

EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER FOR YOUR CAMPUS

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Mobilizing prayer for our ministry is one of the most important things we can do. It's the only thing we cannot delegate. After all, if we don't stand in the gap for our campus, who will?

The first person we need to mobilize to prayer is ourselves! If we are not passionate about praying it will be very difficult for us to mobilize others to pray. This is hard. Being "faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12) takes discipline. We all constantly need to be stretching ourselves with new goals to become better prayer warriors.

There are seasons that I (Paul) have attempted to pray for an hour a day, pray over a specific prayer list, go prayer walking or discipline myself in the area of fasting. I am haunted by a statement found in James 4:2b "You do not have because you do not ask God." I am not sure how that works but I don't want this verse to be true of my life. I do know that God does stuff when we ask him!

Every major movement of God started with prayer and ended by lack thereof. EVERY. SINGLE. ONE. Movements where thousands of people came to Christ, where hundreds of missionaries were sent out. Currently, there are over 700 disciple-making movements around the world with thousands of unreached people hearing and responding to the gospel. In each of these movements, it can be traced back to a leadership team that spends around ten or more hours a week in focused prayer. This isn't about checking off a legalistic box so God will bless us, but it is noticing a consistent pattern of where God is moving. Where God's people are radically devoted to extraordinary prayer, God seems to show up in extraordinary ways. If every single movement of God can be traced back to extraordinary prayer, then why is prayer typically our last-ditch effort instead of our weapon of choice?

I (Clayton) became highly convicted about this the more I studied disciple-making movements around the world. The problem was, though, that I was a cruddy prayer. How was I going to practice extraordinary prayer and lead my team to extraordinary prayer? How could I do ten hours a week when I couldn't do ten minutes a day? You may feel the same way. Let me challenge you with this: If you struggle to be a person of prayer, take your ordinary prayer life, and add a little extra to it. Add 5 mins, pray every day, take a prayer retreat a month, etc. Whatever it is, add something to it. Take your ordinary and do a little extra until that begins to feel ordinary and then do a little extra until that begins to feel ordinary. Slowly but surely you will begin to practice extraordinary prayer.

If you are planting a new ministry you need God to build it. "Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain." Psalm 127:1. Could it be that the breakthrough in your life, your ministry, the lives of your students, and on your campus hasn't happened yet because it isn't being fought for in the spiritual realm? You've worked with calloused hands instead of calloused knees?

A section from the classic book *The Kneeling Christian* rocked my world the first time I (Paul) read it. Read it thoughtfully as you consider your own prayer life.

"Has it ever occurred to you that our Lord never gave an unnecessary or an optional command? Do we really believe that our Lord never made a promise which He could not, or would not, fulfill? In fact, it can easily be shown that all want of success, and all failure in the spiritual life and in Christian work, is due to defective or insufficient prayer. Unless we pray aright we cannot live aright or serve aright. This may appear, at first sight, to be a gross exaggeration, but the more we think it over in the light Scripture throws upon it, the more convinced shall we be of the truth of this statement. Fellow-Christians, let us awake! The devil is blinding our

eyes. He is endeavoring to prevent us from facing this question of prayer....Do we realize that there is nothing the devil dreads so much as prayer? ...He loves to see us "up to our eyes" in work — provided we do not pray. He does not fear because we are eager and earnest Bible students — provided we are little in prayer. Someone has wisely said, "Satan laughs at our toiling, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray." All this is so familiar to us — but do we really pray? Let us never forget that the greatest thing we can do for God or for man is to pray. For we can accomplish far more by our prayers than by our work. Prayer is omnipotent; it can do anything that God can do! When we pray God works."

We are in a cosmic battle for the souls of students on campus and we must use the weapons God has given us! If you want to make an eternal difference in students' lives the battle must first be won in prayer.

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

But it is not enough for us to be a prayer warrior, we must invite others into the battle with us. In looking at gospel movements and college campuses I (Clayton) sought the help of Paul Watson, author of *Contagious Disciple Making* and disciple-making movement strategist and leader. I asked him why we didn't see disciple-making movements on college campuses. He said,

"We have yet to see a true disciple-making movement of God on the college campus because college ministers do not act like they are in a spiritual battle. They walk onto their campuses thinking that Satan will just hand over the most strategic demographic on the planet without a fight. You need *at least* a thousand people praying for you and your campus before you can expect any serious movement of God on your campus."

