

Beginners Videography for the Church

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Introduction

You're probably reading this book because you are a Youth Leader or other leader in the church. Your church may be on a tight budget and you know they can't afford professional video staff and/or equipment, so you're doing the next best thing for them...you're giving them the gift of video as a ministry offering! The gift of video is a wonderful idea, as you will have the privilege of using your video hobby as a gift to God and a contribution to the salvation of non-believers and an encouragement to the believers. This gift that you're about to give is a precious gift...but now we come down to the truth of the matter...how do you go about giving this gift in the right way?

So many times we have seen (and fixed) videos for people that were done as gifts by their Uncles or friends with the best of intentions. Unfortunately these well-wishers struck out on their own on this project, not seeking help or practicing their video skills, and so these people came to us with videos that were discolored (such as a yellow bride's dress and skin), or not framed up correctly (church looks as though they are sinking in quick sand) or shaky footage (almost making the viewer seasick). These mishaps can be remedied by studying books such as the one you're about to read. By reading this booklet you have taken a step towards being able to give a wonderful gift that your church will cherish, instead of one that they might regret.

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In writing this, I realized that there may be parts of this booklet that, though they are helpful to some, may be obvious common sense to others and vice versa. Knowing that would be inevitable, I have written everything that I know and have researched on each subject addressed in this book. So you might read and use this entire book, or you might find that you only need to use parts of it. Either way, I hope this information provides some helpful solutions for creating video that will wow the congregation and give a new ministry opportunity to every video enthusiast in the church!

Let's Get Real!

Let's be honest. You want to give your church the best video ever, but you may lack the experience and equipment to do so. You'll want to set some goals for this project, but try to set your goals realistically. Obviously you won't be able to give them Hollywood on their video, but by the end of this book you will be able to give them some great footage...a proper looking, steady view...an incredible ministry in-and-of itself.

The first thing that you need to evaluate is your level of knowledge and experience about the camera that you plan on using. Study the manual and learn what every button does. One of the most frustrating things about camera manuals is that they tell you what the button does, but they don't tell you why you would ever need that button and what that button could be used for! That is one of the first things we will address in this book...getting to know your camera and its functions. If you do not have your camera's manual, you will need to call the camera manufacturer and request that one be sent to you or look for it online. Either way you will definitely need the camera manual to figure out all of the secrets of your camera.

Secondly, you need to evaluate your level of video shooting experience. How many times have you taken your video camera out of its bag to record for long periods of time? Five times? Ten times? This is something else that will be delved into more in the following chapters...the need for practice. As you read through the many suggestions in this book, I encourage you to pause after each chapter to practice the suggestions that have been given so that each piece of advice will be fresh in your mind as you practice the techniques.

Also, you will need to evaluate your equipment (or lack thereof). Do you have a tripod for your camera? An on-camera light? Any microphones besides the on-camera microphone? Don't worry...you won't need to purchase any other equipment, but after reading this book you may want to...at least some of the smaller less-expensive items that I will be suggesting. The more equipment you have, the better your footage will be and the better prepared you will be for any and all situations.

Lastly, you will need to evaluate your level of dedication to this project. Your church and/or youth group are depending on you to give them your best. You will be tempted, at some point, to put down the camera and say "I've done enough." But, taking on this responsibility will mean accepting a certain level of dedication. You must determine to follow the advice in this book to the best of your ability, develop a serious amount of patience, and stick with this till the end. Set for yourself some goals as you read this, and as you reach those goals you'll be setting the stage to make for your church a video to remember!

Getting to Know Your Camera

So, how long has it been since you last read your camera manual? If you're anything like me, you read through it when you first bought your camera and then you filed it away somewhere thinking that you'd never need it again. Well, we were both wrong! So, get that manual out, dust it off and get ready to read through it with brand new eyes. If you can't find it, then go online to the manufacturer's website and try to see if you can download it. If you can't, you'll need to call the manufacturer and order a new one. Now, you may be asking what I meant by reading through it with 'brand new eyes'. What I mean by that is simply this: the manual tells you what each button does, but it usually doesn't tell you what you'd ever need to use it for and as I tell you what each button is used for, all-of-a-sudden you'll see each button in a whole new way!

