

# Swordsman of the Word™

Rightly wielding "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph 6:17)

[swordsmanoftheword.com](http://swordsmanoftheword.com)

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Categories: ABOUT / ESSAY

# Running this Blogging Race Once Again

December 27, 2019 | By Arjay B. Araña

There have been many challenges and difficulties in getting this ministry off the ground — lack of resources, lack of support, lack of humility, and lack of faith. To those of you who have followed my progress, you know the things I went through. And you probably thought — after many months of silence from me — that I'd finally given up. I won't blame you if you did.

But the truth is that I just didn't want to proceed without God's explicit approval, and so **I've waited on him**. Despite all the energy, time, and tears I've already spent on this blog, I've still waited on God — for him to prove to me that he really wants me to spend a significant part of my life blogging for him.

And so God has. Answered me. Proven it to me. And so here I am. Running this blogging race once again.

My thanks and gratitude go to Dale, my brother in Christ, whom God has used to bring me back on this racetrack. This one is for you, bro.

I am back, yes, but there are now great changes in the life I'd envisioned for myself, especially in regard to this ministry — changes that were brought by other people's choices, not mine. (It is a self-evident truth that the freewill choices of other people can drastically affect our own lives.) However, I will no longer talk about these things; what's done is done, and there is now only the future to look forward to.

Instead, this post (and my next one) will be my ministry report to you. I'll talk about the things that have changed and the things that have remained in regard to my **Founding Documents** [<https://swordsmanoftheword.com/archives/sets/founding-docs/>] and some announcements. Specifically, for this essay, I'll talk about the present general state of *Swordsman of the Word*. In my next essay, I'll go into more details.

Before I begin, however, I think that you should appreciate the significance and the seriousness of this moment. I've been writing slowly, thinking carefully, and praying earnestly because I am laying down the path for my future. The things I'll say in this post will have far-reaching consequences — and not only to my own life, but to many others as well, including yours.

And now, my friends, the **bottom line** here is that God has already called me to do other things for him besides blogging. (Although those "other things" are still being worked out, and so I cannot yet say anything about them.) Yes, I still serve God full time — I was, and still is, serious about the decision I made to answer God's call to work for him — but I can no longer

work as a full-time blogger, like I hoped to. This bottom line has three major ramifications.

Firstly, I have no more plans to make of this ministry something I couldn't handle given my now limited time. If you'll remember, I've made preparations for its eventual growth, like *Swordsman Library*, its companion website, where you can read the Bible and some Christian classics. Now *Swordsman of the Word* has become just my personal blog where I serve God through my writing, and where I earn a part of my living. Whatever growth and expansion this ministry would have, I leave now to God, in his own timing and provision. (And for now, I have closed down my social media channels, except for my personal Facebook account, and I have also closed down *Swordsman Library*.)

Secondly, I am reaffirming the change I made before, and that is, this blog is solely dedicated to my personal essays and reflections (there won't be articles and Bible studies like in my original plan, and there won't be any new type of writing in the future). This narrower focus will make this blog easier to maintain.

And thirdly, there are two great changes on the nature of the ministry itself, two changes that go hand in hand: One, I have no more plans to make *Swordsman of the Word* into an "official" ministry; and two, and I will embrace the fact that this WordPress.com blog (and my Patreon creator page) are made for business purposes.

## A Duality of Nature

*Swordsman of the Word* is not an "official" ministry, because it is not under the authority of any church or Christian organization. In other words, it is **independent**. And this independent status will most probably remain, because I have chosen to preserve and to fight for the freedom that comes with it — to follow God wherever he leads me in regard to this ministry; and also because I have decided to turn *Swordsman of the Word* into an official business enterprise.

I had said from the very beginning that this ministry is God's work, not mine. It all belongs to him. God is the real boss who makes the decisions, and I'm only his worker who tries to know his will through prayer and his Word, and to follow him. (There were other people who were supposed to be involved in this with me, but things hadn't turned out as I hoped.) Admittedly, this matter of authority is vague and vulnerable to personal whim, and it should not be so. Rather, it must be clearly defined and set in stone, especially now that I've declared my independence.

This question of authority was made clearer to me while studying theology, and so I'm declaring now that the **supreme authority** of this ministry — the *only* authority I submit to and teach from — is the Word of God itself, the Bible. For I stand with many other Christians who believe that "the Bible is the only infallible rule for faith and practice." As the cry of the Reformation went, "*Sola scriptura!*"

This means that I have really set out now on my own, accountable only to God and his Word. Whatever the future holds for me and this ministry, I can be sure that I've done all I could to be able to follow God. Also, this means that everything I do in regard to *Swordsman of the Word* — from my writings to my business practices — must be in accordance with the Scriptures. Even for specific things that the Bible doesn't talk about, they must still be in line with its principles,

like righteousness and holiness.

