

Kids Korner

Hey Kids, This month we are talking about weddings. Color in the picture of the bride and groom and then look up the following texts about weddings in the New Testament: Matthew 22:3-12; Matthew 25:1-10; Revelation 21:2-9.



References:

1. Swenson, Richard A. MD, (2010). NAVPress, *In Search of Balance*, p 110.
2. Hunt, Mary (2010) DPL Press, "10 easy ways to cut the cost of a wedding," *Debt-Proof Living Magazine*, May 2009, p 1.

"Marrying for love may be a bit risky, but it is so honest that God can't help but smile on it." — Josh Billings

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The Stewpot

A potpourri of practical ideas to help you become a better steward

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A Fairy Tale Wedding on a Pauper's Budget

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Everyone loves a wedding . . . almost everyone! If the truth be told, there's a little bit of romance in each of us, evidenced by the fact that millions of Americans were willing to get up in the wee hours of the morning to watch the wedding ceremony of the century; the exchange of vows by Kate and William.

However, fairy tale weddings can be short changed by the cost of a wedding. The most expensive wedding dress in the world is a Beverly Hills creation entitled the *Diamond Wedding Gown*, worth \$12 million. Beverly Hills also boasts the most costly wedding cask valued at \$20 million, which has never been tasted or touched as it is sealed off by armed guards. With a train of 1.2 miles, the longest wedding dress is from China. Interestingly, the groom's mother promptly called the dress "a waste of money in my opinion." (Perhaps she should have kept her comments to herself since the bride's parents paid for it.) And the highest priced wedding belongs to London-based Indian-born steel tycoon Lakshmi Mittal, who lavished \$60 million on his daughter Vanisha in Paris.¹

Fifty to one hundred years ago, the average wedding was performed in the bride's home church, where the groom wore his first and possibly only suit and the bride wore a modest dress made by a family member or friend. The reception was usually cake, punch, an assortment of nuts and snacks or hors d'oeuvres. The gifts were practical, such as bedroom linen, bathroom towels, and cooking pots. In contrast, the weddings of today are more likely to be performed in a garden setting, on a beach at sunset or in a Las Vegas chapel, with the couple's gifts displayed on a boutique or upscale retailers website, and a catered reception in a hotel ballroom. However, a couple can still be married

Stewardship is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality and finances.

for \$500 in their parent’s backyard with the reception provisions provided by the guests.

How to stretch your wedding budget?

1. **Bridal gown.** Borrow or rent the wedding dress. Remember, it is only worn for a few hours. If it’s going to be a keepsake, then find an inexpensive seamstress (maybe a relative or friend who would love to donate their time and talent as a gift.) Or look in a second-hand bridal shop for a reasonable deal.
2. **Flowers.** Purchase the flowers from a discount warehouse such as BJ’s, Sam’s Club, Costco or a flower market/nursery.
3. **Music.** Choose from musically talented friends or acquaintances, who would be glad to perform as their gift to the bride and groom. If you prefer a professional, contact your local community college for a senior music major who would be willing to play or sing for a nominal fee. One couple I know invited their church choir to be the special music for the wedding service.
4. **Photography.** Plan to have the professional portraits taken at a beautiful location or in the photographer’s studio a few days before of the wedding. If one or both of the bridal party’s family are unable to attend, ask

your crazy photographic friends to take lots and lots of snapshots.² In this current age with so many great digital cameras, your friends can give you a great record of your wedding. Or look for a professional video photographer for the wedding.



5. **Reception.** Often the time of your reception will determine the type and cost of a meal. Three o’clock in the afternoon may call for just a cake, snacks and punch. If you choose a sit down meal, why not do what one church family has done for years? The ladies of the church chose to volunteer their time for each of their daughter’s receptions.

Why a Stewpot about weddings?

Many of the same principles that would apply to that special wedding day, a wise steward would apply to all aspects of life. The average couple will spend approximately 250 hours in preparation for their big day, yet many of us barely spend two hours a month planning, budgeting and implementing household money management.

1. Simplistic

Scale back on a variety of items in your wedding planning like fewer attendants or fewer guests. Make it a family reunion in Hawaii. There is something inherently elegant in simplicity. This principle applies to everyday purchases. Many appliances and other purchases are overly-complicated. Nearly 50% of all Christmas gifts given to seniors are returned. Not because they do not appreciate or need them, but because they were too difficult to understand and operate. Next time you purchase an appliance for your home, remember simplicity goes a long way if you expect your spouse and children to assist you in household chores. Washing clothes in a washing machine that has six complicated dials may prove to be intimidating.

2. Practical

Practicality should be the essence of your special day. Resist what others plan. You don’t have to have a superior wedding. Talk with your immediate families about what’s important to you on this memorable day. In the same way apply practicality to all financial decisions. When purchasing a vehicle, ask yourself *why am I purchasing this vehicle* rather than *do I like its aesthetics*. An example would be having a factory GPS which would cost hundreds of dollars more than a simple device which you can pull out of the glove box when needed.

3. Financial

Wedding planners suggest making a list of everything you would like for your special day. Then reassess the list by together deciding what items are essential, which items you can cut corners on, and which you can do without. As a steward we are encouraged to follow the identical concept for every major item we buy, a vacuum cleaner or a new automobile.

4. Relational

There is an often quoted saying, “After the wedding comes the marriage.” For all the wedding wishes of your friends and relatives the two of you will continue to grow your relationship for the rest of your lives, through good times and not so good times. Part of good stewardship is nourishing and nurturing your relationship between you and God, family, friends and fellow members.

5. Spiritual

Marriage is one of the most spiritual events of life. It was blessed by the Creator in the Garden of Eden, acknowledged by Jesus as significant when he performed His first miracle at the wedding in Canaan, and finally, John, the Revelator describes the church as a bride adorned for her husband at the Second Coming of our Lord.

Statements:

“A \$28,000 wedding does not get you any more married than a \$800 wedding—it just raises your debt level.”¹

“The average wedding in the United States hit it’s all-time high of \$28,000 just before the Great Recession.”¹