

Build Your Own War Room (aka Prayer Closet)!

(thanks <http://www.allcreated.com>)

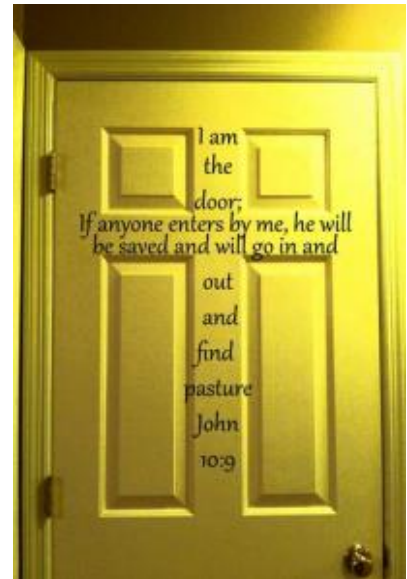


The key is this...find a place with zero interruptions. Sounds easy...but it's not. That's how and why the 'closet' has been identified as one of the best spots in our homes. An empty closet, that is. And if an empty closet (or closet-like space) is not available in your home, keep reading. We have a few tips in creating a space that will have the same incredible, heart-warming, God-loving, soul-searching result.

But let's start with the basics.

WHY have a war room?

1. **Because prayer matters to God and it's powerful!** James 5:16 says "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is *powerful* and effective."
2. In today's super-electronically connected world, **it's what we need to really be able to quiet our hearts, to hear God's voice.**
3. **It is eye-opening, the things that God wants to reveal to you through a dedicated prayer time**—insights into your life, your relationships, your motivations, and understanding God's purposes. Jeremiah 33:2-3 "This is what the Lord says, he who made the earth, the Lord who formed it and established it—the Lord is his name: '*Call to me* and I will *answer* you and *tell you great and unsearchable things* you do not know.'"
4. **We are commanded to devote ourselves to prayer.** Colossians 4:2 "Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart."
5. **For the future of us, our children, and our land.** 2 Chronicles 7:14 says "Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land."
6. **We are told to pray continually (1 Thessalonians 5:7), and be faithful in prayer.** How often do we actually, currently pray, though? Probably not as much as we would like or should. Romans 12:12 "Be hopeful in hope, patient in affliction, *faithful* in prayer."



7. **Following Jesus' example of withdrawing to a solitary place to pray.** Luke 22:39-46, we see that Jesus withdrew and knelt to pray. And Mark 1:35 "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a *solitary* place, where he prayed."
8. **We are told to pray in secret** (not just to be seen by others). Matthew 6:5-6 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But *when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father*, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in *secret*, will reward you."

How to find/build/create your War Room:

1) Consider if there is an actual extra little closet or space in your house where you can comfortably sit and kneel to pray. It may currently be used as storage and filled with things, but consider emptying it by selling or giving away excess that you don't really need. If a little space like this does not exist in your home, try to be creative with an alternative— is there a space on the floor of your bedroom (not your bed!) where you could be alone, leave a Bible, prayer photo album (see description below), etc.? It just needs to be an electronics free zone (no iPads, iPhones, Laptops, etc.)

2) Equip your little space with a lamp, if it doesn't have lighting. Also, I find it helpful to keep a **throw pillow** in there, to be a little more comfortable.

3) Print off photos of people in your life that you want to be regularly praying for, and either put them up on a tack board or in a little prayer photo album, that you keep in your prayer closet. Looking at people's faces seems to help me remember to pray for them, and then to pray more specifically for what they are going through in their lives.

4) Pray using the "ACTS" acronym. Spend time on each "letter"

- **Adoration:** Spend some time adoring and worshipping God by declaring things about who He is. (ie- Altogether good, loving, just, faithful, truth, etc.) Psalm 145:3 "Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom."
- **Confession:** Spend time confessing your own sins to God. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."
- **Thanksgiving:** Spend time listing out things you are thankful for—finding things to be thankful for will help you understand God's purposes in hardship. Ephesians 5:20, "And give thanks for *everything* to

God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Psalm 50:23, “But giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors me. If you keep to my path, I will reveal to you the salvation of God.”

- **Supplication:** This is the part where you bring your different requests to God—for yourself, for fellow Christians, for people who don’t know Jesus, for our country, for different situations around you and around the world, etc. 1 Timothy 2:1 “I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them.

5) Pray with an open Bible. God uses His Word (the Bible) to speak into our lives and reveal Himself. I would suggest that this should be an actual hard-copy of the Bible (not electronic), to guard against potential distraction.

6) Keep a journal in your prayer closet. You will want to be writing down (to remember) the things that God will start revealing to you. Also, if you journal the things you are praying for, you will be encouraged and praise God when God answers your prayers, in His timing. Otherwise, you might not even notice when God has moved in response to your prayer.

7) Consider getting a book like Operation World to keep in your prayer closet, which daily will help you focus in prayer on a specific people group or country, and their spiritual needs/spiritual state.

8) Spend some time praying in a kneeling position. Something about kneeling to pray really seems to help humble my heart before God and helps me naturally tend towards worshipping Him. (This does not have to be all your time in your prayer closet—just try it to see if it helps you focus on our glorious God.) Psalms 95:6 “Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.”

9) If the idea of spending more extended time in prayer seems overwhelming, set a kitchen timer (to have in the prayer closet) or a watch (not your smartphone, for distraction reasons). Then set the alarm to go off in a set amount of minutes (maybe start with 10 minutes and then add from there). I think you’ll be surprised how fast time flies, once you really start praying through different people and situations in your life.

10) Just get yourself into your prayer closet. If you can make it that far, I think that actually praying will be the easier part. Tearing ourselves away from the endless house work, TV, Facebook, e-mail, etc., is the hard

part. That is often what keeps us from hearing from God– being distracted. Don't be discouraged if this feels unnatural and hard. Prayer is a spiritual discipline, so that infers it will take time, effort and energy.

“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” – Hebrews 12:11

The real beauty of having a prayer closet is forcing out all the distractions that keep us from having the kind of prayer life that God desires.

