



# *Journal of Biblical Counseling* Author Guide to the Use of Artificial Intelligence

EDITORIAL POLICY | EFFECTIVE 2026

## Purpose & Scope

The *Journal of Biblical Counseling* is committed to publishing articles that reflect the genuine intellectual work of its authors. As AI writing tools become increasingly capable and accessible, the editorial team has developed the following guidance to clarify what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable AI use in the preparation of manuscripts submitted to the *JBC*.

The *JBC* recognizes that many authors may prefer to write without any use of AI tools, and we fully support that choice. Nothing in this policy is intended to encourage or pressure authors to incorporate AI into their writing process. Authors who find that AI use conflicts with their convictions about intellectual integrity, originality, or personal conscience are encouraged to follow that judgment. The policies outlined here are intended to define boundaries for those who do use AI, not to suggest that its use is expected or desirable.

Two foundational principles shape this policy. First, the US Copyright Office does not recognize copyright in AI-generated content. This means that material produced by AI tools cannot be legally attributed to or owned by a human author. Second, the *JBC* does not consider AI to meet the requirements of authorship. Authorship implies independent intellectual contribution, judgment, and accountability for the content of a work. AI tools can assist a human author but cannot substitute for one.

The table below provides guidance organized by workflow stage. Authors should read it carefully before and during the preparation of their manuscripts. Where use is marked “Case by Case,” authors retain discretion but must disclose that use to the editorial team (see Disclosure below).

TASK	PERMITTED?	CONDITIONS & NOTES
<b>IDEATION &amp; STRUCTURE</b>		
Use AI to brainstorm article ideas or titles, suggest section headings or subsection organization, or think through the overall architecture of a piece.	Case by Case	Acceptable as a prompt for the author's own thinking, not as a substitute for it. AI may assist with outlining and structural brainstorming, but must not generate the explanatory prose content of any section. Final ideas, titles, and structure must reflect the author's independent judgment and ownership. Disclose use in article proposal.
<b>WRITING &amp; CONTENT GENERATION</b>		
Use AI to draft, supplement, or generate any portion of an article's written content, including introductions, conclusions, examples, or case studies, or submit AI-generated prose without disclosure.	Prohibited	All written content must originate independently with the author. Undisclosed use of AI-generated content constitutes a breach of <i>JBC</i> authorship standards and may result in rejection or retraction.
<b>EDITING &amp; POLISH</b>		
Use AI or AI-assisted tools (e.g., Grammarly) to check spelling and correct grammatical errors.	Permitted	Standard proofreading assistance is acceptable. No disclosure required unless substantive suggestions were adopted.
Use AI for light copyediting—improving sentence-level clarity without changing content or adding new material.	Permitted	Acceptable provided the author reviews and approves all suggestions. AI must not add, remove, or reframe the author's arguments. No disclosure required.
Use AI to identify and correct parallelism errors in lists, headings, or series of items.	Permitted	Acceptable as a structural editing aid. The author must review all suggested changes; AI must not alter the substance or meaning of any item. No disclosure required.

TASK	PERMITTED?	CONDITIONS & NOTES
Use AI to reformat, clean up, or verify the structure of a bibliography or footnotes.	Permitted	Acceptable for formatting assistance only. Authors must verify the accuracy of every citation independently. AI-generated citations are not reliable. No disclosure required.
<b>RESEARCH &amp; SOURCE ENGAGEMENT</b>		
Use AI to generate citations, footnotes, or a starter bibliography.	Prohibited	AI tools frequently hallucinate or misattribute sources. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all citations and must locate sources independently.
Use AI to summarize an article or book that you have not read yourself, then incorporate that summary.	Prohibited	Authorial integrity requires direct engagement with sources. AI summaries are not a substitute for reading.
Use AI to identify Scripture passages relevant to a given topic or theme.	Case by Case	Acceptable as a research aid, provided the author reads and evaluates every passage in its context. Authors are fully responsible for the accuracy of all Scripture references and the theological weight placed on them. AI tools may miss relevant passages or misidentify context.
Use AI to gather historical background, biographical information, or other factual research.	Case by Case	Acceptable as a starting point for research. Authors must independently verify all facts through reliable sources before incorporating any material into the manuscript. AI-generated historical claims can often be inaccurate.
Use AI to get an orientation to an unfamiliar topic before beginning your own reading.	Case by Case	Acceptable as a preliminary step, provided it does not replace engagement with primary sources. Authors must not reproduce AI summaries in their writing.

## Disclosure Requirements

Authors who use AI tools for purposes marked “Case by Case” in the table above must disclose this in their article proposal at the time of submission. Disclosure should describe the nature of the AI use (e.g., “I used an AI tool to brainstorm section headings” or “I used an AI tool to identify potentially relevant Scripture passages, which I then verified and evaluated independently”). Uses marked “Permitted” in the table do not require disclosure unless the author adopted substantive suggestions, in which case a brief note in the proposal is encouraged.

Upon receiving an author’s disclosure, the editorial team will determine on a case-by-case basis whether and how that use will be acknowledged in the published article. Authors should not assume that disclosed AI use will or will not appear in print; that determination rests with the editors.

Failure to disclose AI use (particularly for uses that fall in the Case by Case or Prohibited categories) may constitute a breach of the *JBC*’s publication standards and may result in rejection of the manuscript or, if discovered post-publication, retraction.

## A Note on Evolving Tools

AI capabilities are changing rapidly, and this policy will be reviewed and updated periodically by the *JBC* team. Authors with questions about a specific use not addressed in this guide are encouraged to contact the managing editor before submission rather than after.