

Alternative Wedding Vows and Vows Including Children

Sample Wedding Vows –Gaelic

“I marry you with my eyes wide open. You have helped me let go of the past and I embrace the future. Thank you for making me laugh again. Bless you for taking my hand as we begin anew.”

“I offer myself to you as a partner in life. I vow to love you in sickness and health. I commit myself to encourage you in good times and in bad. I will cherish and respect you all the days of our life together. Starting anew once again, I give thanks that I have found you. May our marriage be a gift to the world and our families as your love is a gift to me.”

God has given us a second chance at happiness. I come today to give you my love, to give you my heart and my hope for our future together. I promise to bring you joy, to be at home with your spirit and to learn to love you more each day, through all the days of our lives. My love for you is endless and eternal.

“Because of you, I laugh, I smile, I dare to dream again. I look forward with great joy to spending the rest of my life with you, caring for you, nurturing you, being there for you in all life has for us, and I vow to be true and faithful for as long as we both shall live.”

You May Now Kiss Your Bride.

Sample Wedding Vows – Kahlil Gibran On Marriage

[**Kahlil Gibran** 1883-1931. Poet, philosopher, and artist, was born in Lebanon, a land that has produced many prophets... **Kahlil Gibran** was among the most important Arabic language authors of the early twentieth century.]

Then Almitra spoke again and said, And what of Marriage, Master? And he answered saying:

You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore. You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days. Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God. But let there be spaces in your togetherness, And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Love one another, but make not a bond of love: Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls. Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone, Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping. For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts. And stand together yet not too near together: For the pillars of the temple stand apart, And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

Sample Wedding Vows – CELTIC

HANDBASTING is an ancient Celtic wedding ritual in which the couples' hands are tied together with a ceremonial ribbon or cloth (if you saw the movie BRAVEHEART you might remember the scene where they were married in the forest. The priest wrapped their hands in a strip of cloth, his family's tartan). It's often done in modern times with a beautiful ribbon the couple chooses. One couple I married actually had Celtic origins, and had a special tartan cloth woven for them that incorporated the plaids of both their clans. It's tied in a bow with an opening loose enough so that the hands can come out freely, or simply draped across the hands. The couple saves the ribbon or cloth as a keepsake. Here are some words that can be said with handfasting:

"Erik and Lynn, as your hands are bound together now,
so your lives and spirits are joined in a union of love and trust.

Above you are the stars and below you is the earth.

Like the stars your love should be a constant source of light,
and like the earth, a firm foundation from which to grow."

Sample Wedding Vows – THE APACHE WEDDING CHANT is a beautiful option for closing a ceremony:

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter for the other.

Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth for the other.

Now you are two persons, but there is only one life inside you.

Go now to your dwelling to enter the days of your life together.

And may your days be good, and long upon the earth.

Sample Wedding Vows – That Include Children In The New Family

SAMPLE #1

I (.....), choose you, (.....), and (.....), to be my family.

I promise to honor& respect you, and to provide for you to the best of my ability.

I promise to make our home a haven, where trust, love, and laughter are abundant.

I make these promises lovingly, and freely, and vow to honor them all the days of my life.

SAMPLE #2

I prayed to God for a companion who could understand me and accept me as I am and for a special friend who would share laughter and tears – and he sent you.

[Bride/Groom], I promise to love you with all my heart, mind and strength. I promise to be faithful, now and forever. I also promise to respect your children and treat them as if they were my own. I gladly accept the obligations that go along with this pledge. I care for your children and want them to be a part of my life.

With continued love, friendship, trust and communication, I [Groom/Bride] take joy today in committing my life to yours. [Bride/Groom] when you need me I will be there and when your strength fails you, may mine always be there for you. Side by side, step by step, may our great journey together begin, here now from this day forward.

SAMPLE #3

Including Children in the Second Wedding Ceremony.

The bride and groom can choose to repeat these traditional wedding vows:

A. “I,____, take you ____ to be my lawful wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward. For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health...for all eternity.”

[OR]

B. "I, _____ take you now, in the presence of God and these witnesses, to be my wife/husband. I promise to love you, to hold you and to honor you, in good times and in bad, to enjoy you, to communicate with you always, and to console you when you need consoling. I will give thanks for you each and every day, and cherish you with all my heart until out time on earth together has ended."

[AND]

C. "I promise to be a good and faithful husband/wife to you, and also a patient, loving father/mother to (children's names), caring for them and providing for them as my own. I promise to be their strength and their emotional support, loving them with all my heart forever."

Then the children can repeat "we do" after these words:

"And now, (children's names) do you promise to love and respect your parent's new husband/wife? Do you promise to support their marriage and their new family? Do you promise to accept the responsibility of being their children, and to encourage them and support them in your new life together?"

For Couples who plan to light a unity candle during second wedding ceremonies, you could purchase a special family unity candle, lighting three candles, signifying the union of your families. The officiate can recite the following:

"The lighting of the center candle represents not only the union of (bride) and (groom) in marriage, but the unity formed in this new family in which your lives will now shine as one family"