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 **CEREMONY #1**

**Who gives this woman to be married to this man? (response)**

**Friends and family, we are gathered here in the sight of God, and in the presence of this company, to unite  and in holy matrimony. Marriage was ordained by God in the Garden of Eden and confirmed in Cana of Galilee by the presence of the Lord Himself, and is declared by the Apostle Paul to be honorable among all men. It is therefore, not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, soberly, and in the fear of God. It is fitting, therefore, that we should begin by seeking God’s blessing for this marriage service. Let’s pray…**

**Heavenly Father, we pray that you will bless and as they begin this new journey together. In all the experiences of life, may they always stay close to You and to each other as they share the joys and blessings as well as the trials and heartaches. Help them to honor and keep the promises they make here today, and remind them daily of Your great love for them so they, in turn, may reach out in love to each other. Give them such love and devotion that each may be to the other a strength in need, a comfort in sorrow, a counselor in difficulty, and a companion in joy. In the name of Christ Jesus we pray, Amen.**

**The scriptures give us a very clear description of what love is to be;**

**First Corinthians tells us that “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 fails. So faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest is love.”**

**In love, just as in life, the little things are the big things. It is never being too old to hold hands. It is remembering to say “I love you” at least once a day. It is never going to sleep angry. It is never taking one another for granted. The courtship should not end with the honeymoon, but should continue throughout the years. It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.**

 **and *,*  in presenting yourselves here today before God and these witnesses to be joined in marriage, you perform an act of faith. This faith will grow, develop and last, but only if you both decide to make it so. There is no ritual or service that can guarantee a lasting and growing love.**

**If you would have the foundation of your marriage be the devotion you have for one another, not just at this moment, but for all the days to come, then treasure the hopes and dreams that you bring here today. Establish that your love will never be blotted out by the common nor obscured by the ordinary in life. Faults will surface where you now find comfort, and admiration can be shattered by the routine of daily life. But dedication, love and joy will grow when you nourish them together. Stand fast in that hope and confidence, having faith in your shared destiny just as strongly as you have faith in yourselves and in one another today. Only with this spirit can you forge a union that will strengthen and endure all the days of your lives.**

**And now, if you have appeared for the purpose of being joined in holy matrimony, will you please signify this intention by joining hands.**

***groom to repeat after Pastor Steve by phrases:***

 **, with all my heart I take you to be my wife.**

**On this day and for the rest of my life. With the Lord’s help**

**I promise to be patient and kind with you, never jealous,**

**To have a humble heart, to honor and respect you,**

**To place your needs before my own, to be slow to anger,**

**And quick to forgive, to bear all things with you,**

**To believe in you, supporting you in all you do,**

**To hope with you, and to remain faithful, only to you forever.**

**I will make you a part of me, and in turn, become a part of you. Until death do us part.**

***bride, to repeat after pastor Steve by phrases:***

 **, with all my heart I take you to be my husband.**

**On this day and for the rest of my life, With the Lord’s help**

**I promise to be patient and kind with you, never jealous,**

**To have a humble heart, to honor and respect you,**

**To place your needs before my own, to be slow to anger,**

**And quick to forgive, to bear all things with you,**

**To believe in you, supporting you in all you do,**

**To hope with you, and to remain faithful, only to you forever.**

**I will make you a part of me, and in turn, become a part of you. Until death do us part.**

**What tokens do you present as a visual confirmation of your promise to each other? (the rings)**

**Wedding rings serve as a fitting symbol of the vows you have just spoken. They are the outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible reality---the love that joins your hearts together in God. 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.**

***Pastor Steve gives ring to groom and groom presents to bride saying:***

 **, with this ring, I pledge my love and commitment.**

**May it ever be a symbol, of the unbroken bond of our love.**

***Pastor Steve gives ring to bride, and bride presents to groom saying:***

 **, with this ring, I pledge my love and commitment.**

**May it ever be a symbol, of the unbroken bond of our love.**

**Let us pray: Father, I pray that YOU would be the bond that will hold this union together. We ask your blessings to be poured out upon and , and that they be held safely in your hands and find their peace in your presence. In Jesus name, amen.**

**Then by the authority vested in me as a representative of the state and a minister of the gospel, and because of the vows made in the presence of these witnesses, it is my joy to pronounce you husband and wife. Those whom God has joined together, let no one put asunder. You may now seal your vows with a kiss.**

**Friends, it is my pleasure to present to you MR. and MRS.**