

Marriage Works

Sample Vows for Wedding Ceremonies

(Use them as printed or select parts from one or more for your own wedding)

Example 1

-Groom-

I(full name)..... , because I realise God has drawn us together, and because I make a commitment to love you, do today ask you , to become my wife.

Before God, and in the presence of these people, I promise to be a faithful husband, to honour and surround you with my love, and to provide for you and protect you in our lives together, whatever may come our way.

I will love you as Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for her, until the Lord returns or we are parted by death.

-Bride -

I(full name)..... , because I know that God has called us to become one, and because I make a commitment to love you, will gladly become your wife.

I will comfort, reverence and honour you, and recognise your leadership in our home.

I will remain faithful to you, respect you and love you, with a totally open heart until the Lord returns or we are parted by death.

-Rings-

I put this ring onto your finger, as a continual sign that we are married under the honest vows we have made today. In the name of God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Example 2

-Groom-

Today, before God, our family and friends, I give myself to you,(full name)..... and ask you to be my wife.

I promise to love, honour and respect you, to be your faithful husband and best friend, and always at your side protecting and supporting you.

Giving leadership in our home, I will listen to you, seeking and valuing your opinions, and no matter what life brings we will always be together, secure in our love for God and each other.

-Bride -

I(full name)....., because I love you and I know God has drawn us together, give myself to you and will gladly become your wife.

I promise to comfort , honour and respect you, always at your side, recognising your leadership in our home.

As your best friend I will support you and help you to keep God at the centre of our lives and no matter what life brings we will always be together.

-Rings-

I give you this ring as a symbol of my absolute love for you and as a permanent reminder of the promises we have made today before God, our family and friends.

Example 3

-Groom-

I(full name)....., give the best of myself to you and ask you to be my wife.

As your best friend I promise to love and honour you with all I have to give, in the only way I know how - completely and forever.

We will always be together, secure in our love for God and each other.

-Bride -

I(full name)....., love you and give myself to you and will gladly become your wife.

I promise to love you and as your best friend grow along with you, allowing God to guide our lives and be willing to face changes together, secure in our love for God and each other.

-Rings-

.....(full name)....., give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you and as a permanent reminder of the promises we have made today before God, our family and friends.

Example 4

(Alternative Secular Marriage)

“On behalf of(names)....., I would like to welcome you to this happy and joyous occasion as we assemble together as relatives, friends and witnesses to the joining in matrimony of(full name)..... and(full name).....

Marriage is a normal state of life, ordered that natural instincts and affections might be fulfilled and perfected. It entails the love, companionship, help and comfort, that a husband and wife should have for each other both in prosperity and adversity. I therefore have no need to remind you both of the serious nature of this occasion as you meet here for the public recognition and recording of your marriage.

If anyone knows why these two persons cannot be legally married they should say so now”.
(Slight pause).

“According to law you are both required to make a declaration and this you will make in the presence of witnesses and also of your relatives and friends who have come to join with you in this ceremony. Following the declaration you will be required to sign the marriage register.

Now let the declaration be made. To guide you I will read it out phrase by phrase and ask you to repeat it in turn after me.

We will begin with the Bridegroom”:

I call upon these persons here present - to witness that I(full name)..... - take you(full name)..... to be my lawful wedded wife (*in accordance with God's holy will*) **(this phase should only be included with the consent of the parties being married)** 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 you - as long as we both shall live - and to this end I pledge you my word.

“Now the Bride”:

I call upon these persons here present - to witness that I(full name)..... - take you(full name)..... to be my lawful wedded wife (*in accordance with God's holy will*) **(this phase should only be included with the consent of the parties being married)** 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 you - as long as we both shall live - and to this end I pledge you my word.

(To the Bridegroom):

“Will you please take the ring for the Bride and put it on the fourth finger of her left hand saying after me”:
I place this ring upon your finger - as a reminder and pledge - of our constant and abiding love.

(To the Bride):

“Will you please take the ring for the Bridegroom and put it on the fourth finger of his left hand saying after me”:
I place this ring upon your finger - as a reminder and pledge - of our constant and abiding love.

“And now by the authority given me I declare you to be lawfully married and have great pleasure in pronouncing you husband and wife”. (An opportunity is then given for the Bridegroom to kiss the Bride).

