

Bride-To-Be

A young couple got engaged.

When the wife-to-be announced the exciting news to work colleagues who were also shortly to be married, she was met with shrieks of joy, which quickly turned into words of advice:

Make sure you start looking at reception venues at least 12 months in advance.

Many dressmakers require 12 months notice, so start looking for your dress now!

You should book your photographer as soon as you set a date.

Make sure you don't forget to book your hair and beauty treatment at least six months in advance.

Don't forget to book nails and massages for the entire bridal party at least three months in advance.

Your invitations should go out eight weeks prior to the date, so start looking at ideas now!

She hadn't realised there were so many rules in planning a wedding!

The following day, she arrived at work to find what seemed like hundreds of kilos of bridal magazines waiting for her.

Her well-meaning colleagues had collected all of their wedding magazines and brought them in for her to do "some light reading".

She was overwhelmed, to say the least.

That night, she started flipping through some of the magazines, even though they hadn't even set a wedding date yet.

She was shocked and amazed to see how lucrative the bridal industry was.

Advice and advertising on everything from bouquets and bonbonniere, to cars and cake, to dresses and diamonds, to stationery and shoes, to celebrants and ceremonies, was contained in those magazines.

They boasted that no matter what your budget and taste, there was something available for you somewhere.

It was, after all, the most important day of a woman's life.

That's when she began to wonder.

Women especially, put so much work, time and money into planning the big day... but how much time and effort would the average woman put into planning what happens after the big day?

One book says that the average woman spends 300 – 500 hours during the engagement planning her wedding.

The same book says that, sadly, the same woman would only spend between 10 and 15 hours planning for life after the wedding.

Now, gentlemen, before you get all self-righteous, the same book says that about the same amount of time that a woman spends planning her wedding, the average man spends avoiding the planning.

And he spends even less time planning for the couple's married life together.

And as she pondered these thoughts, the bride-to-be began to see a parallel between planning a wedding and our lives as Christians.

So often, we invest all our time into things such as going to church, going to home group, going to church outings and generally being a happy church family.

While these things are important they shouldn't take up ALL our time.

We need to save some time for the most important thing and the reason that we are here on earth.

Luke 5 tells the story of Jesus getting into Simon's boat.

Jesus tells Simon to put the net out to catch fish.

Simon answers and says, "We've been fishing all night but we haven't caught anything."

Nevertheless he casts his net out and, lo and behold, they catch a whole heap of fish.

When the other fishermen see this they are amazed, and Simon Peter falls down at Jesus' feet and says, "Depart from me. I am a sinner."

At this point, Jesus could have said, "Yes, you are a sinner and you are unworthy of My presence."

But Jesus chose to keep in mind the thing that God had sent Him to earth to be – the Saviour of men.

So instead, Jesus answered and said, "From now on you will be fishers of men."

And the Bible says that the four fishermen left all and followed Him.

Our purpose on earth is to unashamedly share the gospel.

Like Jesus, we have to choose not to see the distractions around us.

We must choose to lay hold of the challenge that God set before us which is to be fishers of men.

We serve an amazing God; One who sent His only Son to die for our sins and give us eternal life.

It is our job to share that good news with others who may not have heard what Jesus has done for them.

And in doing so, we need to let go of the distractions of this world, and focus on storing up riches for ourselves in the life after this one, which is where life really begins.