

## Secular, Non-Religious Wedding Ceremony Script 14

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### WELCOME (OPENING REMARKS)

Family, friends, honored guests, on behalf of Bride and Groom, I would like to warmly welcome you to the celebration of their marriage. They wish to express their gratitude for each of you who has chosen to be here today. During the ceremony this afternoon, we respectfully request that you silence and put away all cell phones and cameras so we can all be fully present in this moment.

Bride and Groom have come before us today with the intention to marry one another; their love for each other has brought them to this place. Neither I, nor any other, can join these two lovers today. Only they can do what they have chosen. They are joining themselves, each to the other. We, by our participation in this celebration, do but recognize and honor their intention to dwell together as husband and wife.

Marriage is a dedication. You give yourself into the hands of the one you love. You do so trustingly and generously. By the same token, each of you receives a gift, the life and love of each other.

Shakespeare wrote:  
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,  
My Love as deep; the more I give to thee,  
The more I have, for both are infinite.

### MOMENT OF REFLECTION

This day will be filled with love and joy and laughter and will pass more quickly than can be imagined. The couple have requested a brief pause to reflect and absorb this moment in their lives; to look, listen, and feel; to fix these sensations in their memories for years to come.

### ADDRESS

Whenever we attend a wedding, we are given the opportunity to reflect on our own relationships. We might look at the couple before us and be tempted to compare their love to the quality of our relationships. The truth is that every couple is as unique as the individuals in it, but one thing holds true: For love to exist between two people, each person must allow the vulnerability of giving his or her love to the other, and each must be open to receiving the other's love in turn. Therefore each of us is a powerful creator of love. Each of us, every moment of every day, has the choice to dedicate ourselves to one another or to withhold our love and caring.

If you ask couples who have a strong and abiding love what they like most about their partners, many will say when they are with that person they don't have to pretend to be anything other than what they are. They are able to express themselves without fear of being judged or rejected. There is room in the relationship for both of them to be unique individuals. They are free to surrender to the vulnerability of true intimacy—to be known and loved unconditionally.

When two people are happily married, they enjoy each other's company with the greatest delight and excitement. As many moments they as might spend together and as many conversations they might share, it could never be enough. They can find endless joy in discovering each other and in sharing their being with the other. A happy marriage is a long conversation which always seems too short.

In the words of Dana Scully, "It seems to me that the best relationships, the ones that last, are frequently the ones that are rooted in friendship. You know, one day you look at the person and you see something more than you did the night before. Like a switch has been flicked somewhere. And the person who was just a friend is... suddenly the only person you can ever imagine yourself with."

## **DECLARATION OF INTENT**

Bride and Groom, before this moment you have been many things to one another, but now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of

life, words that will irreversibly alter the relationship between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this—is my husband; this—is my wife.

It is relatively simple to stand here and say these words today, but far more difficult to live them day to day. When you love someone, you do not love them all the time in exactly the same way. That is impossible. Yet that is what most of us expect. We forget the ebb and flow of life and of love and of relationships. We insist on permanence, on duration, on continuity. But in love, as in life, the only stability is in change, in growth, and in freedom. Therefore what you promise today must be renewed and reaffirmed tomorrow and all the tomorrows to come.

### VOWS

Groom, do you take Bride to be the wife of your days, the companion of your heart and the friend of your life? To stand united in the face of adversity and bask together in the light of good fortune? With these words spoken, do you wish to marry Bride and join your life with hers?

Bride, do you take Groom to be the husband of your days, the companion of your heart and the friend of your life? To stand united in the face of adversity and bask together in the light of good fortune? With these words spoken, do you wish to marry Groom and join your life with his?

Groom, do you vow to love Bride faithfully, to be worthy of her trust and deserving of her respect, to support, comfort, and strengthen her through life's joys and sorrows, and to love her without reservation, all the days of your life?

Bride do you vow to love Groom faithfully, to be worthy of his trust and deserving of his respect, to support, comfort, and strengthen him through life's joys and sorrows, and to love him without reservation, all the days of your life?

### EXCHANGE OF RINGS

For generations the passage of two people into the state of marriage has been marked by the exchange of rings.

Rings hold deep symbolic meaning. The circle is an ancient symbol representing notions of totality, wholeness, perfection, and the infinite. It implies an idea of movement, and symbolizes the cycle of time. It symbolizes both the potential and the completion, the eternal cycle of life.

Even as these circles, these rings, hold universal significance, they are also personally significant to these two here today. They are a constant reminder of the bond between a husband and a wife. A visible, tangible symbol of their commitment to each other. Let these rings be a sign that love has substance as well as soul, a present as well as a past, and that this person has been chosen, this person walks not alone through life.

Groom, please place this ring on Bride's finger and repeat after me:

Let this ring be a symbol of my promises to you -  
and a reminder of my devotion to you. -  
I am honored to call you my wife. -

Bride, please place this ring on Groom's finger and repeat after me:

Let this ring be a symbol of my promises to you -  
and a reminder of my devotion to you. -  
I am honored to call you my husband. -

### **FINAL**

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 to the other.  
Now there will be no loneliness, for each of you will be companion to the other.  
Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before you.

Treat yourselves and each other with respect, patience, and compassion, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together.

Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness, and kindness that your love deserves.

If each of you take responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.

May beauty surround you both in the journey ahead and through all the years.

May happiness be your companion and your days together be good and long  
upon the earth.

Go now and enter into the days of your life together.

### **PRONOUNCEMENT**

Bride and Groom, you have each betrothed yourself to the other in love and compassion, and you have taken upon yourselves the responsibilities of a profound and loving friendship. In the presence of these witnesses and in keeping with tradition, you have spoken the words and performed rites that have united your lives. Having so affirmed, I now pronounce that you are husband and wife.

Groom, you may kiss the bride.

Ladies and gentlemen it is my great pleasure to present, for the first time as husband and wife....