

Computer Generated Transcript - We're going to dive into our message today I talked to weeks ago about this dream that God has given me and now I know that only like fifty of you were here for that because that was the Sunday where the high was I think twenty four below or something and and so not very many people were here maybe some of you went online and listened and stuff but I talked about how I truly believe God has given me a dream that that there are going to be some cool things going on this year and I'm trying not to be specific about it because I don't want me saying something to influence somebody and some. Toward something that isn't of God that's manufactured does that make sense I don't want to try and manufacture some move of God I want God to do what he needs to do and but I Want I talk to people about expectation and we talked about how this month that I really want to encourage you to be praying and fasting how I really want to encourage you to take some time this month and do those things were not passing out sign up sheets no one's going to call you and check to see if you're doing it this is between you and God all right but I genuinely believe that that God is calling us to to this season in the month of January to as a church be praying and fasting and I want to encourage you to do that I talked about. This a little bit at the beginning or at the end about how fasting without prayer is not fasting it's just dieting you can't just stop eating food and hope that God's going to do something good I mean prayer and fasting is always mentioned together in the Bible when you when you see fasting there's always prayer that's a part of that if you're new to the faith and I know that many of us in this place many of you are were in this giant. Difference in where we're at in our spiritual journey and I that is great we don't expect you if you just got saved a couple weeks ago to know everything that somebody who is born and raised in one of these chairs and has been sitting in church for sixty years to know that's OK We don't have some we don't assume that we're so glad I'm so glad to pastor a church where there is those kind of things happening people are getting saved people are growing in their faith and that's awesome so I don't want to just assume that you know what this is fasting is dedicating yourself to prayer and giving up something for that time all right and in the Bible it's always food in the Bible they give up food well that's not true there's one time that Paul talks about married couples giving up marital relations for a short period of time but other than that one and instance. The Bible talks about fasting food and some of your blushing now but it's all right so so what I want to encourage you to do though is really pray about that now I want you to be smart I shared this two weeks ago my pastor in Montana was diabetic so for him to go on a week or week long fast with no food. Would have meant he was in the hospital very shortly into that fast OK he had to be smart so he fasted all food that tasted good so he ate to him stuff that tasted bad now I made mention that he was always eating rice cakes I could always tell when kid was fasting because there'd be rice cakes everywhere and because I really believe that those things are the most horrible thing ever created and then some of you were like and love rice cakes How could you say that you know and but I just want to encourage you if you don't know what fasting is if you want to know a little bit more please come and talk to me about it I'm not going to spend this whole time talking about it but I want to encourage you as a church body to carve out some time in January to fast and pray that God would work and I gave you four specific things to pray about and I'm going to reiterate those again right now I believe that we need to be praying for our schools I believe the. There is some things that are going to be happening and I want to I want to be praying for our schools I want to be praying for our children the children's ministry I want to be praying for them and particularly in the student ministry as well I want to encourage you to be praying for those two age groups because I really believe that God is about to do something awesome in those age groups in our church and I believe it's going to spread from there. I think it's going to be a great thing and then the last thing I want you to pray for is what John talked about last week and we didn't talk with each other ahead of that because we weren't in the office together so that was just God doing something cool as we were working things together I want you to pray for dreams I want you to pray that God would put a dream on your heart pray that God would speak vision to you for what he wants to do through you in this coming year and so I want you to be praying for those four things as a church and John last week then talked about dreams and he talked about pursuing those things and allow God to allowing

God to speak to you in that way and it's such a cool thing to watch God bring pieces of this thing together but I want to encourage you in this place to see God there has never really as far as I know if in my study as far as I as far as I can look in Scripture and throughout church history there has never been a move of God that has happened without a cost OK You understand that I'm not talking about like giant waves of persecution or something like that I mean that has happened to for sure I'm not trying to downplay that but that's not what I'm trying to forecast or anything like that I'm just saying there's a cost you study these things you look at these things and there is a group of people that have been willing to put in time and effort in prayer put in time and effort in sharing their faith in learning about God and setting themselves apart for God to do what he wants to do there's a cost in some of this stuff to see God really move so if you're out there and you just kind of sit back and