First of all, I know it all looks very complicated at first. If you thought you were going to read all of the pages in your manual, but then became confused and/or bored with it, you're not alone. Many people with video cameras know how to push record and on/off and that's about it. That's ok, though because we're going to do a power run through your camera manual in less than an hour, gleaming only what we need for now and leaving the rest in the dust.

Because my cameras are pro cameras, I'm not going to use the camera manuals from my cameras for this exercise because my cameras are probably very different from yours. Instead I'm going to be using a camera manual from a fairly popular Sony digital 8 camcorder. The model number really doesn't matter, as we are going to be talking about functions that are usually found on most consumer camcorders.

Take a look at the manual's table of contents. I want you to read the section on getting started first. Then read recording and playback basics. Also, look at any diagrams that your manual provides and pay close attention to any buttons that you never knew existed. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to those obscure buttons and their functions.

The first thing that you need to know about is a button that probably does not exist on your camera...the white balance button. The reason that there is no white balance button on your camera is because it is a built-in function. I was astounded to learn that consumer camera manuals don't address this EXTREMELY important function. The white balance function is what makes all of the colors appear correct on the video. Properly white balancing your camera could mean the difference between a white t-shirt and a yellow one! The way this function works on your consumer camera is automatic. As soon as you turn your camera on, the camera assumes that the first thing that it sees is white and that affects how colors will be recorded. For that reason, when you turn on your camera, make sure that you have it up close and pointed at something in the room that is white, like a piece of paper or a white tablecloth. Make sure that you

repeat this procedure every time you enter a new room because the lighting will change from room to room.

The exposure button is another important function on your camera. It is located on the battery end of your camera. This allows you to tell the camera how much or how little light to allow into the camera. Just push the exposure button and rotate the dial below it up or down. If you're outside on a sunny day, you'll probably need to lower the exposure to let less light in so that people's faces aren't too bright and shiny. If you are indoors (especially in mood lighting at the wedding reception), you'll probably need to boost the exposure up as much as possible to allow a lot of light in. Try to remember, though, that the more you open up the exposure the greater your chance for grainy footage. Grainy footage happens when you open the exposure up all the way because of low light situations. Although you'll end up with brighter footage, the footage may be super grainy. To compensate for this, I suggest using a small camera mounted light, which we will talk about in later chapters.

The fader button gives your production a more professional feel and is especially helpful if you're not planning on doing any computer editing of the video production. It is located on the battery end of your camera. The fader allows you to gradually fade from black to your subject, and then when you're done recording your subject you push the fader button again to fade gradually from your subject to black. Fading looks much softer and more professional than an abrupt start and stop. Many cameras have several fade options to choose from, but a lot of them just look goofy and/or out of place for weddings. The only two options that you would use for a wedding is the regular fader function, which takes you from black to subject and vice versa, or the overlap fade which softly transitions from the last recorded image to the one you're about to record.

The focus switch, found towards the lens end of your camera, allows you to choose either auto focus or manual focus. I suggest using auto focus for most of your shooting, and manual focus for any extra shots that you want to do creatively. Auto focus constantly keeps the center of the screen in focus, while manual focus allows you to choose whether the foreground or background is in focus. However you may need to use manual focus if the subject you want to shoot is not directly dead-center.

The eyepiece lever is in an obscure part of the camera and is easy to miss. It can be found on the underside of the eyepiece. This lever is essential if your vision is impaired. If you wear glasses usually, but feel the need to take them off during video shooting, just put your eye up to the eyepiece, make sure the focus is set on automatic, and then adjust the eyepiece lever until your eye is seeing the subjects in focus as they should be.

Nightshot, usually found on the LCD side of your camera, is a nifty button and fun to use during night-time shots, but I don't suggest using it for capturing

normal footage, as it makes everything look light green and everyone's eyes look extremely creepy.

Back light, located at the battery end of your camera, is a helpful button if your subject is standing in front of the main source of light (like an open window), making him/her look like a shadow. If your subject looks like a shadow, push the back light button to allow for more light in front of him/her.

