

Computer Generated Transcript - So we're going to continue a series we've been talking about dreams and prayer and these things for the last few weeks and I'm I'm going to continue on in that today last week we talked about one of Paul's there called his prison prayers and he wrote down at least three if you want to kind of take some things where he just says and I pray but he doesn't get really specific you could say there's four or five but we have three recorded prayers from Paul for people in prison and last week we talked about one of them any fees in chapter three. And and he prayed that people would have strength of spirits inner strength that they would be able to withstand the hardships of life he prayed that they would have depth of faith that their faith would be more than just this shallow surface the thing he prayed that they would have understanding that they would they would understand what he's calling them to understand what God is doing understand who God is better and that they would experience his love those are four things that he prayed for those are four things that Paul prayed for this church in F. assists and it's such an important thing I talked about how this is my prayer and this time for the church those four things are pretty are things I'm praying for this church in this season and I want to encourage you to do that we talked about last week about coming into God's house with an expectation that God will do something we talked about approaching our prayer lives with an expectation that God is going to do something that God will answer that God will will meet that God will do those kind of things and it's so important for us to not just be sitting back and just lying as I will see you know I mean to be expecting God to work we talked about those moments of faith those people of faith throughout history that expected God to move and he did. And he will and I want to encourage you to continue on in that and today we're going to be talking about this as well we're going to be talking about about prayer we're going to look at another one of Paul's prayers it's going to be an awful Libyan's chapter one OK we're not going to get there quite yet but for some of those who like a lot of leeway to get there because you're not super familiar with your bible full Libyan's Chapter one is where we're going to be at K. so you can go ahead I read out of the New Living Translation most weeks if you have an electronic version that's how you can do it Lagasse version those are trustworthy things that can get you the translations of the Bible online they have apps for both of the major carriers and we want to encourage you to bring a bible OK but flippin chapter one I want to talk about God answering prayer real quick though I had a conversation with a man in our church who wasn't here last week and he's not here this week because he's taken care of his mom right now but I only add that detail to say he didn't hear what I preached before he called me and wanted to set up a time to talk to me all right this is not in response to him hearing me this is in response to him hearing God all right and he shared and I'm not going to share the whole the whole thing but I'm going to I'm going to share with you parts of why of what God spoke to him and he's been hearing this for a while if you some of you will know who I'm talking about as soon as I start start talking because he's mentioned it to many people buddy he really felt like God said Pray pray often and pray is an empty cup and his his way of saying that is don't don't pray with a preconceived idea of what God's going to say back how many of you've ever done that like you prayed and you kind of already knew what you wanted to hear from God and it was amazing how God spoke to you exactly what you wanted to hear when you weren't really listening for his response but just had a preconceived idea anybody else had that happen before yeah I have. And it's a big deal to pray allowing God to speak to just listen as Americans most of us are really good at this right. While some got stuck in there me. We're not really good that just listening a lot of us are good at talking a lot of us are good at pretending to listen right we can sit there and not our head in and who doesn't but we're thinking about a million other things right and that's that's something but but most of us struggle to just sit and listen and I would encourage you when you come to prayer to just listen to what God would have to say and then be obedient God wants to work through you God wants to speak to you and the reason I can say that is because that's the pattern we see in scripture over and over and over again when we listen to what he is saying he will speak then it's on you to follow through then it's on you to be obedient it's on you to say yes God I will and it was interesting how he kind of wound this time up as we were as we were talking he said expect to see miracles expect answers and I want to encourage you with

