

MARRIAGE CEREMONY #2

1. Who gives this bride in marriage?

(Wait until all are seated.)

We have assembled here at this time to unite _____ and _____ in the holy bonds of wedlock. The marriage relationship is of Divine origin. It began in the mind of God, and was established according to His purpose (Gen. 2: 18 - 25). Woman is man's "help-meet" in that she is "help-suited" to man. She has power to complete his needs physically, intellectually, and socially. She answers to him in bodily form, in flesh, and in spiritual and rational nature.

Marriage, as God purposed it, and revealed in His Word, involves a mental decision, an agreement to be married.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2:24). There must be a compliance with civil law -- *"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: The powers that be are ordained of God"* (Rom. 13:1). Vows must be taken, vowing to remain together "till death do us part". These vows constitute a covenant between marriage partners, and God witnesses this covenant (Mal. 2:14). Marriage is consummated by the sexual union: *"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled"* (Heb. 13:4). God joins a husband and wife together (Matt. 19:6); He "yokes them together". They are bound together by law (Rom. 7:2) for life. So, marriage is the binding together by God of a male and female through a covenant and sexual union. This union is an exclusion of all others until death separates them.

God designed marriage with a three-fold purpose:

(1) To satisfy man's desire for companionship. God said, *"It is not good that man should be alone"* (Gen. 2:18).

(2) To perpetuate the human family. God said, *"Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth."* (Gen. 1:28).

(3) To fulfill the sexual needs of men and women. Paul said, *"To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband"* (1 Cor. 7:2).

_____ and _____, this union you are now entering is indissoluble save for the cause of unfaithfulness and death. Fornication alone gives either of you a right to put the other away for life. Light and frivolous excuses are not acceptable before Him with whom you have to do, and by whom you will be judged. I want to impress upon you that this union is not to be entered into thoughtlessly and lightly, for upon this relationship depends much of your future usefulness and happiness. You have, no doubt, reflected seriously and prayerfully upon the duties and obligations that grow out of this union.

PRAYER.

VOWS -- JOIN RIGHT HANDS.

MAN'S VOWS: _____, do you take _____, to be your lawful and wedded companion, to live together after the ordinance of God in the holy estate of matrimony; to love her as you do your own body; to nourish and cherish her, even as the Lord does the church; to protect her in health and in sickness, in adversity and in prosperity, and forsaking all others, to keep yourself to her alone until death do you part? DO YOU?

WOMAN'S VOWS: _____, do you take _____, whose right hand you now hold, to be your lawful, wedded husband; promising before God and in the presence of these witnesses, your friends, that you will be to him a faithful, loving and devoted wife; that you will honor, cherish, obey and love him; and that you will remain with him in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, and forsaking all others, you will keep yourself to him, and to him only, until death shall separate you? DO YOU?

RINGS -- MAN

_____, is there a ring? This ring, like eternity is endless. It is symbolic of love which unites two hearts so they beat as one. Take it and place it upon the finger of _____ and repeat: "With this ring I thee wed, and to thee I pledge my trust and my love until death do us part."

WOMAN

_____, is there another ring? This ring symbolizes pure and true love which has no end. So, take it and place it upon _____ finger and repeat: "This ring to thee I give, to be worn as a reminder of this solemn vow I here make at this time."

Inasmuch as you two have privately consented to give yourselves to each other, and have publically ratified the same before God and these witnesses; therefore, by the authority vested in me as a preacher of the gospel, by the state of _____, I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride.

I NOW PRESENT TO YOU: MR. AND MRS. _____.