

Alright. Yes, and hello and welcome to Valley Creek. Happy New Year to you and your family. Whether you joined us this Christmas, or maybe it's your first time back in a while, or maybe you're here every single week; thanks for being here. Thanks for making Jesus first, taking priority for the beginning of this year. And last weekend we had RE: A Three-Day Encounter with Jesus, and it was incredible. And we're already hearing stories of life change and breakthrough and healing and places where people are hearing from the Lord for the first time. It was an amazing three days with God. I just want to encourage you. If you hear me say that and you hear breakthrough and healing and life change and hearing the voice of God, and you're like, "I want that." Can I just tell you, it's coming. In Jesus' name, it's coming. And I'm believing, by faith, that it's not just for them, it's for you. I'm believing, by faith, that RE was just a taste, but this year we're going to taste and see that the Lord is good.

And so, your healing, your breakthrough, your hearing from the Lord, your touch from God, it's on its way. It's coming. You just saw, in a trailer just a second ago, another thing that's coming is the Hope Carrier Initiative, and it's a really big deal. Next week, Pastor John brings back a brand new series. It's a big one. It's an important one. We've been waiting on it a really long time. We felt like the Lord has placed this and birthed this in our heart from way back when. We've been preparing and praying for it. It's going to be incredible, and so you get to be here when. You get to be here when we launch the Hope Carrier Initiative. You're not going to want to miss that next week. I think you can feel this momentum, this movement, this life that's happening right now, and I think it's because we're seeing our vision on full display. You see, our vision is to be a movement of hope for the city and beyond.

A movement - that is a movement where it's for all of us. It means all of us are experiencing that move of God. When God moves in and through us, you experience a move of God in your life. When God moves in and through you, we experience a move of God in our life, and it takes all of us. It's not just one of us. It takes us all to experience a movement. You see, nobody can start and nobody can experience a movement on their own. We all get to experience it together. And so, it's all of us - the people of God, engaging the Word of God, united by the Spirit of God, under the lordship of Jesus; that's when a movement happens. That actually changes the world. That's when we experience what God has for us. And so, if you're here right now, you're part of the people of God, and we're building a history with God. And so, I want you to catch that there's a history, an inheritance, a heritage that's being built among us right now.

There's an atmosphere of hope that's growing among us. Hope isn't like, "I hope something's going to work out; I hope it turns out okay." Hope - the confident expectation of the goodness of God is growing in our church right now. And so, there's a movement of hope that's happening among us. There's a movement of hope that we're all experiencing together. And so, as we get into this new year, as we start a brand new year together, here's the question. How are you going to follow Jesus and become more like Him this year? As you're making your plans, as you're having conversations with your family, I bet you that you've already started

talking about what sports you're going to play, and what vacations to take, what finances will look like. While all those are good, and while all those who are important as we come into a new year, really the question for those who follow Jesus, disciples of Jesus, is, how am I going to follow Jesus and become more like Him this year?

And the thing is, if you don't have, like, an answer to that question, it's probably not going to happen. Because instead of following and becoming, you're going to find yourself kind of reacting and responding to life as it happens to you. But that is the question for disciples. You've probably noticed, we've been talking a lot more about what discipleship looks like here at Valley Creek. To be a disciple, to be like one who becomes like the one they follow. That's what a disciple is - one who becomes like the one they follow. We want to be disciples of Jesus. We want to follow and become like Him, but how do we do that - that's a really, really important question. I think if we're going to answer that question, we ought to go back and look at the life of the disciples. You see, they primarily started as lost, lonely, broken, defeated and discouraged. They went on to become disciples and they went on to change the world. One of the very best stories about discipleship is actually the story of the Road to Emmaus.

There are two men in that story. They are lost, lonely, hurting, broken, defeated and discouraged. They're walking, actually, from Jerusalem back home. The reason they're defeated is because nothing turned out the way they thought it was going to. All of their hopes, all their dreams, all their expectations were gone, why? Because Jesus had been crucified, was dead, and they thought buried, and along with it everything they hoped was going to happen. So, here's a question for you as we start this year. Does that feel a little bit like you? Like, if you're just honest in your soul, does that feel like you're starting 23, like lost in your business, defeated in parenting, discouraged at school? Because those men keep walking, and then something miraculous happens. The resurrected Jesus comes and walks along with them.

