

# Planning your wedding ceremony

## *A Framework for Your Wedding Decisions*

**Please take some time together to discuss the following issues and come to a consensus.**

1. Whom do you consider the wedding to be for?

the bride	the groom
the bride & groom together	your parents
your friends	the church
the state	other
  
  2. Who will be the final authority in the decisions for your wedding?

the bride	the groom
the bride & groom together	the bride's mother
the minister	the florist
the wedding coordinator	the bride's father
the groom's parents	other
  
  3. Who will be paying for the wedding?
  
  4. On a separate sheet, list all of the expenses for your wedding. Be sure to include the reception, facility or church rental, decorations, bride's dress, honeymoon, invitations, postage, photos, gratuities for organist, soloist, etc. Mark those expenses that are essential, and those you might want to do without if necessary. Go over your list with whomever will be paying the bills.
  
  5. What atmosphere do you want to create for your wedding? Do you want it to be quiet, intimate, joyous, worshipful, festive? What elements can you include in the ceremony that will help create this atmosphere?
  
  6. What part will music have in your wedding? What song[s] will be sung?
  
  7. What part will clothes, flowers, candles and decorations have in your wedding?
  
  8. Complete your vows at least a few months prior to the wedding. You may write your own, or use or modify those on the attached pages.
  
  9. What emphasis do you want the minister to give in his remarks? Do you want him to use a more traditional message, or something more personal, directed specifically to the two of you? Contact your minister to inform him of your needs.
1. Check off each item when it is completed:

a. Parents consent	p. Plan honeymoon
b. Pastors consent	q. Confirm sound person
c. Facility date confirmed	r. Send Thank-you letters
d. Attendants chosen	
e. Pre-marital class begun	
f. Plan wedding ceremony	
g. Plan wedding reception	
h. Vows written	
i. Plan rehearsal dinner	
j. Plan rehearsal	
k. Compile guest list	
l. Send invitations	
m. Physical examinations	
n. Blood tests	
o. Apply for marriage license	

*Wedding Personnel Organizer*

**Please fill in the following details to help ensure an organized ceremony.  
Your wedding hostess and minister[s] will need a copy.**

Location & phone number where wedding will take place:

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Date & time for wedding:

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Date & time for rehearsal:

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Location & time for rehearsal dinner:

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Location and time for wedding reception:

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**Bride:**

Bride's parents & step parents

1. 3.

2. 4.

Bride's grandparents

1. 3.

2. 4.

Other relatives to be specially seated:

**Groom:**

Groom's parents, step parents

1. 3.

2. 4.

Other relatives to be specially seated:

**Bride's Attendants:**

Maid/Matron of Honor

Bridesmaids:

1. 3.

2. 4.

**Groom's Attendants:**

Best Man:

Groomsmen:

1. 3.

2. 4.

Flowergirl[s]:

Ringbearer:

Organist:

Pianist:

Other Musicians:

Vocalists:

Presiding Minister[s]:

Wedding Hostess:

## *Wedding Format*

**The following is a suggested wedding format given simply to help you organize your thoughts and give you a standard wedding format as a starting point to help you begin thinking through crafting a ceremony that authentically speaks to your life as a couple, and your unity in Christ.**

Prelude Music

Candle lighting

Seating of Grandparents

Seating of the Mothers

Entry of the Grooms Party

Processional

Music changes to The Wedding March  
Entry of the Bride

Giving of the Bride

Word of Welcome  
Opening Prayer

Scripture Reading  
Message on the Meaning of a Christian Marriage

Exchange of Vows  
Exchange of Rings

Charge to the Bride  
Charge to the Groom

Vocal or Instrumental

Communion  
Unity Candle  
Signing of Marriage License

Prayer for the New Couple

Presentation of the Couple  
Pronouncement of Marriage, Wedding Kiss

Announcement of Reception Dismissal Procedures

Postlude  
Recessional

## Sample Wedding Vows

**The following are some examples for vows, which you are welcome to use, alter, or you may write your own instead.**

\_\_\_\_\_, I vow to love you just like (Christ) Jesus loved the church. I'll give myself up for you in order to sanctify or set you apart for the abundant life that Jesus designed for you. \_\_\_\_\_, I will love you as I love my own body and I'll cherish you. I'll nourish you, protect you and provide for you. \_\_\_\_\_, I realize my leadership responsibilities, and with God's leadership and help I will honor you, treat you as precious and minister to you, being sensitive to your special feminine needs. I will take initiative to insure the sun never goes down on any anger between us. I commit myself to you in the Lord and divorce is not even an option. I will consider this union as permanent, from this day forward.

