

Christian Ceremony 1

Introductory remarks

Question

Pastor -- Who gives _____ to be married to _____?

Bride's Father -- Her Mother and I do.

Guests seated

Challenge to Bride and Groom

_____ and _____, our God of love has established marriage as the symbol of Christ's perfect relationship to His Body, the Church. We have come to bring you as one before Him. _____ God has ordained the man as the spiritual head, as the responsible provider, and as the initiator of love in this human relationship. By His enablement, your strength must be _____'s protection, your character her boast and pride, and you must so live that she will find in you the haven for which the heart of a woman truly longs.

_____, it is God's purpose that you be a loving wife, that you respond to _____'s love in tenderness with a deep sense of understanding, through a great faith in Christ who brought you together. It is His desire that you have that inner beauty of soul that never fades; that eternal youth that is found in holding fast the things that never age.

_____ and _____, Christian marriage is not living merely for each other; it is two uniting and joining hands to serve God. Seek His kingdom first, and His righteousness, and He will add all other things to you. Do not expect perfection from each other, perfection belongs solely to God. You need not minimize each other's weaknesses, but always be swift to praise and magnify each other's points of comeliness and strength and see each other through kind and patient eyes.

God will lead you into such situations as will bless you and develop your characters as you walk together. He will give you enough tears to keep you tender, enough hurts to keep you compassionate, enough of failure to keep your hands clenched tightly in His, and enough success to make you sure you walk with Him. May you never take each other's love for granted, but always experience that wonder that exclaims "Out of all this world you have chosen me." When life is done, may you be found then as now, hand in hand, still thanking God for each other. May you ever serve Him happily, faithfully, together until you return to glory or until at last one shall lay the other into His arms. And all this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Vows

Pastor -- _____ have you in the quiet hours of your companionship considered what is your Christian duty as a husband?

Groom -- I have.

Pastor -- _____ have you in the quiet hours of your companionship considered what is your Christian duty as a wife?

Bride -- I have.

Pastor -- _____ and _____, you stand before us as the children of God, redeemed through Jesus Christ. Is it your purpose to establish a home that is truly Christ-centered, where the Word of God is read and obeyed; a home that is welded together by prayer in which the Holy Spirit is your constant guide?

Bride & Groom -- It is.

Pastor to groom -- And now, in token that your hearts are joined together in love, will you please join your right hands.

_____, this woman whom you hold by the hand is to be your wife. She has given you one of the most sacred things under heaven: a woman's life and a woman's love. You may bring her great joy or cause her deep sorrow. It is not what you bring her in a material way that will make true happiness--riches without love are nothing. The gift without the giver is bare. The practice of those virtues as husband that you have shown as her lover will keep her heart won to your heart. Do you vow here, as you have promised _____ that you will be true and loyal, patient in sickness, comforting in sorrow, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto her so long as you both shall live?

Groom -- I do.

Pastor to bride -- _____, this man whom you hold by the right hand is to be your husband. On your life, your love and devotion he will lean for strength and inspiration. He is going to look to you for encouragement, for cheerfulness and confidence. No matter what the world may say or think, people may forget him, lose confidence in him, and turn their backs upon him, but you must not. May your life and your love be the inspiration that will constantly lead him to greater dependence upon our Lord Jesus Christ. Do you vow here, as you have promised _____ that you will be loyal in adversity, ministering to him in affliction, comforting him in sorrow, and forsaking all others, keeping yourself only unto him so long as you both shall live?

Bride -- I do.

Pastor -- You may now share your vows with each other.

Prayer of dedication
Embrace
Presentation of couple
Recessional