

I Tie the Knots

Premier Wedding Officiants

1. Irish Blessing

May the road rise to meet you
May the wind be always at your back
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home
And may the hand of a friend always be near.

May green be the grass you walk on,
May blue be the skies above you,
May pure be the joys that surround you,
And may true be the hearts that love you.

May God be with you and bless you;
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune and rich in blessings,
And may you know nothing but happiness from this day forward.

2. Love ~ Laura Hendricks

Love is friendship caught fire; it is quiet, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times. It settles for less than perfection, and makes allowances for human weaknesses. Love is content with the present, hopes for the future, and does not brood over the past. It is the day-in and day-out chronicles of problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories, and working toward common goals. If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack. If you do not have it, no matter what else there is, it is not enough.

3. On Marriage ~ Kahlil Gibran

You were born together, and together you shall be for evermore. You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days. Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God. But let there be spaces in your togetherness. And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another, but make not a bond of love:
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup, but drink not from one cup.
Give one another of your bread, but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together yet not too near together:
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.



4. Blessings for a Marriage ~ Janet Dillet Freeman

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring, and may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding. May you always need one another -- not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you to know your fullness. A mountain needs a valley to be complete. The valley does not make the mountain less, but more. And the valley is more a valley because it has a mountain towering over it. So let it be with you and you. 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. May you embrace one another, but not out 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 no notice of small faults. If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back. May you enter into the mystery that is the awareness of one another's presence -- no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side, and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities. May you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy. May you have love, and may you find it loving one another.

5. Sonnet 43 ~ Elizabeth Barrett Browning

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 days
most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love with a passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed 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 thee better after death.

6. Looking for Your Face ~ Rumi

From the beginning of my life I have been looking for your face, but today I have seen it. Today I have seen the charm, the beauty, the unfathomable grace of the face that I was looking for. Today I have found you, and those who laughed and scorned me yesterday are sorry that they were not looking as I did. I am bewildered by the magnificence of your beauty, and wish to see you with a hundred eyes. My heart has burned with passion and has searched forever for this wondrous beauty that I now behold. I am ashamed to call this love human, and afraid of God to call it divine. Your fragrant breath, like the morning breeze, has come to the stillness of the garden. You have breathed new life into me. I have become your sunshine, and also your shadow. My soul is screaming in ecstasy. Every fiber of my being is in love with you. Your effulgence has lit a fire in my heart, and you have made radiant for me the earth and sky. My arrow of love has arrived at the target. I am in the house of mercy, and my heart is a place of prayer.



7. Apache Marriage Blessing

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be the shelter for each other. Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be the warmth for the other. Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before. Go now to your dwelling place to enter into the days of your life together. And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

Treat yourselves and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together. Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your connection deserves. When frustration, difficulty and fear assail your relationship - as they threaten all relationships at one time or another - remember to focus on what is right between you, not only the part which seems wrong. In this way, you can ride out the storms when clouds hide the face of the sun in your lives - remembering that even if you lose sight of it for a moment, the sun is still there. And if each of you takes responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.

8. Love Is a Great Thing ~ Thomas à Kempis

Love is a great thing, yea, a great and thorough good. By itself it makes that is heavy light; and it bears evenly all that is uneven.

It carries a burden which is no burden; it will not be kept back by anything low and mean; it desires to be free from all wordly affections, and not to be entangled by any outward prosperity, or by any adversity subdued.

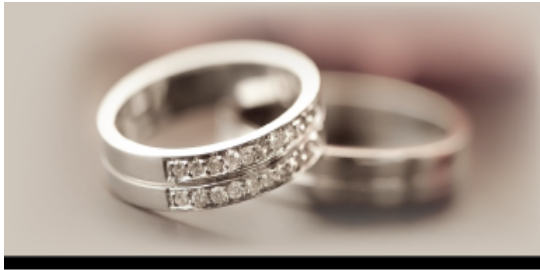
Love feels no burden, thinks nothing of trouble, attempts what is above its strength, pleads no excuse of impossibility. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and it completes many things, and warrants them to take effect, where he who does not love would faint and lie down.

Though weary, it is not tired; though pressed it is not straitened; though alarmed, it is not confounded; but as a living flame it forces itself upwards and securely passes through all.