Furthermore, I am declaring that my teachings and my interpretations of the Bible will be within the traditions of Orthodox Christianity. Yes, *Swordsman of the Word* is independent and answers only to the authority of the Bible; nevertheless, I don't want to be branded as a false teacher and a heretic, and I deeply respect the rich heritage of the faith.

As I mentioned once before, I'm not here to start my own religion, but to glorify and to serve God. I also do not claim that I am better than all the great teachers of the faith who have gone before me. In fact, the more I study, the more I see my ignorance and inadequacies. The truth is, I'm only here to do my own part in building God's Kingdom, offering whatever gifts God has given to everyone I could reach — whether that reach be large or small. If I've done that, I am satisfied.

My friends, you should know that independence for this ministry was never in my mind. I never thought that I could do something like this on my own. In fact, I expected to be helped and supported. And in return, I expected to follow. However, given all the things that happened... independence is now my only choice. That is, if I want to be uncompromising in my beliefs, if I want to be unshackled in the things I do, especially in my writings, and if I want to really please God and not people, then *Swordsman of the Word* must be independent — free from other authorities except that of God's authority as given in his Word.

Do you want to know how I feel, my friends? I feel a bit scared. I realize that I've just taken a gigantic step of faith, and that my whole life and reputation are on the line. Will God be faithful? *Ha ha*. Stupid question.

No matter, I still choose to look on the bright side. In view of my bottom line, that I no longer have all the time in the world for blogging, this independence does have some practical and invaluable advantages. First of all, I will not have to deal with red tape, because there is only God to consult; following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I can make my decisions and act on them quickly. Second, my schedule and my output are mine to dictate; there will be no unnecessary pressures on me except those I allow. And third, there is the possibility for hiatuses — when I need to take a break from creative work, or when I am simply too busy on other things.

Now, if independence is my only choice for *Swordsman of the Word's* existence, then turning it into an actual, registered, and tax-paying business is also my only choice for its stable support. Let's talk now about this.

The reality is that I cannot rely only on donations for this ministry. Also, I don't want to spend my time and energy looking for and asking for money, and be distracted from my writing. What I need is a secure and constant source of funds. (My Patreon creator account is supposed to be that source, but I wasn't yet able to really work on it, because my priority has been this blog.)

But how do you balance serving God and making money? I wanted this to be a real ministry, not a business, and so I had set some limitations on what I can do... limitations that I cannot afford now.

I haven't yet looked into it, on how this would actually go — most probably just sole

proprietorship — but *Swordsman of the Word* will now become a real business enterprise. And it will be a ministry only in its soul, on the inside. And so yes, I'm saying it now, I'm not only here to serve God, but I'm also here to make money, to do business — but to do business in ways that honor God, of course.

A duality of nature: a ministry on the inside, a business on the outside. This is the way that God has led me to, and I do believe that this is indeed the best way for *Swordsman of the Word* to exist — if it must retain its independence and freedom for a long time to come.

As a minister, I serve people as a representative of Jesus, and my purpose is to help them know God more through his Word and through my own life. Like before, I will still give much of my writings for free — with a Creative Commons license for easy and legal sharing — and I will still give much of myself in my writings.

And as a businessman, I will endeavor not only to earn money for my financial needs and for those I love, but also to provide for the financial needs of this ministry — to make it self-sustaining. I will not only ask for donations, but I will also sell items (maybe e-books of Public Domain Christian literature), and I will continue being a creator-writer in Patreon. (Patreon is where you can subscribe, for a monthly fee, for more of my writings.)

## My Greatest Reason

Having a smaller structure, and being both an independent ministry and a personal business are truly considerable changes for *Swordsman of the Word*. And these are only the major changes; I haven't gone into details yet. However, there is one important element that hasn't change, and that is my greatest reason for doing all these — my love for God. Let's talk now about matters of the heart.

I started this blog in July 2018 with great reluctance and doubt. I was clearly receiving God's instructions to start this ministry, but I was also in pain. I was dealing with some issues of faith, and I was questioning whether or not God is truly trustworthy. In the end though, my love for God triumphed and I obeyed him. Thus, *Swordsman of the Word* was born.

Today, love is still the primary reason why I serve God, and particularly, why I'm still pursuing blogging — despite the delays, rejections, challenges, and other opportunities that came my way. (Honestly, I could be earning good money right now in a secular job, if not for my choice to be faithful to the things that God has called me to do.) This time though, unlike when I first began writing, God has already plentifully showed me his acts of faithfulness and trustworthiness.

Yes, I do all these because of my love for God. However, looking back this past year, and judging by all the things that happened... I'm thinking now that many people hadn't really understood the depth of that love. After all, anyone can easily say that they love God, and many do, but many also are not faithful to him. The Bible itself says, "Many men claim to be men of unflinching love, but who can find a faithful man?" (Proverbs 20:6 WEB). You can say then that I was tested by my sufferings... tested if I would remain faithful in spite of them.