What a statement! What would it take for you to mobilize a thousand people to regularly pray for you and your campus? In his letters, the apostle Paul repeatedly modeled seeking out the prayers of others for his ministry. Many of the breakthroughs we have seen on our campuses are a direct result of the prayers of our ministry prayer partners. And many of the hurdles in our ministry will not be overcome until they are prayed-forward by our prayer partners.

Here are some practical things we have used in our ministries to utilize and mobilize prayer. It's not an exhaustive list, or to say we know what we're doing. It's just a place to start from as we seek extraordinary prayer for our campuses.

Email Prayer Letters

One practical way we (Paul) have mobilized prayer is through email prayer letters. We have over 400 people that we send our prayer letter with our current updates, stories and prayer requests. This is a great way to share what God is doing and get people praying on a consistent basis.

Facebook Group

I (Clayton) have a Facebook Group that I post on 4-5 times a week with updates and specific requests. The hope is to have regular, relevant contact with those who are standing in the gap for my ministry and my family. It's also something we've challenged our student leaders to do as well. Our students are always creating groups for their mission trips, so we challenged them, since they were "on mission" on their campus, to create one for their small group, outreach team, etc. It is also a way we can help track how close we are to having a thousand people praying for us regularly.

Text Message Prayer Team

The best tool we (Paul) discovered for mobilizing prayer is our “text message prayer team.” It’s more personal and similar to live streaming than our emails, which is more of an overview. I (Paul) have 70 plus people I send requests to 3-4 times a week. If I have a gospel appointment on campus I just shoot out a text using my group text app and they are able to pray on the spot. It is such a joy to send out another text after the appointment and celebrate when the student decides to become a follower of Jesus!

Prayer Calendar

We (Clayton) use a prayer calendar. Each staff and student leader makes a numbered list, 1-30, of believers in our network. On the matching day of the month, they call or text the person next to the day and pray specifically for the requests they have for the day. As God answers those specific prayers we celebrate them with the others in our prayer calendar. If just thirty people are doing it, at five minutes a day, that is two and a half hours of prayer for people in our ministry every day!

Pray-a-thons

We (Paul) simply ask our students and supporters to sign up for a 30 minutes time slot to pray for the campus. We make it a habit to do 24hr Pray-a-thons regularly. They serve as a great way to build momentum and prepare for other important events. There are all kinds of creative ways you can pull them off however we have kept it simple and just put our prayer requests on a Google spreadsheet. We then ask people to sign up for a 30min time slot. People can sign up online, print off the requests and then pray for our ministry no matter where they are in the world.

Another recent version of a Pray-a-thon we are trying is a “21 Days of Prayer” emphasis where we are asking our ministry partners to pray over a PDF we send them with 21 days of prayer requests leading up to our Fall Semester.

48/72 Hour Prayer Tent

We (Clayton) set up a tent in the middle of campus and have students and ministries sign up for hour slots to spend time on campus praying. It’s a great way to collect prayer requests and cover campus in prayer. It also allows other students from campus to walk by and be prayed for.

Focused Prayer Time

As a staff we (Clayton) realized that we couldn’t lead our students and partners somewhere we weren’t going so we need to model prayer. We began spending focused time each week as a staff praying through scripture together. We take a passage and pray verse by verse through it. Sometimes it takes thirty minutes and sometimes it takes two hours. We’ve asked our students to form groups to pray together throughout the week as well.

We have been called by God to stand in the gap for our campus. It is a joy and a privilege to invite others into our calling and intercede for us. As college ministry leaders let’s join what God is doing and mobilize daily prayer for our campuses and nations.

If you’re looking for more resources on prayer and the college campus check out

- *God on Campus* by Trent Sheppard is an excellent book that describes the modern prayer movement on college campuses and connects them to the history of revivals.

- *When God walked on campus* by Michael F. Gleason is a brief history of evangelical awakening at American colleges and universities.

This is a resource that was put together as part of the training process for Campus Multiplication Network. The vision of CMN is to equip leaders who desire to plant new ministries on college campuses until there is no campus left without a multiplying gospel movement. We provide training and coaching for collegiate ministry leaders who are looking to accelerate evangelistic growth and start new multiplying campus ministries. For more information, you can email campusmultiplicationnetwork@gmail.com