

WGSU Wk 5: The Master plan

I'm here at MHS Football Stadium. Yes, it's empty for now, but it's here that we see the crowds gather, especially when a big game is on. And, in due time, this stadium will be filled again, with the crowds all coming in to be spectators for the big game on the field.

Right now, the Plan for amassing again in big crowds is unclear. Plans are changing Daily on social distancing restrictions, and it is questionable if we'll ever get to gather in mass again anytime soon. It's so uncertain? For us as a church, at first was maybe, Easter, now maybe not until the Fall, and maybe even longer than that? Plans keep changing.

If Jesus could somehow show up, I wonder how he would respond to all that's happening to us today? What would our Master's, Master Plan be?

And one of our biggest American pastimes, football in the fall is in question. You see, this stadium represents a place where crowds of people, and hopefully in the fall, come and watch football. Especially during homecoming, or when a league championship is on the line, there would be crowds of people here!

You ever wonder what Jesus' response was to the crowds? In Jesus' day, crowds gathered from far and wide to see Jesus, maybe not all amassing in stadiums like this, but crowding around him to hear his teachings, see him performing miracles, and get close enough just to touch him for their healing!

And it was in this moment, in the beginning of his ministry, and in the midst of a pack of people, that his master plan would be revealed, his plan to reach the whole world and show up in people's lives even till this day!

Let me read to you about our master's master plan:

I'll read you from the context from which he'd reveal his plan in Mark 3.

⁷ Jesus went out to the lake with his disciples, and a large crowd followed him. They came from all over Galilee, Judea, ⁸ Jerusalem, Idumea, from east of the Jordan River, and even from as far north as Tyre and Sidon. The news about his miracles had spread far and wide, and vast numbers of people came to see him.

⁹ Jesus instructed his disciples to have a boat ready so the crowd would not crush him. ¹⁰ He had healed many people that day, so all the sick people eagerly pushed forward to touch him.

If you had at a map, you'd see that these places mentioned were 20 – 50 miles around Galilee. It's like people from different parts of Oahu, coming here in crowds to see Jesus. All gathering because his radical messages and his miraculous healings. If it were today, Covid 19 patients, would be wheeled to his side in mass for healing. Jesus deals even with demon possession, and he had star power for sure, and the crowds showed that, but it wasn't the crowds that Jesus was drawn to. You'd think he'd be attracted to the crowds, especially knowing that he wanted to reach the whole world.

Instead, he instructed his first disciples, "to have a boat ready so the crowd would not crush him." So probably it was Peter and his brother Andrew who get the boat to get him out of the crowd. (We don't hear what Jesus says, but I wonder if he said, "guys, I've got an important thing to do tomorrow. And it's not about being with the crowds. I need to spend time with my heavenly father"

And right after this, we get to see Jesus' master plan to reach the world in verse 13 – 15

Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. **14** He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach **15** and to have authority to drive out demons.

Did you catch his plan? His master plan to reach the world with his good news, was gonna be done from his association with 12 men. And these were just ordinary Joes!

The Master Plan wasn't gonna be done from inspiring the crowds from afar. No, it would be done up close and personal, in and through community, from his selection of people out of the crowd to be his faithful followers where Jesus would show up in their lives over and over again.

And what can we learn from this passage regarding the plan. Verse 14 says, He appointed twelve to (And it's so easy to miss) So let's catch it!

1. Be with him (the call on these men to follow was a call to relationship)
2. Send them out to preach (share the good news)
3. Have authority to drive out demons (do his ministry)

There will always be crowds, but Jesus is looking for community, where he'd show up in our lives f2f, and impart his truths directly to us, and breathing life into our lives about who we are, our identity, where he can speak directly into our issues, calm our fears, help change our thinking to be more Kingdom like.

And Jesus knew, he couldn't do that from afar. He had to do so from up close and personal. That was his master plan to reach the world, his investment into a community of followers, that would catch his heart, and spread that throughout the world!

For us today, we should ask ourselves this question, are we in the crowd or have we responded to Jesus call to become a part of his community? I'll illustrate this.

In due time, this stadium will be filled with crowds again all coming to watch some football or some other sports or band competition.

And if you're in the crowd, in these stands, you can come and go as you please, choose which game to attend, people don't really know you. You can keep to yourself. And for a while it's fun. At least you're AT the game.

But it's not until you get out of the stands and get onto the field and on the team that you can experience the joy of winning. It's not until you get on the team, start training with the team, and playing that you become a player. And you're not playing alone. You are playing on a team with others, who have decided to get out of the crowd and onto the field so that you can experience first hand being a part of a team.

