

On behalf of GROOM and BRIDE, allow me to thank you for celebrating this special occasion with them today.

Throughout their individual lives GROOM and BRIDE have had our support, encouragement, wisdom (solicited or not) and love – and they will continue to need us as they face the future together.

But more than anything we could do, they will need the grace, love, and wisdom of the God who brought them together. Would you join me in asking for His blessing now?

PRAYER

- Thank You for giving us the joy of knowing and loving GROOM & BRIDE
- Thank You for the role that we have been able to play in their lives, and the roles they have played in ours
- Thank You for helping them to find one another
- Bless this ceremony today and the reception that will follow
- Bless their marriage; bind them together so tightly that the only thing that can come between them is You.

PLEASE BE SEATED

Who gives BRIDE to be married to GROOM today?

WALK UP ON STAGE

COUPLE FACES ME, HAND OFF FLOWERS

We learn in the first chapters of the Bible that in the beginning God created man. But not long after He looked at the man and said it was not good for him to be alone. So He created woman, brought her to the man, and there in the garden God officiated the first wedding.

And now **GROOM**, just as God brought Eve to Adam He has brought **BRIDE** to you and the two of you stand here before your God, your family, and your friends, ready to enter into a covenant together – to become, as God intended – one man joined to one woman ‘til death do you part.

You are about to promise God and each other that you will in the best of Times and the worst of Times love and serve one another. But these aren’t just pretty words from a Hallmark card – keeping these promises will be hard.

And why is that?

It’s because we now live as fallen people, in a fallen world, among other fallen people.

Not long after God brought Adam and Eve together, they chose to rebel against Him by eating from the only tree He had forbidden in the Garden.

And when God confronted Adam about it, he pointed at his beautiful, precious, custom-made bride, and blamed her for everything. “It’s the woman You gave me!” he said.

You see, when sin entered the world it wrecked our relationship with God, but it also weakened our relationships with other men and women, including those who are closest to us.

But that's not all, sin also made Adam and Eve feel shame and fear for the first Time and ruined the perfect environment God had created so that now death, disease, and disaster are found all around us.

Now, those aren't the kind of flowery, romantic words we like to hear at a wedding, but they are the reality of the world your love and marriage will live in.

With all of that stacked against you, how can anyone expect their marriage to survive? Well, you both know the answer – By returning to the author of life and marriage and asking Him to restore each of you, and this union, to what He always planned, your relationship can not only survive, but thrive, prosper, and be a source of blessing and comfort to each of you and the lives you will touch.

The Bible tells us, in 1 John 4 “this is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.” It goes on to say, “Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other.”

So, *it is as we consider what God has done for us* that we are enabled to love one another with a love that, like His, initiates, forgives, and makes sacrifices.

If your love ever feels smaller than it does today, if you ever lack the strength to keep these vows, consider the love God has shown toward each of you and ask Him to help you reflect that love to each other.

In light of this,

I DO'S

Do you GROOM, through the grace of God and the power of
the Holy Spirit,

Take BRIDE to be your lawfully wedded wife,

To love her, serve her

Honor and cherish her,

And forsaking all others,

Give yourself only to her

For as long as you both shall live?

(GROOM SAYS "I DO")

Do you BRIDE, through the grace of God and the power of the
Holy Spirit

Take GROOM to be your lawfully wedded husband,

Will you love him, serve him

Honor and cherish him,

And forsaking all others,

Give yourself only to him

For as long as you both shall live?

(DOMINQUE SAYS "I DO")

VOWS
(GROOM AND DOMINQUE JOIN HANDS)

GROOM look into BRIDE's eyes, and repeat after me.

I, GROOM, take you, BRIDE,

To be my wife.

I commit my life to you,

Embracing all joys and sorrows,

All triumphs and hardships.

I promise to submit to Christ

As the leader of our home.

I promise to serve you

As Jesus teaches me to serve.

I pray that God will help me become

The husband He's called me to be

And teach me

To love you

With His love.

With God as my witness and my strength,

I pledge you my love.

VOWS

BRIDE, look into GROOM's eyes, and repeat after me.

I, BRIDE, take you GROOM,

To be my husband.

I commit my life to you,

Embracing all joys and sorrows,

All triumphs and hardships.

I promise to submit to you

As the Church submits to Christ.

I promise to serve you

As Jesus teaches me to serve.

I pray that God will help me become

The wife He's called me to be

And teach me

to love you

with His love.

With God as my witness and my strength,

I pledge you my love.

RINGS

(MAY I HAVE THE RINGS?)

GROOM, this ring is a reminder to BRIDE, and to everyone she meets of the Covenant that you have made with her today - to be her husband, to love her, to serve her, and to give yourself for her.

Place it on her finger and repeat after me:

I give you this ring
as a symbol of our vows.
With all that I am,
and all that I have,
I honor you.
In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
With this ring, I thee wed.

BRIDE, for the rest of his life, when GROOM looks down upon his ring, he will also be reminded of the Covenant that you made with him today - to be his wife, to serve him and give yourself for him.

So please place it on his finger and repeat after me:

I give you this ring
as a symbol of our vows.
With all that I am,
and all that I have,
I honor you.
In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
With this ring, I thee wed.

CLOSING - KISS/PRONOUNCEMENT.

And now, the Bible says the two shall become one. It is no longer GROOM and his goals, or BRIDE and her dreams, but the two of you are joined with one goal, one purpose, one life together.

The Bible also says those who God has joined together, "let no man separate."

So, in consideration of the vows you have made to each other
and the rings you have exchanged before God and this company,
by the authority vested in me by the church of Jesus Christ
and with the recognition of the Commonwealth of Virginia,

I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU HUSBAND AND WIFE.

GROOM, YOU MAY KISS YOUR BRIDE!

FLOWERS HANDED BACK TO DOMINQUE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I'M PLEASED TO PRESENT TO YOU,

FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME.

MR. AND MRS _____