

# Running an Online Christian Enquiry Course

Top Tips from Claire Cooke, Jo Smith and Pete Tomkinson

## Who do you need to run the course?

- A host
- Co-host
- Technical support person to admit people to zoom and administer break out rooms
- People praying for the course

## What do you need to do to prepare?

- Download the course guide: [how to run alpha online guide](#); [running a Start course online](#); [Christianity Explored online course](#)
- Help people get to know each other before the course starts by setting up a WhatsApp group
- Create a sign-up system: invite individuals put information about the course on social media and the church website
- Ensure that people's data is safeguarded and passwords for zoom are not shared publicly. [E-Safety guide for alpha](#) gives more information about precautionary measures and security
- Consider, in advance, how you will follow up the course
- Know your group
- Prepare how you will end your sessions with time to reflect and consider a next step

## What practicalities do I need to think of?

- Have a flipchart or documents that you can share on screen
- Make the sessions shorter – 1 hour 10 mins is sufficient
- Start later to enable parents to put children to bed
- Pre-sort your breakout groups and keep these the same every week
- Agree a way of ending breakout groups with your technical person so that people are given a warning of the end of the discussion time

## How do you enable the greatest participation?

- Group leader is key in setting the tone and helping people feel at ease
- Create a pre-course WhatsApp group
- Encourage conversation and think of ice breakers such as discussing people's snacks
- Make the first meeting one that focuses on getting to know each other and how to use zoom features
- Use open ended questions
- Be mindful of including everyone
- Set ground rules for participating on zoom, eg. one person talks at a time.

## What are the Pros of working online?

- It is a good way of training others up to take on roles of hosting, co-hosting, technical support
- There is less preparation time ie. No setting up chairs
- People feel at ease in their own homes and like to see other people's homes too
- Sessions can be recorded and sent to those who couldn't come
- Can include people who are shielding or socially isolating

## How do you make the most of zoom?

- [Changing the settings on zoom to make most of sound and picture quality](#)
- [How to make breakout rooms](#)