

# THE ESSENTIALS

## The Foundation

Deuteronomy 6:5 & John 3:16

### INTRODUCTION TO THE MPC SMALL GROUP

Over the next 8 weeks together, there will be small group materials provided to each small group leader and will also be available to download from our website. There will be three sections presented each week.

Section 1 – **Small Group Questions.** These are the same kinds of questions that we have worked on before in small groups. The intent is to go deeper into the Word and find practical ways to apply it all to your everyday life.

Section 2 – **Pray.** Prayer is an essential part of who we are as the people of God (We'll talk more specifically about this in week #4 of our series). Take time to share prayer requests and leave time to pray for one another.

Section 3 – **Moment on Mission.** We want to pass along ideas about how individuals or groups can enter into serving in the community. Typically, we'll give one idea that is from our Missions Team and one idea where you as an individual, family or small group can do something to engage your neighbors.

### GUIDELINES FOR MEETING TOGETHER

Begin by establishing some ground rules for your group. Even if your group has been together for a while, it is always a good idea to check in and make sure you all share a common set of values. Here are five things you might consider as part of that discussion.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** What is said in the group stays in the group. Talk about this and make sure everyone is on the same page with this value.

**LISTEN:** Value one another during the discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond or fixing someone's problem.

**SHARING:** Be sensitive about the amount of time you share. Try and hear somewhat equally from all members of the group.

**SENSITIVITY:** There is a lot happening in the world. On top of all the stuff that we can see, there are things that people are going through that are unseen. Be sensitive to the fact that there may be people who are really hurting or very anxious, or stressed, or scared, or angry.

## **“WEEK #1 - THE FOUNDATION”**

Preached: September 12, 2021

Series: “The Essentials”

Scripture: John 3:16 and Deuteronomy 6:4-9

### SECTION 1 – SMALL GROUPS QUESTIONS

1. **Check in question** – How have you and your family been doing in the midst of our “pandemic-environment” that has lasted longer than most people thought it was going to last?
2. In the OT passage, just following verses 4-5 are tangible ways to remember to put God at the center of your life. Do any of these ideas translate well into our culture some 2000 years later? What are the practices / habits / reminders that you have put into place in your life to remember where God is to be?
3. John 3:16 is one of those passages that is found everywhere – on the bottom of an In-n-Out cup, at large sporting events with a guy with a rainbow wig, large billboards, and a myriad of other places. Do you think this is a good verse to capture the essence of the Christian faith? Why or why not? Is there another passage of Scripture that you think captures the Christian faith better or just as well?
4. When it says, “God so loved the world” what do you think the writer means by “world?” All the people in the world – even those who aren’t people of faith? All people regardless of their faith? Everything in the world?

5. If you saw a person today who exhibited the ideas of loving God with all their heart, soul, and strength - what would that person be doing? How would you know that this was true about them? Would people say this about you? Why or why not?
  
6. Plenty of people are fine to profess that they believe in God. However, when asked if they believe in Jesus, they are less likely to respond with as much strength. Why do you think this is? How does Jesus change everything?

## SECTION 2 – PRAYER

Take some time to share some prayer requests with one another and then spend some time praying for each other.

## SECTION 3 - MOMENT ON MISSION

**Partners in the community** – Are there non-profit organizations or volunteer opportunities in the community that you are actively a part of? If you are looking for opportunities to serve in the community, we will be highlighting organizations that the church is partnered with each week of this series.

**On your own in the community** – As you walk the dogs, take evening walks, or any other kind of exercise, what does it look like for you to love God with all your heart, soul, and strength as you engage in these activities?