

Preparing The Bride

When a woman is planning to be married, she generally spends months preparing for the wedding ceremony. She shops for a wedding dress, chooses outfits for her attendants, orders flowers, addresses and mails out invitations, secures a location for the reception, engages a photographer and musicians, schedules a church and a clergyman, and does scores of other related, time-consuming tasks, all to ensure that the service itself will be a memorable occasion and a fit beginning for her new life—a life she has yearned for and dreamed about for a long time.

What some of us don't realize is that whether we have ever planned, or will ever plan, a wedding in the natural, we are preparing for a marriage in eternity with the Lamb of God.

God's plan for us is that we become the bride of Christ. According to Anna Rountree, author of *The Heavens Opened* (Creation House), this plan is much like an arranged marriage. At the point of our new birth, our future spiritual marriage is set up in heaven somewhat as arranged marriages are here on Earth. It is essential that we keep this vision before us throughout our lives so that every decision we make will serve the end of preparing us for our destined role.

Just imagine how a child would be reared if from the moment of her birth it was known that she would marry a king. All her training would be designed to prepare her for this auspicious future so that when the time came for her to become queen, she would be ready. In the same way, our focus should be on the eventual reality of our marriage to Christ.

The most important aspect of preparing for this role is getting to know your Bridegroom. You must become familiar with every facet of His nature and learn what pleases Him. To do this, you must make spending time with Him a priority.

Set aside quiet periods for prayer. Learn to practice the presence of God with continual fellowship through the Holy Spirit. And make an effort to read and study the Bible on a regular basis.

The Bible is a transcription of Jesus, whom John describes as “the Word” (John 1:1, NKJV). As you study it, the Holy Spirit will reveal Jesus to you.

There are many ways to pursue studying the Bible. To encourage you, we are offering an online Bible study through our Web site, . For more information, see Cyber Scene.

Why not take advantage of this opportunity to prepare for the wedding of the Lamb? Be like the five virgins in the parable who kept their lamps filled with oil and who were ready when the bridegroom arrived (see Matt. 25:1-13). With even greater care than that with which you would plan your own earthly wedding, plan for a greater spiritual event—becoming the bride of Christ.