that God isn't just speaking to a few people in this church the same idea he's been speaking to many of us in this season that we need to be expecting him to work that we need to be anticipating him to do something that we need to be taking time to listen and I want to encourage you with that knowledge that that is out there I'm going to try one of these handheld wireless mikes again we've been struggling this morning with our our handheld So if you're running some sort of Wi-Fi blocker stop it OK I don't really think that's what happened I did a little search for other networks was unplugged again quit unplugging our stuff seriously All right here we go I want to take that away from my face because you don't need me in stereo OK. Here's what I want to do I'm not going to give somebody else a chance to preach today OK which is what pastors are always afraid to give people a microphone because you know some people get a microphone and then they can't help but preach that's not what we're doing today OK but I want to give you a chance as a church body what is something that God has answered in prayer for you now I'm going to give a couple of caveats here OK you don't have to be like God raised my brother from the dead OK That's awesome if that happened that's an amazing thing if that happened in your life I'm not trying to downplay it I think that's fantastic but God met me in prayer when I felt alone is every bit as much of an answer to prayer is some major miracle OK I'm not trying to say don't share a major miracle I'm just trying to say we want people to feel liberty what what is something I want to bring this around because I want it on the recording OK I know that's intimidating to some of you but if it's not on the microphone it's not going to be in the in the recording and I want that K. so what is something that God has answered a prayer for you about and I'm going to sit here uncomfortable silence until some people actually answer because I know that he has all right all right didn't have to wait long you can sit there yeah I'm bringing you Mike I've struggled with you know helped me and that seems like over the last year maybe feelings even more you know like I thought I'm doing. And that really can help me more but I'm just grateful that. His word is who else right walking back. And I miss. You but hold it right in front your mouth though and when life just seems overwhelming the mountain is on top of me and where I've just heard over and over again take the next line of it. And I'm responsible and that's next that I don't have to take the whole mountain I don't have to eat the whole else it's just the next. Out of the answered my prayer where I have freedom from depression and anxiety and I write Joy thank you who else I'm trying to cut through here Shelley sorry. Me. I don't. I don't. Was there with me but he is with us and he has the ability to heal and you know sometimes just sit back and think you know there's no way this is going to happen and you know your negative human. Is not by me I don't see him I don't have a board that sits on the front of me and says hey things are going to be good for you know these you know comes right to the Newseum face to face and this is obviously we're faith comes in and I thought it. Or a few years ago I lost faith because I could see it not being possible of a situation in my life. That I needed him to touch and heal my best friend and he did and it's America so what I need to say is we need to even if we're in that valley and we're law and we are struggling we've got to realize he's still next to us and through Malta a prayer support and encouragement God will help us you know the question is when and I mean it could be you know the day tomorrow or whenever i know is there and that is a major major support for myself and others thanks we're going to two more it's getting warmed up now all right tomorrow when I want to shoot right across the front here right here scuse me right in front your mouth OK There you go. Yancey amazing parents and awesome friends and life through him he just he saved me a lot of stuff I just want to say he's there in the fun to be he is there in the serious stuff but I just love him on with him. Just a couple quick little things is when I was working and Tony was the only one the bread home so. Our kids needed you bets. And of course they wanted our oldest had his bed since he was two years old and he wanted a waterbed and I'm like yeah right god there's no water beds out there and if they are there there's a big huge Queen Bess Well I said we need a like a double that because that's all that's going to fit in his room and so we just prayed and prayed and prayed and a couple weeks later I opened the paper and oh and i also told them we don't have very much money and so and so I hope I open the paper and there was a double waterbed for sell for fifty dollars and I'm like jumping off the couch like Yes Yes Well my son was working at Ace Hardware and he came home and I said

Trevor guess what I found a bag he goes Oh and I showed him and he goes yeah that's the one that my coworker has for sale he said I could have it so not only did God put it in the paper and show me he made sure the travel was going to get it because it and I just thought that that's all fine and then also then the next son said I need a waterbed Well his room was smaller and I'm like yeah right you never seen a single waterbed out there no so my sister and I were supposed to go to this one garage loved ourselves and we called there and there's this pile of stuff I'm not second guessing myself twenty second guessing a very quickly sure you want to have it. Did you see him pass anyway so then there's this pile of stuff in and we have got there late and I and I told her you know we need this is like I said it was really small so I go back and I said to my sister well I don't know looks like waterbeds for the last person is not a waterbed or what is that he said it's water but I said well what size is it