

Intercessory Prayer

Intercessory prayer is the act of praying to God on behalf of yourself or others. When Nehemiah heard of the decline of the people of Israel – their community and their structures - he was affected to the heart: "I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven." Nehemiah waited upon God in prayer for four months before springing into action. More than likely he gathered a community to intercede with him. When he finally did move into action at the invitation of the King, no one can deny that the hand of God was upon him.

When a campus has no witnessing community, there are systems that oppose God or God's purposes, or there is a community of Christians struggling to survive, let's take the biblical example of Nehemiah and turn our heartache into gathering people for prayerful intercession. After a season of intercession for a campus, Jesus' kingdom reality starts to take form where the presence of God had been absent.

In the season of waiting on God in intercession, Nehemiah and his community did four things:

1. **Worshipped God.** Worship is powerful. Speaking and singing the truth of God's goodness and character elevates faith and intercession. Also, our enemy doesn't care for worship. Worship is effective at removing his presence and his lies.

"Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments..." - Nehemiah 1:5

Examples of ways to bring worship to campus:

1. Organize volunteers and students to prayer walk on campus using your mind to imagine God's presence everywhere your feet step, with the Kingdom coming to campus in all of its fullness. Imagine the students and faculty set free to worship God. As you worship, ask God to make it so.
2. Spend significant time in your prayer meetings worshipping God. Play worship music and sit silently together under its effect. Simply worshipping God is a form of prayer in itself.
3. While worshipping God with music, take a campus map and lay a hand on each academic building, housing, social space, sports facility etc. Ask that God would be lifted up in those spaces.
4. Look for the presence of God already on campus by taking a walk. Look for signs of the Kingdom: a motto that shares fidelity to truth, a kind gesture from one person to another, a significant amount of energy given over to the development of students. Thank God for all the signs of His presence – explicit and implicit! Praise Him that he is already there, before you ever begin ministering.

For further reading: [Worship and the World to Come](#)

2. **Confession and Repentance.** Naming individual and collective sin in confession and turning away from it in repentance can free the Holy Spirit's presence to overflow. We often think of confession and repentance as an individual process, yet in scripture, God often deals with us collectively, as people groups and nations. We are asking for revival on this campus. What sins,

"I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you." - Nehemiah 1:6b

historical and contemporary, are blocking this campus community from receiving God's favor in greater measure?

A suggested process for corporate confession and repentance on campus:

1. Read the history of your campus. Check the website or other reference material.
2. Gather with friends and walk around campus. Ask God's help to see the campus with His eyes.
3. Identify and make note of what you have researched and what you see. Specifically, where do you see lies of the enemy, or strongholds at work? A stronghold, according to 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, is simply a collective mindset that is opposed to the gospel.
4. With your community, confess to God the sin of your campus community. Repent humbly of what God revealed to you. Stay away from judgements by recognizing your own participation in lies and repenting personally first.

For further reading: [Return to Me](#)

3. **Fasting:** Fasting is the emptying of ourselves for the filling of God.

We often see this as a means to personal holiness. But similar to collective repentance, collective fasting is effective as a prayer effort. As we fast, we can dedicate hunger or emptiness to the desire for God to fill that space.

"When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven." - Nehemiah 1:4

Examples of ways to bring fasting to campus:

1. Fast as you can, not as you cannot. Fast from technology, media, distractions, unhealthy living patterns or other things. Fast from food. Ask God to guide your fast and tell you how to proceed.

Examples of ways to corporately fast:

1. Organize friends to fast for the campus in prayer over a designated time. Each person can take a day of the week to fast for campus.
2. Invite others who care about the campus to fast with you on a designated day. End the fast with a communal prayer meeting for the campus virtually or in person as appropriate.

For further reading: [Fasting](#)

4. **Intercessory Prayer.** Nehemiah stands between God's will for the people of Israel and their reality of earth. A mediator sits between two people at odds, listening to both sides and helping to build reconciliation between the two. An intercessor, like a mediator, stands "in the gap" between heaven and earth, praying until "it is on earth as it is in heaven" - Matthew 6:10.

"Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name." - Nehemiah 1:11a

Gather people to pray consistently for this campus, once a month or every other week. Run a prayer meeting physically or virtually. Be creative.

Examples of ways to practice intercessory prayer:

1. Print out a map of campus, place it on the ground and walk around the map, asking God to surround this campus with His presence!
2. Practice [listening prayer](#), asking Jesus for his intentions for this campus. Ask God to give you a scriptural promise of what God intends to do. Pray with faith into that scripture, and ask for faith if you do not have it.
3. Gather your community. Together imagine and write out what it will be like for the students and faculty if the Kingdom of God came to campus. How would people treat each other? What would the values of campus be? Pray and ask God to bring it about.
4. Gather your community and draw a [network map](#). Pray blessings of God's presence on these individuals. Call to God to come be present with them, increasing their faith, their joy, their vision of the gospel on campus.

For further reading: [The Intercessions Handbook](#)

More than just a prayer meeting, Nehemiah led a prayer effort. Months of focusing just on God and praying led to movements of God that eventually changed reality for the Israelites. May it be so for us and our campuses.