Our scripture comes from John 15 verse 7 and verse 12. While you’re finding that, “A mom was driving her 5-year-old son George to McDonald's one day. On the way they passed a wreck. She pointed over and said, "We should pray!" From the back seat, she heard George earnestly pray: "Please, God, don't let those cars block the entrance to McDonald's." How’s your prayer life? Is it more like Jesus or more like George?

**John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.**

 Two weeks ago, we talked about abiding in Jesus. To abide is Jesus means to live in Him at all times. It’s not about rules… it’s about relationship. Our walk, as disciples, is all about becoming more like Jesus with every single breath we breathe. Jesus esteemed others more highly than Himself, forgave completely, and loved without condition. He loved both the royal and the rejected of society. If Jesus is our Master and we are His disciples, then it’s our desire to copy Him completely… so much so that people KNOW they’ve seen Jesus when they see us.

 Today, we’re going to talk about two keys to abiding with Jesus – Master keys that connect us with Him: Prayer and Fellowship – these are inward facing – things that happen within the church. Next week, we’re going to talk about the outward facing things – things that demonstrate our abiding in Jesus: Witness and Service. Prayer and Fellowship fill us up so we may be poured out in Witness and Service. Titus 3:4-7 says But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Jesus poured Himself out. How can we, as disciples, do any less?

 Prayer is our connection with God. It’s like plugging in the power cord. Verse 5 **If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.** When we are in the will of God, we ask rightly. We are not asking like George, but like Jesus. We’re not praying for possessions, but people. James 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. James is echoing Jesus. When we abide, we do not ask wrongly. We ask in accordance to Jesus will and He gives it to us. Jesus modeled this kind of prayer for us in Luke 11:2-4 Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.” Notice Jesus’ recognition of God – God You are magnificent. Hallowed, praised be Your name, His prayer is for God’s will to be done and His Kingdom to be established, His prayer is for daily bread so we might be strong enough to do God’s plan, and He finishes by asking for forgiveness and for protection. How does the modern prayer of a Christian look compared to this? Are we abiding in prayer or are we asking amiss? More like Jesus or more like George?

 Look at verse 12 - **This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.** Not a suggestion! 1 John 4:20 says If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar. James 4:1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? Fellowship within the church flows from love and great prayers – the preachers prayers? NO! Individual prayers. Fellowship is nothing more and nothing less than individuals who made a decision to love one another. That is what brought you to church this morning – choice. That’s what causes us to love one another, forgive one another, and esteem one another more highly than self – choice! There is one “i” in fellowship, but notice how close to the end of the word it is. Fellowship is meant to build up, not tear down. Fellowship is designed to magnify the Kingdom in all of us, not highlight achievement in any one of us. Discipleship happens best in the kitchen of great fellowship.

Hebrews 10:24 says “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.” We pray for one another and we fellowship with one another with the aim to stir up love and good works. Love and good works take the form of Witness and Service. But where do we start… by considering one another, esteeming one another higher than ourselves. Listen to Paul in Philippians 2:2-3 “Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.”

This week, consider the health of your prayer life – more like Jesus or more like George? What is your approach to fellowship? How are these two presenting themselves in the world beyond the front doors of the church? A branch is only as healthy as the connection to the Vine. A disciple is only as healthy as our connection to the Master. If we are to make disciples, we must be a healthy disciple first – healthy in prayer and flourishing in fellowship. May God fill us to overflowing with both, so we might pour ourselves out abundantly.