Program AE, located at the battery end of your camera, is a helpful tool when planning to shoot a school play, beach scene, fast-moving sports, sunsets, overhead projectors, or a scene out a window, but for most occasions there really is no need for this button.

The photo button, located at the top of your camera, is helpful if you plan on taking digital still photos of anything. You can record these onto the video tape or onto a memory stick. Either way, they can be loaded onto your computer and printed out for the church, if they so desire. Keep in mind, though, that because video is recorded at a lower resolution than still photography, pictures taken with your video camera will look fine on video, but may be pixilated in print. Take some test pictures and print them out to test this function. After your test, you may decide, as we have, that video cameras are still not ready to compete with still cameras when it comes to taking photos.

The sel/push exec dial located at the battery end of your camera, is the dial that you use when you need to scroll through the menu, display, digital effect, or picture effect functions (located on the inside lcd screen space opposite the screen). After you scroll through one of these menus and find the thing you're looking for, to choose that option just press the sel/push exec button and you've got it.

I would advise against using the digital effects and picture effects for most occasions, by the way. Most of those effects simply wouldn't look very professional. You might, however, choose to use the B & W (black and white) picture effect or the sepia picture effect for any creative shots. DO NOT, however, use those effects for any of the main events throughout the day.

Those are all of the most important functions to be aware of. I'm assuming, of course, that you're already aware of the battery release button, the zoom button, the tape eject button, the record button, and the on/off button. If you're not familiar with any of these basic buttons, please refer to your manual.

Now that you are familiar with your camera and its capabilities, it's time to move onto basic shooting techniques.

Basic Shooting Techniques

During our first year of videography, we noticed that there were plenty of training videos on creative shooting techniques which were very helpful, but there wasn't much teaching on proper basic shooting techniques. Even though we already had a good background and good experience with camera operation, there were some basic things that we still had not mastered, and after watching some of our first weddings and some footage from other newbie videographers, it was obvious that there was a big need for some lessons on the basics.

1. **Start with the right equipment.** You don't necessarily NEED to have all of these things, but they will prove helpful to you in getting good steady footage. If you can purchase these things, then you should.
 - 1 – camcorder and power supply cord
 - 1 – tripod: This is necessary for getting good steady footage.
 - 1 – wireless mic: Because your on-camera microphone won't pick up speech as well as you'd like it to, you might want to invest in an inexpensive lapel mic from radio shack for the main subject to wear. Use the mic hole located at the front of your camera to plug in the wireless receiver and then be sure to test the sound by plugging in a pair of headphones into the hole above the mic.
 - 1 – 20 watt camera mounted light: 20 watts is not overwhelming for most people, and it still provides much needed light for you to compensate for any dim lighting.
 - 4 – camera batteries: Because you can never have too many batteries. ☺
2. **When to white balance.** You will need to white balance every time you enter a new room or go outdoors because of the varying degrees of lighting that are used from place to place. Use a white poster board or white t-shirt to white balance your camera. Set up your camera exactly where it will be during the event and white balance by turning the camera off, pointing it at the white object, and then turn it back on.
3. **Don't move!** During a main event, such as a special speaker, sermon, etc. - use as little movement as possible. Frame up quickly and then don't move! A lot of our headaches early on in this business were from beating ourselves over the head because of our constant movement during the main events. We were constantly either zooming or panning as if that was going to add creativity to the video. Constant zooming and panning during the main event does not add beauty or creativity...it just looks sloppy. So, remember: zooming and panning works wonders for creative shots, or for an MTV style of shooting....but never, never during the actual event. Also, if at all possible, don't include those 'framing up' shots in the final production. It's so important that it needs repeating: frame up quickly and don't move!

