

## The Wine Ceremony

Minister:

Welcome to the marriage of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

The poet Kahlil Gibran once wrote:

"Love one another, but not make a bond of love.  
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.  
Fill each other's cup, but drink not from one cup.  
Give one another of your bread, but not eat from the same loaf.  
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,  
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.  
For only the hand of life can contain your hearts.  
And stand together, yet not too near together,  
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,  
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow."

Minister to Groom:

\_\_\_\_\_, when you love someone, you do not love them all the time, in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. That is impossible. It is even a lie to pretend it is possible. And yet that is exactly what most of us demand. We insist on permanence, on duration, on continuity. The only continuity possible in life as in love is in growth, in fluidity, and in freedom, as dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in creating the same pattern.

Minister to Bride:

\_\_\_\_\_, the only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not even in hoping. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back nostalgically to what it was, nor forward in dread or anticipation to what it might be. It is loving in the present relationship, accepting it as it is now. Relationships must be like islands, which one must accept for what they are here and now with their limits, islands surrounded and interrupted by the sea, continually visited and abandoned by the tide. One must accept the security of the ebb and flow of intimacy.

The Bride and Groom pour each other a glass of wine.

Minister:

The years of our lives are a cup of wine poured out for us to drink. The grapes when they are pressed give forth good juices for the wine. Under the winepress of time, our lives give forth labor and honor and love. Many days you will sit at the same table and eat and drink together. Drink now and may the cup of your lives be sweet and full to running over.

The Bride and Groom touch their glasses and drink a sip of wine.

Minister:

Now, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, will you take vows here, before all of us, which symbolize the many unseated vows you have already made and will continue to make to each other throughout your

relationship.

Bride:

The words I say to you now are ones I have waited a lifetime to utter, words I say in love and in confidence. I see you as a strong, growing partner, the person with whom I wish to share my life. I offer you all the days before me, no matter what may come our way. I freely take you, \_\_\_\_\_, as my husband. Take this ring as a sign of my commitment.

Groom:

I promise to stand by you, to be there when you need me, and to share the happiness and sadness of my life with you. If the secret of life is to enjoy the passage of time, then let us share our time together from this day forward. I come to this place today as a man standing alone; I will walk from it by your side. Today, I shall carry you across the threshold and enter into a new and lasting lifetime commitment. I commit myself to you, \_\_\_\_\_, as your husband.

Minister:

When you share a joy, it is doubled, and when you share a sorrow, it is halved.

You have both pledged your love to each other before these witnesses. Therefore, by the authority granted to me, I joyfully pronounce you husband and wife.