Love is active and sincere, courageous, patient, faithful, prudent and kind.

9. Wedding Prayer ~ Robert Louis Stevenson

Lord, behold our family here assembled.
We thank you for this place in which we dwell,
for the love that unites us,
for the peace accorded us this day,
for the hope with which we expect the morrow,
for the health, the work, the food,



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and the bright skies that make our lives delightful;
for our friends in all parts of the earth.

10. i carry your heart with me ~ e.e. cummings
i carry your heart with me (i carry it in my heart)
i am never without it (anywhere i go you go, my dear;
and whatever is done by only me is your doing, my darling)
i fear no fate (for you are my fate, my sweet)
i want no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you
here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;
which grows higher than the soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart
i carry your heart (i carry it in my heart)

11. Love's Philosophy ~ Percy Shelly

- The fountains mingle with the river and the rivers with the oceans,
The winds of Heaven mix forever with a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single; all things by law divine;
In one spirit meet and mingle, why not I with thine?
- See the mountains kiss high Heaven, and the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven if it disdained its brother,
And the sunlight clasps the earth, and the moonbeams kiss the sea:
What is all this sweet work worth if thou kiss not me?

12. Fidelity ~ D.H. Lawrence

Man and woman are like the earth, that brings forth flowers
in summer, and love, but underneath is rock.
Older than flowers, older than ferns, older than foraminiferae,
older than plasm altogether is the soul underneath.
And when, throughout all the wild chaos of love
slowly a gem forms, in the ancient, once-more-molten rocks
of two human hearts, two ancient rocks,
a man's heart and a woman's,
that is the crystal of peace, the slow hard jewel of trust,
the sapphire of fidelity.

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The gem of mutual peace emerging from the wild chaos of love.

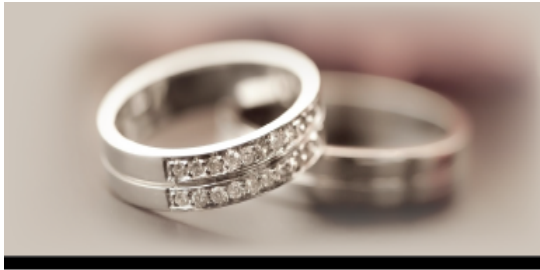
13. Foundations of Marriage ~ Regina Hill

Love, trust, and forgiveness are the foundations of marriage. In marriage, many days will bring happiness, while other days may be sad. But together, two hearts can overcome everything...In marriage, all of the moments won't be exciting or romantic, and sometimes worries and anxiety will be overwhelming. But together, two hearts that accept will find comfort together. Recollections of past joys, pains, and shared feelings will be the glue that holds everything together during even the worst and most insecure moments. Reaching out to each other as a friend, and becoming the confidant and companion that the other one needs, is the true magic and beauty of any two people together. It's inspiring in each other a dream or a feeling, and having faith in each other and not giving up... even when all the odds say to quit. It's allowing each other to be vulnerable, to be himself or herself, even when the opinions or thoughts aren't in total agreement or exactly what you'd like them to be. It's getting involved and showing interest in each other, really listening and being available, the way any best friend should be. If you have love, trust, and forgiveness as the foundations of your marriage, your relationship will be strong, your hearts will be filled with joy, and your lives will be blessed beyond measure.

14. A History of Love ~ Diane Ackerman

Love. What a small word we use for an idea so immense and powerful. It has altered the flow of history, calmed monsters, kindled works of art, cheered the forlorn, turned tough guys to mush, consoled the enslaved, driven strong women mad, glorified the humble, fueled national scandals, bankrupted robber barons, and made mincemeat of kings. How can love's spaciousness be conveyed in the narrow confines of one syllable? Love is an ancient delirium, a desire older than civilization, with taproots spreading into deep and mysterious days. The heart is a living museum. In each of its galleries, no matter how narrow or dimly lit, preserved forever like wondrous diatoms, are our moments of loving, and being loved.

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15. The Art of Marriage ~ Wilfred Peterson

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens.
A good marriage must be created.
In the art of marriage, the little things are the big things...
It is never being too old to hold hands.
It is remembering to say "I love you" at least once each day.
It is never going to sleep angry.
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 having the capacity to forgive and forget.
It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.
It is finding room for the 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 being the right partner.

