

Promises, Readings and Vows

These pages offer individual promises, readings and vows that may be incorporated into any wedding ceremony.

Five Different Wedding Promises

Below you will find vows that can be included in any ceremony. You may take out or include any new words that you choose.

Vows 1

(), I take you to be my wife/husband from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being.

Vows 2

I take you, (), to be my wife/husband, I promise before God and these witnesses to be your faithful wife/husband, to share with you in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, to forgive and strengthen you and to join with you so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.

Vows 3

I take you, (), to be my wife/husband and these things I promise you:
I will be faithful to you and honest with you;
I will respect, trust, help, and care for you;
I will share my life with you;
I will forgive you as we have been forgiven;
and I will try with you better to understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and worst of what is to come as long as we live.

Vows 4

I, (), take you, (), to be my wife/husband, and I promise to love and sustain you in the bonds of marriage, from this day forward, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, till death shall part us, according to God's ordinance; and to this end I give you my faith.

Vows 5

(), I offer my love
(), I offer my strength
(), I offer my support
(), I offer my loyalty
(), I offer my faith
(), I take you as my husband/wife as long as we both shall live.

I believe that we are meant to be for each other a sign of Christ's love; that we are called to bring each other to God; that we are called to love and forgive each other. Believing these things, I offer myself completely to you to be your husband/wife in marriage.

Readings

Can be read by a friend or the Judge.

An Apache Prayer

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter for the other.
Now you feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there is no more loneliness.
Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before you.
Go now to your dwelling, to enter into the days of your life together.
And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

A Reading from the 1st Corinthians, Chapter 13: 4-13

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know I part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

A Poem by Elaine Fealy

Touch each other often
 As a symbol of your love and presence.
Say "I love you" without hesitation –
 To assume the other knows is to play the part of a fool.
Be open and truthful in all your communications –
 It will enhance your trust for one another.
Be willing to forgive or ask for forgiveness
 When you feel hurt or have been hurtful.
Remember that only those who respect others
 Will be given respect in return.
Love each other with the same intensity
 That you would like to be loved yourself.
Hold each other often during seasons of joy
 And the strength will be there during seasons of sorrow.

Enjoy and value similar pleasures together
But allow for individual differences apart from each other.
Be creative in the ways you show that you care
Lest boredom creep into your relationship.
Nurture your marriage as if you were stranded on a deserted island
With only each other for love, joy and sustenance.
Remember that love does not just die –
We kill it with indifference and lack of commitment.
Take the risk of sharing your vulnerabilities –
Be gentle with each other in accepting them.
Take time to exchange gifts of love
Whether it be a single rose or a listening ear.
If tragedy comes, don't close your heart to the other
For sorrow shared is sorrow diminished.
The bonds of marriage are only as strong
As your commitment to nourish and grow together in love.
Forgive all those for the injuries they cause you
And forgive yourself for not being perfect.
Remember that life is like a beautiful rose –
To enjoy the beauty you risk some thorns.
With love as the motivation for your words and deeds
You will share harmony in your relationship.
Enjoy your new life together
In peace, joy and serenity.

MARRIAGE JOINS TWO PEOPLE IN THE CIRCLE OF LOVE

Marriage is a commitment to life – to the best that two people can find and bring out in each other.

It offers opportunities for sharing and growth no other human relationship can equal, a physical and emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime.

Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships.

A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener and critic.

Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller; memories are fresher; commitment is stronger. Even anger is felt more strongly, and passes away more quickly.

Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing love through the seasons of life.

When two people pledge to love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique to themselves, which binds them closer than any spoken or written words.

Marriage is a promise, a potential, made in the hearts of two people who love, which takes a lifetime to fulfill.

Edmund O'Neill

MARRIAGE IS LIKE THE SPRING

Marriage is like the spring
It represents flowers, beauty, romance and love.
It is the time of youth and passion and strength.
It brings a new life overflowing with sweet elixirs
Of happiness.
But summer follows spring
And summer will bring new responsibilities.
Your life together will be tested by many trials.
You will not escape the summer heat of misunderstanding,
Discouragement, frustration and failure.
And you will suffer the searing heat of pain and sorrow.
But you will have greater strength to bear them all...
Because you walk together.

And then in the autumn season
When you have toiled upward together to reach at last
The summit of your life, then the strength of youth
Will begin to fail, passions will begin to cool, and
Flowers will begin to fade.
But autumn also brings contentment, peace and calm.

And finally when winter comes
Your physical strength will be gone, but the spiritual
Strength of your undying love will still remain.
Your flower will be taken away, but the seeds from that
Flower will fall into the ground and bring forth new flowers
Of rare beauty and rich fragrance.
And you will say to each other that life indeed was good...
Because you walked together.

But now, for you, it is spring!
Rejoice in the flowers; rejoice in the beauty;
Rejoice in the romance and love!

MY VOWS OF LOVE TO YOU

(The bride and groom face each other and read the following to each other.)

- GROOM:** I vow to give you the best of myself and to ask of you no more than you can give.
- BRIDE:** I vow to respect you as your own person and to realize that your interests, desires and needs are no less important than my own.
- GROOM:** I vow to share with you my time and my attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to our relationship.
- BRIDE:** I vow to keep myself open to you. To let you see through the window of my world into my innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams.