Now, there's three of them. Now they're starting to talk about it and they're starting to experience kingdom things, they're in godly relationship. That is where two or three are gathered, there He is also. A cord of three strands is not easily broken. They're walking together with the resurrected Jesus, and they don't even know it. So, they walk all the way to their home, they continue the conversation, and then they sit down and they break bread, and they have a meal together. And all at once their eyes are opened and they recognize Jesus. So, right then, He disappears from their sight. And then, they asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" Two men, lost, hurting, broken, defeated, discouraged. They have this conversation. Now there's some life, now there's some energy, now their hearts are starting to burn within.

And they're so excited, they actually get up. They run the seven miles back to Jerusalem. They tell the other 11 disciples what has happened, and everything starts changing for them. Something brought them to life. Something awakened their heart. Something caused their

hearts to start burning within them. What was it? I think you see it right here, "each other" and the "Scriptures." The people of God and the Word of God. Surrounded by, talking about Jesus, that the people of God and the Word of God is what brought them back to life, so their hearts started burning within them. I believe that that's the answer to the question, how are we going to follow and become more like Jesus this year? The people of God and the Word of God. So Valley Creek, can I just declare this over us? Our hearts are going to burn within us this year. God is going to move, there's going to be a feel and a Spirit, and a life and awakening, and a burning within us.

Like business people, your hearts are going to burn within you this year because of the people of God and the Word of God. Suddenly you're going to find divine solutions to systematic problems that you've been waiting years to try to figure out. It's going to happen this year. Teachers, I believe, by faith, your hearts are going to burn within you this year, because of the people of God and the Word of God. You're going to find this love for your students. You're going to find a whole new wisdom in the classroom to educate and reach the heart of the next generation because your heart is going to burn within you. Listen, creatives, I speak this over you. Your heart is going to burn within you this year because of the people of God and the Word of God, and you're going to start creating beautiful things; creativity, masterful things in the area of the arts. You're going to carry all the creativity of heaven into your space, into your area.

Those of you that are the only ones that follow Jesus in your family, your hearts are going to burn within you this year because of the people of God and the Word of God. And because your hearts are so on fire, you're going to bring the love of Jesus to the rest of your family and you're going to see a change in the generation of your home, of your family, of your people. Because of the people of God and the Word of God, your hearts will burn within you. May it be in Jesus' name. May it be in Jesus' name. That's what I think God is calling us to this year. Then, the real question is, how? How do we experience, then, the people of God and the Word of God? Well, I think the invitation is for everybody at Valley Creek to be part of the people of God by getting in a Circle, and by being part of the Word of God by engaging the reading plan. At Valley Creek, we do Circles and we engage the reading plan just one chapter a day together. That is an invitation for all of us this year. So let's talk about Circles, okay.

So Circles, what are they? Well, Circles are where truly, we follow Jesus together. Where life transformation happens. At Valley Creek, we've got student Circles, we've got men's Circles, we've got women's Circles, we've got couple Circles, we've got Circles that meet in the city, we've got Circles that meet online. All of our Circles do the same three things. They discuss the weekend message, they engage the Scriptures, and they pray together. Why? Because I haven't arrived, that's why. Because there's still more to experience, to follow, to become like -- and I'm going to go out on a limb on this one. But I think it's possible that maybe you haven't arrived yet either, and that there's more. Like, don't look at your spouse, don't look at the person beside you. But maybe, it's possible there's more to follow and become like Jesus. It's

just, look at how the disciples engage the people of God. It says this, "They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Check this out, they had a Circle. They literally talked about what had been spoken, they opened the Scriptures, and they prayed together.

This is how they engage the people of God. "Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another." Listen, Circles are going to take devotion. Being part of the people of God takes a devotion. Not giving up, to be devoted, to continue to do something with intense effort despite difficulty. It takes a lot to be devoted, but it's important, it's worth it because we can encourage one another - both in faith and in life. That's part of what we experience when we do life together. "Love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." To love one another and to experience the love of others, that's part of what we experience when we do life together, when we're in Circles. "By this everyone will know," here's a question for you. Who does "everyone" include?

