

The elements of a wedding ceremony are somewhat universal although they may be embellished and their chronology be modified from ceremony to ceremony. Here are some of the major elements:

- 1) *The Greeting*
- 2) *The Declaration of Intentions (Wedding Vows)*
- 3) *The Exchange of Rings*
- 4) *Blessings and Readings*
- 5) *The Pronouncement*

Greeting

On behalf on the (Bride) and (Groom), I welcome you to the marriage ceremony of (Bride) and (Groom). They feel blessed and honored that you are here to witness and celebrate their love for each other.

Declaration

Officiant: _____ do you take _____ to be your lawful wife, will you love her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health and forsaking all others keep only unto her so long as you both shall live.

Response: I do.

Officiant: _____ do you take _____ to be your lawful husband, will you love him, honor and keep him in sickness and in health and forsaking all others keep only unto him so long as you both shall live.

Response: I do.

Vows (turn and face one another)

(repeated after officiant ,one line at a time)

I _____ take _____,

to be my husband,

secure in the knowledge that you will be

my constant friend,

my faithful partner in life,

and my one true love.

On this special and mystical day,

I give myself to you with

my sacred promise to stay by your side as your wife

in sickness and in health,

in joy and in sorrow, as well as

through the good times and the bad.

I promise to love you without reservation,

comfort you in times of distress,

encourage you to achieve your goals,

laugh with you and cry with you,

grow with you in mind and spirit,

always be open and honest with you,

and cherish you for as long as we both shall live.

I _____ take _____,
to be my wife,
secure in the knowledge that you will be
my constant friend,
my faithful partner in life,
and my one true love.
On this special and mystical day,
I give myself to you with
my sacred promise to stay by your side as your husband
in sickness and in health,
in joy and in sorrow, as well as
through the good times and the bad.
I promise to love you without reservation,
comfort you in times of distress,
encourage you to achieve your goals,
laugh with you and cry with you,
grow with you in mind and spirit,
always be open and honest with you,
and cherish you for as long as we both shall live.

Ring Vows

Officiant: Marriage is a state in which two people come together and create a union that is greater than the mere sum of two individuals. It is difficult to express in words the profound relationship that is love. What emblems do you have of your love and regard for one another?

[Rings are handed to officiant.]

From time immemorial, the circlet of metal has been an emblem of the sincerity and permanence of a couple's love and regard for one another and their union. As the precious metal turns again upon itself, so does a good marriage turn upon itself for its refreshment and renewal. Take these rings and exchange them in the spirit of love. (Bride) and (Groom): (this can be said together or each separately)
I give you this ring as token that I will love you, in all times, in all places, and in all ways, forever. With this ring, I thee wed. (last line optional)

Optional reading or blessing here (see below) Pronouncement

Officiant: _____ and _____, you have made special promises today to each other which have been symbolized by the taking of vows and the giving and receiving of rings. By the authority vested in me by the State of Minnesota I now pronounce you to be husband and wife. Now that the ceremony is over and the experience of living day by day is about to begin, go and meet it gladly.

Officiant:

You may kiss the (Bride)

Ladies and Gentlemen. May I introduce to you Mr and Mrs _____

Here is one reading you may wish to use.

**The Meaning of Love
(From Corinthians)**

Love is patient, love is kind.
It does not envy, it does not boast,
It is not proud.
It is not rude, it is not self-seeking,
It is not easily angered,
It keeps no record of wrongs.
Love does not delight in evil
But rejoices with the truth.
It always protects, always trusts,
Always hopes, always perseveres.

Or:

**Blessing
(from an Apache text)**

Now you will feel no rain, for each will be shelter for the other. Now you will feel no cold, for each will be warmth for the other. Now there is no more loneliness. Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before you. Go now to your dwelling place to enter the days of your life together, And may your days be good and long upon this earth