



Zoom For Student Ministry : A Helpful Tool For Small Groups

What Is Zoom?



Zoom is a powerful video conferencing application that is used by large businesses, learning communities, universities, schools, and other organizations. It is a great fit for establishing a virtual face-to-face connection for youth groups, small groups, and church ministry.

You can download Zoom for free here.

Mac

PC

Android

iOS

How does Zoom work for me?

Zoom is a video (i.e. camera!) conferencing platform, so here are some basic tips to help make you look good when on-camera with your group.

Get ready for your close up!

Quiet: To the best of your ability maintain a **quiet** room, and keep yourself quiet when not sharing. Be **mindful** of noisy typing and **mute** yourself when *cough* coughing.

Also consider using both headphones/earbuds AND a microphone. Bluetooth headsets, earbuds, and ear pieces are not overkill and are quite helpful in making the call more enjoyable for everyone else. If you have the standard-issue white Apple earbuds with the white plastic





tabby thing on the cord (that's the mic), that works great! Don't think you need expensive gear. You've probably already got what you need: just don't forget to use it.

On Set: Consider your surroundings. Is your area clean and free of distractions and messes? Are dirty clothes piled in the corner of the room? Is the area behind you distracting? Trust us: someone will notice. Clear your space. Clean your space. Enjoy your calls.

Lights: Make sure that the lighting around you is **excellent**. This might mean moving closer to a **window** or adjusting a **lamp**. The goal is to get more **light** on your **face** and not behind your head. This helps to make the image more clear and your lovely face less shadowy.

Camera: Is your webcam or phone camera-ready? Consider where the camera is placed and from what **angle** you are filming. There are definitely more **flattering** angles (above and slightly at an angle) than straight under your chin from the webcam.

Lift: Elevate your laptop or tablet, or consider getting a grip-arm or small tripod for your phone to elevate your camera to just above eye-level.

Action: For the most part, you want your hands free. This doesn't seem obvious at first, but around 15 minutes into your first call you will want freedom of motion. Also, talking with your whole face and hands is helpful in making this way of connecting more human.





Pro-Tips For Leading A Great Virtual Meeting

Acknowledge that the first-go will be a start-and-stop mess. Accept that people are clumsily gathering in a digital room. Welcome them and **encourage** them. This is a big step for many people, and the sooner they settle in and feel welcome, the better the meeting will go.

Be overly intentional. The whole Zoom conference thing is a little odd for everyone at first. Acknowledge people by name. The digital name tags assist with making it personal every time.

Get a co-host or two. There may be a lot to manage in terms of greeting, chatting with folks, fielding questions, and muting throughout the meeting. Work with a partner(s) to help make sure everyone on the call feels welcome and connected while the leader is leading and the teacher is teaching.

Delegate your host duties. As your group grows, you will need **help** maintaining order. Enlist a person, and **assign** them as host to help manually organize your breakout rooms before separating the group.

Close your eyes when you pray. My friend Nick and I agree that it is an odd and **beautiful** thing to see people close their eyes together while praying. It reminds you that the **people** on the other side of the screen are human too.

Raise your typical energy. Use hand **gestures** and be excited about what you are sharing so that it **radiates** through the screen. Help your friends on the call fight the feelings of isolation by **connecting** with you through the screen. Set the tone.

Don't make it weird. Trust us when we say that this is less weird for your students than it is for you. They live on video calls with their friends.





Practice spiritual disciplines. Read Scripture. Pray together.
Encourage each other. Use this tool to accomplish the good work.



Learn more! There is a 4-part tutorial on YouthMinistryBooster.com
Download the video helps [here](#).

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more about moving your youth ministry online.

