

Christian Ceremony 8

Introductory Remarks

Dearly Beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God and in the presence of these witnesses, to join _____ and _____ in holy matrimony, which is an honorable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocence, signifying to us the mystical union which is between Christ and His Church. Which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with His presence at the first miracle which He wrought in Cana of Galilee; and is commended of the Apostle Paul to be honorable among all men, and is therefore not to be entered into lightly or inadvisably, but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God. Into which holy estate _____ and _____ come now to be joined and to unite two hearts and lives, blending all interest, sympathies, and hopes. I charge and entreat you, therefore, in entering upon and sustaining this hallowed union, to seek the favor and blessing of Him whose favor is life, whose blessing maketh rich and addeth no sorrow. Let us now seek His blessing.

Prayer

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to come by Thy grace to this marriage. Give to these who marry a due sense of the obligations they are now to assume, so that with true intent, and with utter unreserve of love, they may plight their troth, and be henceforth helps, meet for each other while they journey through life. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Giving away of Bride

Pastor -- Who is giving _____ in Holy Matrimony to _____ ?

Father of the Bride -- I do.

Pastor -- I charge you both as you stand in the presence of God, to remember that true love and loyalty alone will avail as the foundation of a happy home. If the solemn vows you are about to make be kept inviolate, and if you steadfastly endeavor to do the will of your heavenly Father, your lives will be full of joy, and the home you are about to establish will abide in peace.

No other human ties are more tender, no other vows are more sacred than those you are about to assume. You are entering into the holy estate which is the deepest mystery of experience, and which is the very sacrament of divine love.

Wedding Vows

Pastor to Groom -- _____, will you have _____ to be your wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony; will you love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

Groom -- I will.

Pastor to Bride -- _____, will you have _____ to be your wedded husband to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony; will you submit to him, serve him, love, honor, and keep him, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

Bride -- I will.

Ring Vows

Pastor to Groom -- What pledge do you give of the sincerity of your vows?

Groom -- A ring.

Pastor to Bride -- Do you accept this ring as a pledge of the sincerity of _____'s vows?

Bride -- I do.

Groom -- WITH THIS RING I THEE WED. AND WITH ALL MY WORLDLY GOODS I THEE ENDOW. IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER., AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AMEN.

And may this circlet of pure gold which has no end, be henceforth the chaste and changeless symbol of your evermore pure and changeless affection.

Pastor to Bride -- What pledge do you give of the sincerity of your vows?

Bride -- A ring.

Pastor to Groom -- _____, to you accept this ring as a pledge of the sincerity of _____'s vows?

Groom -- I do.

Bride -- THIS RING I GIVE YOU...IN TOKEN AND PLEDGE..OF MY CONSTANT FAITHFULNESS AND ABIDING LOVE.

Pastor -- And may this ring given, be the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual bond which unites your two hearts in love that has no end.

Forasmuch as _____ and _____ have consented in holy wedlock, and have thereto confirmed the same by giving and receiving each one a ring; by the authority committed unto me as a minister of the Church of Jesus Christ, I now declare you husband and wife according to the ordinance of God, and the laws of the State of _____, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

(The minister suggests that the couple shall kneel and continues)

Dearly beloved ones, this day marks a new era in your lives now united. From henceforth you travel life's pathway not alone, but together. Let love be forever enthroned in your hearts. As members of the church of Jesus Christ, we earnestly commend you to our Heavenly Father, asking Him that according to His abundant grace, He may bestow upon you both the Spirit of Grace, enabling you to establish a Christian home where the voice of prayer and praise shall be as sweet incense continually ascend unto Him who hath purchased you with His own precious blood.

May you experience as you travel down life's pathway together, be like unto the experience of the two disciples who journeyed together from Jerusalem to Emmaus, of whom we read that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. And may heaven's constant benediction crown your union with ever-increasing joy and blessedness and true affection of a happy marriage.

Prayer of Dedication

Let us all bow our hearts in prayer of dedication.

O God, our heavenly Father, Thou alone art the Source and Author of life. Thou art the Protector and Guide on life's pathway. Thou alone art the Builder and Maker of homes. Now grant, we pray Thee, the blessings of Thy promises, and the aid of Thy Holy Spirit to these dear ones, enabling them to honor Thee, and to be ever true to the pledges made to each other. May Thy grace in abundant measure be theirs, helping them to walk in Thy truth, to abide in Thy fellowship, and to live in perfect peace and love with each other until their earthly life shall end in Thy glorious presence. This we ask in the blessed name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

And now, may the Lord bless thee and keep thee. May the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, May the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. Amen.

(At this point while the couple still kneel, the soloist may sing an appropriate prayer hymn of consecration).

Introduction of new Couple

Pastor -- And now it is my happy privilege to congratulate and introduce to you Mr. & Mrs. _____

(The organist will immediately strike up the recessional with the entire wedding party marching briskly down the aisle to the rear of the church.