Everyone, including you; which means that you will know that you are His disciples when you engage the people of God. You learn more fully that, yeah, you know what, I am actually a disciple. I am like the one who becomes like the one they follow. I'm a disciple of Jesus. I will know more that I am a disciple. One more example for you. At the beginning of Acts, when Pentecost happens, when the Spirit is released out into the world, it says they're all gathered together and they're discussing what had happened. They're reading Scripture and praying together. That is they're having a Circle. And so, what's interesting about that moment is that I believe there was, something was happening where their hearts were burning within them -- this is when I felt like the Lord gave to me as I was preparing to talk with you guys, I think what happened was, the guys on the Road to Emmaus carried such a life and energy and such a spirit for meeting with Jesus they carried that to the 11 disciples.

The 11 disciples had this churning within them, they had this energy, this life, this expectation for Jesus to move, their hearts started burning within them as they were in the upper room. And then it says, "And suddenly, a sound like the blowing of a rushing wind came into the space," almost like Jesus has taken the billows on the fireplace and He's stoking the fire in their hearts and then fire bursts out, and tongues of fire burst out to them and into the world around them. The Spirit is released, and everything changes. A move of God started and this burning in their hearts, as they gathered together as the people of God. And then the Spirit goes, and He blows through the whole world and everything changed. Right up till now, the Spirit is still on the move. So, Valley Creek, could it be that God wants to release His holy fire into our lives, our families and the world around us through Circles this year, through the people of God this year?

Could it be that God wants to do something amazing as we engage each other as the people of God? Can I ask you, are you in a Circle? Because this is good, it's like really good, but this is

not enough. Our weekend experiences, they are essential, they are not sufficient. What breaks my heart sometimes is, from so many times of meeting with people, a lot of times it's the marriages that don't make it, the people that get embittered by church, the people that start deconstructing their faith, they all have the same kind of thing in common. They did not have the people of God speaking into their life, encouraging them, challenging them, calling out Jesus in them. So, instead of like a fire that was in here, they had black logs, just nothing, darkness, and that's what gets passed out into the world around them.

We need each other to stoke that fire, to encourage, to call out the Jesus in each one of us. And what you have to catch is, all of us have some hurting in life, and all of us have done some hurting in life. All of us have some hurting - some places that we've been hurt, and all of us have done some hurting, and Circles help with each of those things. That is, Circles begin to heal the places in us where other people have hurt us. That's part of what you get when you're with the people of God. And Circles are where people say, "Yeah, that's not Jesus. Know that you shouldn't have said that to him and that's not the way to respond." And so, what are they doing? They're helping us stop hurting others so that we can live free in all of our relationships. There's so much that we can experience. You see, we need people that pull the rocks out of our heart and help cultivate the soil of our hearts, so that we can be successful in all kinds of areas of life.

It's part of why Jesus used a really important analogy. It's called the Parable of the Sower. He actually explains to us what Circles is and why we do it. Here's what it was. He starts talking to a crowd one day and He uses, like, an agricultural analogy. Now, for a bunch of people that are into agriculture and they understood it, it's really easy for them to initially try to pick up on it, but then it started to get confusing. They didn't really understand that He wasn't talking about soils, He was talking about our hearts. So the crowd disperses, and then His disciples look at Him, and they're like, "Jesus, help us understand that a little bit more. Like, what were you talking about with the whole seed and the soils thing?" And so, He gathers them in a circle and He begins to teach them what He was saying. He says, "The farmer sows a seed and that seed is like a word that gets sown into our life." It's the Word of God in our life, and depending on how our hearts are cultivated, depending on how soft the soil is depends on whether or not that seed of truth, that Word of God in our life will actually grow into something that multiplies, that grows, that's healthy.

Sometimes our soil is hard. We have a hard heart, and so the seed gets thrown on, but then it just kind of bounces off. There's no way for it to take root. Sometimes our hearts are rocky soil. That is, the Word of God comes and it tries to land but because there's rocks there the root only grows up so deep it's shallow and eventually, the plant just withers whenever any kind of uncomfortability or difficulty comes. And then, sometimes the hard soil is a divided heart, it's thorny soil. That is, there's a lot of other things that are in the soil that begin to choke out what God wants to do, how He wants to make it grow. Things like the desire for money, the desire for other things. The worries of this life, they come and they choke out that plant so it can't be

fruitful. But then there's a heart soil that's 30, 60, 100 times what was sown into it. There's a way that there's a soil that's so good that it multiplies. It produces something amazing in our life.

