



# VIRTUAL BREAKOUT

A Quick Guide to Small Groups





### Summary

Meeting virtually is a positive disruptor that has shaken things up in breakout and pushed us out of our comfort zone. It's a highlight of the week.



### Two Minute Read



### Small Group Commitment #5 *Embrace Accountability*



Written by  
*Rob & Kim Deas*

The first time I heard the word “zoom”, I thought of one of two things: it’s either the sound I make when I’m playing with Hot Wheels, or it’s that show I watched as a kid in the 1970’s (remade in the early 2000’s) with the catchy theme song: “*Come on and zoom, zoom, zooma, zoom!*” Admit it, you know you just sang the tune in your head.

## Now I’m using “zoom” to describe what I’m doing with my small group.

At first, I was skeptical about using technology to connect with my peeps. Personally, I had a ton of questions. Will this be weird? Then my hesitations were confirmed when half my group said, “*What’s a Zoom? And does it hurt?*”

Over this past month, meeting virtually for breakout has taken my small group to a new level. For those who don’t want to be there, this is an easy out. But what I’m finding is more people are more engaged. More than I expected. Meeting virtually has become a positive disruptor that has shaken things up in breakout and pushed us beyond our comfort zone. It has stretched the depth of our predictable and cliché answers and has challenged our relationship with Christ as we’re experiencing the reality that the Church is more than a building with four walls and a roof. In light of the awkward world we’re living in right now, meeting virtually for breakout has become a highlight of the week.



### Observation

Unlike a phone call or text, meeting virtually minimizes the de-socialization that we are all experiencing. Seeing each other face-to-face creates a powerful visual of community and reminds us to focus on others. Meeting virtually for breakout fosters a sense of belonging in the midst of isolation and distancing. As a simple touch point during the week, it boosts our faith and provides real-time encouragement through God@Work stories. What we’re all going through is new for everyone and everyone has a story to share.



### Ideas to Consider

Meeting virtually for breakout is simple and free. Here are a few suggestions as you continue with cyber meetings:

- **Communicate ahead of time.** First, set a time and date. Then, send out a link for the online meeting. Especially with breakout, make sure it is clear who is meeting: is this just the guys or is it ladies only... or is it everyone? Also, remember to send out a few reminders along with questions you want people to process ahead of time.
- **Help your group be seen and heard.** It’s helpful to ask your group to not hold their phone. All devices should be stationary to avoid distractions and motion sickness. All participants should also be in a room that is well-lit and with heads fully in frame so everyone can see their face. Pets and kids should be muted whenever possible.
- **Keep it simple.** Don’t have a strict agenda. Make this a free space for people to share anything. Remember, most people haven’t talked to too many humans in a while and might have a lot on their heart. Use this time to go deep and allow people to share their struggles and what they are going through.
- **Preaching is not allowed.** No one has been through a pandemic like this, so there’s no right way to feel about it. The news has barraged us with mind-numbing details. Don’t try to be an expert. Just watch and listen.
- **Keep an eye on the clock.** An hour (or 40 minutes if you are on a free Zoom call) is a good amount of time for everyone’s attention span and it’s about all we can handle, especially if the conversation is emotionally draining.
- **Close in prayer.** Choose someone who was engaged and comfortable during the session and ask them to pray. It might also be a good idea to pick someone who has a good internet connection, so everyone can hear them.

Do you think Jesus would use Zoom with His disciples during this time of social distancing? I think He would. He was about taking time for others. He was all about listening and giving hope. He was about connection and community. And if He found Himself six feet from a few kids, He’d probably make the same sound with His Hot Wheels as well.