leadership reflects IHP's calling to equip authors, serve readers, and advance God's Kingdom through the written word.

Education & Background

James and Sarah met at Colorado Christian University and have been married since 1991. They are active in their church and community and are parents and grandparents. They bring extensive teaching experience across primary, secondary, and postsecondary contexts in the United States and abroad.

Sarah holds a Doctor of Ministry and Master of Arts in Ministry from Carolina University, a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction from Colorado Christian University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the same institution. She also has a GATE certification from Southern Utah University and maintains teaching endorsements in K-8

Gifted and Talented and Science. She has been recognized as a Distinguished Educator of the Year three times.

James holds a Master of Science in Secondary Education from Nova Southeastern University, completed some doctoral work in Educational Leadership, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Marketing and Journalism from Metropolitan State University of Denver. Before entering education, James spent 5 years in commercial-chemical sales.

Please welcome them as they begin reaching out in their new roles at IHP.