It is expected, and it is what is right and good, that we should serve God because we love him.

But for some people this reason gets minimized — pushed into the background and not really thought about at all — and I think that that is wrong. Keeping our reason for serving firmly in sight all the time should prevent us from wandering into the path of selfish ambition and personal glory. It should also help us to endure and be steadfast in the face of hardships, persecutions, and unbelief.

*Swordsman of the Word* is an assignment I received from God — an assignment I cannot do alone without God’s help and power, and without the support of people who believe in me. This was true when I started, given especially my lack of training and financial resources. And this is still true today, even with my better preparedness to teach, and even with the smaller structure of the ministry.

I already dealt with the issue of some people not believing this claim, which had made my tasks even harder. And so right now I just want to say that if I was doing these things for reasons other than my love for God, then I would have already given up early in the race. Or I would have tried pushing this ministry on my own — with my human strength and human ways — instead of waiting on God.

But I have waited on God — and so difficult that has been — for his approval and signal to begin again. And while waiting I have made more preparations, especially in my studies, so that I could better serve God when his answer comes. And so yes, I am delayed, but I was not defeated.

And because this assignment really did come from God, he has indeed been faithful in helping me and sustaining me — by giving me the wisdom and energy to do the work, and by giving me friends who encourage me. Truly, the faith, love, and courage that I have shown God have not been in vain.

*A man’s steps are established by Yahweh. He delights in his way. Though he stumble, he shall not fall, for Yahweh holds him up with his hand.* — Psalms 37:23-24 WEB

*It isn’t good to have zeal without knowledge, nor being hasty with one’s feet and missing the way.* — Proverbs 19:2 WEB

*There are many plans in a man’s heart, but Yahweh’s counsel will prevail.*  
— Proverbs 19:21 WEB

All the obstacles then, and all the hindrances that tried to prevent my work on this ministry, and my resolute walking by faith in spite of them have two significant consequences in my soul.

One is that I am very cautious now in expecting other Christians to have as much faith in God as I have, or for them to share my own faith and vision. I’m a pioneer and an artist in many ways, and I can’t hope for a wide acceptance of my views from them, especially from those who are resistant to change.

Another is that my confidence in both God and myself, especially in my knowing his will for my life, has increased immensely. I now have this much-greater courage to follow God and do his work, knowing that, in return, he is taking care of my own affairs.

The truth is, I love God, but he loves me even more.

*“Because he has set his love on me, therefore I will deliver him. I will set him on high, because he has known my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him, and honor him. I will satisfy him with long life, and show him my salvation.” — Psalms 91:14-16 WEB*

**Tags:** religion, Christianity, Christian, God, Bible, blogging, writing, perseverance, ministry, business, rejection, loving God, victory

## About



Do you hunger for God? To know him more and his Word, but are overwhelmed by the huge amount of study materials out there?

Are you longing for the Bible to become more personal to you? To find in your study the balance between the theoretical and practical, between the scholarly and personal? The balance between truth and grace?

*Swordsman of the Word* is a blog about God and the Bible, but it is much more than that. This is also my own journey towards knowing God more through his Word, and towards understanding and changing my own life — and the world around me — in the light of that Word.

This is an invitation for you to join me in my journey.

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My name is **Arjay B. Araña**. I'm a Filipino, single, and a born-again Christian.

I am a conservative evangelical, though I'm still in the process of discovering and affirming my theology. I haven't attended any seminary (and never will), but I'm presently a student in Bible school, where I'm receiving training for the ministry.

My calling from God is to be a teacher, a missionary, and maybe even a pastor.

This blog is part of my works for God, both in Christian education and the missions. It is solely dedicated to my personal essays and reflections — and its purposes are (1) to help you know God more, through his Word and through my own life, and (2) to share with you my passions and burdens as a servant of the Lord Jesus.

**More Information:** My posts in the following category tell more of the philosophy and the story behind my work here: [swordsmanoftheword.com/category/about/](http://swordsmanoftheword.com/category/about/). Also, I've talked about my personal life and my own walk with God in my testimony: [swordsmanoftheword.com/archives/sets/my-testimony/](http://swordsmanoftheword.com/archives/sets/my-testimony/).

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*This is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God,  
and him whom you sent, Jesus Christ. — John 17:3 WEB*

How has this ministry helped you, my friend? Have you started to know God more?

The truth is, all these things I've talked about won't have any real meaning to you unless you first have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

If you want to know how to start such a relationship (and to know the story, the privileges, and the responsibilities that accompany this relationship), please read this: **God's Plan of Salvation.**

[swordsmanoftheword.com/salvation/](http://swordsmanoftheword.com/salvation/)