

Introduction: We all have a history of our prayer or lack of prayer practice. The Garth Brooks song is an example of prayer for something we want and petition God for, but often give up quickly if we don't receive it.

Ephesians 1:15-21

3 dimensions of prayer: Downward/Upward, Inward/Outward, Forward/Backward

1 Downward (all prayer is response to God speaking/acting)

-Prayer Scriptures - join Trinitarian conversation, See John 17

"Language is spoken into us; we learn language only as we are spoken to... All speech is answering speech." He goes on to describe this as "the overwhelming previousness of God's speech to our prayers." (Eugene Peterson)

Upward (response to God of all kinds, specifically thankfulness)

- write out things your thankful for, go on a walk and thank God for things you see

2 Inward -God wants to change us internally by slowing down and praying, spending time with Him. Practice Prayer of Examen (see Ignatius as an example)

"Prayer is the only entryway into genuine self-knowledge. It is also the main way we experience deep change—the reordering of our loves." (Tim Keller, Prayer)

Outward (praying to see the world change - others come to faith)

-Join prayer call on Tuesday night

"God instituted prayer in order to allow His creatures the dignity of causality (Pascal). It would perhaps be truer to say that He invented both prayer and physical action for that purpose. He gave us small creatures the dignity of being able to contribute to the course of events in two different ways (work and prayer)." (C.S. Lewis)

3 Forward (hope, inheritance to look into God's future)

-Christ Church Day of Prayer on Thur

Backward (cross/resurrection power as anchor)

-rehearse the gospel by Communion

"We know God will answer us when we call because one terrible day he did *not* answer Jesus when *he* called. . . . Jesus' prayers were given the rejection that we sinners merit so that our prayers could have the reception that he merits." (Tim Keller)