

6. Resource information

Preaching with Microsoft Office PowerPoint software

Advantages, disadvantages and useful tips

Advantages

- 1 A picture can be built up and developed. For example, text boxes explaining each part of Nebuchadnezzar's image can be displayed in turn.
- 2 Photographs, such as archaeological sites, can be effectively displayed.
- 3 Maps, such as the development of empires over time, can be readily shown.
- 4 Verses can be clearly displayed and annotated.
- 5 Different Bible versions can be compared side by side.
- 6 Different Bible passages can be compared side by side.
- 7 Handouts of slides can be printed for the audience.
- 8 The speaker can print notes with additional points for himself.
- 9 Movie files, such as news reports of important events, can be shown.
- 10 Slides are easy to modify quickly, for example to take into account recent world events.
- 11 Points can be emphasised within a passage.
- 12 Complex points can be illustrated simply, using diagrams and process charts.
- 13 For those who do not know their Bibles, a reference can be displayed with key points while still encouraging them turn up the passage.
- 14 PowerPoint slides are particularly useful where a connection between the Bible and the world in general is being discussed, for example, the Bible and fulfilled prophecy.

- 15 Animation can help to reveal text a bit at a time as required, so building up the message.
- 16 A PowerPoint illustrated talk can help to bring the Bible to life.

Disadvantages

- 1 It discourages people from looking at their Bible during the presentation, especially if the room is dark.
- 2 It can encourage a more passive approach to the Bible.
- 3 Animations, if used, can distract the audience.
- 4 Slick technology can distract from the Bible message.
- 5 The technology could malfunction or fail.
- 6 Slides can contain too much detail to be fully absorbed before the speaker moves on to the next slide.
- 7 Text can be too small to read.
- 8 Inconsistent design and poor use of fonts can distract from the message and make the presentation look amateurish.

Tips for using PowerPoint

- Use simple, consistent design between slides.
- Do not use more than two fonts, and use them consistently.
- Restrain use of animation to emphasise the message.
- Use adequate font sizes to be easily readable—at least 24 pt, but ideally 30 pt.
- The emphasis must be on the message, not on the medium.