or how much is it twenty five dollars I said well what size is that it's a single so he gave me exactly what we needed and I just have to tell you that's so funny you just even in the littlest things he answers I literally have never seen a single waterbed before that is so that is very true so I wanted to have this mike around for a few minutes this morning because. I feel like sometimes people just expect pastors to hear from God and not everybody else and I want you to know that if I if I let this go once the ball gets rolling and people start picking up steam this thing we could hand this mike around all morning long with different things that got a spoken to different people different things that he has come through with different people and different ways that he is working in people's lives I can tell you stories of answered prayers and I can tell you stories of prayers that I wish would have been answered in the way I wanted them to and I still don't understand what happened I can tell you a story about how we had just bought a house as you pastors and it was a fixer upper in every sense of the word it's the one that we're in right now but it's got this big backyard and we thought man a playground back there would be awesome but we have no money we literally drove around on Saturday just to price out little playground like backyard playground sets and we're like oh well that maybe next year and somebody came up to us that Sunday morning and said I know this is going to sound crazy but I feel like God wants us to buy you a playground set and later that week they brought it to our house and that's amazing is the answer to prayer I mean my wife and this person they were both weeping and crying and it's just this cool thing when God uses people I can tell you another story that breaks my heart still to this moment my my my little brother and his wife. They were struggling in their marriage and we've been praying for them for you for a year and a half about about their marriage and they eventually got divorced God God didn't work the way I wanted them to work in that situation we prayed and we prayed but ultimately they made decisions and the way that I wanted things to go down they didn't happen that doesn't mean that God isn't real and it doesn't mean that God doesn't care and it doesn't mean that God cares more about a play set than he does my brother's marriage I don't have all the answers for why and how and when and I never will but what I do know is is from experience that God cares that God works that God works in the fun twin waterbed and that God works when we're praying for cancer and everything in between and God cares deeply about you and he will answer and to ask you to approach in faith and sometimes we need to hang on through the ride because the journey isn't always fun but God is good and he is there no matter what you want you to look at Philippians chapter one. Philippians chapter one we're going to be in verse nine we talked about this chapter we went like section through section through this letter a few months ago I mean it's probably a year ago now but we went section through section of this letter that Paul wrote to the Philippians and this is a church that Paul was a part of planting it Paul was a part of the very beginning of this church he spent time there reporters heart and life into this church and now Paul is in prison most likely Paul is waiting to die as he has written this letter depending on the timing of which prison sentence he's in but for sure we know he is in jail for his faith because he preaches Jesus he is in jail and he's writing this church that's suffering persecution these people are struggling just because they say they're Christians the government is hunting them down all right and he writes into this situation to these people that he deeply cares about and you can see that we're going to start in verse nine but if you read right before that you'll see about how he talks about how it's right for him to care for them

as a father it's right for him to have a special place for them in his heart it's he cares so deeply about this church and we're going to pick up and Philippians chapter one verse nine and he says I pray that your love will overflow more and more and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding for I want you to understand what really matters so that you may live pure blameless lives until the day of Christ's return may you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ for this will bring much glory and praise to God So Paul is writing from jail to people in persecution and he tells them you need maturity he says you need to pray that God will grant you maturity and why do I say that because that's what these words are there's nothing shallow about what's asked for here this is a prayer that people would grow deeper in their faith with God in the midst of the fire all right this is not and the other thing I want to say here is this is not a group of new believers this is at this point in time one of the oldest churches in the world as far as Christianity meaning it's about five years old OK I mean this is that's a little bit of an exaggeration it's a little older than that OK but it's not old but Philip high is why it's called flippin skates written to Philip high the city of Philip and this is one of the first churches that Paul plants and it's moving on it's not the oldest but it's one of them this is a group of people that knows who Jesus is all right they know