

# REM Cycle

Groups at Foundations are intended to reflect how God designed us to be in community with one another. They are dynamic and involve multiple elements of engagement. More than a place to learn. More than a place to fellowship. And more than just a place to serve. Groups need all these parts to reflect God's heart for Biblical community. Foundations' groups strive to incorporate each component into the DNA of their Small Group community.

**REM Cycle** is the acronym used to represent four key components we want to see in every Small Group – **R**ecreation, **E**ducation, **M**ission, **C**ommunity. The format may look different in your group – *doing it a certain way* is not important – doing it is important.

## **R = Recreation:** *(noun) activity done for enjoyment*

Gary Fischer, mountain bike innovator, inscribed on the bike's top cap, "*all work and no play is no fun at all*". Although he was not a Bible scholar (to my knowledge) he was onto something. God wired us for recreation, fellowship, laughing, rejoicing, dancing, play, fun, etc. It came easy as a kid, but somewhere along the way some of us forgot how to. Michael Yaconelli questions, in his book *Dangerous Wonder*, "*What if our strategy to win the world was to 'play' people into the kingdom? What if we could hear laughter in a church as well as 'amens'?*"

\*What might this look like in your Small Group? Take the night off from your study. Go bowling, out for dinner, make dinner together, take a hike, watch a ballgame, plan a game night, go dancing, etc. Have fun, be creative, build relationships & memories.

## **E = Education:** *(noun) the process of imparting or acquiring knowledge and development*

In the scriptures the word 'wisdom' is found over 200 times, and the word 'knowledge' over 170 times. "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.*" (Prov 1:7) Our goal is not to acquire information about God, but rather we learn and grow and mature our faith as we study. As we gather in groups to challenge, encourage, pray, study, and talk about God's Word we learn from each other. "*As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another*" (Prov 27:17). "*...the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*" (2 Tim 3:15-17)

\*What might this look like in your Small Group? Choose a video series, book of the Bible, book study, parenting study, marriage study, sermon series discussion, etc. This will most likely be the largest percentage of time your group spends together so choosing something that interests everyone will be important. Foundations is here if you need study options.

**M = Mission:** (*noun*) *Important assignment.*

The church has a mission because Jesus had a mission (*Missio Dei*). Jesus came to give life and give it to the fullest (Jn 10:10). Missional living is embracing the posture, thinking, behaviors, and practices of Jesus in order to share the message of the gospel. Most of the time serving leads to relationship which leads to conversations. Foundations' Mission Statement is "to bring the extraordinary life of Jesus to a lost and broken world".

\*What might this look like in your Small Group? Connect with a non-profit organization to see how you can serve with them (several can be found on the FC website), help at Foundations Church (Kids, Students, making coffee, etc), offer to help a neighbor with a project/yardwork, launch a parenting or marriage study and invite co-workers, neighbors or friends to join, spend time at a retirement home loving on residents, etc. Whatever you choose to do, it is important to serve from your heart and not see this as a "box to be checked" or a project to be completed... the result will be *compassion* instead of *obligation*.

**C = Community:** (*noun*) A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.

Few will debate the need for people to be in community. But *belonging* in community is insufficient – the need is deeper. Genesis 1 shows us that we are image-bearers of an eternally communal Godhead – Father, Son, Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12 explains that we are many parts that make up one body. We were created for community... not to simply belong to it or merely appreciate it. We are incomplete without it.

Jesus lived his life and carried out his ministry in community. The establishment of the church was not a building, but a group of people praying, living, studying, worshiping, serving, caring for one another – together in community.

Our community must be more than a gathering. We want to be intentional to develop a depth of being known and knowing one another – which includes fellowship, care, challenge, fun, study, encouragement, etc. Developing authentic, healthy Christian community takes time and effort.

\*What might this look like in your Small Group? Use ice-breaker and check-in questions. Share prayer requests and pray together. Each person shares their faith journey (Your Story). Make connections with others between meetings – text, email, calls, coffee, drop-ins. Play together.