4. **Follow the rule of thirds.** Some cameras have markers for this on the LCD screen and some do not. If you're not familiar with the rule of thirds, here it is: check your LCD screen and look for a small outlined box in the middle of the screen. If you do not have that marker box, imagine splitting your camera's LCD screen into 3 columns and 3 rows...a 3x3 grid with 2 lines down and 2 lines across, just like a tic-tac-toe grid. The rule of thirds dictates that for a close-up shot (shot of the subject's head and shoulders) you always keep your subject's eyes on the top line of that grid and if it's a medium or wide shot (shot of subject's head to mid-thigh or full length body shot) you always keep your subject's shoulders on the top line of that grid. Do not "bulls-eye" your subject by putting his/her head in the middle of the screen. That's a common mistake that many people make which ends up making the subject look like he/she is sinking in quick sand because of the huge amount of headroom up above him/her. Please remember that this is a rule...not a suggestion! ☺
5. **Watch what you say.** We can laugh now about one of our first shoots but it wasn't so funny at the time. We sat in the car trying to get a really great drive-by shot of this row of flags. I started arguing about how to do the shot, and George argued back. We were horrified when we watched the footage later! This client had requested the raw footage, and here we were having an all out cat fight on-camera! Needless, to say we had to cut that part of the footage out before giving it to our client, but I'm sure you've already guessed the point of this story...be aware, constantly, of every little thing that you say...remembering that people will be watching AND listening to your raw footage. Any verbal slip-up could be quite embarrassing!

Follow these basic shooting techniques and your footage will look and sound much better than the average home movie.

Secrets of the Single Camera Shoot

I'm sure you've noticed, as you watch popular Television shows, that it's never just one camera angle throughout the show. T.V. shows employ 3 or more cameras on the set, because different angles give more variety and entertainment to the viewer. Watching one camera angle for hours can sometimes be boring. Since you probably don't have the option of using several different cameras for shooting this upcoming event, you'll want to use some (if not all) of these secrets of the single camera shoot to keep the interest of the viewer and provide several different angles of the action.

The ICE Method

The ICE method (In Camera Editing) is used when shooting a main event at your church (not setting up your own studio-shot video) and it will save you time in editing and make your raw footage look smooth and clean. Using this method means that you have to go completely wireless (using camera batteries instead of plugging in), and though it may mean purchasing more batteries, the result is worth it. This method employs 3 specific keys. Those keys are:

1. **Be ready.** You have to know when each specific event within the main event will happen. The only way to do that is to ask your pastor for an itinerary, listing everything that will happen in chronological order. Tell the church before the wedding that having this itinerary to study before the big day is a must. The itinerary will help you know when the next transition between events will be. During some of the transitions between specific events, you will need to pause your recording and move to a different location to get a different angle, but you can only move when there is dead time, so make sure to get an itinerary and keep it with you so that you can be ready.
2. **Be steady.** During the main event: ALWAYS shoot from a tripod or at least a monopod! That's the best way to ensure steady footage. When you're getting establishing shots of the building, or signs you can feel free to go handheld (using the steady shooting techniques in the next chapter), but when shooting any main events during the day, you'll definitely want to use a tripod or at least a monopod. Anytime you are planning to move the tripod, pause your recording so that you don't end up recording your move from one place to another. If you plan on doing hand held work, read the next chapter first.
3. **Know when to go... or stop.** Plan out your movements before the event and know which transitions you'll be using to move to another spot. When you do move from one spot to the other make sure you pause your recording until you are stationary AND framed up correctly, then begin recording again. Remember that to make your starts and stops look smoother on video, you can use the fade button that we discussed in a previous chapter.

Whether you're planning on editing this video or not you've just made this footage into a very clean-cut, multi-angle, interesting to watch video. And, if you're planning on editing this, it will now be much easier and take much less time because you only captured the footage that you need, avoiding any dead-time that occurred at the event.

To make your video even cleaner and even smoother, you'll need to know some steady shooting skills that will make getting hand held footage ten times easier.

Keys to Steady Shooting

Something that might have already noticed is the fact that with smaller cameras it's very difficult to get good steady footage off the tripod. Well, with a few tips from other professional videographers and our own experimentation, we've discovered some very effective ways for you to get great steady footage.