him they're following him they say they receive letters from Paul they they've seen those kind of things happen they're a part of a network of churches they're their god this is not a whole bunch of flaky people who don't know anything this is an established church and Paul writes to them and he says I want you to grow in maturity and you can see he says that through several different ways all right he prays first and foremost that they would grow in love I know that that can be kind of a church buzzword people are like oh here we go again he's going to tell us we need to love people better yeah I am going to tell you that because the Bible is full of that. The Christian life is marked by love for people Jesus says they will know who you are by your love for one another by your love for other people in church to try and discount the importance of our love for people as followers of Jesus is to stand everything on its head and say what the Bible says doesn't matter because love is the foundation of the Christian life I'm not talking about like Louis gooeey I have a crush on you kind of love I'm talking about a deep seated love of God and people that is self sacrificing and puts other people ahead of ourselves that is what we are called to that's what we're supposed to be marked by and as Paul writes this letter to this established church the first thing he says I'm praying for you in is that you will grow in love because every single one of us can do better in this way every single one of us has room to grow in our love for both God and for people if you don't believe that's true just go on Facebook for ten minutes and you will see that there's plenty of room for growth in love got quiet in here and there like mankind would leave some posts don't look at mine yet to be second we all have room to grow here it's not some just failing that's unique I'm not trying to rub anybody's face in the fact that you stink at this I'm just trying to say even this mature church this mature church and I cannot talk this morning Paul says I want you to grow in love. I'm praying that you will grow in love and he actually talks about how they're growing love with knowledge and understanding that it won't just be like this weird love that has no depth behind it he's actually specifically praying that they will love with knowledge and understanding this happens a lot of times in the church right we're either all knowledge and understanding or we're all love right it's all about just just let God lead you and love everybody and everything is going to be nice Who cares what the Bible really says as long as you love and then there's other people that are over here in the like we don't really care about you as long as A But what we do care about is if you think the way we think OK and there's very little middle ground between the two sometimes and that is not the way that these two things were ever intended to be in Scripture I think most of us would look at Jesus and say wow that dude was smart he was able to out think in outwit the leading thinkers of his day and yet I think most of us would think has there ever been a more loving person on earth and that's who we're trying to be like right those two things are supposed to go hand in hand you should have a faith that runs deep in knowledge and is full of love and we should love on purpose Paul prays that their love would grow in knowledge and understanding and most of us are like I don't even know what that means because it's such a foreign concept and yet it wasn't in the Bible those two

things are just hand in hand in scripture that we would love deeply intentionally mindfully God and his people his creation so first and you praise is pretty awesome way to start a. Pretty good beginning then he prays that when they begin to love with understanding and knowledge right you can see it's just it's just a pattern that will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding for I want you to understand what really matters so that you will live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return that's verse ten so when that happens when they begin to grow in love with understanding and knowledge they'll see what really is important and they'll live pure and blameless lives for Christ Now again we get these things out of order sometimes in the church right sometimes we're like we need to live pure in brain blameless lives and then we'll figure out this love thing. As if it is possible whatsoever to live a life that pleases God without being people who are marked by love it is not you are not capable of living a life that is good enough separated from the love of God you can't the Bible says it this way it is impossible for man to please God kind of black and white kind of you know we could continue on and no socks I could just keep grabbing verses as we grow in love will begin to figure out what's really important and will live lives that are pure and blameless for crisis does not mean that you will never ever make a mistake again OK I wish that was true which was true for me because I could use less mistakes in my life and I'm sure you could too but Paul says as we begin to grow in our love in our knowledge in our understanding then we'll begin to see what's really important will begin to find what really matters to God and our lives will look the way that they're supposed to look and here's the deal with that you don't have to have everything figured out before you come to Jesus as a matter of fact this is