

## **NON-DENOMINATIONAL CEREMONY #1**

**MINISTER:** Good afternoon (morning/evening)! We are gathered here today, not to witness the beginning of what will be, but rather what already is! We do not create this marriage, because we cannot. We can and do, however, celebrate with Bride and Groom

And their friends and families the wondrous and joyful occurrence that has already taken place in their lives. Marriage is a supreme sharing of experience, and an adventure in the most intimate of human relationships. It is the joyous union of two people whose companionship and mutual understanding have flowered in romance. Today Groom and Bride proclaim their love and commitment to the world, and we gather here to rejoice, with and for them, in the new life they now undertake together.

The joy we feel now is a solemn joy, because the act of marriage has many consequences, both social and personal.

Marriage requires, "love." A word we often use with vagueness and sentimentality.

We may assume that love is some rare and mystical event, when in fact it is our natural state of being.

So what do we mean by love? When we love, we see things other people do not see. We see beneath the surface, to the qualities that make our beloved one special and unique. To see with loving eyes, it to know inner beauty. And to be loved is to be seen, and known, as we are known to on other. One, who loves us, gives us a unique gift: a piece of ourselves, but a piece that only they could give us.

We, who love, can look at each other's life and say, "I touched his life," "I touched her life," just as an artist might say, "I touched this canvas."  
"Those brushstrokes in the corner of this magnificent mural, those are mine. I was a part of this life, and it is a part of me." Marriage is to belong to each other through unique directions, yet weaving one tapestry together.

The secret of love and marriage is similar to that of religion itself. It is the emergence of the larger self. It is the finding of one's life by losing it. Such is the privilege of husband and wife- to be each himself, herself and yet another; to face the world strong, with the courage of two.

To make this relationship work, therefore, takes more than love. It takes trust, to know in your hearts that you want only the best for each other.  
It takes dedication, to stay open to one another,

To stay open to one another, to learn and grow, even when it is difficult to do so. And it takes faith, to go forward together without knowing what the future holds for you both. While love is our natural state of being, these other qualities are not as easy to come by. They are not a destination, but a journey.

The true art of married life is in this an inner spiritual journey. It is a mutual enrichment, a give and take between two personalities, a mingling of two endowments, which diminishes neither,

But enhances both.

Through this cooperation, we give ourselves, our lives and love. Into the hands of the one we love. We do so trustingly and generously. And so, each of us receives a gift: the life and love of the other. We receive this gift, not only from the one we love, but also from the parents who brought us into the world, and from our friends and families as well. And so as Groom and Bride's friends and family, we are here to share with them this joy and hope, and to see them off on the path they will walk together. May it be a path of blessedness, bright with flowers of prosperity and spiritual awakening; paths of ever deepening, ever broadening love that they will travel, arm in arm, throughout eternity

## **THE COMMITMENT**

**MINISTER:** Groom and Bride this celebration is the our ward token of your sacred and inward union of hearts, which the church and temple may bless, and the state make legal, but which neither state nor church can create nor annul. It is a union created by your loving purpose and kept by our abiding will. It is in this spirit and for this purpose that you have come here to be joined together.

## **VOWS**

**MINISTER:** Groom, will you have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live, to live together in marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, and honor her, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy, so long as you both shall live?

GROOM: "I WILL"

**MINISTER:** Bride, will you have this man to be thy wedded husband, to live, to live together in marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, and honor him, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy, so long as you both shall live?

BRIDE: "I WILL"

## **CEREMONY OF THE RINGS**

**MINISTER:** Traditionally, the marking- of the passage to tile status of husband and wife is marked by the exchange of rings. These rings are a symbol of the unbroken circle of love. Love freely given has no beginning or no end, no giver, and no receiver for each is the giver, and each is the receiver. May these rings always remind you of the vows you have taken? (Each places the ring on the other's finger and repeats this simple vow):  
"With this ring, I thee wed."

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

Inasmuch as you have consented together in this ceremony to live in wedlock and have sealed your vows in the presence of this company and by the giving of these rings, it gives me great pleasure to pronounce that you are now **Husband and Wife.**

**CONGRATULATIONS, you may kiss the bride!!**

