

ALL RISE FOR THE ENTRANCE OF THE BRIDE AND INVOCATION

PASTOR:

We have come together before the face of God to join _____ and _____ in marriage.

We seek to honor the will of God for marriage, the concern of the Christian Church for its well-being, and the interest of the state in the orderly development of society.

Invocation (Pastor may add details about the environment, weather, or other requested aspects to the Invocation)

God, our Father,

As Jesus said in Matthew 18:20 (NLT), "For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." We invoke your presence and ask your blessing and protection as we join this couple in the union of marriage by your grand design. We praise you for making and redeeming us to live together in love. We thank you for the love and trust which bring _____ and _____ to this their marriage day. Favor them with the honor of your presence at their wedding. Unite them by your Spirit so that together they may reflect the love of Christ for his church.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PLEASE, BE SEATED

Giving of the Bride (OPTIONAL):

PASTOR: Who presents this bride for marriage?

BRIDE-GIVER: "Her mother and I do" (or alternative)

BRIDE Moves to Groom's Side

GROOM and BRIDE-GIVER shake hands

Institution and Meaning of Marriage:

PASTOR:

In marriage, as instituted by God, a man and a woman covenant to live together in a lifelong, exclusive partnership of love and fidelity. (Genesis 2:18; Matt. 19:5-6) The Apostle Paul sees the union of husband and wife as a symbol of the union between Christ and his church (Eph. 5:31-32). If marriage is to be pleasing in the sight of God, those who enter into this covenant of life must share a common commitment to the Lord of life.

In putting His blessing on a marriage, God intended that it would provide:

- a context within which husband and wife can help and comfort each other and find companionship;
- a setting within which we may give loving and tender expression to the desires God gave us;
- a secure environment within which children may be born and taught to know and serve the Lord; and
- a structure that enriches society and contributes to its orderly function.

When these purposes are prayerfully pursued in union with Christ, the kingdom of God is advanced and the blessedness of husband and wife assured.

In Ephesians 5 the Apostle Paul admonishes all Christians to develop a mutual respect and love when he says, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." When he applies this to the marriage relationship, he instructs the wife to be subject to her husband as the church is subject to Christ, its head. He also instructs the husband to pattern his love for his wife after the example of Christ's love for his body, the church. Paul says, "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord," and "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." In marriage this requires that the husband and wife serve each other by providing the love, nurture and faith which will enrich their lives together and build a Christ-centered home.

Our sinful and selfish tendency to break down what God has built threatens marriage with tensions, agony, and even with broken bonds. People who marry in the Lord, however, may trust that he will lead them and graciously provide for their needs when they follow the biblical pattern for love. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

Declaration of Intent:

PASTOR:

Now that you have heard the will of God for marriage do you promise to abide by it? **(Response from Bride and Groom not required)**

Exchange of Vows

PASTOR:

In the presence of God and before these family and friends I now invite you to exchange your vows.

Groom/Man:

(CUSTOM VOWS)

Bride/woman:

(CUSTOM VOWS)

Rings:

PASTOR: Rings are a symbol of your covenant in Christ

Groom: I give you this ring as a symbol of our Covenant in Christ

Bride: I give you this ring as a symbol of our Covenant in Christ.

Message

_____ and _____ it has indeed been my honor to be part of this special day, and as a part of that honor I pass on to you some wisdom. A Marriage is never a 50/50 deal. Each partner needs to always be willing to give 100%. Marriage is a 100/100 deal, when one partner can only provide 75%, the other partner has to be willing to give that extra 25% or more from their 100% to cover them. You are being joined as one system, a family unit, interdependent on each other and growing together. Your union is a blessing to Christ’s Kingdom and as such it is my hope that you will be an example of love, commitment, and success to those you encounter. May God bless both of you and your family with health, happiness, and longevity.

ALL PLEASE RISE FOR THE BENEDICTION

Benediction

God of love,

You have established marriage for the welfare and happiness of mankind. This was the plan, and only with you can we work it out with joy.

Bless this husband. Bless him as a provider of nourishment and raiment, and sustain him in all the exactions and pressures of his battle for bread. May his strength be her protection, his character be her boast and her pride, and may he so live that she will find in him the haven for which the heart of a woman truly longs.

Bless this loving wife. Give her tenderness that will make her great, a deep sense of understanding, and great faith in you. Give her that inner beauty of the soul that never fades, that eternal youth that is found in holding fast the things that never age.

Teach them that marriage is not living merely for each other; it is two uniting and joining hands to serve you. Give them great spiritual purpose in life. May they seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and the other things shall be added unto them.

May they never take each other's love for granted, but always experience that breathless wonder that exclaims, "Out of all this world, you have chosen me."

When life is done and the sun is setting, may they be found then as now, hand in hand, still thanking God for each other. May they serve you happily, faithfully, together, until at last one shall lay the other into the arms of God.

This we ask through Jesus Christ, great Lover of our souls.

Declaration of Marriage

PASTOR:

As a minister of Christ's church and by the authority which the state has vested in me, I now pronounce you, husband and wife, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” (Matt. 19:6) you may kiss your bride.