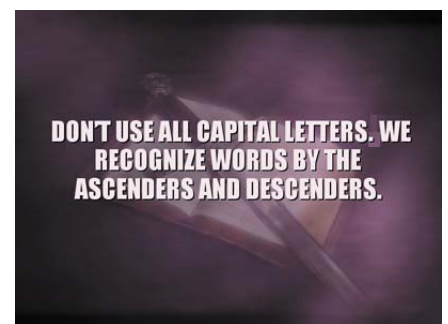


Slide Design 101: Basics for Making an Effective and Appealing Slide



Designing slides for a sermon is very different from traditional PowerPoint® projects. Rules for slides used in large screen presentations are different than the rules for building presentations for your laptop. We also need to keep in mind that we are trying to build visuals that enhance, not hinder, the sermon message. Here are a few tips that will help when designing slides for sermons.

1. Choose a background: Find one that fits the look and feel of what is going to be presented.
2. Choose images that help visualize the text: Use a strong visual image that can be easily associated with the entire message.
3. For most slides, use an easy-to-read, bold sans serif font (like Arial or one of the Helveticas). White text on a dark background and black text with a light background are the easiest to read.
4. Use a maximum of two major fonts throughout the presentation.
5. Stay within “title safe”: Title safe is similar to margins on a piece of paper. In other words, keep the text away from the edges of the screen. Some older televisions will crop all four edges. Also give plenty of leading, to leave space between the lines of text. Let the slides breathe.
6. Don’t use all capital letters: We recognize words by their ascenders and descenders. When you capitalize, it produces a straight line across the top and bottom of the letters, so there is no variation in the words. Balance out your text and don’t cram it onto one slide. Add more slides to the presentation to accommodate all of your text.



7. Carry a background theme or color through the presentation: Use pictures to add impact to your presentation, but use them sparingly. Do not put text on top of pictures unless the picture is partially transparent. If there is a picture on the side of a template, allow it some space or margin between it and the text.
8. Test your ideas with the equipment, similar ambient light, and in the room in which you will be preaching. Sit in the back of the room, see how it looks and make sure that you can easily read the text.

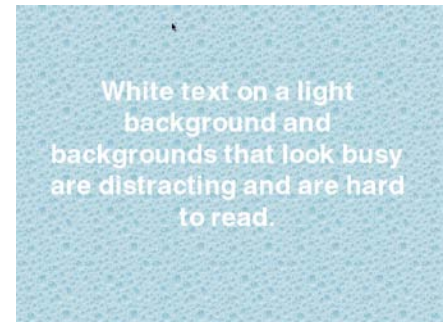
Background – A background that is dark with light text on it is easiest to read. Avoid backgrounds with textures that are too busy. Use larger soft textures. Backgrounds that look busy are distracting.

Text – In choosing text color, strong contrast with the background is best. Light colors such as white, cream & yellow work well. Yellows, light blues – along with bold and italic – fonts look good for highlighting specific words. On most backgrounds red text does not work well. If transferred to video, red text smears and degrades the quality of your presentation.

Consistency – Keeping a consistent theme throughout a presentation is best, whether it be a template theme or color. If there are multiple sections in the presentation it is acceptable to have a slightly different theme for each section, but there should still be an overall theme tying everything together.

Layout – Keep the design clean and uncluttered. Allow the slide to breathe a little. Don't pack it full of text and pictures, as it becomes very hard to discern each idea. Aligning things such as pictures with text or centering the title over the body text helps it look professional. Leading is the distance or white space between each line of text. If this gets too close together it becomes hard to read. It's better to use more slides than to cram the whole topic onto two slides.

Margins – Yes, margins are needed in multimedia presentations. Especially if presented on a television. Many older televisions cut off some of the viewing area around all four edges. Put the important things inside the “title safe” area. This will keep any text from being clipped and only the background will be cropped. Create margins as you would for a letter. Make them wider for even better results.



Fonts – For the main body text choose a font that is moderately bold. Use a sans-serif font, one without “feet.” Set the font to a large size. Sizes vary from font to font so it is hard to recommend a specific point size. The best guide, which works for most fonts, is to use no more than 7-8 lines of text including your slide title. On a full screen-slide with no side graphics, plan on no more than 8 words per line and half that if there is a side graphic. It’s nice to use a different font for titles to contrast with the body text. A good rule is to use no more than two fonts per slide. Remember, simplicity is always best.

Pictures – Using pictures in a presentation adds impact and life. It is better to have a few quality pictures sprinkled throughout your presentation than to have mediocre pictures on every slide. Mixing two or three styles of pictures (photos, clipart, paintings) on one slide looks unprofessional.

Overlapping Elements – Never put text on top of a picture unless the picture is partially transparent or softened. This way the elements won’t compete visually. Likewise putting text on top of faces or other important objects is distracting.

Legibility – Check size. No matter how nice the presentation looks or how much time you have spent putting it together, if the audience cannot see or read the slides they become nothing more than your personal notes.

Test Run – The best way to check the slide material is to go to an auditorium or church, set up the projector and screen, sit at least half way back in the room and view some of the slides. Think of someone whose eyes aren’t as sharp anymore. If you feel they would be able to read and see the material, then it’s fine. If not, go back and adjust the problem areas.

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