

Good morning. We are gathered here today to join together Jeff and Lisa in marriage - an estate instituted in love, occasioned by joy, and honored and renewed by each man and woman who pledge themselves to one another.

Marriage is an act of faith and personal commitment as well as a moral and physical union between the parties. Marriage has been described as the best and most important relationship that can exist between two human beings; the construction of their love and trust into a single growing energy of spiritual life is a moral commitment that requires and deserves daily attention, since no earthly happiness exceeds that of a reciprocal satisfaction in the married state. Marriage should be a life-long consecration to the ideal of loving kindness, backed with the will to make it last.

We read in "The Prophet:"

"True love gives nothing but itself
And takes nothing but from itself.
Love does not possess, nor would it be possessed.
For love is sufficient unto love.
Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself,
To awake at dawn with a winged heart and
Give thanks for another day of loving.
To rest at noon and meditate love's ecstasy;
To return home at eventide with gratitude,
And then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your heart
And a song of praise upon your lips."

Jeff, will you take Lisa to be your wedded wife, to love, to cherish, to have and to hold, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, in sadness and in joy, to share together as long as you both shall live? "I do."

Lisa, will you take Jeff to be your wedded husband, to love, to cherish, to have and to hold, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, in sadness and in joy, to share together as long as you both shall live? "I do."

What token of devotion do you offer your beloved?

May these rings be blessed as the symbol of this affectionate unity. These two lives are now joined in one unbroken circle. Wherever they go, may they always return to one another in their togetherness. May these two find in each other the love for which all men and women yearn. May they grow in understanding and in compassion. May the home, which they establish together, be such a place of sanctuary that many will find there a friend. May these rings, on their fingers, symbolize the touch of the spirit of love in their hearts.

[Hand ring to Jeff]

Jeff, in placing this ring on Lisa's finger, repeat after me: "Lisa, I give you this ring as the pledge of my love and as the symbol of our unity."

[Hand ring to Lisa]

Lisa, in placing this ring on Jeff's finger, repeat after me: "Jeff, I give you this ring as the pledge of my love and as the symbol of our unity."

Inasmuch as Jeff and Lisa have consented together to marriage before this company; have pledged their faith and declared their unity by giving and receiving a ring and are now joined in mutual esteem and devotion: By the authority vested in me by the State of Minnesota, and by the still higher authority of the Word of God, I pronounce you husband and wife. "What God hath joined together let not men put asunder."

I now offer them the Benediction of the Apaches:

"Now you will feel no rain,
For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold,
For each of you will be warmth for the other.
Now there is no more loneliness for you,
But there is only one life before you.
Go now to your dwelling place,
To enter into the days of your togetherness.
And may your days be good and long upon the earth!"

Jeff, would you like to kiss Lisa?

[Conclusion]