church online

CHURCH BUILDING MAY BE CLOSED. BUT THE CHURCH IS ALWAYS OPEN.

practical tips for recording sermons at home

CHURCH

ONLINE

Introduction

▶ While the physical building may be closed, the church is never closed as the church comprises people, not physical buildings.

▶ Recording a sermon at home differs from delivering a message from the church pulpit

▶ Sermon recordings require more preparation

▶ Here are some practical sermon recording tips to help you edify your online church

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Preparing for online sermons

▶ **Depending on your church guidelines, we recommend that online messages be trimmed to about 25-30 minutes.**

▶ **This limits the entire service to about 45-50 minutes (including worship and announcements) – ideal for the online church.**

▶ **Avoid the embarrassing "ahmmm", "uhmmm" by typing out your sermon from start to finish in PowerPoint.**

   ▶ Type your sermon in its entirety, including greetings, prayer and even jokes.

   ▶ Font size of 36 is ideal. Use Sans Serif fonts like Helvetica, Arial or Calibri.

   ▶ Use sentence case (only first letter is capitalised). ALL CAPS is visually tiring.

   ▶ Break the text into small portions. Use text markers on each slide, e.g. each slide should have a line in bold and yellow highlight to facilitate your search for the text, in case you lose track.

Dressing appropriately

▶ **Find out if there is any dress code that your church requires. Examples include:**

   ▶ Smart casual: *batik*, plain collared T-shirt without designs, short-sleeved shirt.

   ▶ Semi-formal: *batik*, long-sleeved shirt without tie, long-sleeved shirt with or without tie plus a jacket (black or dark blue).

   ▶ Formal: full business suit with tie.

▶ **Avoid bright colours with distracting patterns.**

Preparing your recording location

▶ **Find someplace quiet and bright.**

  ▶ Natural lighting is best.

  ▶ If using down or strobe lights, avoid warm white or yellow.
    White lights are ideal.

  ▶ The light should be directed to your face, not on
    your reference material.

  ▶ If you are using spectacles, be sure the lights are not
    reflected from your glasses to the camera.
    Try to adjust the angle of the lights to avoid reflection.

  ▶ Avoid recording the video in an empty room,
    as it could result in poor audio capture due to echo.

▶ **Choose a plain background to eliminate distractions.**

Preparing your audio and video setup

▶ While video quality is important, getting your audio right is also crucial.

▶ Pair earphones (with integrated microphones) or wireless microphones with your laptop or video camera.

▶ Be sensitive to the surroundings, eliminate distracting ambient noise (e.g. stand fan or air conditioner in operation) that can be picked up by the microphone.

Preparing your camera or laptop

- ▶ **This is a very important part of the process as mistakes can impact your entire audio and visual sermon delivery and presentation.**

- ▶ **Some preachers like to stand when preaching from home.**
  Others like to sit. This is a personal preference.
  What is important is that you feel comfortable and be at ease.

- ▶ **If using your laptop, position the camera at eye level to ensure optimal eye contact between you and your viewers.**

  - ▶ Eye contact makes a BIG difference for online services.
    Avoid repeatedly looking away from the camera.

- ▶ **If using a DSLR camera, position it at eye level.**

  - ▶ Bear in mind that your distance from the camera affects the quality of the recorded audio, if you use your camera's built-in microphone. Using a wireless microphone mitigates this issue.

  - ▶ Consider using a prime lens (e.g. 50mm lens) and position yourself about three feet away from the camera.
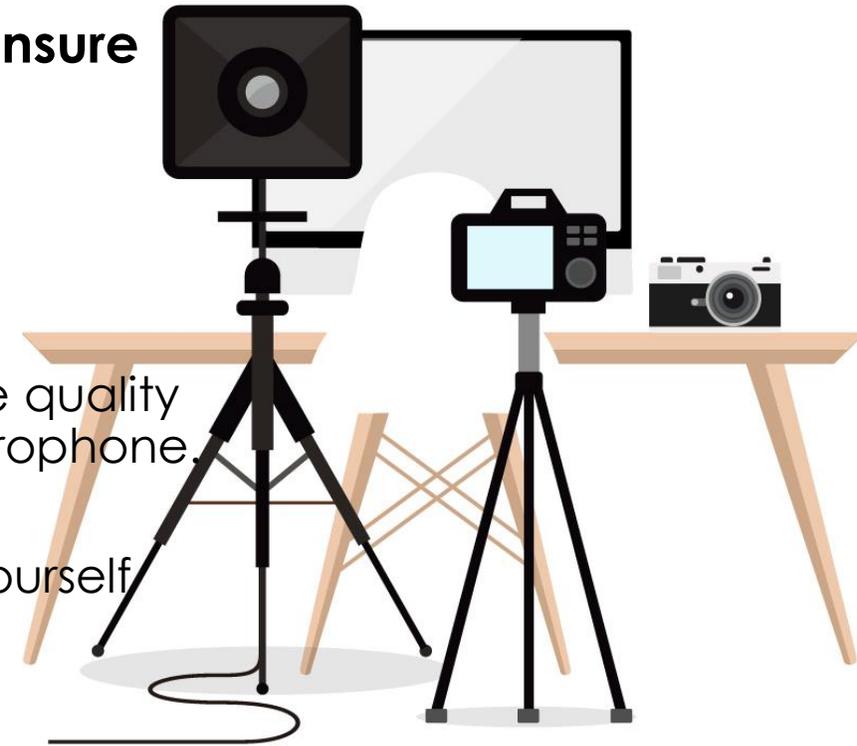
Recording your message

