

Sample Ceremony Readings And Inserts For Your Ceremony

SAMPLE CEREMONY READINGS AND INSERTS UNITY CANDLE LIGHTING #1:

_____ and _____ the two separate candles in front of you, symbolizes your separate lives, separate families and friends. The individual candle represents your lives before today. Lighting the center candle represents that your lives are now joined together as one and represents also the joining together of your two families and friends.

BLENDING OF THE SANDS OR UNITY SAND POURING #1:

_____ and _____ the two separate containers of sand, symbolizes your separate lives, separate families and friends. The individual container represents your lives before today. Pouring the sand into the separate container symbolizes that your lives are now joined together as one and represents also the joining together of your two families and friends.

BLENDING OF THE SANDS OR UNITY SAND POURING #2:

Bride and Groom Before you met, your lives were on separate roads, each going in different directions and seemingly leading to different destinations. But somewhere along the way you met, fell in love, and today you find yourselves standing together at the entrance of a new path that will forever join your once separate journeys into one. Before each of you there is a container of sand. Each represents the separate journeys you once were on, as well as your own sets of friends and families that once were apart. In a moment I will ask that you both blend your individual containers of sand together ... representing the coming together of your friends and family, through your marriage, into one. And as the sand is blended into one container, your once solitary journeys will now be one of companionship, as you walk a single path together into your future. Bride and Groom "I now ask that you blend your containers of sand together. (the sand is now poured) As the sand has blended together, your lives are now joined, your separate journeys through life are now one. Your friends and family are as one as well, for now you will share those who are in your lives and will walk hand-in-hand along the path of your marriage – united and strong as husband and wife, as inseparable as these grains of sand.

BLENDING OF THE SANDS OR UNITY SAND POURING #3:

Bride and Groom now come forth to seal their relationship through the mixing of the sands. Just as your two lives joined together become one, so will the individual sands become one as they are poured. It would be impossible to separate these sands, just as it would be impossible to separate Bride and Groom after today. This covenant is a relationship pledge between two people who love each other heartily and who agree that they will commit themselves to one another throughout their lives

God's Knot – Cord of Three Strands What is the Cord of Three Strands Ceremony?

The cord of three strands symbolizes the joining of one man, one woman, and God into a marriage relationship. Marriage takes three; you, your soon to be spouse, and God. It was God who taught us to love. By keeping Him at the center of your marriage, His love will continue to

bind you together as one throughout your marriage. The cord of three strands ceremony is a great addition to a traditional wedding ceremony. It adds a truly unique element to your ceremony that friends and family will remember. It can also serve as a substitute for the unity candle. This is useful for situations where candles may not be used, or may be difficult. The Cord of Three Strands works well as a substitute in outside weddings. At some point in the wedding ceremony, the bride and groom braid the Cord of Three Strands together. The groom holds a small metal ring with three attached strands. The bride then braids the strands together, symbolizing the union of God, husband and wife. The colors of the cords is significant. The following readings are provided as a sample of what can be read during the braiding of the Cord of Three Strands. You may certainly use these or develop your own!

CORD OF 3 STRANDS READING – OPTION 1

Today, [name of groom] and [name of bride] have chosen to braid three strands together into a single cord. Each strand has a significant meaning. The Gold Strand represents God and His majesty. The Purple Strand represents the groom and his life. The White Strand represents the bride and her life. In braiding these three strands together, [name of groom] and [name of bride] have demonstrated that their marriage is more than a joining of two lives together. It is a unity with God as well. They have chosen to allow God to be at the center of their marriage, woven into every aspect of it. As Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 reads, “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

CORD OF 3 STRANDS READING – OPTION 2

The braiding of the three strands demonstrates how [name of groom] and [name of bride] are joined by God in marriage. Each strand holds special meaning. The Gold Strand symbolizes that the Lord Jesus has been invited by [name of groom] and [name of bride] to the position of authority in this marriage relationship. The Purple Strand represents the groom. It illustrates the majesty of God as head over the husband. As [name of groom] submits himself to the Lord, the Lord in turn will hold the marriage together through him. The White Strand represents the bride. It illustrates the purity of the bride of Christ. As each has received Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, they are cleansed through Christ. Ecclesiastes 4:12 reads, “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” Today, [name of groom] and [name of bride] have been woven together by God as ONE in marriage!

JUMPING THE BROOM

An African / African-American tradition. Jumping the broom symbolizes a new beginning and a sweeping away of the past and a joining of two families together as one.

THE LASSO CEREMONY

This tradition is usually associated with Hispanic and Filipino families. Lasso (sometimes called, “lazo”) or rope is placed around the bride and groom’s shoulders (groom’s shoulder’s first) in the form of an “8” (the infinity symbol) – after they have exchanged their vows – to symbolize their everlasting union. This is usually done by the officiant, however, family members can also take part in this ritual. The couple wears the lasso throughout the remainder of the service.