you just are a spectator I want to encourage I want to I want to tell you that I unless God just like divinely interrupts your life probably not a lot is going to change for you God isn't dependent somehow on you to work in your life but very rarely do we see God just like interrupt somebody is day and you're going to do this OK most of the time God comes along somebody who's already seeking him and says I want to do this somebody is already speaking somebody who's already listening somebody who's already going after him and I want to encourage you in this place. Let's start some prayer and fasting I'm not trying to say none of you do this and we probably all have room to grow in this area and I want to do it so as we talk today OK And as we go through these things we're going to we're going to get into scripture in we're going to read a song in this but I want to ask you what are some stories in the Bible where you see people coming to God expecting him to do something and I'm I'm literally asking for feedback right now OK this isn't a rhetorical question this is a question where I want you to answer where are some stories that you see in the Bible of people coming to God in the Old Testament you know they would they would refer to Him as God or in the New Testament coming to Jesus expecting God to move the man's daughter sick yeah OK lowered the dude through the roof yeah OK absolutely giddy and absolutely threw out some fleeces God if this is you make it happen Elijah which time. The prophets of bail call I mean you want to talk let's just talk about that one for a second because that's like the most amazing thing all of these stories are great but a lie it's on a mountain surrounded by all hundreds of profits of another God He gives them a chance to go first he's like whichever god answers by fire that's the real God OK These prophets of of by all are are dancing around and cutting themselves and lighting these fires and eventually he starts to make fun of them and I'm not I'm not making this up look it up Kay He's like is your god taking a bathroom break right now that he won't hear you and he starts to mock and eventually the other time and so then he he brings out his sacrifice and he pours water all over it to right and he's all out there all by himself and then we see God answer and like the coolest way ever this this fire shoots down from the sky and consider what you want to talk about expecting God to move How dumb would he looked if nothing had happened right I mean we know now after you know a couple thousand years of looking at it and reading the story that God answered in fire but you go try that in your backyard today God I mean that takes an incredible amount of faith right the same thing with all of these stories that have been mentioned what would it be like to cut a hole in somebody else's roof so you can drop your buddy down on a bed in front of Jesus who most of the teachers at that very point in time are trying to set up to kill right now no big deal but he will just will repair your roof later you know and we just cut through your shingles and you know all that kind of stuff so we can get our buddy in here don't worry about it I mean that is it's faith these things are important what else what some other stories where people just come to God expecting him to move I'm sorry what. Hannah absolutely she's she can have a baby and she comes to God and if you will if you will give me this child I will I will say dedicate him to your service for the rest of his life who else Aster Yup that is a big deal going into the King to see it Shadrach me shakin Abednego King they are getting ready to be thrown into a furnace to be burned alive and he's like I'll give you one more chance to bow down and they say listen our God can save us but even if he doesn't we will not bow down they weren't one hundred percent sure that God would save them but they just believe that slew that it could and they were tossed into a furnace at peace with that because they knew God

could move it's an amazing thing what else they gave it in King Saul which time again right I mean how many times did Saul think he had him you know and but David knew who God was and he knew God had a plan for him and he knew that God would carry him through what else one more way to say the same one that Mandy already did so. I'm sorry Sherry I couldn't help it. It's a different side of the story is when it's when they wouldn't bowed not when they went in the furnace Yeah good job Sherry I like it so. She was writing she was all right she talks after the new I don't disagree with that so. What. Me though yeah yeah you know then you know yes Daniel has as he is again you could talk about which time when he's in a lion's den when he prays when he when he's got this vision that comes where you just trust God and we're still talking about it three thousand years later trying to figure out what it all means but Daniel just knew it was Guy I mean you could you could pick out all kinds of things the fact of the matter is it's not that hard to think of one if you study the Bible now I know some of you are new to the faith and you're like I've never even heard some of those stories before and that's OK you've got lots to read and lots to be excited about all right like I have told people for years if you think the Bible is boring then your imagination is broke OK because you need to get in there and read some of these stories and what God has done and how amazing it is and all of these things in the fact of the matter is we could keep naming stories over and over and over again for the rest of the time we're talking about and we wouldn't run out of them because there are so many stories of people who just expected God to move in the Bible they just showed up knowing who he was one of my favorite ones one of the verses I almost used and I'm just going to reference it here is in is in Micah in this prophet is talking about how he supports for seeing all of this destruction