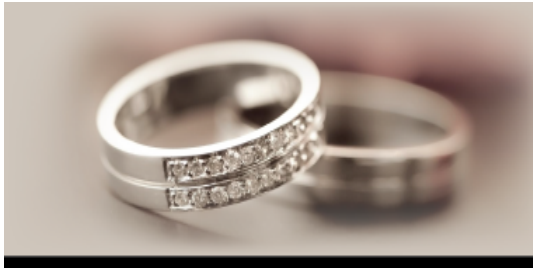
16. Cherokee Prayer

God in heaven above
please protect the ones we love.
We honor all you created as we pledge
our hearts and lives together.
We honor mother-earth
- and ask for our marriage to be abundant
and grow stronger through the seasons;

We honor fire
- and ask that our union be warm
and glowing with love in our hearts;
We honor wind
- and ask we sail though life
safe and calm as in our father's arms;
We honor water
- to clean and soothe our relationship
- that it may never thirsts for love;
With all the forces of the universe you created,
we pray for harmony and true happiness as we forever grow young together.

17. Excerpt from The Irrational Season ~ Madeline L'Engle

But ultimately there comes a moment when a decision must be made. Ultimately two people who love



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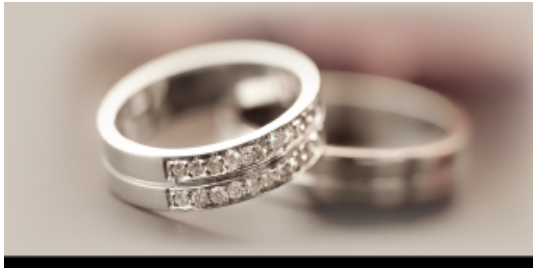
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each other must ask themselves how much they hope for as their love grows and deepens, and how much risk they are willing to take. It is indeed a fearful gamble. Because it is the nature of love to create, a marriage itself is something which has to be created, so that, together we become a new creature. To marry is the biggest risk in human relations that a person can take. If we commit ourselves to one person for life this is not, as many people think, a rejection of freedom; rather it demands the courage to move into all the risks of freedom, and the risk of love which is permanent; into that love which is not possession, but participation. It takes a lifetime to learn another person. When love is not possession, but participation, then it is part of that co-creation which is our human calling.

18. Love is Not to Possess ~ James Kavanaugh

To love is not to possess,
To own or imprison,
Nor to lose one's self in another.
Love is to join and separate,
To walk alone and together,
To find a laughing freedom
That lonely isolation does not permit.
It is finally to be able
To be who we really are
No longer clinging in childish dependency
Nor docilely living separate lives in silence,
It is to be perfectly one's self
And perfectly joined in permanent commitment
To another—and to one's inner self.
Love only endures when it moves like waves,
Receding and returning gently or passionately,
Or moving lovingly like the tide
In the moon's own predictable harmony,
Because finally, despite a child's scars
Or an adult's deepest wounds,
They are openly free to be
Who they really are—and always secretly were,

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In the very core of their being
Where true and lasting love can alone abide.

19. Union ~ Robert Fulghum

You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way. All those conversations that were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks - all those sentences that began with "When we're married" and continued with "I will and you will and we will"- those late night talks that included "someday" and "somehow" and "maybe"- and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart. All these common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, "You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed- well, I meant it all, every word." Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another- acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years. Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this- is my husband, this- is my wife.

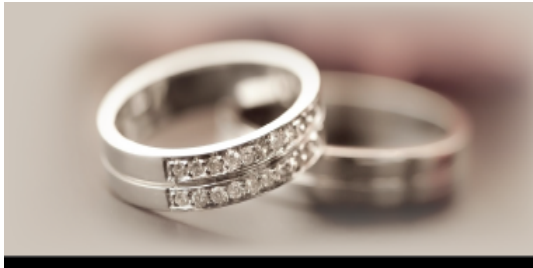
20. Sonnet XVII ~ Pablo Neruda

I don't love you as if you were the salt-rose, topaz
or arrow of carnations that propagate fire:
I love you as certain dark things are loved,
secretly, between the shadow and the soul.

I love you as the plant that doesn't bloom and carries
hidden within itself the light of those flowers,
and thanks to your love, darkly in my body
lives the dense fragrance that rises from the earth.