OPTIONAL

The Bride and Groom kneel before the minister. Minister: _____ and _____ have chosen to incorporate the Lasso ritual into their wedding ceremony today. The Lasso is a wedding ritual in which the couple are bound together with a ceremonial rosary. Lassoing is a declaration of intent, where the bride and groom clearly state that they are marrying of their own free will. _____ and _____ since your lives have crossed in this life, you have formed eternal and sacred bonds. As you enter this state of matrimony you should strive to make real the ideals that to you, give meaning to this ceremony and to the institution of marriage. With full awareness, know that within this Lasso you are not only declaring your intent to be bound together before your friends and family, but you speak that intent also to God. The promises made today and the ties that are bound here greatly strengthen your union and will cross the years and lives of each soul's growth. _____ and _____, I ask you to hold hands and look into each others eyes. Will you honor and respect one another, and seek to never break that honor? Will you share each other's pain and seek to ease it? Will you share the burdens of each so that your spirits may grow in this union? Will you share each other's laughter, and look for the brightness in life and the positive in each other? Bride & Groom: We will. Minister drapes the Lasso in the form of an "8" around the shoulders of the Bride and Groom. Minister: _____ and _____, as you are bound together now, so too your lives and spirits are joined in a union of everlasting 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. Minister offers a prayer, removes the Lasso before the Bride and Groom rise, then presents the Lasso to the Groom who will later give it to the Bride. (The Bride will carry her bouquet as they walk together down the aisle).

FAMILY VOWS 1:

As their dearest family and friends, it is our honor and privilege to stand witness to this event. This day is made possible not only because of your love for each other, but through the grace and support of your family and friends. It is our hope that your fulfillment and joy in each other and in yourselves will increase with every passing year. The marriage of _____ means the creation of a new home and a new family. As such, it becomes all the more important to recognize the significance of a devoted and supportive extended family. They have therefore asked that each of you pledge a vow of support for their marriage. So I ask . . . will each one of you here today do all that is in your power to support and encourage _____ in fulfilling the promises they make here today – if so, please respond by saying, "We will."

FAMILY VOWS 2:

_____ are very honored to have you here at their wedding. As they begin their new lives together it will take lots of love and support from family and friends to help them on their journey. On behalf of _____, if you promise to love and support them in their marriage, Say I Do.....

FAMILY VOWS 3:

Now that you have heard _____ and _____ recite their vows, do you, their family and friends, promise, from this day forward to encourage them and love them, and to help guide and support them in being steadfast in the promises they have made?" "We do."

BREAKING OF THE GLASS:

Breaking a glass summons the Jewish cultures notion that sweetness can only exist alongside bitterness—breaking the glass reminds us that although this wedding has provided joy, the world is still in turmoil, and requires our care and love. Its glass also suggests the frailty of human relationships. The glass then is broken to “protect” the marriage with the implied prayer, As the glass shatters, so may your marriage never break. Concluded By everyone saying Mazel tov, means good fortune in Yaddish and is the equivalent of “Congratulations!”

QUOTE FROM RABBI LAWRENCE SCHUVAL CEREMONY OF THE ROSE (THE FIRST GIFT):

The Ceremony of the Rose symbolizes the merging of the Bride’s and Groom’s families. When the Bride enters, she has in her possession two roses, usually red. As she approaches the altar, the Bride will stop and offer a rose and a kiss to her mother or significant mother figure. In doing so she is expressing her gratitude for preparing her for this moment and for receiving the man she is about to marry into her family. When the wedding ceremony has ended and she and the Groom exit, the Bride will stop and offer a rose and a kiss to the Groom’s mother or significant mother figure. In doing this, she is expressing her gratitude for preparing her new husband for this moment and for receiving her into the Groom’s family. A variation you may consider is to present both roses either upon the entrance or upon the exit.

THE BLESSING OF THE HANDS

Bride, take Groom’s hands palms up, So you may see the gift they are to you: These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and vibrant with love, that are holding yours on your wedding day, as he promises to love you all the days of his life. 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 work alongside yours, as we build our future together. These are the hands that will hold you whenever illness, fear, or grief may find you. These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it. These are the hands that will tenderly hold our children. These are the hands that even when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours Now Groom, please take Brides’s hands, palms up, so you may see the gift that they are to you: These are the hands of your best friend, smooth, young, and carefree, that are holding yours on your wedding day, as she promises to love you all the days of her life. 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 work alongside yours, as we build our future together. These are the hands that will hold you whenever illness, fear, or grief may find you. These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it. These are the hands that will tenderly hold our children. These are the hands that even when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours.

THE BUTTERFLY LEGEND RELEASE

If anyone desires a wish to come true they must first capture a butterfly and whisper that wish to it. As a butterfly can make no sound, the butterfly cannot reveal the wish to anyone but the Great Spirit who hears and sees all. In gratitude for giving the beautiful butterfly freedom, the Great Spirit will always grant the wish. So according to legend, by making a wish and giving the butterfly freedom, the wish will be taken to the heavens to be granted. We have gathered to grant this couple all our best wishes and are about to set these butterflies free in trust that all these wishes will be granted.

