

Session Seven: The Wedding

Scriptures:

Genesis 2:14-25

Eph 5:8-31

1 Pet 3:1-7

Col 3:12-14

Questions:

- How are the plans for the wedding coming along?
- What else can I help with you with?
- Did you get your marriage licence?
- Have you had your medical/physical examination?
- Other

Introduction:

This session is intended to summarize, to bring to a climax and conclusion what was covered in the last six sessions. It circles back, but also moves forward. It will be used to emphasize that there is a difference between the wedding and the marriage. The wedding will only last a couple of hours - one half of a day the most! The marriage is the commitment of a life time, yet many couples spend more time preparing for the **wedding** than they do for the **marriage**. It is not uncommon to witness a declining significance of the vow in proportionate to the extravagance of the ceremony.

The wedding, however, is very important because it an act of worship of God, who brought the couple together. It is a proclamation of the word of God: His plans, purposes and principles for marriage and family. It is a public declaration of the couple that they love each other and want to spend the rest of their lives together. It is a witness *to*, as well as witnessed *by*, those who are present [the Ceremony/Covenant]. Further, it is an act that fulfils civic requirements {Signing Registry}. But then, there is also the social aspect as well [the Reception].

This session will include a model of a ceremony that I use, emphasizing the vows that the couple will be making. If they decide to write their own vows, this will be an opportunity to review this with them. The ceremony will be constructed and conducted in such a way that it will be an act of worship to God and witness to those present.

We will spend time talking about:

The Wedding

The Reception

The Rehearsal

This session will also be a check-up, to make sure the plans and the details are in place or at least moving along appropriately.

Types of Ceremonies:

1. Formal
2. Informal (Shorter Service but include full vows)
3. Renewal of Vows (Much flexibility, also include full vows)

Elements of the Ceremony:

[Procession]

1. The purpose of the gathering
2. The meaning of marriage: A Mini-Message on Marriage/Family
3. The charging of the couple
4. Questions to the Bride and Groom
5. Affirmation of Commitments/Covenant
6. Exchange of Rings
7. The Pronouncement of the marriage
8. Prayer of petition and dedication
9. Signing of the Registries
10. Presentation of the Couple
11. Music included at various points, as the couple desires.
12. Benediction

[Recessional]

Mini Ceremonies (within the marriage ceremony proper):

1. Ring
2. Unity Candle

(These are additional and powerful opportunities to visibly proclaim the meaning of marriage)

Outline:

Preparation

Rehearsal

1. Processional
2. Ceremony
3. Recessional
4. Reception

A Model Ceremony

Invocation and Introduction:

This is the day that the Lord has made we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118:24)
Marriage is a gift from God. He gave it for our benefits and blessings. It the foundation for human society, and should be highly honor by men and women everywhere and for all times.

We are assembled in the presence of God, to join this man and woman [**mention their names**] in marriage. Marriage was instituted by God, regulated by His commandments, blessed and adorned by our Lord Jesus Christ and commended by the Apostles Paul to be honorable among all men. It should not be entered into lightly, but reverently, soberly and discreetly. Let us, therefore, solemnly remember that God established and sanctified marriage for our welfare and happiness.

Our Savior, even the Lord Jesus Christ, declared that a man shall leave his mother and father and cleave unto his wife. By His Apostles, He instructed those who enter into this relation to cherish mutual esteem and love and to nourish and cherish each other; to bear with each other's infirmities and weaknesses; to comfort each other in sickness, trouble and sorrow; in honesty and industry (hard work) to provide for each other and for their household, in temporal things; to pray and encourage each other in things pertaining to God and to live together as heirs of grace as they live out the vows of their covenant.

Who gives this woman to be married?

For as much as these two people have come to this house of worship (home/place) to be made one in this relationship of marriage, a relationship that started long before this day, but is radically changed today, it is understood that neither of them know of any reason why they may not be united in marriage.