coming and he talks about how how wildly wicked that they have become as followers of God but he's like I will put my trust and I will put my hope in God and know that he is good and people just came to God expecting a modern day version of that you know I mean how many if you've ever been to a Bible camp right you hear people talking about this all the time about how how God works at camp and he absolutely does I mean if you've ever been to a camp if you've got a family camp or our kids camps or our team camps you see miracles happen and you see people's lives changed and people baptized in the Holy Spirit and all of these things there's nothing magical about Camp campus just something that has been bathed in prayer all year long and then people go to camp if they don't expect God to move any other time all year they go there expecting God to do something in Errol in their lives and he does because they show up with expectation they show up looking for God to do something and I think most of you know where we're going this morning you're smart people and you could probably get up here and finish talking through the rest of this day for me my challenge to you is what are you expecting It's a simple question today what are you expecting when you go to your prayer time assuming you have one when you pray do you expect to hear God's voice do you expect your prayers to make a difference. When you go to your bible reading time and you're studying the words you expect to hear God's voice again through what he talked to all of his people so many years ago when you come to a gathering like this do you expect to hear the voice of God do you expect to see miracles happen do you expect to go deeper with God and who he is or do you fall victim of the mentality of we just go to church because it's what we do and hopefully we hear something good and then we'll go eat and then we'll be good and we talk about church and the gathering of the believers the same way that we talk about a mediocre launch what do you expect what are you expecting to see what do you expect not just when we come together this isn't about you need to come here ready for God to move because this is just a piece of the puzzle what do you expect when you sit down to hear the voice of God do you do that even to schedule time to listen to God instead of just talk at him What are we expecting when you turn to songs when I read out of the New Living Translation this morning if you have you version or lost you can select out if you want to read the same words I do if you've got your own favorite translation that's great we're going to be in song chapter sixty two if you're unfamiliar with your Bible if you close it and you open it right in the middle you're probably going to hit either proverbs or Psalms OK so if you get proverbs just turn to the front a few pages and you'll get there but but songs chapter sixty two is what we're going to read today and we're going to read part of it and then we're going to go to a fusions but

Psalms chapter sixty two we're starting verse one for Jed youthen the choir director Psalm of David some sixty to one I wait quietly before God for my victory comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation my fortress where I will never be shaken so many enemies against one man all of them trying to kill me to them I'm just a broken down wall or a tottering fence they plan to topple me from my high position they delight in telling lies about me they praise me to my face but curse me in their hearts interlude or say look whatever Your says right there that all that I weigh I am wait quietly before God For My hope is in him he alone is my rock and my salvation my fortress where I will not be shaken my victory and honor come from God alone he is my refuge a rock where no enemy can reach me oh my people trust in him at all times pour out your heart to him for God is our refuge and you could keep reading through that psalm and you would continue to see words like rock and refuge and if you continue to look through the Psalms as a whole you will see rock and refuge brought up over and over again do you see a pattern of what he's trying to say the world is against me if I just listen to them I'm a washed up shell I've got nothing to offer I'm just a figurehead ready to be thrown down if I listen to what everybody else says but I know where my foundation needs to be I know where to draw strength from I know where to draw my image myself image from I know who to go to in these hard times because my rock in my fortress will not fail this is not in the absence of trials this is in the middle of trials who is our rock who is our refuge do we expect him to be those things or do we just go through our day. What you turn to chat to. Chapter three and I want you to hear from my heart I talk about those four things to pray. And really this portion of Scripture is is my heart for this year if you want to talk about a theme set of verses that I have for the two thousand and eighteen calendar year as your pastor in this church in this town this is it all right chapter three this is this is where I'm at this year this is what I'm looking to this year this is what I want to see God do in your life and our lives collectively All right so maybe write it down maybe maybe make a mark this is this is what I'm praying for you and it's my hope that many of you will pick up this and be praying these verses throughout this year all right chapter three. Paul is writing to this church and half assists that's why it's called the fusions OK he's writing to them it's a struggling church in a major a major thoroughfare we've talked about this letter before but but Paul is just kind of gotten down laying out all of these sayings. And how people are struggling and how he's been and how he hit personally has been going through persecution he's been and he's worried that his persecution is going to cause them to lose faith and so he's talking through all of these different things