

group has played a positively transformative role in my spiritual life at Seattle Pacific University. When reflecting on how I have grown in Christ over the last four years, I discovered that group is the primary method by which I am able to benchmark my growth. I am not saying that this is the only place I grew spiritually, but rather this is the place I was able to simultaneously learn the Christian story and reflect on my spirituality, creating distinct memories over the course of four years. Each year, my outward behavior, actions, and attitude slowly transformed at group, which in effect symbolized how I was growing internally.

Freshman year I was incredibly eager to grow quickly and to share with the community my passion for the Lord. Thus, I was one of the kids up front – always first to stand, first to raise my hands, and most likely singing the loudest.

Sophomore year I was a Student Ministry Coordinator on Second Central Emerson. I was also diagnosed with a form of epilepsy. Because the neurologist couldn't find anything in my brain, we did not know how to prevent my seizures. I was going through an incredibly rough time. I still had passion for the Lord, but was also confused by Him and this medical problem He threw in my life. I couldn't even listen to loud music without being scared of having a seizure. This explains my absent memories of group that year. But when I was there, I was still up front, most likely sitting the whole time with my head down, my ears plugged, and praying. This symbolizes my rollercoaster relationship with Christ that year: sometimes absent, other times incredibly intentional.

My junior year I was a Residence Hall Ministry Coordinator in Emerson. This was a huge inwardly maturing year for me. It was a time to intentionally learn. Rather than proclaiming my love for the Lord, I decided to sit, listen, learn, and witness others proclaiming their love for the Lord. I became the kid that sat in the back, often times without friends, just to witness the beauty of Christ's community as well as reflect as an individual.

Senior year was a culminating year for me. It was a year of completion. Although I still have a lot more to grow, I finally felt whole. Group became more than a service to me – it became a time to serve others with intention, to pray with intention, to sing with intention, to listen with intention, to reflect with intention. It became a time to simultaneously partake in community, to learn, and to proclaim my love for the Lord. It became a year of many things, climaxing at the Resurrection Week service in which each ministry at SPU actively participated. It was at that point I could say, "This is what SPU is all about." It was a truly holistic service. I quickly found myself on a spiritual high, for all forms of ministry whirled together within me during one period of time. I was whole. The Lord had transformed me through service, worship, and ministry.

Although I actively participated at my church and with other ministries on campus, group played a massive role in my spiritual transformation. It provided the outlet I needed each year as I grew. That's what is so cool about group. It's not just a place to sing. It's a place to sing, pray, journal, reflect, be with others, or remain in solitude. It's a place to be who you are in any given situation, and to provide for your needs in any context. It's a place that changes over four years to suit whatever needs you have. Group teaches. It's up to you to make the space what you want. To me, it was all of the places listed above. It was a spiritual "Room of Requirement," and I sure hope you know what that means because I can't think of a better way to say it.



Courtney Farance

B.A. in Business Administration – Marketing, class of 2012;
Outgoing ASSP Vice President of Ministries