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## READINGS

### *I promise*

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.

*By Dorothy Colgan*

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OUR CEREMONY

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## ***My love***

When I met you, I had no idea  
How much my life was about to be changed...  
But then, how could I have known?

A love like ours happens once in a lifetime.  
You were a miracle to me,  
The one who was everything I had ever dreamed of,  
The one I thought existed only in my imagination.

And when you came into my life,  
I realised that what I had always thought was happiness  
Couldn't compare to the joy  
Loving you brought me.

You are part of everything I think and do and feel,  
And with you by my side, I believe that anything is possible.  
This day gives me a chance to thank you for the miracle of you.  
You are, and always will be,  
The love of my life.

*By Linda Lee Elrod*

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**OUR CEREMONY**

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***Love***

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 putting your hand into my  
heaped-up heart,  
And passing over  
All the foolish, 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 live  
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 a creed  
Could have done to make me good  
And more than any fate to make  
me happy.

You have done it  
Without a touch  
Without a word  
Without a sign  
You have done it  
By being yourself.

*By Roy Croft*

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**OUR CEREMONY**

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## *Love*

Love is a friendship that has caught fire.  
It is quiet understanding,  
Mutual confidence,  
Sharing and forgiving.  
It is loyalty through good and bad.  
It settles for less than perfection  
And makes allowances for human weakness.  
Love is content with the present.  
It hopes for the future and it doesn't brood over the past.  
It's the day-in and day-out chronicle of irritations, 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 don't have it,  
No matter what else there is,  
It is not enough,  
So search for it, ask god for it,  
And share it!

*Author Unknown*

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**OUR CEREMONY**

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### *The gift from the sea*

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 in 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.

*By Anne Morrow Lindbergh*

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### ***On love***

Love is a mighty power,  
A great and complete good.  
Love alone lightens every burden, and makes rough places smooths.  
It bears every hardship as though it were nothing, and renders  
All bitterness sweet and acceptable.

Nothing is sweeter than love, Nothing stronger,  
Nothing higher,  
Nothing wider,  
Nothing more pleasant,  
Nothing fuller or better in heaven or earth, for love is born of god.

Love flies, runs and leaps for joy  
It is free and unrestrained  
Love knows no limits, but ardently transcends all bounds.  
Love feels no burden, takes no account of toil,  
Attempts things beyond its strength.

Love sees nothing as impossible,  
For it feels able to achieve all things.  
It is strange and effective,  
While those who lack love faint and fail.

Love is not fickle and sentimental,  
Nor is it intent on vanities.  
Like a living flame and burning torch,  
It surges upward and surely surmounts every obstacle.

*By Thomas Kempis*

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***True love***

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.

*Unknown Author*

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***You gave me wings***

You gave me wings and I flew,  
You gave me voice and I sang,  
You gave me rhythm and I danced,  
You gave me heart and I loved,  
You gave me vision and I saw,  
You gave me sound and I heard,  
You gave me touch and I felt,  
You gave me life and I live.


*By George Betts*

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## *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 a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is at no time taking the other for granted

The courtship should not end with the honeymoon,

It should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together facing the world.

It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.

It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice,

But in the spirit of joy.

It is speaking words of appreciation and  
demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo  
or the wife to have wings of an angel.

It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is cultivating flexibility, patience,  
understanding and a sense of humour.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other and 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.

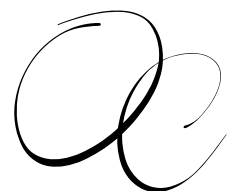
It is establishing a relationship in which the independence is equal,

Dependence is mutual and the obligation is reciprocal.

It is not only marrying the right partner, it is being the right partner.

*By Wilferd A Peterson*

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***We love each other***

We love each other –this is not the end result, but the beginning.  
Love begins when two people join together, to form a unity of souls,  
written in their hearts.

A new direction which requires acceptance, patience and understanding.

Acceptance for differences for the struggles and hardships,  
and most of all for change and growth.

Patience, to allow time to take its natural course to flow, to blossom.  
Flowers and love, thrive on the same things – time, warmth and care

Understanding is the wisdom of maturity,  
the combination of patience and acceptance.  
And so, my friend, I offer these things to you,  
As one –my gift to you.

*By Geroge Betts*

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### ***The love chapter***

Love is very patient, very kind  
Love knows no jealousy: love makes no parade, gives itself no airs,  
Is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful  
Love is gladdened by goodness  
Always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best,  
always hopeful, always patient.  
Love never disappears.

*Corinthians 13:4-8*

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Love knows no limit to its endurance,  
No end to its trust, No fading of its hope:  
It can outlast anything.  
Love still stands when all else has fallen.

*Corinthians 13: 7-8*

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***Hold fast with open hands***

When two people decide to marry, it is an acknowledgement of their desire to shape the journey of their life together, and experience the richness of life's lessons in unity, rather than alone.

It should not be seen as surrender of independence and freedom,  
But a recognition that they can still retain both these attributes  
In a union of mutual love and respect for each other as individuals.

The years that pass should see their love grow deeper  
as they grow wiser and the bonds of marriage become stronger.  
The quality of friendship is the golden thread that gently weaves  
Happiness and contentment into any marriage.

*(First person's name)* and *(Second person's name)* it is a privilege as well as a responsibility to join your lives together; sharing the years in fulfillment and development of the qualities that matter most.

Only you can bring your love and friendship to this marriage.  
Give them to each other as the greatest gift of all.

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### ***Closing reading***

By your choice you have made a marriage  
No matter what the demands on your  
Lives and your time,  
The meaning of your living is now  
Known through your love.

You must nurture each other to fullness  
And wholeness, renew yourselves  
In love and laughter,  
Maintain the capacity for wonder  
Spontaneity, humour, sensitivity,  
And save time for each other,  
To love each other more deeply  
And learn to love more fully  
The creation in which the mystery of love happens.

*By David Johnson*

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