

## The Power of Pouring: Growing Together in Community

April 27 – 28, 2024

Welcome back to wk 4 of our One Community series where we are envisioning all of us for a cultural shift in our church to make life in small group community not just a nice-to-have setting for growth and transformation, but a need-to-have, essential part of our Christian life, where it's not just our church's plan, but God's masterplan to reach our world with the good news of His Kingdom. Last wk, PLori spoke about the kind of healing community we all need and have access to. She spoke about the kind of friends that would do anything to carry us to Jesus, even crash roofs if necessary. We all need, what kind of friends? Yes, Mat friends.

And speaking of mat friends, I wanna show you a pic of Mat's new mat friends. (Show Pic). This pic was taken last Friday when six families gathered in ohana. Already, there's a space challenge, I'm not a "Houston, we have a problem" space challenge. It's a space challenge to have that many children together. But the good news is that Braiden and DarceyAnn are already praying and discerning about gathering with others that have a hard time meeting on Fridays. **(Show pics)**

An amazing thing happened on that Friday. It was just a meet-and-greet time. But as they were sharing, one of the couples opened up and shared about their medical challenge. Well, that was an opportunity for this newly formed group to be Mat Friends together to carry this couple to Jesus. Now that couple doesn't have to journey alone. They have mat friends who'll carry them to Jesus.

Tonight/Today, I'm speaking about the power of the pour. Not the power of being Poor in Spirit. No, it's the power of the pour, pour, as in pouring into one another.

And that's a picture I wanna give you as what can happen in a small group community of believers coming together and pouring our lives, our care, our concern, our love into one another and sharing in the greater pour of God, pouring his power of his very presence into our lives.

I can talk all day of that kind of community where growth happens and when you are in a community of fellow pourers, but later you'll get a chance to hear real life stories of those who have been experiencing this in our church and how their lives have been transformed.

Now, reflect upon your life, think through, who has poured into your life to help you become the person you are today? You'd surely say my mom and dad. But beyond them, who has believed in you maybe when others didn't? Who saw potential in you and went out of their way and invested time in you? Who in your life looked past your past failures and kept having faith in you? Someone who gave you a chance when others didn't. Do you have people like that in your life like that, people who have poured themselves into your life to where you are overflowing in others today? Do you?

- One reason I'm trained as an English teacher is my HS English teacher believed in me, invested time with me, and trusted that this pidgin speaking boy from Waipahu, could become an English teacher rather than a PE teacher.
- My HS baseball coach saw potential in me more than just a player, he said Earl, I going be one of the captains and saw that I could be a leader, role model for others.
- When I was looking for a change in career to have more free time to coach my son in baseball, this new promising pastor took a chance on me and invited me to join him reaching central oahu for Jesus.

- Then there's my wife today. As a wishy washy boyfriend, she could have dumped me for someone else, but she saw husband potential in me and waited for me as I spent three years on a Japan mission.

I'm sure you have people like this who poured their lives into yours.

**OG & Self Reflection Q1:** Who has God used to pour life in your life? Share what you have become because these people poured their lives into yours.

Do you know that Jesus took a chance on and saw potential in those he poured his life into. He didn't choose the best and brightest of the bunch. He picked ordinary Joes, many like you and me. We don't hear about all the disciples' professions, but Peter; James; John; Andrew were fishermen. But they weren't kayak fishermen like me. They were net fishermen who caught smaller fish in the Lake. We have a despised tax collector, Matthew. Not much has been recorded about the lives of the other apostles.

And when Jesus picked them, he committed himself to pour his life into them. And he didn't do that from afar, he did it from being up close and personal with them for three years. Jesus saw potential in them to become his world changers. And the good news today is that Jesus picks us to be his world changers too if we accept his invitation to follow him.

We get a picture from last week's message of the need to have Mat Friends to carry us to Jesus. I wanna give you another picture of what kind of community of believers Jesus models where he pours his life into us?

