

Modern Wedding Ceremony

Shall we begin with a prayer.

Our God and Father,

Hallowed be your name.

We come before You now thankful for Your blessings and the wonderful occasion that has brought us together.

We pray that You will bless us this day as we have gathered to unite _____ and _____ as husband and wife.

We are thankful that so many of their family and friends are able to be here to witness this ceremony and to share in their joy.

We pray that these proceedings will have Your blessing and that all we do this day, and every day, will bring You honor and glory.

In the name of Jesus we pray.

Amen

Out of affection for _____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride), we are gathered here in the presence of God and this company to witness and bless the exchanging of vows that will bind them together in the holy relationship of marriage. When this ceremony has ended, they will leave as husband and wife having been joined together by the God of heaven.

To this moment _____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride) bring the fullness of their hearts as a treasure to share with one another. They bring the dreams that will bind them together. They bring that personality and spirit which is uniquely their own, out of which will grow the reality of their life together.

More importantly, _____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride) have come here today out of respect for God and in obedience to His command that has been from the beginning. For of the three institutions ordained of God, the home is the oldest. Since its origin is of God, it is honorable and is to be held in the highest esteem by all mankind.

So while this ceremony is the legal blending of hearts that have already been beating in unison, at the same time, a home is being formed and a relationship established that is not only approved by the state but one that was ordained by God in the early morning of time, blessed by Jesus while He was upon the earth, and declared by the apostle Paul to be that which is to be honored by all.

“Who gives this woman to be married to this man?”

_____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride), there are no ties on earth sweeter than those you are about to form. There are no vows on earth more solemn than those you are about to make.

But a wedding is a happy occasion. It is flawless in its good humor and its sense of well-being. It is a wonderful expression of love.

But the days of your marriage will not always be filled with the happiness and joy of today. As you live it out, you will find your relationship has moods and seasons, low times as well as high. From time to time the delightful spirit of this day will not be with you. "For better or for worse" is a reality all marriages must face from time to time. When difficulties come, you will have to reach for something deeper in yourselves — for the love that is stronger than even that which you have this day. For while it is love that has brought you to this marriage altar, it is love in its infancy. For after you have lived together many years, walking side by side down the narrow path that leads through time — laughing together, sorrowing together, planning and dreaming together — you will know the depths of love.

I want you to remember that your relationship is a progression. There is an old Chinese proverb that says, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." For you, _____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride), your wedding today is an exquisite and beautifully choreographed first step. With it, you are passing through a portal that will lead you to many places, including ones you cannot possibly imagine. Wherever it takes you, there will be surprises — for this is a mark of a truly loving relationship.

There is great joy to be found in such a surprising journey with twists and turns, shades and possibilities, beyond your wildest imaginings. Instead of resisting changes, allow them to blossom in you so that you and your relationship will grow and mature.

Therefore, along with celebrating the joyous feelings of today, remember, especially when saying your vows, that you are promising to love for the long and ambiguous future. If you will remember this commitment you are making today, instead of bowing down or bowing out when difficulties arise, you will be able to ride out any stormy times with confidence knowing that those cloud-filled skies are but temporary and not a reflection on your relationship as a whole.

Above all, in the days and years that lie ahead, remember that love is what matters. Love will prevail.

It is the love you have for one another that will be the answer to all your difficulties. If in marrying, you have chosen well and promised wisely, love will be stronger than any conflict, bigger than any changes. It is to love — to the love you are celebrating and radiating today — that you must always return.

The apostle Paul spoke of this love and its characteristics in 1 Corinthians 13 when he said, "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in truth; bears all things, believes all things, endures all things. Love never fails."

_____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride), allow your love to grow and blossom. Allow it to cause you to draw closer to each other for your marriage should be the union of two lives into one. Let your two hearts beat as one — work together, walk together, bear each other's burdens and share each other's joys. Be friendly, loving and tender-hearted and cherish the relationship and commitment you are establishing this day.

I pray that God will look down favorably upon you and the union you are forming today. May He shower you with blessings. May your life together be long and happy.

Vows and Exchanging of Rings

The union of husband and wife in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Therefore, marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.

Into this holy union _____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride) now come to be joined. If any of you can show just cause why they may not lawfully be married, speak now or else forever hold your peace.

(To the woman)

_____ (Bride), will you have this man to be your husband; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live? If so, signify by saying, "I will."

(To the man)

_____ (Groom), will you have this woman to be your wife; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live? If so, signify by saying, "I will."

(To the man)

_____ (Groom), will you take _____'s (Bride) right hand and repeat after me.

(The man, facing the woman, takes her right hand in his and says:)

I, _____ (Groom), take you _____ (Bride), to be my wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death.

(To the woman)

_____ (Bride), will you take _____'s (Groom) right hand and repeat after me.

(They then loose their hands and the woman, still facing the man, takes his right hand in hers and says:)

I, _____ (Bride), take you _____ (Groom), to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death.

The wedding ring signifies to all the uniting of this man and woman in holy matrimony and symbolizes the never-ending nature of their love.

Are there rings to be exchanged?

(To the best man) May I have the ring please?

(To the man) _____ (Groom), place the ring on _____'s (Bride) finger and then repeat after me.

_____ (Bride), I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you.

(To the maid of honor) May I have the ring please?

(To the woman) _____ (Bride), place the ring on _____'s (Groom) finger and then repeat after me.

_____ (Groom), I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you.

Shall we again go to God in prayer.

Prayer

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,

We approach Your magnificent throne in awe of Your majesty, power and love. We recognize You as the source of all that is good in life. We thank You for giving us life and sustaining us each day with Your blessings.

We are thankful that not only have You meet our needs in the physical and spiritual realms but that You also have made provision for our happiness. We rejoice in the fact that You have given us the church to allow us to properly express our love to You and Your Son. We likewise rejoice in that You have given us the institution of marriage so that we can properly express the great love between a man and a woman.

Dear Lord we pray that You will now look down upon _____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride) and the union they are forming today. May they start this relationship with much love and may their love grow and flourish. May they realize the serious nature of their vows and that their commitment is not only to one another but to You and Your Son.

Our Father, bless them with much happiness, strengthen them in times of adversity and keep them always in Your care.

May their love for you and for one another grow and abound.

In the name of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, we pray,

Amen.

Now that _____ (Groom) and _____ (Bride) have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, with the joining of hands and the giving and receiving of a ring in the presence of this company, by the authority of the state of _____ and that of all-mighty God, I pronounce that they are husband and wife. Those whom God has joined together, let no one put asunder.

(To the man)

You may kiss your bride.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am very happy to present Mr. and Mrs. _____ .