\_\_\_\_\_, created by God as your glory, equal helper and complimenter, I vow out of love and fear of Christ, to be loyal and submissive to you. I will never forsake you for as long as we both live. The Bible tells me that a good wife is quiet and gentle in spirit, reverent in behavior, sensible, pure, kind and a worker at home. \_\_\_\_\_, I vow to allow God's grace to help me become all these things for you. And, \_\_\_\_\_, the Bible also says that , as your wife, I am to love you. I love you \_\_\_\_\_, and I promise today to always love you through all trials, tribulations and joys.

I \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_ to be my wife  
I will honor you above every other family relationship  
I commit myself to you as to no other  
To love you as Christ loves the Church,  
To provide for you, to care for you, as best I can,  
Whether times are easy, or whether they are difficult.  
I will live with you graciously as my co-heir in Jesus Christ  
Until Jesus comes, or until God by death, shall separate us.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my husband.  
I will honor you above every other family relationship.  
I commit myself to you as to no other  
To submit to you out of my reverence for Christ,  
To help you, to care for you,  
Whether times are easy, or whether they are difficult.  
I will live with you graciously as my co-heir in Jesus Christ  
Until Jesus comes, or until God by death, shall separate us.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_ to be my lawful wedded \_\_\_\_\_ [husband or wife] to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part.

\_\_\_\_\_, I commit myself to you, I will love and honor you. I will submit to you as Christ would have me - as the church is to submit to Him. I will walk alongside of you, encourage you, support you and pray for you. I am thankful for our friendship and for the love God has blessed us with. I am looking forward to spending my life with you through both good times and bad. I promise to stand beside you. I pledge my faithfulness and my life to you. I love you.

I \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_, my sister, my friend, my love, to be my wedded wife and to love and cherish you with all I have and all of whom I am. I will forsake all others to be one with you, to share life's challenges, sorrows and joys and grow with you in the grace of our God. I give my life to you, to serve you and to serve our God with you. I will love you as Christ loves the church. I choose to be your husband until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, or until God, by death shall separate us - and so, I give you my pledge. I love.

I \_\_\_\_\_, take your, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wedded husband. I choose you to be second only to the Lord in my heart and life: submitting to you as unto Him. I give you all of who I am, who I have been and who I will be, to be one with you, to love, comfort, honor and obey you...to serve and to serve with you. I choose to be your wife, forsaking all others until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, or until God, by death shall separate us. And so, I give you my pledge. Where you go I will go - where you stay I will stay - your people will be my people and your God, my God. I love you.

\_\_\_\_\_, I love you and commit myself to you. God has created me to love you, and with His help I will love you with patience, sensitivity, and understanding. I will serve, support, and trust in you, during good times and bad, helping you to become a woman who is sanctified and whole in the ways of the Lord.

\_\_\_\_\_, you are the greatest blessing that God has ever given me. I believe that it is His perfect will, He has brought us together in order to complete each other. \_\_\_\_\_ I love you and need you, and before God and all these people here I pledge myself to you. I promise to love you in an understanding way, as Christ loves the church. \_\_\_\_\_ I truly commit myself to care for, to protect, to honor and to love you no matter what the circumstances might be.

\_\_\_\_\_, know in your heart and in your mind, that apart from my own relationship with the Lord, I will cherish nothing more than I do you. All that I have and that I am I give it all to you.

\_\_\_\_\_, I commit myself to you, as to no other. I will love and honor you, and submit to you as Christ would have me, as the church is submissive to Him. I thank Him for your love and friendship. I promise to encourage you, to work alongside of you, and to help you in every way I can; when life is easy and when it is hard. By God's grace, I will be faithful to you.

