

Ceremony Passages and Readings

Art of a Good Marriage:

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 at no time taking the other for granted; the courtship should not end with the honeymoon, it should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.
It is standing together facing the world.
It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.
It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice, but in the spirit of joy.

It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.
It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo or the wife to have wings of an angel.
It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding and a sense of humor.
It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.
It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

It is finding room for the things of the spirit.
It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.
It is establishing a relationship in which the independence is equal, dependence is mutual and the obligation is reciprocal.
It is not only marrying the right partner, it is being the right partner.

1st Corinthians 13 :

"A marriage ceremony represents one of life's greatest commitments, but also is a declaration of love. I wish to read to you what Paul wrote of love in a letter to the 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. Love never fails"

A Irish Blessing:

May the road rise to meet you, May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face, The rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

May God be with you and bless you; May you see your children's children. May you be poor in misfortune, Rich in blessings, May you know nothing but happiness, From this day forward.

May the road rise to meet you, May the wind be always at your back, May the warm rays of sun fall

upon your home, And may the hand of a friend always be near.

May green be the grass you walk on, May blue be the skies above you, May pure be the joys that surround you, May true be the hearts that love you.

Eskimo Love Song:

You are my husband, you are my wife, My feet shall run because of you, My feet dance because of you, My heart shall beat because of you, My eyes see because of you, My mind thinks because of you, And I shall love, because of you.

Corinthians 13:4-8, The Bible:

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 ends.

Why Marriage? by Mari Nichols:

Because to the depths of me, I long to love one person, With all my heart, my soul, my mind, my body... Because I need a forever friend to trust with the intimacies of me, Who won't hold them against me, Who loves me when I'm unlikable, Who sees the small child in me, and Who looks for the divine potential of me...

Because I need to cuddle in the warmth of the night, With someone who thanks God for me, With someone I feel blessed to hold, Because marriage means opportunity, To grow in love in friendship... Because marriage is a discipline, To be added to a list of achievements... Because marriages do not fail, people fail, When they enter into marriage, Expecting another to make them whole...

Because, knowing this,, I promise myself to take full responsibility, For my spiritual, mental and physical wholeness, I create me, I take half of the responsibility for my marriage, Together we create our marriage... Because with this understanding, The possibilities are limitless

How do I love thee? by Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. I love thee to the depth and breadth and height, My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight, For the ends of Being an Ideal Grace. I love thee to the level of every day's, Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light. I love thee freely, as men strive for Right; I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise. I love thee with the passion put to use, In my old grief's, and with my childhood's faith. I love thee with a love I seemed to lose, With my lost saints,--I love thee with the breath, Smiles, tears, of all my life!--and, if God choose, I shall but love thee better after death.

Love's Philosophy by Percy Shelley:

The fountains mingle with the river, And the rivers with the ocean; The winds of heaven mix forever, With a sweet emotion; Nothing in the world is single; All things by a law divine In one another's being mingle.- Why not I with thine? See! the mountains kiss high heaven, And the waves clasp one another; Now sister flower would be forgiven, If it disdained its brother; And the sunlight clasps the earth, And the moonbeams kiss the sea:- What are all these kissing's worth, If thou kiss not me?

I Ching:

When two people are at one in their inmost hearts, they shatter even the strength of iron or bronze.

And when two people understand each other in their inmost hearts, their words are sweet and strong, like the fragrance of orchids.

Apache Wedding Blessing:

Now you will feel no rain, For each of you will be shelter to the other. Now you will feel no cold, For each of you will be warmth to the other. Now there is no more loneliness, For each of you will be companion to the other. Now you are two bodies, But there is one life before you. Go now to your dwelling place, To enter into the days of your togetherness. And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

The Native American Tradition:

Now you have lit a fire and that fire should not go out. The two of you now have a fire that represents love, understanding and a philosophy of life. It will give you heat, food, warmth and happiness. The new fire represents a new beginning - a new life and a new family. The fire should keep burning; you should stay together. You have lit the fire for life, until old age separates you.

'Words of Power'; Voices from Indian America

The Hebrew Scriptures:

You have captured my heart, my own, my bride, you have captured my heart with one glance of you eyes, with one coil of your necklace. How sweet is your love, my own, my bride! How much more delightful your love than wine, your ointments more fragrant than any spice! Sweetness drops from your lips, O bride; honey and milk are under your tongue; and the scent of your robes is like the scent of Lebanon

Treat Each Other With Respect:

Treat yourselves and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together. Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your connection deserves. When frustration, difficult and fear assail your relationship - as they threaten all relationships at one time or another - remember to focus on what is right between you, not only the part which seems wrong. In this way, you can ride out the storms when clouds hide the face of the sun in your lives - remembering that even if you lose sight of it for a moment, the sun is still there. And if each of you takes responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.