And let's look at Jesus' early setting where he pours his life into his boys. When Jesus first started out his ministry with his 12 disciples, it was around this one

area. Do you know it? It's the Sea of Galilee. Or more accurately, it's a lake and today it's called Lake Gennesaret. **(Show pics)**

As we read the next passages of scripture, focus on the specific place of where Jesus focuses his pour? Is it with the crowds, the masses, or is it in his small group community? Crowd or Community? Well, instead of reading, you like watch one video? **(Show video, approx. 2 minutes).**

It was in that boat, up close and personal, away from the crowds that Jesus imparted his life into his disciples. Later in Mark 6 let's read. . **(Keynote)**

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things (Mark 6:30 – 34 NIV).

Then after Jesus teaches the crowd from afar and does his miracle of feeding them. Let's pick up the story. **(Keynote)**

The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand. Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened (Mark 6: 45 – 52 NIV).

How much was caught from afar. And crowds come and go. But Jesus came for community! Jesus taught the crowds from afar but connected deeply in

community, in close proximity. And much of this happens in the boat going from one end of the Lake of Galilee to the other.

Notice Jesus doesn't call the crowd into the boat. The boat was just big enough to hold the 12. And that's when Jesus gets away from the crowd to pour his life into his community. Now Jesus pours his life in other settings too, but it's the boat that represents Jesus being away from the crowds and being up close and personal with his disciples. We all need a setting like this where Jesus is in the center of our boat with others, we all need "Boat Buddies", where we get out of the crowd and we place Jesus in the center of our boats. And inevitably storms of life hit us, our lives get rocked, but it's in the confines of the boat that Jesus is there pouring into our lives as he did his chosen ones. He taught from afar, but he imparted his life and keys to the kingdom to his faithful followers up close and personal.

And if that's what Jesus did, I wanna model my life like our master. He didn't isolate himself. Instead, he retreated to get poured into from his heavenly father. And that's what we get to do for each other in our boats.

**OG & Self Reflection Q2:** Who are or have been your "Boat Buddies" in your life? How have these buddies made a difference in your life? If you honestly say you don't have buddies like this, are you open to taking next steps to have them?

**Share illustration of the sponge vs. the Brick.** Jesus pours his very presence on us. We can be sponges that soak in so much from Jesus, his wisdom, promises for our lives, Jesus speaks life into us, pours his forgiveness on us, and he does so for others too, but for some those gems of wisdom, promises, just run off us, and we don't ever take it in. And Jesus tries to pour his very presence on us, but it's not him, it's our lives that hardened to take in anything. Jesus is looking for people

who are open to him, sponges who take in all that he has to teach us, so that we can grow. But after a while, in order for us to grow more, we must, what, wring out our lives into other sponges. And as we do, we help others get filled. And we do this together. God downloads his life into us and we get to pour ourselves into others. It's the power of the pour! And that's what happens in our ohana groups!

**(Testimony)** I can talk much more, but I'd rather you hear from someone who about six months ago came pretty broken to church, but quickly got poured into and had boat buddies, mat friends come alongside her and now she gets to pour into others. Please welcome up my HS classmates, daughter, Natalie Gamboa, as she shares her story of being poured into!. **(Show pics as she shares & painting)**

**(Testimony)** Now I'd like you to welcome up a couple who Gayle and I are boat buddies with and mat friends as well. Welcome up Russell and Trang Malone as they share about life in community **(Show pics while they share)**.

**OG & Self Reflection Q3:** From the testimonies that were shared, what inspired you most from their stories? Can you relate?

**Pastoral Pulse Response Card:** Much has been poured over you today. You've heard Jesus masterplan of growth. We all need boat buddies, mat friends. You've heard the growth and transformation of three in our church. Now, we wanna get a pulse from our people. Are you soaking in this value? Are you ready to take next steps of growth. We can't leave here the same way we came. Don't be a brick, be a sponge. GO OVER THE PASTORAL PULSE response card **(Show QR code)**. Please turn it in! Don't let me hound you down!

**End with Benediction.** When Jesus is in our boat, surrounded by our boat buddies, carried by our mat friends, NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE. Let's sing it out!