Now, why is that important? Well, Jesus explains to us a really clear truth. You can't cultivate your own heart soil. You need people in your life to help churn and cultivate your heart in a way that will help it receive the things that God is trying to speak into you. You need people in your life to help pull out the rocks, and call out the good, and then pray for you, and then speak to you about the things of Jesus. Cultivate, cultivate, churn the soil of your heart so you can receive it. And even as you hear me say that, you may be thinking to yourself, like your flesh says, "Yeah, but I don't have time for that, and like it sounds, like, vulnerable and it's scary. Like, I don't know if I ever want to do that." That's what the flesh tells us, but the Spirit says, "Come." The Spirit says, "Hey, it's going to be good." There's life there. You're going to become more like Jesus. You're going to step into the fullness of what He has if you're willing to and open to letting your heart be cultivated, letting the soil of your heart be churned by others.

Now, as you hearing me say this, I'm guessing there's two different groups of people that are hearing this right now. One is, you're already in a Circle. That's awesome, thanks for that. Man my challenge, my encouragement for you is double down, triple down, stay devoted. I challenge you to ask this question, if something comes in the way, calendar-wise, of Circle, like something else comes against it, which one comes off the calendar first? Like, if something's busy on your schedule, which one has to fall off and which one stays? Because I would -- I think the Lord wants us to highly elevate the people of God this year and to highly elevate gathering together, to not give up meeting together, so I encourage you, double down, triple down. The second group of people that are hearing me right now is that you're not in a Circle. Can I just ask you, would you ask the Lord what He wants to do? Maybe even just say like, "Jesus what do You have for me, what do You want to do with the people of God this year? What do you want me to do?"

And then just listen, just ask Him to see what He says. Because you've got to catch like, none of us can carry the Ark alone. In the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant literally held the presence of God. It carried the fire of God. They'd have to carry it with multiple people on poles, because nobody could carry it alone. Nobody experienced it alone. It was truly together, with the people of God. And so, may our hearts burn within us with the people of God this year. That's the first way to follow and become more like Jesus. The second one is the Word of God. Truly engaging the reading plan, one chapter per day, the Word of God. Jesus calls Himself the capital Word of God, but the Bible, the Scriptures, it is the words of God and it is alive, it's living, it's active, it changes us, it's Spirit and its truth.

Really, what I want you to catch about Scripture, about the Bible, is it's like a love letter from a father who loves His children. When you read the Bible, I want you to think about it like, this is

a love letter from God about all the good things He has for me and has done for me. In fact, here's where we get it wrong a lot of times. The Bible is not so small that it's about what I have to do. It's so big, that it's about what Jesus has already done. It's not so small that it's a list of rules and things and Commandments that I have to try to keep up with. It's so big that it's about the finished work of Jesus, what He has already done. And so, it's really exciting to say. I'm just going to go for it. I'm going to engage God's word, Scripture. I mean, just look what God's Word says about His words. "When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear Your name, Lord God Almighty." When Your words came, they were sweet to my soul. They gave me my heart's delight. They filled me with joy, and by the way, they reminded me that I have a new name in Jesus. I have a new family in Jesus.

And so, that's part of what Scripture reminds me of. Look at this one, "Your word is a lamp for my feet, and a light on my path." Listen, I feel like sometimes we make decisions in life based on our wisdom, man's wisdom, and then we like, stumble into every decision and we wonder why it didn't work out that way. Like, man's wisdom, man's word, man's way is like Legos on the floor of your living room at midnight. Sometimes you're going to make it through; most of the time it's going to be really painful, and you're going to end up saying words that aren't so Biblical. And so, God's Word is a lamp. It's a light. It illuminates my path. It shows you where to go. It shows me what decisions to make. It shows me what to do, what to be about, and so, let's use that lamp, that light.