Now the parties are asked to sign the register and the marriage certificate, care being taken to make sure they sign according to the instructions.

The marriage certificate is then handed to the bride with the celebrant wishing both of them every happiness.

Example 5

(Form of Registry Marriage)

"As I will be using your full names during the ceremony let me check to make sure they are correctly stated on these records".

(to the Bridegroom) "You are: (read out full name from certificate)

(to the Bride) "You are: (read out full name from certificate)

"The law requires each of you to make two brief declarations in the presence of the
(witnesses present) or
(friends and family who have come here with you),
and this is followed by the signing of the marriage register. To guide you in the declarations I will read them out phrase by phrase, and ask you to repeat them in turn after me". (open book)

"Now beginning with the Bridegroom repeat these words please":

I solemnly declare that I do not know any legal reason to prevent this marriage between me(full name).....
and.....(full name of Bride).....

"Now the Bride":

I solemnly declare that I do not know any legal reason to prevent this marriage between me(full name).....
and.....(full name of Bridegroom).....

"Now to give effect to the second declaration which commits you to your marriage, I would ask you to take each other by the right hand. (If necessary sort their hands out physically)

"Now the Bridegroom again":

I call upon these persons here present - to witness that I(full name)..... take you(full name of Bride).....
to be my lawful wedded wife.

"And now the Bride":

I call upon these persons here present - to witness that I(full name)..... take you(full name of
Bridegroom)..... to be my lawful wedded husband.

(To the Bridegroom)

"Did you bring a ring with you?"

(NOTE: Often you will see the best man start fumbling in his pockets. If so, turn to him and ask him to put the ring on the book which you hold out flat for him. Also watch for two rings, a common practice these days. Have both rings placed on the closed book before proceeding).

(to the Bridegroom)

"Will you please take the ring for the Bride and put it on her left hand." (Allow plenty of time)

(Then to the Bride if there is a second ring)

"Now will you put the other ring on the Bridegroom's hand".

(to both)

"And now by the authority given to me as a Marriage Celebrant appointed under the law of New Zealand, I now declare you lawfully married".

(Congratulate each and shake hands - If you feel it appropriate, say to the groom "You may now kiss your Bride" but be careful as this is not always appropriate, particularly for Indians, some Polynesians, etc)

(to both)

"Now I will ask you to sign the marriage register."

Conclude by wishing them every happiness)

Example 6

(Form of Secular Marriage)

The Declaration of Purpose

(To the congregation)

"We have come together as friends or family to witness the marriage of(full name of Bridegroom)..... and(full name of Bride)....."

Having previously met and spoken with(name)..... and(name)..... I know that they appreciate that marriage must not be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly but with mutual respect, and so they have come before you, for recognition and recording of their marriage. Anyone who knows that they cannot be legally married, should say so now". (Slight pause)

(to the couple)

"The law requires that each of you must make one brief declaration in the presence of witnesses and this is followed by the signing of the marriage register.

To guide you in the declaration, I will read it out, phrase by phrase, and ask you to repeat it in turn after me.

Now shall we begin with the Bridegroom?"

I call upon these persons here present to witness that I(name)....., - take you(name)..... - to be my lawful wedded wife (*in accordance with God's holy will*) (this phase should only be included with the consent of the parties being married) to have and to hold - for better for worse - for richer for poorer - from this day forward - in sickness and in health - to love and to cherish - as long as we both shall live - and to this end I pledge you my word.

(To the Bride):

I call upon these persons here present to witness that I(name)....., - take you(name)..... - to be my lawful wedded husband (*in accordance with God's holy will*) (this phase should only be included with the consent of the parties being married) to have and to hold - for better for worse - for richer for poorer - from this day forward - in sickness and in health - to love and to cherish - as long as we both shall live - and to this end I pledge you my word.

(To the Best Man or Bridegroom)

"Did you bring the ring(s) with you?" (Place them on open book)

(To the Bridegroom):

"Will you please take the ring for the Bride and place it on the 4th finger of her left hand, repeating after me:"

I give you this ring (*in God's name*) (these words should only be included with the consent of the parties being married) as a symbol of my love and as a sign of my promise.

