

Going Further

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- **Sacred Marriage**—Thomas—What if God's primary intent for your marriage isn't to make you happy. . . but holy?
- **Love and Respect**—Eggerichs—Cracking the communication code between husband and wife involves understanding one thing: that unconditional respect is as powerful for him as unconditional love is for her. It's the secret to marriage that every couple seeks, and yet few couples ever find.
- **His Needs – Her Needs**—Harley, Jr. describes the ten most important needs of men and woman and teaches you how to “affair-proof” your marriage, sustain romance, increase intimacy, and deepen your awareness year after year.
- **Before You Say “I Do”**—Wright & Roberts explore how to clarify role expectations, establish a healthy sexual relationship, handle finances, and acquire a solid understanding of how to develop a biblical relationship.
- www.fullmarriageexperience.com

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- **Life Group**—*Marriage 101*—a pre-marital counseling course—meets every Sunday at 9:20 a.m. in room E332. Attending just four classes qualifies couples for a discount on their marriage license. *The Nearlywed/Newlywed Class* is also offered at 9:20 in room E330 and allows you to connect with other couples in a similar life stage and hear biblical teaching to strengthen your marriage and your relationship with the Lord.
- **Engaged Couples Conference**—Hear from couples as they share valuable insight to help you get a great start on your marriage. Contact 347-5740 for info on the next event.
- **Soul Mate Live**—A free, high energy event consisting of a live band, free coffee and desserts, creative skits and videos, and a practical message for a healthy marriage. This “date night with a purpose” takes place quarterly. Visit soulmatelive.com for details on the next event.
- **Home Point Resource Center**—Pick up *Pointers*, *Faith Talks*, and CDs that will encourage and equip you for your upcoming marriage relationship. All resources are FREE.

bellevue.org/homepoint

Engaged Getting Ready for Marriage



HomePoint

Pointers

Getting Ready for Marriage

By Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families

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 heard it said:

As you plan your wedding, don't forget to plan your marriage.

What does it mean 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

Research demonstrates the long-term value of making time now for 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. This is a great time to practice decision-making.

Sometimes, the smaller decisions, picking a paint color for example, can cause more discussion than the larger decisions.

Step three: Discover the purpose of marriage

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

Step four: Create a meaningful event

To focus on the sacred nature of marriage in the early church, couples often stood during the course of a weekly church service to exchange their vows. Those weddings were a part of the community of faith's worship routine. They did not have the grand ceremonies typical of modern wedding, but their simple public vow accurately reflected the purpose of marriage.

Be careful that you don't allow the complexity of your celebration to overshadow the deeper purpose of a strong Christian marriage—to honor God and to celebrate the sacred union of marriage.