

Good Afternoon. It is truly a blessing from heaven for two people to find each other and to love so deeply that they embrace the holy bond of marriage. Although this is their day, it is also a tribute to those here and those who have passed on. For knowing you and interacting with you has helped to make our Bride and Groom who they needed to be to find each other. All of you are in the threads of which are woven the tapestry of their lives. Each one of you is an important piece in the story it tells. On days like today that tapestry is spread out and displayed for everyone to see, with all the glorious colors and textures that your diversity adds. You all hold a place in their hearts reserved for those that they have chosen to call "Family" and "Friends" and they are deeply grateful for each and every one of you.

Marriage is a gift from God, a miracle. It is an opportunity to feel the joy of taking care of someone who takes care of you, to be challenged towards growth yet gently nurtured, to love deeply and receive it in return. It is about trust, friendship, and having a partner to share all life has to offer. It is a commitment to participate in a process of mutual evolution, understanding and forgiveness. It is indeed a sacred union to be treated with reverence.

Marriage is not a place to hide from the world. It is a safe place to grow and become wiser. It is a place to evolve into better people; so that you can go out into the world and make a difference by spreading the joy and wisdom that you have found with each other.

Lisa, Jeff is a gift to you from God, but he is not a gift for you alone. This man is yours to love, that in your love he may grow stronger, wiser. You're his confidante - the one person he will pour his heart into and depend upon. It is God's will that in your love, this man might find within himself a greater sense of who he is and who he shall be.

And so it is with you also, Jeff, that although Lisa is God's gift to you, she is not a gift intended for you alone. You are asked by God to love this woman, that in your love she may find herself as God created her, so beautiful and strong and brave, and true, that the entire world might be blessed by the presence of a woman who shines so. May she relax in your arms as she has never relaxed before. May she know, from now on, that there is one on whose love she can depend on forever.

May you both create, with God, a piece of heaven on earth.

Jeff and Lisa, please face each other and take each other's hands, so that you may see the gift they are to you.

These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you on your wedding day as you promise to love each other today tomorrow, and forever.

These are the hands that will work along side yours as together you build your future.

These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years, and with the slightest touch will comfort you like no other.

These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief temporarily comes your way.

These are the hands that will wipe the tears from your eyes, tears of sorrow and tears of joy.

These are the hands that will give you support and encouragement to chase down your dreams.

These are the hands that will hold you tight as you struggle through difficult times.

These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it.
These are the hands that will lift your chin and brush your cheek as they raise your face to look into eyes that are filled with overwhelmingly love for you.
And lastly, these are the hands that even when wrinkled with age will still be reaching for yours, still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.

Jeff repeats after Rev.:

Lisa, I promise to be faithful, supportive, and loyal and to give you my companionship and love throughout all the changes of our life. I vow to bring you happiness, and I will treasure you as my wife. I will celebrate the joys of life with you. I promise to support your dreams, and walk beside you offering courage and strength through all endeavors. From this day forward, I will be proud to be your husband and your best friend.

Lisa repeats after Rev.:

Jeff, I promise to be faithful, supportive, and loyal and to give you my companionship and love throughout all the changes of our life. I vow to bring you happiness, and I will treasure you as my husband. I will celebrate the joys of life with you. I promise to support your dreams, and walk beside you offering courage and strength through all endeavors. From this day forward, I will be proud to be your wife and your best friend.

Ring Ceremony:

And so we come Lisa and Jeff, to the presentation of rings by which you symbolize and bind your love.

The circle has long been a symbol of spirit and the power of god. The sky and the earth are round. The sun and moon, both round, come forth and go down again in a circle. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing and always come back again to where they were. Without beginning or end and with no point of weakness, the circle is a reminder of the eternal quality of God and of unending strength. Let the seamless circles of these rings become the symbol of your endless love and unending faithfulness. Your wedding rings are most precious because they say that even in your uniqueness you have chosen to be bonded, to allow the presence of another human being to enhance who you are. As you wear them through time, they will reflect not only who you are but also the glorious union that you are now creating.

Jeff, place the ring on Lisa's finger and repeat after me: "As this ring has no end, neither shall my love for you."

Lisa, place the ring on Jeff's finger and repeat after me: "As this ring has no end, neither shall my love for you."

Wear these rings as the enclosing bond of reverence and trust. Fulfill the circle of love that now makes you one.

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind always be at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon the fields.

May the light of friendship guide your paths together,
May the laughter of children grace the halls of your home.
May the joy of living for one another trip a smile from your lips, a twinkle from your eye.

Lisa and Jeff, in the presence of God, your family and friends today, you have spoken the words and performed the rites which unite your lives. It is my greatest joy and privilege to declare you husband and wife. You may now kiss.

And now ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to present to you for the first time, Mr. and Mrs. XYZ.