

## Marriage

1 A HYMN *may be sung.*

2 *All sit, as the minister reads the INTRODUCTION:*

We have gathered here in the sight of God, and in the presence of this congregation to witness the joining together of *N* and *N* in marriage.

Marriage is an honourable state instituted by God in the time of man's innocence and signifies the union of Christ with his church. The Lord Jesus honoured a marriage at Cana in Galilee with his presence and there performed his first miracle. The Bible teaches that marriage is to be respected by all. It must not be entered into lightly or merely to satisfy physical desire, but with prayer, careful thought and reverence for God, duly considering the purposes for which marriage was ordained.

First, marriage was established for the mutual companionship, help, and comfort that husband and wife should provide for one another both in prosperity and adversity. Secondly, it was established in order that the natural instincts and affections, implanted by God, should be hallowed and directed aright. Thirdly, marriage was established for the procreation of children, who should be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord and to the praise of his holy name.

It is into this holy state that *N* and *N* come now to be joined. Therefore if anyone can show any good reason why they may not be lawfully joined together, let him now speak or for ever remain silent.

3 *The minister says to the couple:*

*N* and *N*, I charge you both, as you will answer before God on the day of judgment, when the secrets of all our hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you knows any reason why you may not lawfully be joined together in marriage, you must now confess it. For be assured, those who marry contrary to what God's Word allows are not joined together by God nor is their marriage lawful.

4 *The minister asks the groom:*

*N*, will you take *N* as your wife and live together as God has ordained? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

Groom      **I will.**

5 *The minister asks the bride:*

*N*, will you take *N* as your husband and live together as God has ordained? Will you love him, obey him, honour and protect him, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Bride      **I will.**

6  
Minister      Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

*The minister receives the bride's right hand from her father, or friend, and passes it to the bridegroom.*

7 *All stand to witness the marriage vows.*

8 *The bridegroom, taking the bride's right hand in his right hand, says:*

**I *N* take you *N* to be my 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 us do part,  
according to God's holy law,  
and this is my solemn vow.**

- 9 *They loose hands and the bride, taking the groom's right hand in her right hand, says:*

**I N take you N to be my husband,  
to have and to hold  
from this day forward,  
for better for worse,  
for richer for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love, cherish, and obey,  
till death us do part,  
according to God's holy law,  
and this is my solemn vow.**

- 10 *They again loose hands. A ring is placed upon a book. The minister gives it to the groom who places it on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand. Holding it he repeats the following words after the minister (if the bride gives a ring the procedure may be repeated):*

**I give you this ring  
as a sign of our marriage.  
With my body I honour you,  
all that I am I give to you,  
and all that I have I share with you:  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

- 11 *The couple kneel, and the minister prays for them:*

Eternal God, Creator and preserver of all mankind, giver of all spiritual grace, author of eternal life, send your blessing upon N and N so that, living faithfully together in love and peace, they may fulfil and keep the vow and covenant they have made, of which *these rings are* a token and pledge through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

- 12 *The minister pronounces the couple to be man and wife. Joining their right hands together he says:*

Those whom God has joined together let no-one put asunder.

*He then speaks to the people saying:*

*N* and *N* have consented together in marriage and have witnessed the same before God and this congregation. They have made their vows to one another and have declared their marriage by the giving and receiving of *rings* and by the joining of hands. I therefore pronounce that they are husband and wife together in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**13** *The minister blesses the newly married couple:*

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you and fill you with all spiritual blessing and grace that you may so live together in this life that in the world to come you may have eternal life. **Amen.**

**14** THE BIBLE READING *and* SERMON

**15** A HYMN *may be sung.*

**16** THE LORD'S PRAYER:

*either*  
 All Our Father who art in heaven,  
 hallowed be thy name,  
 thy kingdom come,  
 thy will be done,  
 on earth as it is in heaven.  
 Give us this day  
 our daily bread.  
 And forgive us our trespasses  
 as we forgive those  
 who trespass against us.  
 And lead us not into temptation  
 but deliver us from evil.  
 For thine is the kingdom,  
 the power, and the glory,  
 for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*or*  
 Our Father in heaven,  
 hallowed be your name,  
 your kingdom come,  
 your will be done,  
 on earth as it is in heaven.  
 Give us today  
 our daily bread.  
 Forgive us our sins  
 as we forgive those  
 who sin against us.  
 Lead us not into temptation  
 but deliver us from evil.  
 For yours is the kingdom,  
 the power and the glory,  
 now and for ever. **Amen.**

**17** *The minister leads the congregation in prayer using these or other PRAYERS:*

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, bless *N* and *N* by sowing the seed of eternal life in their hearts: so that whatever they learn in your holy Word they may indeed fulfil. Look on them from heaven and bless them as you blessed Abraham and Sarah of old so that, obeying your will and secure in your protection, they may remain in your love to the end of their lives through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Merciful Lord and heavenly Father, by your gracious gift mankind is increased. Give to *N* and *N* the blessing of children and grant them wisdom, grace, and health to bring their children up in faith and goodness to your praise and glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, you have consecrated marriage as a sign of the union between Christ and his church. In your mercy grant that *N* may love and cherish his wife *N* as Christ loves the church and that *N* may be loving and submit to her husband *N* as the church does to Christ. Grant that in their marriage they may learn more of your love and inherit your eternal kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**18** *The minister pronounces the final BLESSING.***19** *The registers are signed.*