kind of saying that that is impossible that you'll that you'll never be able to figure out everything before you come to Jesus but instead as we grow in love with faith and understanding will begin to figure out what really matters and will live pure and blameless lives before Christ and then he kind of ends with this thought in this prayer he prays that their lives will be fruitful because of what Jesus Christ has been done and what uses crisis done in them and that will bring your glory to God right may always be filled with the fruit of your salvation the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ for that will bring much glory and glory and praise to God when it will grow in love. With knowledge and understanding and we begin to find out what's really important to Jesus in our lives will continue to be fruitful because of what Jesus has done and us and that is what brings glory to God Jesus is saying here the Christian life should continue to bear fruit and you can make a case for anything right there you could say the fruits of the spirit you could talk about the fruits that Jesus talked about in the Sermon on the Mount you could you could go all kinds of different ways with what exactly Paul is saying right there and I give you a high five and say that's a great thought but we can't really narrow down for sure exactly what fruit he was talking about because all he uses is a word like fruit but what that is saying is that your life will have purpose your life will be about others your life will be marked by us doing things for God not just for us and that is what is Glory to God as we mature in our faith we continue to be more like Jesus and that causes us to be people who are doing things bigger than just ourselves it's not a complicated messages I'm not trying to wow you with my theological AQIM and how about that for words not trying to go super deep with everybody this morning I'm just trying to say this is a place where I think most of us could grow as Paul prays for this maturing church this church that has been around for a while he prays that they will grow in love purposeful intentional love he prays that they will understand what really matters in this life and he prays that their life will continue to bear fruit it's not super complicated and yet to live that out day in and day out can be tough you know if I asked for a show of hands and I'm not asking this is going to be rhetorical now OK. If I ask for a show of hands and I ask how many of you have been safe for longer than ten years have gone through a season where if you were honest you would have to say your life bore no fruit for Jesus for a time probably most of us would have to raise our hand and be like yeah I got bogged down by everything in that season of my life and it just didn't really bear fruit most of us would probably say if we were honest that there was some point in time in our life where that was true and that means we continue to have room to grow that means we continue to have times it's easy to get in ruts it's easy to get locked in on things that don't matter nearly as much to make important things that aren't

It's tough to live day in and day out for Jesus so that's a difficult thing it's tough to be somebody who's intentional about loving people and Paul prays for a church that has established that they would grow in the street things that would grow in love with knowledge and understand that they would understand what's really important that their lives would continue to be for and I think that's a good model of prayer I think that's something that as we go in prayer we've been talking about this this month I encourage you to find times to pray and fast if you don't know what fasting is please come and talk to me I'd love to have a conversation with you about that but for the month of January we have talked about this church specifically praying specifically fasting toward one goal and I want to encourage you to continue to do that and as you're praying if you get into a time where you're like you know I'm not sure what to pray right now and opening the Bible and praying prayers and there's a good idea and this is a really good one is a really good thing to pray for people in your life and to pray for yourself God help me in these areas and I want to encourage you to do that we're going to close a service the way we view pretty much every week we talked about it during. During our worship time through music this morning we talked about Jesus Christ came to this earth we've been talking about it through this we're praying to Jesus we're talking about salvation all of these things. And Jesus didn't come to this earth just to die he came to this earth to die yes but he also came to this earth to conquer sin and death but the Old Covenant the Old Testament the way that they used to do things would pass and the new covenant would be ushered in where we can be made right with God where our sins are more than covered as they were in the Old Covenant but they are forgiven and that's what salvation is all about that's what it looks like when we say to be saved that's what we're talking about to be forgiven by God saved from the consequences of the sin that we chose I want to encourage you if you're in this place and you have never chosen Jesus before if you're here and you have not made a decision to be forgiven by him and to follow him going to give you a chance to do that in just a moment we're not going I'm not going to call you up here I'm not going