I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where,
I love you simply, without problems or pride:
I love you in this way because I don't know any other way of loving
but this, in which there is no I or you,
so intimate that your hand upon my chest is my hand,
so intimate that when I fall asleep it is your eyes that close.

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21. Guardian of Solitude ~ Ranier Marie Rilke

A good marriage is that in which each appoints the other guardian of his solitude. Each realizes and accepts that even between the closest of human beings, infinite distances continue to exist. In such a loving and accepting atmosphere, a wonderful living side by side is born and can grow up.

When the partners succeed in loving the distance between them, they see each other whole against the wide sky. Each becomes the treasure beyond measure at the end of the others rainbow.

In their mystical, magical moments together, their rainbows merge to become a full circle around the brilliant morning sun. As the sun and moon merge, their inner senses feel the moon, full and glowing in the starlit sky. They become that which transcends thought. They become that which is perceivable only by the personal experience of those fortunate enough to find and accept the ultimate treasure that any physical human being can receive -- the treasure of shared love.

22. The Life That I Have ~ Leo Marks

The life that I have is all that I have
And the life that I have is yours
The love that I have of the life that I have
Is yours and yours and yours.
A sleep I shall have, a rest I shall have
Yet death will be but a pause
For the peace of my years in the long green grass
Will be yours and yours and yours.

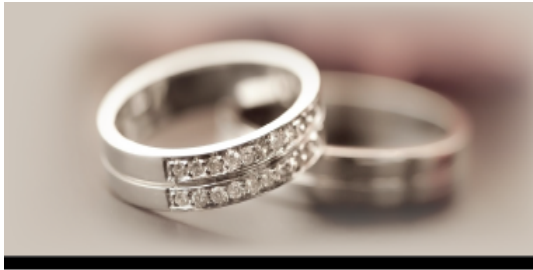
23. Marriage Joins Two People ~ Edmund O'Neill

Marriage is a commitment to life, the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other relationship can equal. It is a physical and an emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime.

Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener, and critic. And there may come times when one partner is heartbroken or ailing, and the love of the other may resemble the tender caring of a parent or child.

Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller, memories are fresher, commitment is stronger, even anger is felt more strongly, and passes away more quickly.

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Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, new ways of expressing a love that is deeper than life.

When two people pledge their love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique unto themselves which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. Marriage is a promise, a potential made in the hearts of two people who love each other and takes a lifetime to fulfill.

24. True Love ~ Author Unknown

True love is a sacred flame
That burns eternally,
And none can dim its special glow
Or change its destiny.
True love speaks in tender tones
And hears with gentle ear,
True love gives with open heart
And true love conquers fear.
True love makes no harsh demands
It neither rules nor binds,
And true love holds with gentle hands
The hearts that it entwines.

25. Untitled ~ Louis de Bernières

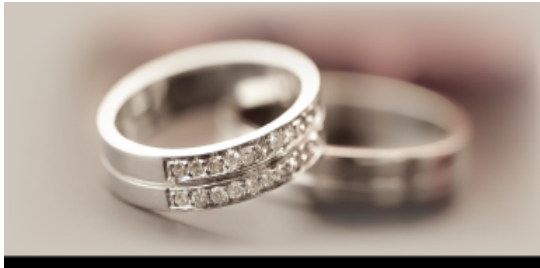
Love is a temporary madness; it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides. And when it subsides you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part. Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of eternal passion. That is just being "in love", which any fool can do. Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident. Those that truly love have roots that grow towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossoms have fallen from their branches, they find that they are one tree and not two.

26. In Love Made Visible ~ Mary Swenson

In love are we made visible
As in a magic bath
are unpeeled
to the sharp pit
so long concealed

With love's alertness

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we recognize
the soundless whimper
of the soul
behind the eyes
A shaft opens
and the timid thing
at last leaps to surface
with full-spread wing

The fingertips of love discover
more than the body's smoothness
They uncover a hidden conduit
for the transfusion
of empathies that circumvent
the mind's intrusion
In love we are set free
Objective bone
and flesh no longer insulate us
to ourselves alone
We are released
and flow into each other's cup
Our two frail vials pierced
drink each other up