at the beginning of this letter and he gets to it fusions chapter three verses sixteen and then we're going to read through twenty one which is the end of the chapter so I pray that from his glorious and limited resources he will empower you with your inner strength I'm sorry he will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit then Christ will make his home and your hearts as you trust in Him your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong and may you have the power to understand as all God's people should how wide how long how high and how deep his love is made you experience the love of Christ though it is too great and fully then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God Now all glory to God who is able through his mighty power at work within us to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever amen I want to read to you what one of my commentaries says about this section of scripture OK Paul knew that if the inner man is what ought to be. I'm sorry if Paul knew that if the inner man is what it ought to be the outer man will be taken care of in due time to many of our prayers focus only on physical and material needs and fail to lay hold of the deeper inner needs of the heart it would do us good to use these prison prayers as our own and ask God to help us in our inner person this is where our greatest needs are we see three prayers that Paul records in his prison a pistol's that's what that's these prison prayers that's what it's talking about one of the earlier any fusions I believe it's an effort to maybe it's in of the fusion chapter one and one isn't flip Ians Paul's writing this from jail OK and he begins to speak and pray over these people about who they are on the inside. Again I'm not trying to say you shouldn't pray to God for physical needs or I'm not trying to say you shouldn't pray to God for some sort of material need I'm not I'm not saying you shouldn't do that but I think too

often my own prayer life reflects too much time spent on those things and not enough on who I am inside and I don't think that I'm unique in that I think most of us at some point in time if we've been serving Jesus any amount of time have probably spent a good deal of time talking to Jesus as though he is a genie instead of as though he is the God who wants to make us whole on the inside and we spend so much time focusing on those outside things like you would ask a genie I would like a new car I would like you know. Again there's nothing wrong with those things as long as we're also looking at the heart and I want to encourage you in this place to hear that this morning we're going to look at some of these things that Paul actually prays There's a verse at the very end of this I want to look right away because we see this verse quoted all the time because it's awesome OK and it's verse twenty now all glory to God who is able through his mighty power at work within us and this is the part you see quoted all the time out of context to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think for a like oh man I pray that God would bless you financially because you can accomplish way more than you could possibly think or imagine right we talk that we use this verse all the time right pray that God will use you as an athlete because he can accomplish you know a lot of through in full in more than you could ever imagine we use that same verse on one side of the shoes and on the other side is I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me like completely out of context of what they're actually trying to say what Paul is saying is God can take the inner man and he will go even beyond what you think he could do he will take you and mold you after who he wants you to be beyond what you even think to ask if you begin this process. And that should be comforting to us so you we can see him pray for four specific things for these people OK you can see him pray for four specific things verse sixteen he prays that they would be given strength I'm not talking about weight room strength again. It is not a problem for you to say God help me in the weight room OK That's OK That's not what we're talking about specifically he says he wants them to be empowered through God's inner strength in their inner man through His Spirit to be power empowered with inner strength because there's a struggle that's happening they need to not lose faith in the midst of all the persecution that's going on but they would be strong enough to stand through the power of God Spirit he prays that they would have depth in verse seventeen he prays that their roots will grow down into God's love and to keep you strong throughly easy to have shallow faith right it's really easy especially in America right now and I'm not trying to mess with that saying the whole church has got everything screwed up please don't misunderstand what I'm saying but it's really easy to have a shallow faith when the stakes are really low right most of us probably aren't worried that somebody's going to kick in our door tonight and shoot us where we sleep because we're people of faith OK most of us are worried like they were in Roman times about being drug into a coliseum and fed to lions because they chose Jesus we don't have those kind of worries most of us I'm not trying to say that life can't be hard I'm just trying to say that most of us are afraid of persecution based on our faith in this country so it's easy to be shallow because there's not much of a cost right if somebody chose Jesus two thousand years ago in Rome it meant they chose Jesus and probably were choosing torture at the same time it's got to cost you measure that and you make a decision that carries with it significant repercussions and so they were like I am a Christian because I go to church every third week and I talk to God once last year that was good. And I have that fish on my bumper sticker on my bumper that that means I'm outspoken I'm I'm witnessing really because everybody