to you know make you dance around or talking to the microphone or anything like that I want to simply ask you to raise your hand if you've never chosen Jesus for we're going to pray together the Bible says we acknowledge our sinners we're believe in Jesus we confess our sins to him and we are saved it's a simple process we're going to do that this morning if you're in this place and if you were honest with yourself you'd you'd maybe say yeah I might be in that spot you were talking about where my life is and bearing any fruit or maybe you could go a whole nother step and be like you know what I know what it's like to follow Jesus and I know I'm really just not even trying to do that right now and you want to ask forgiveness for that and and and move another direction I want to pray for you as well all right so I'm asking about your heads when I see you close your eyes when I ask you to respect this moment all right if you're in here and you never chosen Jesus before and this morning you're ready you're ready to say Jesus lead my life and forgive when I ask you to raise a hand I want to pray with user anybody and hear you not chosen Jesus before this morning you're ready not going to wait long my thing is not to motivate through guilt all right is there anybody in here all right we're going to move that second question maybe you're in here. And you'd say My life isn't what it should be right now and I know it I need God's forgiveness and I need to do things if that's you you want to raise your hand and I see you back there so anybody else give a just another move all right put your hands down once you look at me for just a second here's where we're going I'm going to say a prayer because I don't know where the prayer lives of those of you who raise your hands are all right so let's say a prayer I'm going to ask you to repeat after me and I want to help you through this time if you're in here and you have chosen Jesus I would ask you to repeat after me too so it's not just two people in this crowd all right if you're in here and you haven't chosen Jesus before and you're not ready to I want to give you permission to not pray if you're not ready I write I remember what it was like being forced to go to church not believing anything that they were talking about and still being forced to pray things that I had no intention of following through and I don't want to do that to anybody else because I don't think it's healthy so if that's you if you're here but you don't mean what you're about to say you don't really care about what the things of Jesus I want you to know I'm praying for you and God cares about you and he loves you and we believe that these are the best

decisions that you can possibly make but we're not here to try and trick you into something you're not ready to do and we're not here to force you to do something you're not ready to do all right you just be quiet and your seat but we and challenge you to give God a chance but if that's you if you raise your hand or you're following Jesus in this place and I say a prayer I would like you to repeat after me ready I write one of the was ready OK Jesus you're good thank you for dying for me I know better than what I've been doing and I'm sorry forgive me for going my own way and instead of yours lead me again Jesus I'm yours a man a man those are amazing moments and I hope you don't take those for granted. I challenge you to chase after Jesus was there here's the deal I talked about this last week and for the next week or two here we're going to continue to do this we're talking about prayer and I think it's silly for us to talk about prayer and not give people any time OK It's I think eleven forty seven that's as eleven fifty but if I remember right that's three minutes fast back there which means you have thirteen minutes if you have children before you can go pick them up OK So respect their time let them finish up things if you don't have children congratulations for having all the time that you need OK. If you had children and they're grown same to you OK. But here's the deal you've got thirteen minutes right now to just really connect with Jesus and I encourage you to do that again nobody's going to force you to stay and hear that's that's not how we roll and nobody can make you pray OK but I'd encourage you to take some time and pray pray these things Pray what we talked about last week pray whatever is on your heart and ignore everything I just said and just talk to God the way you know how I'm OK with that and I encourage you to take just a few minutes at the end of the service and ask and turn on some music back there I want to encourage I want to pray if you need to go you can go but I would encourage each and every one of you who are followers of Jesus to pray in this place for a few minutes if not again trying to motivate out of guilt you need to go you can go. I think we can all do better in these things and I want to encourage you to pray Jesus you're good thank you for your word I thank you that it matters today as much as it matters the day it was it was written and I pray God that for each one of us God for those who do not know you yet in this place for those who are still growing by leaps and bounds for those who have maybe gotten comfortable and leveled off for a while. And I pray that you speak to each one of us and I pray that you grow in each one of us today. Help us to know you. To serve you to love better to know your heart. And to bear fruit for. Your good. In math.