1. **Use the wall.** If possible, use a wall for support. Lean up against it to decrease your body's movements. If you can't use a wall, at least have a good steady stance, such as one foot slightly in front of the other, legs slightly spread.
2. **Use the eyepiece.** When going hand-held, don't use the LCD screen if at all possible. Instead, holding the camera with both hands, press the camera's eyepiece firmly against your eye area. This will greatly reduce the flip-flop motion of the camera.
3. **Hold your breath.** This idea may seem a little silly, but it is very effective. For short periods of time hold the camera's eyepiece against your eye, and either take very shallow breaths, or hold your breath completely until you've gotten the short clip that you want. This also works well for any short creative shots that you're getting.
4. **Get into good physical shape.** The stronger your body is, the more control you will have over your camera's movement. Upper body strength is especially necessary for steady camera control.
5. **Move slowly.** Quick movements will make your viewers seasick, so slow down as much as possible. Take slow deliberate steps if you have to walk. If you need to turn your body around to follow the action, do so slowly and keep some space in front of the subjects that are moving. Try not to allow them to 'bump' the edge of your frame.

Follow these keys to steady shooting and you will be more comfortable and confident, feel free to be more creative, and get the shots you want in exactly the way that you wanted them.

Resist the Temptation to be Overly Creative!

We've seen some videos done by friends where you can really tell that they put a lot of thought and effort into the video. Much of the video is done well, but then part-way through the main event you see it...the tell-tale signs of the creative mind at work! During the best part of the sermon, the view zooms into a great shot of the cross on the stage. The view holds there for a few seconds and then zooms out...but, wait...the man behind the camera has decided that he didn't like that zoom shot very much, so he goes in again and tries a zoom out and pan right combination. It's a very steady shot, but before you know it the best part of the sermon is over, and the camera man missed the whole thing!

It is a temptation, believe me, I know! You have so many creative ideas that you want to try out. You think it would look so awesome if you could pan this way, or zoom that way. Unfortunately, if you do these fancy shots during an important event you will kick yourself later! It's tedious and sometimes boring. It will try your patience for sure, but you have to resist the urge to pan or zoom or play with the focus dial during the important events.

There will be plenty of opportunity for you to get some creative footage later, and the church will definitely appreciate that kind of creative footage (which we will discuss in a later chapter). But...the church may be at least a little upset if, during the guest speaker's sermon, the video all of a sudden is zooming in or out or panning left or panning right. During those oh-so-important moments the church members will be happy to have a nice plain-jane still moment of the action. Trust me on this one...save the creative zooms and pans for your youth group MTV style projects. During the main events, all you want is a good steady shot of the event. Frame up your shot first (following the rule of thirds discussed in the last chapter), and then push record. If you're going to move the camera, then do so only after you have stopped recording. Set up the camera again, frame up first and then push record.

Eliminating a lot of the zooming and panning will make your video much easier to watch and much more appealing.

-----Practice, Practice, Practice-----

If you haven't yet, now would be a good time to practice all of the techniques that you've learned so far. The rest of this book will be about preparations before any big events, what to do on the actual day of the event, and what to do with the footage afterwards.

Some good ideas for practice would be to go to some places where there will be a lot of action (like a park or busy public building) to practice following the action, and then visit some boring, slow places (like the post office or library) and practice footage of that. Why do I suggest both types? Well, when you think about it, most events are a combination of slow deliberate movements (adult church) and fast-paced action (youth group, or children's church).

When you practice getting footage of slow, boring places pick a teddy bear at the library or a line of people at the post office. Keep the camera trained on that thing for at least a full 5 minutes. This will be a good practice in patience and still, steady footage. When you visit the park or busy public building pick a subject and follow them as they move quickly from one place to another. For obvious reasons, you may wish to record your own children or nieces/nephews at the park, rather than small children you don't know.

Also, practice in different lighting conditions. Practice in a well lit room, then do some practice outside, and then do some practice in a dimly lit room. More than likely the church event will be held in a well lit church, but they may have worship services or youth services which will be dimly lit for "mood lighting". Mood lighting makes for bad video footage on a consumer camera unless you have a small light to mount on the front of your camera. For this reason, I highly suggest purchasing a light and using it when you practice in your dimly lit room.

Anytime you practice, do some practice on the tripod and then do some practice hand-held.