Look at this one, "Keep this book of the law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." In the original language, to meditate is to murmur, say it over and over and over and over and over and over until it becomes the way that you think, and the actual language of your life. The language of the atmosphere around you. You think that way and you speak that way. You meditate on it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. You know what that says? That says that Scripture in my heart leads to success in my life. Scripture in my heart leads to success in my life. You want to be successful, you've got to get the Word way down deep in your heart. Look at this one, "All scripture is God-breathed and it's useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Man, God's Word is fresh breath. It's fresh air. The world's ways and wisdom and word, it's like smog, and it's like, suffocating. It's hard to breathe it in. But God's Word is fresh air in my life. I breathe it in and I feel that breath. I feel that life. I feel the very God-breath coming into me and filling up my lungs. It's useful for teaching and correcting. That is, God's Word actually wants to teach me. It wants to correct my inaccurate reviews. Like, a lot of us have super inaccurate views about who God is and who we are in Jesus. And so, what does Scripture do? It helps, teaches me. It corrects that to become an accurate view of God and of me. It trains me in righteousness. What does that mean? Well, righteousness is just right standing in Jesus. And

so, the Bible actually trains me how to live in my right standing, how to live righteously, why is that? Because I'm always becoming on earth who God says I am in heaven.

You're always becoming on earth as it is in heaven. That is, you're actually becoming and growing in your righteousness, your right standing with God. Why is Scripture awesome? Because it actually trains you how to live like that, and so that you're equipped for every good work. Every good work, that's the things you love. It's like being -- you love being a good husband. You love being a good parent. Do you love being a top-tier athlete? Do you love your friends? Do you love your hobbies? Okay, all those things you love the most, it can train you for every good work. So Scripture does all of that and so much more. It's so valuable. It's such the Word of God in our life. So can I encourage you, are you willing to engage the Word of God? Are you willing to lean into His Word this year in your life? We've been seeing this all year. We've been seeing this move of God through His word changing atmospheres, transforming us and really helping us become more like Jesus.

And so, I think there's an encouragement for all of us to take a next step in engaging the Word of God. We've been seeing this life that happens when we just start speaking Scripture, it changes atmospheres. It changes relationships. It changes our attitudes and our moods. Scripture brings us back to life. In fact, the hunger that we've been seeing is, it's most obviously displayed in our number one resource. You know what our number one resource on our ValleyCreek+ site is? The reading plan. So, the number one resource of everything we've put out, all of our messages, all of our teachings is the reading plan. It's just people just saying I'm going to read one chapter a day with Jesus. We would have never thought that that was going to be the case, but it has been. So, here's what we get to do this year. This year we are going to read the entirety of the New Testament all together as a church - the whole thing, the New Testament. What is the New Testament?

Man, the New Testament is the story of Jesus, what He has done, what He continues to do through His church, and His kingdom come, how we live in that kingdom. We're going to read it all together, here's how. You've got this bookmark when you came in. This bookmark is to be immediately put in the door of your car or your junk drawer at home. No. So, we gave this to you so that you can truly read along with us, one chapter a day, one book at a time. And after every book that we read, we're going to take two days, that is, to catch-up and reflect. So, everybody can do it, everybody can join along with us. This bookmark is going to help you make that journey. And so, parents, I want to encourage you, make a plan, work the plan. Like, parents, for your family, you are the primary disciplers of your children. And even as I say that out loud, that's convicting to me. I am the primary discipler of my own children. And so, here's the good news. You have the momentum of the whole church family going with you.

You can lead your family this year to dig in to read the New Testament. And as you can see, on the bookmark, there's really three questions that we want to answer after every book, and that is, "What is my key verse?" "What did I discover about Jesus and His kingdom?" And, "What is



the Holy Spirit teaching me?" Can I just tell you, there's discovering, there's discovering to be had, and there's teaching to be experienced. Jesus wants us to discover more and He wants to teach us more about who He is. And so, those are great questions to ask after every book; to journal, to think about, to consider. So, we really want you to utilize this bookmark, don't let that go. It's amazing. The God of the universe wants to speak to you this year. Let me say that again. The God of the universe wants to speak to you this year. He wants to speak to you directly through His word, through His people. That's awesome. And so, what if we just went for it? Like, what if we just read the whole New Testament together? What if we just went for the Word, the wisdom, and the way of Jesus?