27. I Promise ~ Dorothy Colgan

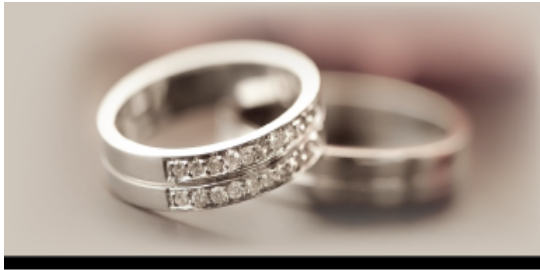
I promise to give you the best of myself and to ask of you no more than you can give.
I promise to respect you as your own person and to realise that your interests, desires and needs are no less important than my own.
I promise to share with you my time and my attention and to bring joy, strength and imagination to our relationship.
I promise to keep myself open to you, to let you see through the window of my world into my innermost fears and feelings, secrets and dreams.
I promise to grow along with you, to be willing to face changes in order to keep our relationship alive and exciting.

I promise to love you in good times and in bad, with all I have to give and all I feel inside in the only way I know how: completely and forever.

28. Touched by an Angel ~ Maya Angelou

We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of loneliness

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until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to liberate us into life.

Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.

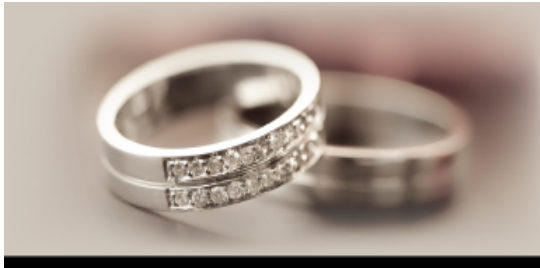
We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.

29. I Love You ~ Roy Croft

I love you, not only for what you are, but, for what I am when I am with you.
I love you, not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me.
I love you for the part of me that you bring out.
I love you for looking deeply into my heaped-up heart and gently passing over all the foolish, and weak things that you can't help dimly seeing there, and for drawing out into the light all the beautiful belongings that no one else had looked quite far enough to find.
I love you because you are helping me to make, of the lumber of my life, not a tavern, but a temple; out of the works of my every day, not a reproach, but a song.
I love you because you have done more than any creed could have done to make me good, and more than any fate could have done to make me happy.
You have done it through your touch, through your looks, through your words, and through your very being.
You have done it simply by being yourself.
Perhaps, after all, that is what being a friend really means.

30. Why Marriage? ~ Mari Nichols-Haining

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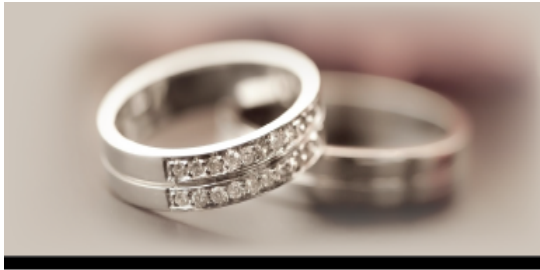
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Because to the depths of me, I long to love one person,
With all my heart, my soul, my mind, my body...
Because I need a forever friend to trust with the intimacies of me,
Who won't hold them against me,
Who loves me when I'm unlikable,
Who sees the small child in me, and
Who looks for the divine potential of me...
Because I need to cuddle in the warmth of the night
With someone who thanks God for me,
With someone I feel blessed to hold...
Because marriage means opportunity
To grow in love in friendship...
Because marriage is a discipline
To be added to a list of achievements...
Because marriages do not fail, people fail
When they enter into marriage
Expecting another to make them whole...
Because, knowing this,
I promise myself to take full responsibility
For my spiritual, mental, and physical wholeness
I create me,
I take half of the responsibility for my marriage
Together we create our marriage...
Because with this understanding
The possibilities are limitless.

31. Gift From The Sea ~ Anne Morrow Lindbergh

When you love someone, you do not love them all the time, in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility. It is even a lie to pretend to. And yet this is exactly what most of us demand. We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, of relationships. We leap at the flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb. We are afraid it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity; when the only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity - in freedom, in the sense that the dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern.

The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping, even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what was in nostalgia, nor forward to what it might be in dread or anticipation, but living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now. Relationships must be like islands, one must accept them for what they are here and now, within their limits - islands, surrounded and interrupted by the sea, and continually visited and abandoned by the tides.



