

Secular Ceremony I

Welcome to family and friends:

We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments, to give recognition to the worth and beauty of love, and to cherish the words which shall unite _____ and _____ in marriage.

Opening:

_____ and _____, in the days ahead of you, there will be times of difficulty and conflict. When you find yourselves in these situations, I ask you to reflect on this marriage advice:

Let your love be stronger than your anger.

Learn the wisdom of compromise, for it is better to bend than to break.

Look for the best in your beloved rather than the worst.

Confide in your partner and ask for help when you need it.

Remember that true friendship is the basis for any lasting relationship.

Give your spouse the same courtesies and kindnesses you bestow on your friends.

Say "I love you" every day.

You may wish to add a reading or song here.

Vows:

_____ and _____, I remind you that marriage is a precious gift; a lifelong dedication to love and a daily challenge to love one another more fully and more freely.

With this understanding, do you _____, take _____ to be your beloved wife?

Do you promise to be a tender, faithful husband?

Do you promise to love and cherish her, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and keep yourself only unto her?

With this understanding, do you _____, take _____ to be your beloved husband?

Do you promise to be a tender, faithful wife?

Do you promise to love and cherish him, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and keep yourself only unto him?

You may wish to add a reading or song here.

Rings:

_____ and _____ have chosen rings as outward symbols of the commitment they make today.

From earliest times, the ring has been a symbol of wedded love. An unbroken and never-ending circle symbolizes a commitment to love that is also never ending.

_____, take the ring which you have selected, place it on _____'s finger, and say to her these words.

This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife from this day forward.

_____, take the ring which you have selected, place it on _____'s finger, and say to him these words.

This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife from this day forward.

Let these rings serve not as locks binding you together, but as keys, unlocking the secrets of your hearts for each other to know, and thus bringing you closer together forever.

Closing:

May the sun bring you new energy by day.

May the moon softly restore you by night.

May the rain wash away your worries.

And may you live the days of your lives in peace, love, and happiness.

Pronouncement:

_____ and _____, having witnessed your vows for marriage with all who are assembled here, and by the authority vested in me, I announce with great joy that you are husband and wife.

Kiss:

You may seal your vows with a kiss.

Presentation:

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present to you, for the first time as husband and wife: _____ and _____

Secular Ceremony II

Welcome to family and friends:

We are gathered here today to take part in the most time honored celebration of the human family, uniting a man and a woman in marriage. _____ and _____ have come to witness before us, telling of their love for each other. We remember theirs is a love whose source is the affection of those who loved them into being.

Opening:

You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way.

All those conversations were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks -- all those sentences that began with "When we're married" and continued with "I will and you will and we will" -- those late night talks that included "someday" and "somehow" and "maybe" -- and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart.

All those common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, "you know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed -- well, I meant it all, every word."

Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another -- acquaintance, friend, companion, and even teacher. Now you shall say a few words that take you across the threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this is my husband, this is my wife.

Vows:

We remind _____ and _____ that they are performing an act of complete faith, each in the other; that the heart of their marriage will be the relationship they create. In a world where faith often falls short of expectation, it is a tribute to these two who now join hands and hearts in perfect faith.

_____, will you receive _____ as your wife? Will you pledge to her your love, faith and tenderness, cherishing her with a husband's loyalty and devotion?

Groom: "I will."

_____, will you receive _____ as your husband? Will you pledge to him your love, faith and tenderness, cherishing him with a wife's loyalty and devotion?

Bride: "I will."

Rings:

_____ and _____, receive each other from your fathers and mothers, who give you into each other's keeping, by saying now, each to the other, words which will tell of your love.

The wedding ring is a symbol of unity, a circle unbroken, without beginning or end. And today _____ and _____ give and receive these rings as demonstrations of their vows to make their lives one, to work at all times to create a life that is whole and unbroken, and to love each other without end.

_____, take the ring which you have selected, place it on _____'s finger, and say to her these words. This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife from this day forward.

_____, take the ring and as you place it on _____'s finger, please state your pledge to her repeating these words:

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"I begin my life with you today knowing that we have developed a trust and commitment that is strong enough to last through good times and bad. With this ring, I offer you my hand, my heart, and my soul as I know they will be safe with you."

_____, take the ring and as you place it on _____'s finger, please state your pledge to him repeating these words:

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"I begin my life with you today knowing that we have developed a trust and commitment that is strong enough to last through good times and bad. With this ring, I offer you my hand, my heart, and my soul as I know they will be safe with you."

Prayer for the Bride and Groom (Optional):

Eternal God, without your grace no promise is sure. Strengthen _____ and _____ with patience, kindness, gentleness, and all the other gifts you so abundantly impart, that they may fulfill the vows they have made this day. Keep them faithful to each other and to you. Fill them by your word and serve you all of their days. Amen.

Pronouncement:

_____ and _____, as a collection of words, this ceremony would count for little, were it not for the love and commitment you have pledged to one another. Your vows may have been spoken in minutes, but your promises to

each other will last a lifetime. Having witnessed your vows for marriage with all who are assembled here, and by the authority vested in me, I announce with great joy that you are husband and wife.

Kiss:

You may kiss your bride.

Presentation:

It gives me great pleasure to present to you, for the first time as husband and wife, Mr. and Mrs. _____ .