When you get back home watch your footage! You can learn a lot about your own good video choices and bad video mistakes by simply watching your footage. As you watch the footage, take notes on what you need to work on and what you were really good at. Then, the next time you go to practice, you'll know exactly what you need to work on.

Preparation During the Weeks Before any Main Event or Planned Shoot Day

Now that you've learned and practiced good steady footage, proper white balancing, crisp sound and lighting you're completely prepared, right?! Not quite.

There are some preparations that you can and should make before the big day arrives. Cover all the bases. Get as much information about the day as possible so that you can be prepared for anything. Your preparations start a couple of weeks before the main event day or planned shoot day.

A couple of weeks before any big event day at your church that you are planning on videotaping, you need to ask your Pastor some questions. Ask about the itinerary of events. Ask what room(s) you'll be shooting in. Let the Pastor know where you'll be shooting from. If you are shooting this with the intent to distribute (or sell) them to church members, let the Pastor know that you would like him to announce to the congregation when the videos will be ready and how much (if anything) you are charging for them. Make as many notes as you need to.

If you are preparing for a purposefully planned shoot date, there are some different things you will need to do beforehand. First of all, you need a script. Make a script planning out the whole entire video from start to finish. Map out the locations that you need, actors that you will use (and what parts they will be playing), and what each person will say and do. Also, acquire any props and/or costumes that you will need. Distribute these scripts to your actors at least 2 weeks before the shoot date so that they have time to practice.

The night before the event/shoot date, make sure you've charged all batteries, tested all cameras and tested your lapel microphone. Here is a check list of materials and equipment that you should have packed into a backpack, camera bag, or duffle bag:

- Camera and camera's power cord (just in case you run out of batteries)
- Tripod
- Extension cord (just in case you run out of batteries) and duct tape (to tape down the extension cord so that people don't trip and hurt themselves)
- 6 -8 hours worth of camera tapes (labeled – Tape 1, Tape 2, etc.)
- Lapel microphone
- Camera batteries and 2 extra 9 volt batteries for your lapel mic
- Lens cleaning brush (can be found at most camera supply stores)

Now you are prepared! And, now that you're prepared, there are some things that you'll need to know about how to best capture the main events of the day and some excellent ideas for extra shots.

Shooting Suggestions

1. **Creative shots to use in editing.** If you are going to edit video, I recommend getting a good editing program (we use Adobe Premier Pro) and first familiarize yourself with the editing software. After you've purchased the editing software, you can have some fun with creative shots. **IMPORTANT:** You only want to capture a lot of creative, MTV style shots if you plan on giving your church edited video with some of the creative footage set to music using video editing computer software. If you are doing some editing, you'll want to capture each shot 4 different times using a different method each time. These 4 methods are: pan left across the subject, pan right across the subject, pan from sky (or ceiling) to subject, and tight shot zooming out to a wide shot of subject. Also use a lot of tight shots of faces and hands (which will add emotion). If you are editing the footage, the more creative shots you have the better. You can always sift through them and decide which ones you will keep for their video and which ones you are going to toss. Creative shots are great to use when editing a music video, but when left on raw footage they can look odd and out of place.
2. **Shots for raw footage video.** If you are giving your church raw footage, I suggest doing very few extra creative shots. Again, remember to use your on-camera light (if you've purchased one) during any dimly lit periods of time. If you are going to be producing a final production as-is (raw footage), start with a nice shot of the outside of the building by starting with a tight shot of the name on the building and then zoom out until you have a wide shot of the whole building. Then, go inside and get set up for the main event.

Having Fun and Working Well With Others!

Here is where I leave you with a note of caution. You're guaranteed to have a lot of fun capturing video, and you should be proud of yourself for taking on this responsibility. BUT...there are some pitfalls to avoid when working on video projects within the church. To avoid strife between you and your video crew here are some suggestions:

- 1.) Create an easy-going atmosphere when shooting. Keep the mood light, fun and energetic. This is especially true when working with young adults and teens as they will all be more likely to want to get involved if you make it fun and exciting.
- 2.) Plan ahead. Don't throw your crew into a last-minute effort or you will likely give them all a bad case of burn-out.
- 3.) Encourage ideas and use them, if possible. Even if the script idea is yours....drop the whole "diva" act, and allow for outside input from your crew. It may not always be possible to use their sometimes "off-the-wall" ideas, but then again, those crazy thoughts may be just exactly what your script needs to give it a fresh, modern spin.

