

## MARRIAGE CEREMONY

-----/-----, you are entering into that holy estate which is the deepest mystery of experience and the very sacrament of divine love.

It is a very special moment in life when two people who were strangers to each other are drawn together by an irresistible attraction; when a man sees in a woman that dream which has haunted his soul; when in a man the woman finds the rest and satisfaction her heart has been seeking. It is a revelation from above and makes all things new. It is the hand of Providence and annuls every argument of worldly prudence.

You are performing an act of total faith, believing in each other to the utmost. If you wish your new life together to be touched with lasting beauty, cherish those memories which have made spring within your hearts during the days when you were getting to know each other.

You must never forget or deny the vision you once saw. You must resolve that it be not blotted out or blurred by the commonplace experiences of life.

Faults may appear that were once hidden in a golden mist. Excellences may seem to fade in the glare of the noonday sun. Still be unmoved in your devotions. Still remain confident and hopeful. Amid the seeming reality of present imperfection, believe in

the ideal. You saw it once. It still exists. It is the final truth.

This is the man, this is the woman you love. This is the shape of spiritual beauty that God sees and that for an hour He showed to you. This is the soul that is to be when victory over temptations, hindrances, and failures is accomplished. Hide this image in your inmost heart.

Gilbran on Marriage:

Love one another, but make not 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 eat not from the  
same loaf.  
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each  
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 cypress grow not in each other's  
shadow.

In I Corinthians 13 we are reminded: Your love should be patient, kind, never jealous or envious, never haughty or boastful, never proud, selfish, or rude.

Love does not demand its own way, it is not irritable or touchy, it does not hold grudges, and will hardly ever notice when others do wrong. It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices when truth wins out. If you love someone you will believe in them, expect the best from them, and defend them. All gifts and powers from God will come to an end, but Love goes on forever. (Source, "The Living Bible")

Let us be still in prayer!

Our Father who art in Heaven, at every turning of life's way, we would stop to seek Your guidance and blessing. We thank You for being Love and for creating us after Your image.

We thank Your planting love for woman in the heart of man, and love for man in the heart of woman. Richly bless these two lives now made one by this bond of love. May they live each for the other and both for You . May their home be Your abiding place and You their constant guest. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Do you \_\_\_\_\_ take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your lawful wedded wife/husband, to love, honor, and sustain him/her through all circumstance?

#### EXCHANGE RINGS

(Groom gives ring to Minister)

This ring by its shape is a symbol of eternity . . . without beginning or end, and is a true emblem of the undying love that shall exist between you. The

substance of which it is composed is a symbol of purity, which shall ever characterize your minds and hearts in all your relations.

(Minister returns ring to the Groom)

Will you please place the ring on the third finger of the bride's/groom's left hand and will you repeat after me

. . .

With this ring I thee wed  
And with it I bestow upon thee  
All the treasures of my mind, heart  
and hands.

Join hands please. In conformity with your mutual declarations and pledges, and by the authority vested in me, I now pronounce you husband and wife; and what God hath joined together, may it live forever..

You may kiss each other.

May I present \_\_\_\_\_