I charge you both, before God our Father, the Searcher of all heart, that if either of you know of any reason why you may not be lawfully joined together in marriage that you do here and now make it known. For if anyone is joined together otherwise than according to the will of God, their union is not blessed.

(Special Music)

Let us pray . . .

(Model Prayer: Customized to suit the particular couple)

Our Heavenly Father, whose presence brings blessedness and happiness to every condition, and whose grace sweetens every relation in life, we ask you to be present and shower your blessings upon these two persons [**use their names**] that they may be truly united in the holy and honorable act of marriage.

As you have brought them together in your providence, sanctify [set them apart] them by your Holy Spirit, and grant them full understanding of their covenant and new relationship. Enrich their lives by your grace that they may enjoy the comforts, undergo the cares, endure the trials and perform the duties of life together under your guidance and protection; through our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

[Short Message on Marriage/Family]

Charge:

M>>>>>>>>, do you solemnly agree before God and these witnesses to take this WOMAN to be your lawful wedded wife; to love and respect her, honour and cherish her, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity; and, leaving all others, to keep yourself only to her, so long as you both shall live?

I do.

W>>>>>>>>, do you solemnly agree before God and these witnesses to take this MAN to be your lawful wedded husband; to love and respect him; to live with him in all tenderness, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity; and, leaving all others, to keep yourself only to him, so long as you both shall live?

I do.

Vows:

(Joining right hands)

I, - - - - - , take you, - - - - - to be my wedded wife; and I do promise and covenant, before God and these witnessed, to be your loving and faithful husband, in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all other, be united to you as long as we both shall live.

I, - - - - - , take you, - - - - - to be my wedded husband; and I do promise and covenant , before God and these witnessed, to be your loving and faithful wife, in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all other, be united to you, as long as we both shall live.

(Special Music)

The Ring Ceremony:

What token do you give as your love?

The ring is a beautiful token and pledge symbolizing the purity [gold] and endlessness of your love and your commitment [circle]..

Groom and Bride: *(individually)*

This ring I give to you, in token and pledge, of our constant faith and abiding love.

Let us Pray!

Heavenly Father, we have heard from ----- and ----- . They recognize and have made the solemn and significant vows in the covenant of marriage. Grant unto them the grace and courage, the love and the loyalty, the constancy and the faith to maintain these vows to the end of their days. Give them the wisdom and the courage to let no one or nothing come in the way of them being faithful to each other and fulfill these vows.

May the new home they establish today radiate the sunshine of your love, and may every heart that comes in contact with it in its several relationships, be enriched and ennobled.

Through Christ our Lord, who shares in this union with them. Amen

Pronouncement:

In as much as you have agreed together to enter into marriage and have given and received a ring(s) in token and in pledge of your love and commitment to each other before God and this assembly, by the authority committed to me as a minister of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the ----- (Province of Ontario), I now declare and , according to the ordinance of God and the law of this --- (province) husband and wife. God having joined these together let no one seek to dissolve this union.

The Groom may kiss the Bride.

The Signing of the Registries:

- Special Music

The Presentation of the Couple:

May I present to you Mr & Mrs. -----

Let us bow for the Benediction:

The Lord bless and keep you;

The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you;

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace. (Nu 6:24-26)

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

The Recessional:

Additional Notes to help in the planning:

Order of Events

Processional Order:

- Minister, Groom & Groomsman in place
- Ushers in two's or singly - shortest first
- Bridesmaids in two's or singly
- Matron/Maid of Honor
- Flower Girl and Ring Bearer
- Bride and her Father

Ceremony

Recessional Order:

- Bride and Groom
- Flower Girl and Ring Bearer
- Matron/Maid of Honor and Groomsman
- Ushers and Bridesmaids

Reception:

- Receiving Line ... Introduce Bridal Party
- Food
- Toast to the Bride
- Toast to the Groom
- Toast to Bridesmaids
- Toast to Ushers
- Toast to Parents
- Groom's Reply
- Cut Cake
- Dance
- Throw away Bouquet & Garter