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32. Oh the Places You'll Go ~ Dr. Seuss (adapted)

Congratulations! Today is your day!
You're off to great places! You're off and away!
You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourselves any direction you choose.

You're on your own, and you know what you know.
And you are the ones who'll decide where to go.
You'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over with care.
About some you will say, "We don't choose to go there."

With your heads full of brains and your shoes full of feet,
you're too smart to go down any not-so-good street.
And you may not find any you'll want to go down.
In that case, of course, you'll head straight out of town.

It's opener there in the wide open air,
Out there things can happen and frequently do
to people as brainy and footsy as you.
And when things start to happen, don't worry. Don't stew.
Just go right along. You'll start happening too.

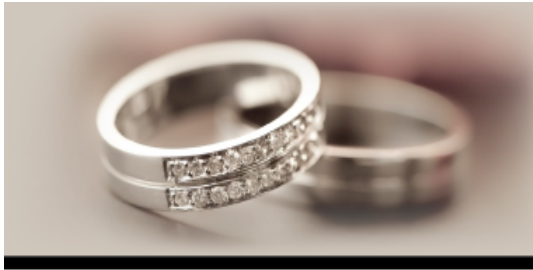
OH! THE PLACES YOU'LL GO! You'll be on your way up!

You'll be seeing great sights!
You'll join the high fliers who soar to great heights!
You won't lag behind, because you'll have all the speed.
You'll pass the whole gang, and you'll soon take the lead.
Wherever you fly you'll be best of the best.
Wherever you go, you will top all the rest.
Just be sure when you step, step with care and with tact
and remember that life's a great balancing act.
Just never forget to be dexterous and deft.
And never mix up your right foot with your left.

And will this marriage succeed?
Yes, it will indeed!
(99 and three-quarters percent guaranteed.)

KIDS, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!

So as the sun sets on this beautiful day,
Celebrate, dance, and toss your bouquet.
The person beside you is there to stay!
You're off to great places, you're off and away.
Your life -- it is waiting. So get on your way.



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33. Celtic Wedding Blessing

May your mornings bring joy and your evenings bring peace.
May your troubles grow few as your blessings increase.
Be no worse than the happiest day of your past.
May your hands be forever clasped in friendship.
and your hearts joined forever in love.
Your lives are very special.
God has touched you in many ways.
May his blessings rest upon you
and fill all your coming days.

34. Wedding Song ~ Bob Dylan

I love you more than ever, more than time and more than love
I love you more than money and more than the stars above
Love you more than madness, more than waves upon the sea
Love you more than life itself, you mean that much to me
Ever since you walked right in, the circle's been complete
I've said goodbye to haunted rooms and faces in the street
To the courtyard of the jester which is hidden from the sun
I love you more than ever and I haven't yet begun

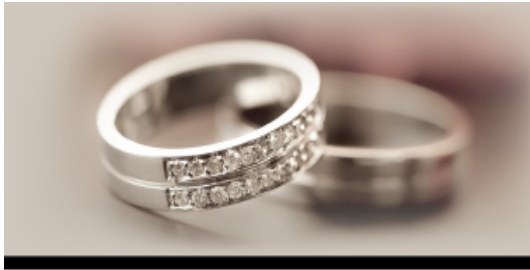
You breathed on me and made my life a richer one to live
When I was deep in poverty you taught me how to give
Dried the tears up from my dreams and pulled me from the hole
Quenched my thirst and satisfied the burning in my soul

The tune that is yours and mine to play upon this earth
We'll play it out the best we know, whatever it is worth
What's lost is lost, we can't regain what went down in the flood
But happiness to me is you and I love you more than blood

It's never been my duty to remake the world at large
Nor is it my intention to sound a battle charge
'Cause I love you more than all of that with a love that doesn't bend
And if there is eternity I'd love you there again

Oh, can't you see that you were born to stand by my side
And I was born to be with you, you were born to be my bride
You're the other half of what I am, you're the missing piece
And I love you more than ever with that love that doesn't cease

You turn the tide on me each day and teach my eyes to see
Just bein' next to you is a natural thing for me
And I could never let you go, no matter what goes on



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'Cause I love you more than ever now that the past is gone