(Then the Bride if there is a second ring, and repeat as above)

"The wedding rings which you have both given and received, serve as a symbol of the vows you have just taken. They are outward and visible signs of the inward and invisible love which binds your hearts together. As rings are without edge or seams, and have no beginning and no end, so they symbolise the perfection of a love that will endure."

"Now by the authority vested in me as a Marriage Celebrant appointed under the law of New Zealand, I therefore pronounce you to be husband and wife."

(Shake hands) "Congratulations and every happiness to you both"

"You may kiss your Bride."

"Now I'll ask you to sign the marriage register."

All that remains is to hand the marriage certificate to the Bride.

Example 7

(Form of Christian Marriage)

The couple to be married stand together, the woman on the left hand of the man. The service may begin with a hymn. Then the minister says to the congregation:

The Declaration of Purpose

"We have come together in God's presence and as His congregation so that(name)....., and(name)....., may be joined in Christian marriage.

Marriage, like our creation as male and female, owes its existence to God, who intends that husband and wife should love each other, and be faithful to each other throughout their lives, and that children should be born and brought up surrounded by love and be given the instruction and correction which belong to a Christian upbringing.

Such marriage must not be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly, but with mutual respect, with reverence for God, and with the intention to obey His will. Then we can be assured that God will guide us and give us His joy and peace.

.....(name)..... and(name)....., seek such Christian marriage. Anyone who knows that they cannot be legally married, should say so now. (Slight pause)

(To the couple)

"Also I charge you both, remembering you are answerable to God, that if either of you know any good reason why you may not legally be married, you now declare it. (Slight pause)

The Question

(To the Bridegroom)

".....(name)....., will you take(name)..... as your wife in Christian marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and keep her, in sickness and in health, and be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?"

the Bridegroom answers:

"I will"

(To the Bride)

".....(name)....., will you take(name)..... as your husband in Christian marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and keep him, in sickness and in health, and be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?"

the Bride answers:

"I will"

Prayer for sincerity in making the Marriage Vows

"Eternal God, true and loving Father, we ask you to help(name)..... and(name)..... and as they enter their marriage. Make them as conscious of your presence as they are of ours, and give them the confidence that you will help them to be true to each other, through Jesus Christ our Lord".

Here, if desired, the Minister may introduce the Giving Away

(To the congregation):

"Who gives the bride away?" (or "Who gives this woman to be married to this man?")

to which may be the response:

"I do" or "We do"

The Vows

The man and woman turn and face each other. Then the Bridegroom with his right hand takes the Bride by her right hand and says after the Minister:

"I call upon these persons here present to witness that I(full name)..... do take you.....(name)..... to be my lawful wedded wife, in accordance with God's holy will, 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 as long as we both shall live, to this end I pledge you my word".

They then loose hands, and the Bride with her right hand takes the Bridegroom by his right hand and says after the Minister:

"I call upon these persons here present to witness that I(full name)..... do take you.....(full name)..... to be my lawful wedded husband, in accordance with God's holy will, 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 as long as we both shall live, to this end I pledge you my word".

The Giving of the Ring

The man places a ring on the 4th finger of the woman's left hand and says after the Minister:

"I give you this ring in God's name as a symbol of my love and as a sign of my promise."

If desired, the woman may then place a ring on the 4th finger of the man's left hand, and say the same words.

Bride and Bridegroom join hands - facing each other.

The Declaration of Marriage

The Minister then says:

.....(name)..... and(name)..... you have declared before God and this congregation that you will live together in Christian marriage, you have made sacred promises to each other, and you have symbolised it by joining hands and by giving then receiving a ring (or by exchanging rings).

I therefore pronounce you to be husband and wife, in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Whom God has joined together, man must not separate.

Bride and Groom kneel.

The Blessing

The Minister says:

“May the Lord bless you and protect you. May the Lord smile on you and show you His favour. May the Lord befriend you and prosper you”.

Bride and Groom rise.

The Minister says:

“.....(name)..... and(name)..... from this moment you begin your married life together.

This is your day and from here as one, you look ahead to all that the future holds.

There is no better foundation on which to build your future than God and his love. In doing that, you will be showing mutual love for each other - a love that is both physical and spiritual."

Shake hands and congratulate each. "You may now kiss your Bride".

“Now I'll ask you please to sign the marriage register”.

"Every happiness to you both"

"And now the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you both, now and forever. Amen”.