else knows I'm a Christian because the fish is on there it was there when I bought it but it's still there I'm not trying to make fun of you OK but let's not be people who are shallow in our faith let's not be people who just come to Jesus and then take for granted the fact that everything is going to be good now let's let our roots go deep into God that when life's troubles arise and they will our faith is not battered because our faith is deep in who God is he prays in verse eighteen for understanding they that they would have power to understand as all God's people should how wide how long how high and how deep God's love really is I if I couldn't say anything else to you today I would say if your question in your face or your questioning who God is if you've got those kind of things I want you just look up the word love in the Bible and start trying to measure how much God cares for you start trying to stack it up against everything else that's going on in this life and I know some you guys like

five don't care about that yes you do yes you do because it matters that if we could begin to grasp the love of God how much he has done we'll done how much how much he gave up for us that makes a difference the fourth thing we see him pray for here in verse nineteen is experience may you experience the love of Christ though it is too great to understand fully then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and the power that comes from God This is important it's important right I am a football fan and I'm not bringing this up just because of what's happening today OK I love football and I probably care about it way too much. OK my wife I'm surprised she didn't say amen OK maybe she did and she was quiet Cheri maybe I didn't hear. And I'm sorry I don't know why that is one of those things today apparently Usually I make fun of Mandy. You can handle it that's good. I love football I played it when I was a kid but I was always pretty skinny in not really that good at it I was always just good enough in athletics to make the team but not really to play all that much you know and so I sat on the bench a lot and I was the guy that they hit in practice because that's that's who I was as soon as the B. teams went away it was a really fun because they would always give us the option either start and play on the beat teams or sit on the bench all day on a team you know and so I usually chose a B. and B. team because I'd rather I'd rather play you know but I was always just good enough to play or to make the team but not play but I mean athletics was not my gift and that's OK. But a lot of people talk about football or or whatever they care about with this great experience right like they talk about it like they know everything and you can you'll hear people do that today right you'll hear people talk about this game and all the stats and all the reasons why this team is going to win or that team is going to win and why and why the coach should have done this at this time when their team loses you know what I mean and how all of these different things play into everything because they know everything about the game but if you actually put them on the field they wouldn't be able to play for a second they know everything but they have no experience whatsoever and if they did experience it wouldn't be very fun because they get dominated we're talking about football today just because you know again they're they're playing but you know other people that are like this they know everything about everything but they've never done it they watched a video on You Tube and now they're a master plumber you know you know who I'm talking about we know everything about everything it we live in a day and age where we are saturated with information there has never been so much information readily available as there is today. I'm I'm glad for You Tube videos it's help me fix all kinds of things in my house does not make me a master plumber just makes me a guy who knows just enough to really have to call a plumber we can know about stuff all the time we can know the theory of something we can know all about it and I'm not going to say you shouldn't study we should study but there comes a point where knowledge meets experience where you're really prepared to do something where you really then begin to believe in it where you really begin to see things work where you see it all come together right every college senior should say every ninety five percent of college seniors are the most arrogant people in the world sorry if you're a college senior and here but you are you think you know it all because you've been sitting in class for four years learning about something you've never actually done it but you know everything there is to know about it right and then you go to the job and you realize you're a freshman all over again because some people have been doing this for the last fifty years and they know more than the theory they know how to actually do it and you start over again and you get better at it not by reading more that's important we should study things change that's good but until you really get your hands dirty with something and you begin to experience all you have is theory and unfortunately again many of us approach our face the same way we know all the Bible has to say about whatever we've been going to Sunday school since Mom made a star go on we were three years old we have the Bible in six different languages and can read it in half of one we know all there is to know but we stopped really asking God to bring us about experiences you don't really expect that he's going to do those kind of things we just go do our thing and we move on and Paul prays that they would have strength strength of their inner man he prays that they would have depth that they would have understanding these are not bad things but he finishes this prayer with. May you experience the love of God Now you feel it and have more than

