

Build A Prayer Shack

A Small Place for Prayer

"But you, when you pray, enter into your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father which is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly." – Matthew 6:6

If we are to take Jesus seriously and literally, we all ought to have a designated place in our homes dedicated to secret prayer. It is known as the prayer closet. It was sometimes the bride's chamber (Joel 2:16) in which she would dress herself for presentation to her groom. What a wonderful illustration of the church, the bride of Christ, and her need to be prepared in secret before entering the Holy of Holies.

Dick Eastman has taken the Lord seriously and built for himself a room in his basement for his prayer closet. *"Prayer can be done anywhere at anytime, but we ought to enter into our "closet" to pray (Matt. 6:6). In other words, we ought to pray alone without a motive for righteous glory from men for this deed. We need to find a special place to pray. Gen. 24:63 tells us that Isaac prayed in the fields. Daniel prayed in a chamber. Jesus departed to a lonely place and prayed there (Mark 1:35). Jesus also met with his disciples in a garden to be with God (John 18:1-2). Similarly, we need to find a special place of prayer to share with God."*

Jesus instructed us to pray to our Father in secret. He used the word "closet" which is only used twice in the Bible - in Matthew 6 and in Joel 2:16 "Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet."

In the Old Testament the Feast of Tabernacles is also called the Feast of Booths, in which the people of Israel were all to dwell in temporary booths for seven days. A "booth" was a hut made of the branches of a tree. In such tabernacles Jacob sojourned for a season at a place named in Hebrew from this circumstance is "Succoth" (Genesis 33:17). Booths were erected also at the feast of Tabernacles, Lev 23:42,43 which commemorated the abode of the Israelites in the wilderness.

INDOOR PLACES

tameion (tam-i'-on)

(Matthew 6:6) AV-closet 2,
secret chamber 1, storehouse 1

- 1) a storage chamber, storeroom
- 2) a chamber esp. an inner chamber
- 3) a secret room

OUTDOOR PLACES

cukkah (sook-kaw')

(Leviticus 23:42 and Jonah 4:5)
AV-tabernacle 12, booth 11, pavilion 5,
cottage 1, covert 1, tents 1; 31

- 1) thicket, covert, booth
- 1b) booth (rude or temporary shelter)

Prayer can take place anywhere, yet Jesus challenged his disciples to “enter into their closet” and close the door to seek the Father in secret. Consider turning a room in your house to a prayer room (closet) wholly dedicated and equipped for praying, or build a backyard shed with the same purpose.

Private Prayer Places

A personal space for prayer can really be just about anywhere that you can stay (relatively) undisturbed. Perhaps there's a quiet place in a park or woods or field, or a garden (as Jesus did). Maybe there's a really good rock to sit on, overlooking the beach and the sea. Your place could be up on the roof of a flat-roof apartment building or dorm, or maybe on a balcony or even a fire escape. Indoors, perhaps it's the bedroom your children grew up in, or a corner of the den. Or maybe all you can muster up is a closet. God doesn't care if there's still a mop in it, what matters to God is that you are in it. (You're more likely to use the room if it's cleaned out and set aside just for prayer.)

There are some good things to have on hand in personal prayer places. A Bible, perhaps a notepad and pen for journaling, perhaps headphones and some music or nature sounds. Indoors, a lamp is a good idea; outdoors, a flashlight may be helpful.

“The prayer space is not chosen so people can see you pray, nor is it a place to relax and fuzz out. It is a place to lose yourself in or to lose track of time, a place to wrestle with the Creator, “to feel one's body made a temple of the Holy Ghost”, as Charles Spurgeon put it. What matters most is not the place itself; what matters is that it helps you to be able to pay full attention to the most important of all relationships.”

From Spirithome.com <http://www.spirithome.com/prayroom.html>

Build Yourself a Prayer Room

The literal translation for the word "closet" is storage area, shed, or pantry. It was a place where things were stored. We all know that today stored things are in closets, basements, attics, and garages. Why not make one of those rooms into a dedicated prayer closet for you to get alone with God? It doesn't cost anything but the effort of cleaning out a space for yourself. It need not be large, and preferably is small about 6' x 8' or so. Decorate it for prayer.

Build Yourself a Prayer Shack

If you are handy with tools you could convert a backyard shed into an attractive prayer place for yourself or others. Churches would do well to provide such “retreats” for pastors and lay people. Just about any church that has ample property could set up a prayer chapel (shed or shack) in the back area of the property. Post sign-up sheets so many people can use the prayer shed for deepening their prayer lives. Here are a few samples of what it could look like.

The cost is reasonable and makes a wonderful summer prayer project for a church, individual or camp ministry. The cost is reasonable and makes a wonderful summer prayer project for a church, individual or camp ministry.

Check out links of the Web like Tumbleweed Houses

<http://www.tumbleweedhouses.com/houses.htm>

See our compiled pictures at Build A Cabana -

<http://www.prayertoday.org/2005/Articles/Backyard-Cabins.pdf>

Check out the Woodshed Prayer House, designed for use by local pastors.

<http://www.pastorsretreatnetwork.org>

Copyright 2005. All rights reserved. No portion of this may be copied, filed, or republished in any form without the express written consent of the author Richard W. LaFountain. It may be used in the church context for prayer training as long as the copyright and web address remains printed thereon.