That's the game of football. Likewise, the crowd in Jesus time represents those in stands. Watching him from afar. But God wants more than spectators as his followers. He is looking for players. Yeah, players who he could coach, life coach to help them transform and be world changers and do the things Jesus himself did.

And Jesus calls each of his faithful followers out by name! This is the account of Luke's gospel, Luke 6:12 -16

One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. ¹³ When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: ¹⁴ Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶ Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

I believe Jesus still calls people out today. Hey, Dan, you Kimo, Sally, hui Lei, you come on down.

Yes, from out the stands and onto the field. And he'll do so in such a personal way like he did with his first faithful followers!

For me, I was in college when God called me out of that stands and onto the playing field. I had said yes to Jesus cuz of the free gift of eternal life. That's why I got into the stadium. Did I want to become a player, identified as a Christian, change my ways, having a new lifestyle. Not really, at first! But because I was "randomly" placed with a Christian dorm mate who kept on inviting me to, more bugging me, I didn't know it then, but it was an invitation to get on the field and play. It was my first call to a community of believers. He said, come to my bible study. I thought, "study the bible! Enough study, I wanna party hardy, as it was on Friday nights! But I said, "I'd try it once" And I never stopped" In fact, I invited my girlfriend the next week, and she joined that community too, my wife Gayle.

And that was the best decision I made as I became a player. Not that kind of player. Checking out the chicks! But a player who'd begin to hear Jesus speak to me and learn about how to win at the game of life.

I instantly became surrounded by people who helped me hear from my life coach, Jesus. And I began this amazing journey on this new team, team Jesus, where my life began to change for the better. My values, my identity, my future aspirations, all became clearer.

As I look back, Like PGlenn shared last week, God used many mentors to mentor me to the master. Jesus called me out, and I didn't know it then, but I'm so glad I responded to his call to get on the field, onto the team, and be a player as that's a huge reason I'm who I am today!

So how does this relate to Jesus master plan at NHCO? All of you have all walked into our stadium, our weekend services, for now online! And it's so okay to be in crowd for a while, but eventually Jesus wants you to get out of

the crowd and into his community. And there are many settings where you can go from crowd to community at NHCO. And God may just use someone to invite out of the stands and into that community! You could join a Transformation Academy class, and we have the summer session classes available now. Classes where you can learn with others! You could join an Ohana Group where you can find Spiritual friends, Mat friends as I call them (people who would be willing to carry you on a mat to Jesus when you can't carry yourself). All of our Campus pastors would be honored to help you get connected to a community. Let us know. There are various ministries you can get connected with to serve! Many of our ministries are tied to our normal weekend services, but that's another way you can get connect in community by serving and learning to use your talents and abilities to serve on the team!

Response. For some of you, you've responded to God's call from the crowd to community and are thriving as a player on God's field. Some of you are even coaching others on the field and making them into future coaches, Jesus calls you a disciple maker, and he wants others to become disciple makers like you.

Maybe some of you just answered the call to community! And you are seeing God show up more in your life! Continue your journey in community seeing God showing up more and more in your life. Maybe you are listening to this message and you're in the crowd still. Listen to one of Jesus last play call to his community of followers before he'd go back to his heavenly father. You've heard this before from Matthew 28:18 - 20

¹⁸ Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy

Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Did you catch his promise at the end. Jesus’ promises to be with us always, where he shows up again in our lives, as we, like those disciples, participate in his master plan of making more followers of Jesus. But, all this starts with us with us choosing to follow Jesus.

God is gonna show up in your life and speak to you beyond the noise of the crowd. Just gotta choose to step onto the field. I’d like to invite you to respond to Jesus’ invitation to participate in his master plan of being his follower and getting on his team. It’s start here! Even if you have answered his call in past, would you pray along with me as well.

John 1:12 says this, “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”

Pray with me, Prayer: Dear Jesus, you’ve been calling me out by name. And now I choose to answer your call and receive you into my life. Jesus, I answer you call out of the stands and onto your team, by receiving you, and believing in your name, Thank you, that I’m on the team, and more than that, I’m a part of your family. Thank you for dying for me, and forgiving me of my sins and calling me worthy to be on your team.

If you’ve made a decision to get out of the stands and onto the field, I wanna welcome you to Team Jesus. That’s a great decision. Let us know as we’d like to pray with you. Until next week, Aloha!