- **Be as relaxed and natural as you can be.**

- **Remember to smile.**
    - Remember that the stress of preparing and recording online sermons can cause one to unintentionally frown.

- **Do not be disheartened if your first recording did not meet your expectations. Pray and record again.**

- **Ensure that your recording is about 25-30 minutes (or follow your church's guidelines on length).**

- **Keep to your prepared text. Avoid temptation to stray from text.**
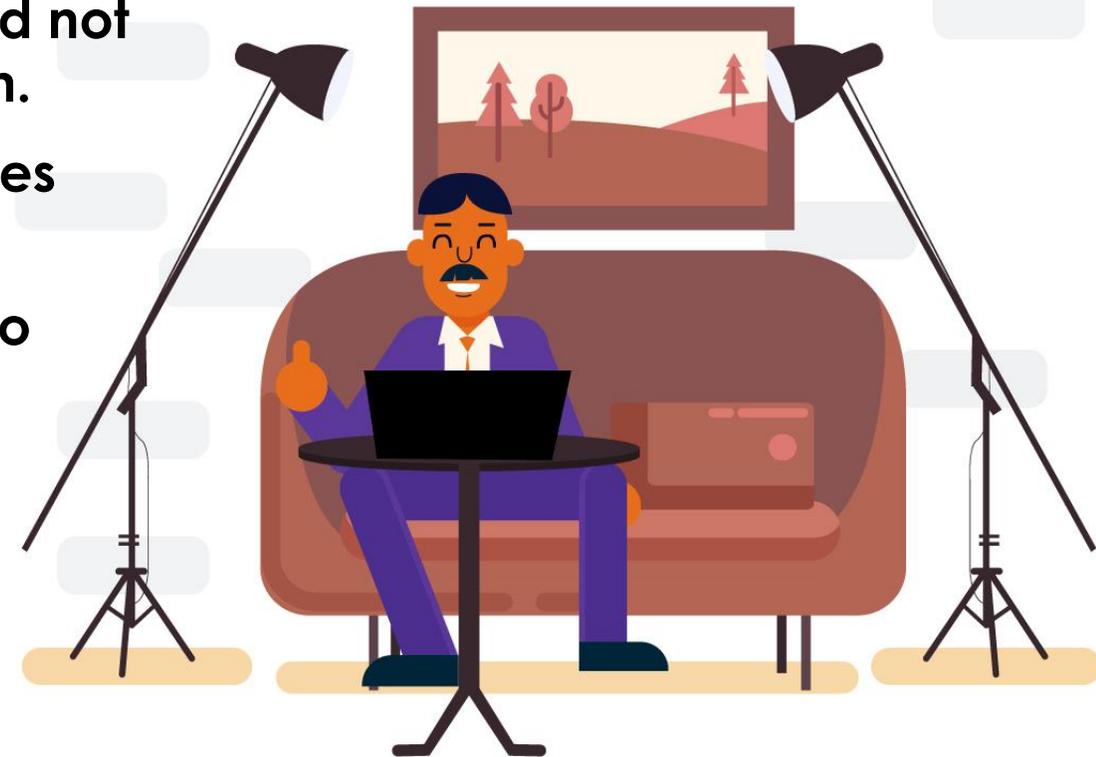
Editing your recording

- ▶ Effective sermon recordings have both your video and PowerPoint slides embedded.

- ▶ Showing Bible verses or quotations helps viewers connect with you.

- ▶ Unless you can edit the video yourself, you will need to procure the services of a video editor.

- ▶ Tell the video editor where in your video to insert images or Bible verses.

- ▶ These should remain on screen for 10 seconds or more to enable reading at a comfortable speed.

- ▶ After this, preserve the image or verse onscreen and gradually feature your video again at a corner of the screen.