\_\_\_\_\_, I give you all that I am and have. I promise to love you with all my being; to honor, respect, and cherish you above all others; submitting to your leadership. I will comfort you and care for you, endeavoring always to encourage and uplift you. I rejoice in this commitment as we seek to attain the stature and fullness of Christ, serving Him together.

\_\_\_\_\_, I commit myself to you, to be your husband, to serve you, to protect you and give my love to you as to no other. I accept the responsibility given to me to love you as Christ loves the church with the humility and strength He supplies. I will love you when times are good and when times are difficult. I promise to seek God always in our relationship so as to be the leader He wants me to be. I love you \_\_\_\_\_, and I praise our Lord for giving you to be my wife.

\_\_\_\_\_, I love you. God has created me to be a helper to you. I will be by your side as your companion, lover, and friend in all situations. I will serve you and respect you; supporting you in your efforts to grow as a husband, a professional, and as a Christian. I commit myself to you and to our life together.

\_\_\_\_\_, before God and these people here, I commit myself to you as to no other, for the rest of my life. All that I have, and all that I am, I give to you from this day on. \_\_\_\_\_, know in your heart and in your mind, that my love for you is not blown back and forth by the winds of change. I have chosen to love you unconditionally as Christ chose to love the church, this decision is based on an uncompromising commitment. I understand fully that only in this committed relationship will our love grow. God is my reason for living and by His grace we will share life's challenges, sorrows, and joys until death does separate us.

Before my God, my family and the friends that have come to share in our celebration, I \_\_\_\_\_, commit myself to you, \_\_\_\_\_, in the deepest, most intimate relationship that two people can enter into: the covenant of marriage. I have grown to love you \_\_\_\_\_, and I am excited and at the same time fulfilled, knowing that you will be my wife, and that we shall share the remainder of our lives together. For I have seen you in a capacity to give that I have rarely seen in others, an ability to give of yourself, your time, your love, while you ask so little in return. I am often taken back and humbled by your unselfishness, and I am immensely grateful to be given a woman of your character and quality as my life partner. I vow to be faithful to you, \_\_\_\_\_ not only in fidelity, but also in my responsibility to meet your needs as a provider, a spiritual leader, a lover and a friend. I realize that marriage is the most challenging of all relationships for with intimacy also comes it companion difficulty, yet, I promise one thing \_\_\_\_\_ I will work at our relationship, I will not give up because genuine love never quits halfway and I love you.

\_\_\_\_\_, beside sending His Son to die for my sins, you are the greatest blessing that God has ever given to me. He knows our strengths and weaknesses much better than we do, and I firmly believe that He has brought us together to make each other more complete. I love you and need you, and before geode and all these people I pledge myself to you. I commit myself to care for, protect, and honor you no matter what, until God separates us by death, or until His second coming. I will love you as Christ loves the church, in an unconditional and selfish way. \_\_\_\_\_, my dearest friend and my partner, besides my relationship with God, I will treasure nothing more than you.

\_\_\_\_\_, I thank God that you are one of "these things" Jesus referred to when He said "seek ye first". You're a precious gift from the Father, and I'm very grateful for your love and friendship. I will always strive to take care of His gift to me by loving you will all my being and respecting you as God has commanded me. My best friend, I want to encourage your heart and uplift your spirit as we share our life together. I promise to follow your leadership as well as support all you do and choose for the two of us, knowing that you desire, consider and value my views. I'm overjoyed that with God's help, our marriage will be a clear representation of the relationship between God and His people. All that I am and all that I have I give to you, until God separates us by death or until we are gathered at His second coming.

***Using the following, the bride & groom say the same vows with no changes.***

\_\_\_\_\_, I do take you to be my true and lawful wife. And God helping me, I will love you, I will cherish you, I will honor you, and I will protect you from all others...in sickness and in health, in poverty or riches, for better or for worse. I will cleave only to you until God by death shall separate us.

## **RINGS**

I \_\_\_\_\_, give this ring to you \_\_\_\_\_ as an outward symbol of my commitment to you. It means I am yours and yours alone. I want all to know that before God and these people, I gave myself to you.