just a head knowledge of it maybe may you know it because you've been there and this is my prayer for you this year this is my prayer for this church at this time in this season that way that we may have inner strength to walk through this life that we would have depth of faith that it wouldn't just be shallow that we would really want to experience something more that we would go deeper that we would have understanding of who God is and how much he loves us and now we would experience those things come together as God speaks and moves in our personal times and in our corporate settings Paul prayed this for the church and F.S.S. I think it's a good model for us to pray for each other I want to courage you in this place expect God to do so and in your life dive in and go beyond the shallow that we already know and allow God to speak to you pray for dreams pray that God will work for that will be a part of it we don't need to pray to for God to show up I know what people mean when they say that like show up today I know what people mean but God doesn't need to show up he's here and mean and I'm the president God doesn't need to schedule us time to get there he's already there but that we would experience his presence that's different that we would go deep and who he is that's different and I pray this for you and it's my hope that this becomes your prayer for yourself and for this church because I really believe it's where we're headed in twenty eighteen if you're a guest with us we end our services almost the same way every every week. We believe in this place just as we were singing about as we've been talking about Jesus came to this earth he sacrificed because he loves us He died on a cross because we needed the final sacrifice I don't understand why God set all that stuff up the way he has way he did but that's what he set up and Jesus Christ came to pay that sacrifice for us but he didn't just die for us He then rose from the grave and conquered sin and death that we can be forgiven and all that we need to do to be forgiven is to ask the Bible makes a really simple to follow Jesus that says we acknowledge were sinners we believe Jesus is who he says he is we confess our sins to Him It's not hard it's not a difficult process serving Jesus takes work like we talked about today going deeper that that's that's more but to become a follower of Jesus is so simple and we're forgiven we can walk with Him If you've never done that we want to give you a chance to do that this morning all right someone asking about your heads and I ask you close your eyes very embody in here today you never chosen Jesus before you never asked him to forgive you you've never done that before but this morning you're ready to start this journey and you'd like to I'd like every head down like every I closed this is just between you and God I'm not going to call you up here we're not going to push you over make you run circles up here we're not here to embarrass you we're here to help you connect with God So if you're out there and you just you know you've never done this and this morning you're ready you might have been ready before I even started talking for God to forgive you I'd like you just raise your hand I want to pray with you is there anybody in here today you've never done this before today you're ready we're not going to wait long I don't like trying to motivate out of guilt because it doesn't really matter long term anyway is there anybody out there you've never done this before so we're going to move. The second part of the same thing with your heads down your eyes cause maybe you've chosen this before you follow Jesus in the past but you know that if you were to sit down and really talk to somebody today about what your life is really like you know that it's not what it's supposed to be it's not about Jesus and who he wants it's about you and what you want and you're ready to just ask for forgiveness for that and maybe point a different direction if that's you and here we would like you to raise your hand this morning to pray for you is there anybody here that's you you know Jesus but you know your life isn't what it what it needs to be right now we want to pray with you I'm going to wait long again if you're in here that's awesome if you're not going to one hundred See one hand up there's anybody else all right so we're going to pray all right you can look at me for a second I'm going to pray again I don't know where everybody's prayer life Islam is going to lead you in a prayer this morning all right and if you're a follower of Jesus please repeat after me to help make it so it's not just one person in the midst of a big room OK if you're that person that raise your hand when encouraged to pray if you're in here and you're you're not following Jesus yet and you really have no intention of doing that today I want to give you permission not to repeat after me because I I remember what it was like when I when I was sitting in churches and didn't buy all the all the stuff

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they were talking about and still felt like I had to say what they were saying I honestly would prefer you not to promise something that you have no intention of keeping high but I want you to know if you're in here and you're not ready to serve Jesus yet I'm so glad you're here and we want to continue to have you come we believe in that but nobody here wants to make you do something OK this is got to be something you choose to do when God really works in your own heart All right so you don't have to pray if you want to that's fine but again I would really encourage you to not not to promise something to God that you don't mean to keep this morning all right but if you're here you raise your hand or you're here and you're following Jesus I'd like you to repeat after me Jesus I know better I have I know what it means to serve you and I just haven't been Forgive me how made to live for you and me to learn your ways and to apply them to your good Jesus. And man.