35. He Wishes for Cloths of Heaven ~ W.B. Yeats

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

36. Excerpt from "The Hungering Dark" ~ Frederick Buechner

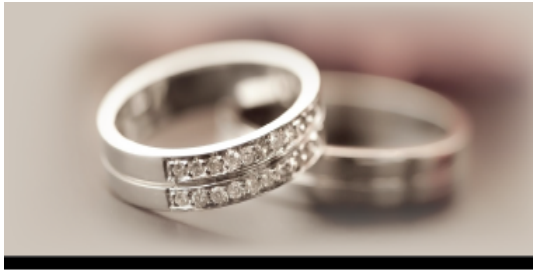
Matrimony is called holy, because this brave and fateful promise of a man and a woman, to love and honor and serve each other through thick and thin, looks beyond itself to more fateful promises still, and speaks mightily of what human life at its most human and most alive and most holy must always be. Every wedding is a dream, and every word that is spoken there means more than it says, and every gesture - the clasping of hands, the giving of rings - is rich with mystery. And so we hope with every bride and groom, that the love they bear one another, and the joy they take in one another, may help them grow in love for this whole world where their final joy lies.

37. I Love You ~ Carl Sandberg

I love you for what you are, but I love you yet more for what you are going to be.
I love you not so much for your realities as for your ideals. I pray for your desires that they may be great, rather than for your satisfactions, which may be so hazardously little.
A satisfied flower is one whose petals are about to fall. The most beautiful rose is one hardly more than a bud wherein the pangs and ecstasies of desire are working for a larger and finer growth.
Not always shall you be what you are now. You are going forward toward something great. I am on the way with you and therefore I love you.

38. Your Love Must Be an Ocean ~ Nicholas Gordon

Your love must be an ocean and a stream,
A song and silence, pilgrimage and end.
It will change as will and passion bend,
Yet, changeless, be what life can only seem.
Love remains the night beyond the dream,
The choice that cannot choose but reason rend,
The fact that makes a fortune of a friend
And will the travesties of time redeem.
So flow with pleasure down the mountainside



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Through years and years of paradise and pain,
Choosing as you change to stay combined.
For there is something underneath the ride
That you need only turn to, to attain,
A grace so beautiful it stops the wind.

39. Excerpt from "Now We Are Six" ~ A.A. Milne

A soul mate is someone who has locks that fit our keys, and keys to fit our locks. When we feel safe enough to open the locks, our truest selves step out, and we can be completely and honestly who we are. We can be loved for who we are and not for who we're pretending to be. Each unveils the best part of the other. No matter what else goes wrong around us, with that one person, we're safe in our own paradise. Our soul mate is someone who shares our deepest longings, our sense of direction. ~~When we're two balloons, and together our direction is up, chances are we've found the right person.~~ Our soul mate is the one who makes life come to life.

40. Untitled ~ Rumi

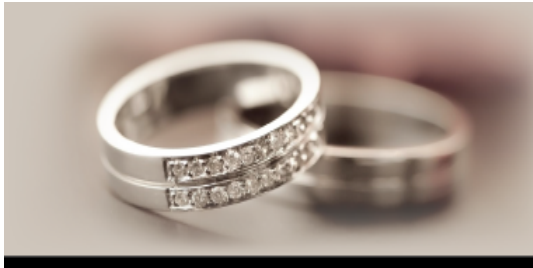
When I am with you, we stay up all night.
When you're not here, I can't go to sleep.
The minute I heard my first love story
I started looking for you, not knowing how blind I was.
Lovers don't finally meet somewhere.
They are in each other all along.
We are the mirror as well as the face in it.
We are tasting the taste this minute of eternity.
We are pain and what cures pain, both.
We are the sweet cold water and the jar that pours.
I want to hold you close so we can cry out with loving.
Two to the world, yet one.

41. Excerpt from "Les Misérables" ~ Victor Hugo

You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving. The great acts of love are done by those who are habitually performing small acts of kindness. We pardon to the extent that we love. Love is knowing that even when you are alone, you will never be lonely again. And great happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved. Loved for ourselves. And even loved in spite of ourselves.