HANDBASTING CEREMONY(CELTIC):

Have you ever wondered where the words “tying the knot” come from? The expression “tying the knot” refers to the traditional Celtic marriage ritual of Handfasting. Handfasting is an ancient Celtic word for wedding, and was recognized as a binding contract of marriage between a man and a woman before weddings became a legal function of the responsibility of the church.

BLESSING STONES:

The ritual of the Blessing Stones, or Wishing Stones, is a wonderful way to include everyone in the wedding by way of offering blessings and good wishes to the newlyweds. It also is a good way to ensure that everyone will make contact with the Bride and Groom at some point during the day. This ritual may be performed at the actual ceremony itself (before the final blessing), or at the conclusion of the service (in a receiving line manner), or later at the reception. When guests arrive at the ceremony, they are given a Blessing Stone along with a note card with words printed on it such as: “My wish for you is ...” or “May you be blessed with ...” or “May God bless you with ...” At some point during the ceremony the guests will share their blessing or wish for the couple and toss the stone into a Blessing Bowl, Wishing Well, a fountain (or whatever is chosen to hold the stones. The notes with the blessings may be placed into a basket or decorative box for the couple to reflect on later. Many couples keep their Blessing Stones in a special place in their home to remind them of all the love, good wishes, and blessings shared at their ceremony.

SAMPLE CEREMONY READINGS (EXAMPLES) LET’S GROW OLD TOGETHER BY DENISE BRAXTON BROWN AND PEGGY WRIGHTSMAN:

Let’s grow old together, beginning with today. Let’s work slowly with each other and build a relationship that we can both enjoy being a part of. Let’s share love and understanding that neither of us is perfect; we are both subject to human frailties. Let’s hold each other close and whisper through the night, pledging our love, honoring our commitment. Let’s encourage each other to pursue our dreams, even when we’re weary from trying. Let’s expect the best that we both have to give and still love when we fall short of our expectations. Let’s be friends and respect each other’s individual personality. Let’s be candid with each other and point out strengths and weaknesses. Let’s be friends as well as lovers. Let’s never take for granted these moments that we’ve shared, but always be reminded of how intensely we have learned to live, and how we have learned to love each other. Let your journey together grow sweeter by the day. Let’s grow old together and look back on life and smile.

HAPPINESS IN MARRIAGE:

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens. A good marriage must be created. In the art of marriage. It is never being too old to hold hands. It is remembering to say “I love you” at least once a day. It is never going to sleep angry. It is at no time taking the other for granted; the courtship shouldn’t end with the honeymoon, it should continue through all the years. It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives; It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family. It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways. It is being friends and respecting each other’s individual personality. It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding and a big sense of humor. It is having the capacity to forgive and forget. It is finding room for things of the spirit. It is a common search for the good and the beautiful. It is not only marrying the right partner, it is in being the right partner.

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS:

Lord make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is desire, hope; Where there is darkness, light; Where there is sadness, joy' O Divine Master, Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, To be understood as to understand, To be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; It is in pardoning that we are pardoned; And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

BLESSING FOR A MARRIAGE:

May your marriage bring you all the wonder excitements a marriage should bring. And may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding. May you always need one another – meeting each others needs. May you need one another, but not out of weakness. May you want one another, but not out of lack. May you entice one another, but not compel one another. My you embrace one another, but not encircle one another. May you succeed in all important ways with one another, and not fail in the little graces. May you look for things to praise, often say, “I love you,; and take not notice to small faults. If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have the good sense to take the first step back. May you enter into the mystery which is the awareness of one another’s presence – no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side, warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even in distant cities. May you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy. May you have love, and may you find it in loving one another.

NEW TESTAMENT I CORINTHIANS 13:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and I have not love, I have become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in differences, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

NEW TESTAMENT EPHESIANS 5:22-33

V.22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. V.23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. V.24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. V.25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; V.26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, V.27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. V.28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. V.29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: V.30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. V.31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. V.32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. V.33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

OLD TESTAMENT GEN 2:18

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

OLD TESTAMENT GEN 2:24

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

HOW DO I LOVE THEE:

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways I love thee to the depth and breadth and height My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight For the ends of Being and ideal Grace. I love thee to the level of every day's Most quiet need, by the sun and candle light, I love thee freely, as men strive for right; I love thee purely, as they turn from praise. I love thee with the passion put to use In my old grief's, and with my childhood's faith, I love thee with a love I seem to lose With my lost saints – I love thee with the breath, Smiles, tears, of all my life – and, if God choose, I shall but love them better after death.

LET US NOT ASK TOO MUCH, CLIFFORD GESSLER:

Let us know how not to ask too much of each other, Share body and mind and spirit without giving up freedom, Love without trying to absorb, be kind yet not smother with kindness, Walk together, but neither retard the other's pace. I would not lead one who did not choose to follow Or follow one who demanded that I be led. The spark of selfhood, that high and precious thing, Let us not dampen it with scorn or blame: Each his own master and the two of us richer, dearer because of it But neither sunk passively in the other, That alone is true mating.