

Christian Ceremony w/Children

(Involving children of Bride and Groom)

Preliminaries

Bride's children come down the aisle and face rear of chapel, standing on left side.

Groom's children come down the aisle and stand on right side, facing rear of chapel.

Groom and Pastor enter, down the aisle, and stand in the center, facing the rear.

Bride enters with escort

Escort sits down after they reach the front.

Wedding party assembles, facing front.

Pastor moves up on platform.

Introductory Remarks and Welcome

Introduce Families

As we share in this wedding ceremony, it is well that we remember that in the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, He concluded, "It is not good for man to be alone." So, He created woman to share in man's life--to assist in man's striving--to satisfy man's need. He also created the woman to be loved, honored and appreciated by man.

This is marriage, and it is for the purpose of joining _____ and _____ in marriage that we have come together today. The marriage of two Christians is viewed by God as an occasion of great joy since it marks the beginning of a relationship that is second only to our personal relationship with the Lord Himself. BUT IT IS ONLY THROUGH CHRIST that marriage becomes what God intends it to be. Let us acknowledge His place in this ceremony and see His blessing on this union.

Prayer

Giving Away of Bride

Pastor -- Who presents _____ to be joined in marriage to _____ ?

Escort -- "I do."

Wedding Vows

The essence of any marriage relationship is love. Much of what we call love is really, self-centered response, which will never form an adequate foundation for marriage. Love, by its very nature, is active and giving, not self-oriented and self-serving.

Jesus Christ is the true example of love, and He has commanded us to love each other as He loves us. And how does He love us? First, He gives all for our sake, without hesitation or concern for Himself. In other words, love puts the needs of the one loved ahead of the needs and desires of the lover.

Next, from Christ's example, we see that love shares all. There are no secret compartments, no hidden rooms, no locked closets in a successful love relationship. There is only openness and, as a result, trust, when husband and wife truly love each other.

Finally, the Lord Jesus teaches us that love provides all. It provides security, it seeks to develop ability, and it shares the common purpose of obtaining what is best for the one loved. Such love is not merely impossible, it is supernatural. ONLY JESUS CHRIST can love this way, and we can only love this way if we submit to Him and depend on His Spirit to love through us.

Therefore, as marriage partners, you must continually allow Christ to exercise His Lordship in your lives because He, and His indwelling Spirit, will enable you to be a proper husband and good wife. Earlier I said that the essence of any marriage relationship is love, but when we understand what love really is, we must recognize that the essence of any marriage relationship is our spiritual relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, because with-out Him there is no real love.

The Apostle Paul gives us an additional description of love in God's Word: "This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience; it looks for a way of being constructive. It is not possessive; it is neither anxious to impress, nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance. Love has good manners, and does not pursue selfish advantage. It is not touchy. It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad with all men when truth prevails. Love knows no limit to its endurance; no end to its hope. It can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the only thing that still stands when all else has fallen." (I Corinthians 13)

Pastor to Bride -- We must also realize that marriage is designed to be a picture of Christ and His relationship with those who believe in Him. In this picture, you _____, as you give yourself in submission and dependence to _____, portray the role of the Christian who also gives himself in submission and dependence to Christ.

Pastor to Groom -- On the other hand _____, as you love and keep _____, you portray the love of the Lord Jesus as He expressed it toward the Christian. In view of this picture, there are specific instructions to both husbands and wives.

Pastor to Bride -- To the wife God says, "Wives, be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church." _____, this is the command of God in His Word and is designed to make your marriage relationship a thing of beauty and joy. So, in acceptance of this principle of God's Word, do you now commit yourself to _____, to be his wife, to join your lives together in living, permanent union as Christ is to His church?

Bride -- "I do."

Pastor to Bride -- Then repeat after me: "I commit myself to you _____, before God, to be your faithful and loving wife for all the years of our earthly life, to cherish our relationship in Christ and God's order for the family."

Pastor to Groom -- _____, the command of God to husbands is, "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave His own life for it." Loving as Christ loved is the key to the enjoyment of all that God designed marriage to be. Without His love the fullness you seek will turn into emptiness, the satisfaction into dissatisfaction. Therefore, do you willing express your desire and intent to fulfill God's command to husbands, counting on the enabling ministry of the Spirit of God, and do you now commit yourself to _____ to be her husband?

Groom -- "I do."

Pastor to Groom -- Then repeat after me: "I do commit myself to you, _____, before God, to be your faithful and loving husband for all the years of our earthly life, to seek to love you even as Christ loves the church which is His bride."

Prayer

Ring Vows

As you exchange rings let them be to each of you a constant reminder of these commitments you have made.

Pastor to Bride -- Please repeat these words after me: "I give you this ring, _____, as a symbol of my love, and with it pledge my loyalty and devotion as long as we both shall live."

Pastor to Groom -- Please repeat these words after me: "I give you this ring, _____, as a symbol of my love, and with it pledge my loyalty and devotion as long as we both shall live."

Exchange Kiss

Pronouncement

Prayer

Introduction of couple