42. Pueblo Indian Blessing

Before we met, you and I were halves unjoined except in the wide rivers of our minds. We were each other's distant shore, the opposite wings of a bird, the other half of a seashell. We did not know the other then, did not know our determination to keep alive the cry of one riverbank to the other. We were apart, yet connected in our ignorance of each other, like two apples sharing a common tree.



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I knew you existed long before you understood my desire to join my freedom to yours. Our paths collided long enough for our indecision to be swallowed up by the greater need of love. When you came to me, the sun surged towards the earth and moon escaped from darkness to bless the union of two spirits, so alike that the creator had designed them for life's endless circle.

Beloved partner, keeper of my heart's odd secrets, clothed in summer blossoms so the icy hand of winter never touches us, I thank you for this gift. Our joining is like a tree to earth, a cloud to sky and even more. We are the reason the world can laugh on its battlefields and rise from the ashes of its selfishness. Now hear me say, in this time, this place, this way -- I love you best of all.

43. Genesis 2:18-24

The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So

the Lord God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he

brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them

would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild

animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man.

So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and

closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from

the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said:

"This one, at last, is bone of my bones

and flesh of my flesh;

This one shall be called 'woman,'

For out of 'her man' this one has been taken."

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one

body.

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44. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their toil.

For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when

he falls and has not another to lift him up. Again, if two lie together,

they are warm; but how can one be warm alone? And though a man

might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him.

45. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a

clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I

have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor

and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not

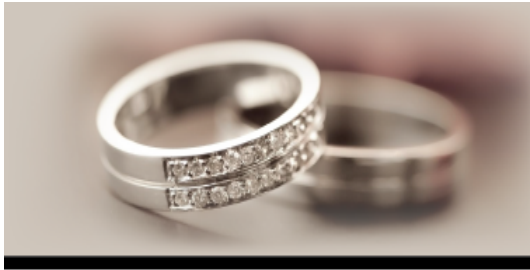
self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but

rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be

stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but

when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought



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like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

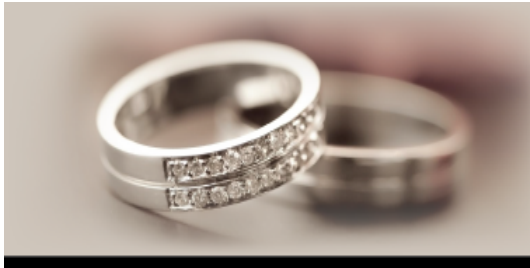
46. God's Love Letter ~ Author Unknown

Everyone longs to give themselves completely to someone. To have a deep soul relationship with another, to be loved thoroughly and exclusively. But God to the Christian says, "No, not until you're satisfied and fulfilled and content with living, loved by Me alone and giving yourself totally and unreservedly to Me, to have an intensely personal and unique relationship with Me alone.

"I love you, My child, and until you discover that only in Me is your satisfaction to be found, you will not be capable of the perfect human relationship that I have planned for you. You will never be united with another until you are united with Me -- exclusive of anyone or anything else, exclusive of any other desires or belongings.

"I want you to stop planning, stop wishing, and allow Me to bring it to you. You just keep watching Me, expecting the greatest things. Keep learning and listening to the things I tell you. You must wait.

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"Don't be anxious and don't worry. Don't look around at the things you think you want. Just keep looking off and away up to Me, or you'll miss what I have to show you.

"And then, when you're ready, I'll surprise you with a love far more wonderful than any you would ever dream. You see, until you are ready and until the one I have for you is ready, I am working this minute to have both of you ready at the same time, and until you are both satisfied exclusively with Me and the life I've prepared for you, you won't be able to experience the love that exemplifies your relationship with Me, and this is perfect love.

"And dear one, I want you to have this most wonderful love. I want you to see in the flesh a picture of your relationship with Me, and to enjoy materially and concretely the everlasting union of beauty and perfection and love that I offer you with Myself. Know I love you. I am God Almighty, believe and be satisfied."

47. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

To everything there is a season,
a time for every purpose under the sun.
A time to be born and a time to die;
a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
a time to kill and a time to heal ...
a time to weep and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance ...
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to lose and a time to seek;
a time to rend and a time to sew;
a time to keep silent and a time to speak;
a time to love and a time to hate;
a time for war and a time for peace.

48. Prayer of St. Francis Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;



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where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master, grant that I 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.