

Engaged

Getting Ready for Marriage

Congratulations on this wonderful milestone. Few seasons in life are filled with as much joy and anticipation as the time spent preparing to get married.

You've probably heard it said that as you plan your wedding, you shouldn't forget to plan your marriage. But it sounds so abstract to "plan a marriage" in the midst of the more tangible (and demanding) project of planning a wedding. How do you do it?

STEP ONE: Learn From Others

Make some time now from marriage education classes or premarital counseling. Those efforts go even further when you supplement them by spending time with an older married couple whose relationship you admire.

STEP TWO: Plan With Patience

Couples often overlook the importance of using the wedding planning season as practical marriage preparation. You can intentionally set the tone for your marriage by the values you live out in planning your big day. The transformational process of "becoming one" can occur in everything from how you assemble your guest list to how you determine a honeymoon destination.

STEP THREE: Discover the Purpose of Marriage

A wedding is bigger than you as an individual and even bigger than you both as a couple. Ephesians 5 describes a couple laying down their lives for one another and becoming one as an icon of God's sacrificial love for His church. That's the counter-cultural call of Christian marriage.

God uses the marriage relationship to teach us valuable lessons about ourselves, often through challenges with our spouse. The goal of Christian marriage isn't "happily ever after", but about two people becoming more mature in Christ through their marriage. It has been said that our spouse is no here to make us happy but to make us holy.

STEP FOUR: Create a Meaningful Event

Weddings are often among the most costly and complicated events to plan. But years from now, you are more likely to remember the simple, sentimental moments from your wedding rather than the more extravagant details. That's not to say big celebrations are out of order, but many risk making them so complex that they fail to honor God or the community they are uniting – both of which are the basis for a strong Christian marriage.

PEARLS OF WISDOM:

Proverbs 16:9 – “The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps.”

Take time to establish new routines during this new season in life. Want to work out? Plan a time and do it. Want to start a devotional? Set aside time and do it. Want to get a puppy? Don't. It's like having a child immediately upon marriage and you're not married yet. However, if a puppy is already a part of one spouses' life, then you already know what you signed up for.

GOING FURTHER – Resources

Recommended Books:

Some books are available for checkout at the Faith@Home Center or for purchase online.

The Marriage Masterpiece (by Al Janssen) The Bible opens and closes with a wedding and in between God uses the metaphor of marriage more than any other to describe His relationship with His people. So what does that mean for your pending marriage? Al Janssen tells the bigger story of marriage as God created it and as couples can experience it.

Before You Say “I Do” (by H. Norman Wright and Wes Roberts) explores how to clarify role expectations, establish a healthy sexual relationship, handle finances, and acquire a solid understanding of how to develop a biblical relationship.

Sheet Music (by Dr. Kevin Leman) provides a practical conversation to the topic of sex and marriage. It has the couple discuss what each other's expectations are and how to deal with the seasons of marriage.

Recommended Website:

Prepare-Enrich.com features tools for couples that want to establish strong foundation for marriage