Look at this one out of Proverbs, "The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it costs you all you have, get understanding." And so, can I just be honest? There's going to be a cost. It is going to cost. It's going to cost maybe, some time, it might cost you having to break away from social media, it might cost like a little bit of planning, but it's so worth it. It's worth it to pay that cost, to experience all the life that there is in Scripture this year. Like, what if you just said, like, we're going to go for it. We're going to have a vision to read the Word of God as a family, as a people. We're going to let it transform us. We're going to -- it's going to change us. Like, what if you just said, "I'm going to actually read so that I can see what I say I actually believe." I'm going to read His word so I can see what I say that I actually believe, and begin to let that Word transform you, okay. I've got just a couple of thoughts before we get started next week. And the first one is this, we're giving you a one week to get ready for the New Testament, okay.

So, it starts a week from tomorrow. What does that mean? It means, plan for it. It means really make a strategy as a family and plan for that week. That's why we want to give you a week to prepare for it. I want to encourage you to get a Bible that you can understand. So, at Valley Creek, we primarily use the New International Version when we do messages. And we also encourage you that the New Living Translation is a pretty easy to read translation. But just one that you can understand, that you can use your bookmark in, and then you could place that into whatever Bible you're using. We're going to give you next week, an amazing journal you're going to use all year long. So, we have an amazing journal that you're going to get. You have to be here at the services in order to get that and take it by faith. But when you do, you're going to be able to use that journal to answer those key questions, to dig into, to keep record of where we are on the journey. When you sit down to read, maybe you've never heard this before, just a great way to start, like, if you're like, "I don't even know. Like, where do I even start with this?"

A great way to start when you sit down is just say, "Holy Spirit, I invite you in. Will you teach me the Words of Jesus?" "Holy Spirit, I invite you. Will you teach me the words of Jesus?" And then let Him begin to speak to you. Every passage you're going to read through the lens of, what does this show me about who I am, and who God is, and what I'm created to do? So, you're actually looking for that - who I am, who God is, what I'm created to do - every single

time you read it? And here's the last encouragement I want to give you. You've got to do it every day, because you eat food every day. And so, sometimes I eat a steak and sometimes I eat brussels sprouts. I actually kind of like brussels sprouts, but sometimes I eat that. And guess what, all of it nourishes me. And sometimes, I remember the meal, sometimes I don't really remember the meal; but I know I'm growing. And I know that I'm being nourished. I know I'm being transformed as I take in that fresh life. In the Old Testament, the people would eat the manna every day fresh. It was new every day. It was supposed to be experienced fresh every single day. So, if you miss a day, that's okay, don't miss two.

If you miss a week, that's okay, jump back in with us and we're going to make it really easy to do this together, there's just a momentum in all of it. So, listen, don't make this decision or anything that I've talked about today; don't make the decision based on whether you want to or whether you desire to. Desire follows faith. Desire follows faith. Because sometimes you're just doing it by faith and being like we're going to do this. We're going to go for it. We're going to have a vision. We're going to start this year. Because, hey, it's a new year. So, maybe you're coming into it and you're feeling lost, lonely, broken, defeated, discouraged. It's a new year in Jesus' name; our hearts are going to burn within us as we engage the people of God, the Word of God as we get in Circles, as we do the reading plan. Man, Circles can change your life. God's Word can lead your life. There's so much good that Jesus is inviting us to this year.

So, what if you just ask Him, "Jesus, what do You have for me this year?" And in Jesus' name, may all of our hearts burn within us. "They asked each other, 'Were our hearts not burning within us while He talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us?'" May that verse be a declaration of how God is going to move among us this year. So, come on, stand up with me right now. Wherever you're at, all the locations, all of our campuses, stand up with me. I just want to invite you even to open up your hands as a sign of faith as we pray for the move of God through the people of God and the Word of God this year. So, God, right now, we do; we pray that our hearts would burn within us; that we would engage Your people and Your Word at a whole different level. We believe that You have life and life change and transformation and new things to reveal to us.

And even as a prayer right now, what if you just asked the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit what do you have for me, because I know my flesh says one thing, but I know the Spirit's declaring another thing? I know I feel one way, but I know Your invitation is a completely different thing." What if you just ask Him. And what if, as a people, we stepped into this New Year believing by faith that the Spirit was going to burn. He was going to burn among us and in us and through us and into the world around us, and that through the people of God and the Word of God, we would experience so much more that Jesus wants for us this year. We believe it by faith, we declare it by faith, and we love You Jesus. In Your name, amen.