The above comments are not must-haves. They are merely suggestions for good ways to work well with those around you during the shooting process.

Edited Video or Raw Footage?

Now that the event/shoot date is over and you have your footage, what do you plan to do with it? This is something that you need to consider and decide on before the event day because it will affect how you capture your footage on the big day. If you plan on delivering the raw footage to the church, then you only get one chance to get each shot right, which is why in previous chapters I suggested that raw footage only video shooting needs to have less creative shots in it, and more of simply documenting the day. If you plan on doing some editing with some home video editing software, then you might consider gathering a lot of creative shots because in the editing process you can use what you want to use and dump whatever you didn't like.

So how do you decide whether you want to edit or not? A lot of that will depend on how much experience, if any, you have with home video editing software.

If you have editing software and have used it to edit video, then editing may be a good idea. A big advantage to editing is that you can do some really interesting stuff with it and make it look very exciting and empowering, but in the same way a big disadvantage to editing is that you will have to spend more hours on this project than just the hours spent on the shoot day. As a professional, most of our wedding projects take us 40-60 hours to edit, but we include many music videos. We also edit the ceremony and reception using footage from 3 different cameras. Since you are probably using one camera, and will probably not be making a whole lot of music videos you can expect 10-20 hours of editing. It's a tedious process, but can really look spectacular compared to raw footage.

Be careful in your editing, though, that you stay away from the "cheese". Cheesy and cartoonish looking effects should be left out of your video. For a church event video, one title at the beginning of the video and a lower third title (name of the speaker) is really all you need when it comes to titles. As for transitions, a fade to black and fade from black to the subject is perfect...or a cross dissolve transition from one subject to the next. Please, please refrain from using page turner transitions, or page splitter transitions, or ball bouncing transitions, etc. You really have to use your own judgment in editing and make editing decisions that will leave the video with a "wow" effect and a professional appeal, leaving a lot of footage as is. If you are wanting to do a really cool music video for youth group, use some scratch effects on the video, or black and white, or darkening or brightening the footage. Music can add emotion to your video. In fact, since music sets the mood, choose your music wisely. Make sure the music fits the tone of the video that you want to convey.

You may, however, choose to give the raw footage to the church. If you can't spend 10-20 hours editing and/or you don't already have video editing software, giving the raw footage to the church will still be a wonderful gift. Just

remember that when you're shooting footage that you plan on giving as raw footage, there is more pressure as you have to get it right the first time...there is no going back to re-do a shot. But, extra pressure aside, if you use your fader button instead of the record button, you'll end up with some nice smooth transitions in between each event, which will make the raw footage look much more clean and professional than the typical raw footage harsh cuts in between transitions.

Whatever you decide to give to the church, make sure you keep a copy for yourself. Besides the fact that you might want to watch the event again, you'll need that copy to keep for the next and final stage of your adventures in video.

Congratulations and Evaluations!

You're finished! Now, pull out your finished tape and watch it. Take some notes. How did you do? Do you like how it turned out? How smooth were your shots or how shaky? Do you notice an improvement from your last home video? These are the kinds of questions that you should ask yourself as you watch the video. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. And even seasoned professionals have to evaluate and take notes on things that need improvement.

After you've evaluated your mistakes, you really should pat yourself on the back for a job well done. If you've followed most (if not all) of the suggestions laid out in this book, then I know you've done a great job, and I know that the newlyweds are going to be happy with their wedding video.

Well, whatever your first video ended up as, it's a start and I'm sure you and your crew had fun doing it. As youth leaders and as professional videographers, we know that providing a modern ministry opportunity to youth and/or young adults is reward enough as you see them having fun while providing a necessary service to their church! Congratulations on a job well done and a gift that your church and your youth will treasure forever!