

SECOND TIME AROUND

WELCOME

What a delight it is for all of us today as we gather here to celebrate the rebirth of love. We bear witness to the fact that this love was sent as a precious gift through the person who is standing next to you. This love that you now possess has brought sunshine into your lives, sunshine that once was hidden behind the clouds of the past. But now the past has dissolved into but a faint memory as you go forward into the future. When you share your vows with each other today, you will be forever changed. You are to each other a healer of the heart, a mender of the emotions, a source of solitude for the spirit.

CONSENT

(Groom) _____ and (Bride) _____, a new life lies before you. Are both of you ready to walk down this path together as husband and wife?

(Both answer): Yes.

Who presents (Bride) _____ to be married to (Groom) _____?

(The Escort shall say): Her Mother and I or I do or We do or Her family does or other.

(Bride gives bouquet to Maid of Honor.)

ADDRESS AND READINGS

(Groom) _____ and (Bride) _____, according to one poet, "Men and women are not angels, nor are they gods. Love can become hatred; joy, sorrow; and marriage, divorce. But human beings are not condemned to failure. Love can grow even in a real world. The wounds of sorrow can be healed, and new life built on the learnings of the old. This is the reason for our gathering today: to renew our faith in the strength of hope and the power of love." Today, I would like to share with you three thoughts, three principles to live by as you begin a new life together.

FIRST, I want to encourage you to look at life through the eyes of FAITH. It wasn't fate that brought you to this moment, it was faith...faith that you could experience life again. So today we not only celebrate your love, but life itself. Because when you chose to love again, you chose to live again. It is faith that allows you to go forward. You can go forward because you believe in yourselves and in each other and in the inherent goodness of your relationship. It is faith that causes you to laugh again, to smile again, to dare to dream again. It is through faith that you will be able to wipe out the old canvases of your lives and allow God, with His amazing artistic talent, to fill them with new color, harmony and beauty. Sometimes our lives are like a desert, and the desert is seemingly void of all life. But given a little rainfall, life springs into existence and beauty. Your lives may have been a desert, but through faith in God, faith in life, faith in love, faith in yourselves and in each other, your lives have sprung into something beautiful. So hold onto faith. Look at life through the eyes of FAITH.

Second, look at life through the eyes of HOPE. Never has hope been so alive. Never has hope been so vibrant. Never has hope been so strong. As you hold each other's hand right now, you are holding onto hope. And what is hope? Hope is a wish your heart makes for your dreams to come true. When you first met this person you are about to marry today, hope began to live again in your hearts. As your relationship began to grow, so too, hope began to grow. It was hope that began to open your eyes to see the possibilities of a new life...of forgetting what lies behind and pressing onward to what lies ahead. The hope that resides within you makes life an adventure. You have before you the adventure of creating something new, something special, something uniquely you. Before, you were alone, but now you are together. Hope says there is a second chance. In one sense, you are standing here before us today, with your backs to the past, facing the future. This inspires us to have hope. Hope lives again in this moment. It is this hope you have that will nurture the expectations of your hearts and will cause your relationship to blossom into something exciting and wonderful and good. Continue to see life through the eyes of HOPE.

Third, look at life through the eyes of LOVE. You have learned a lot about love. You have learned the ups and downs of love. You have learned that sometimes love hurts and can be very painful. It is the painful side of love that often causes us to withdraw and retreat. Then we begin to build walls around our hearts. When love approaches the door to our hearts, we shut the door and keep love out. When we keep love out, we keep life out. We cease to live life the way it was meant to be lived because we haven't experienced love the way we were meant to experience love. Now, all that has changed. When love approached the door of your hearts in the form of the person standing with you, you were willing to take the risk. You opened the door and you dared to love again. Because you rediscovered love, you will experience life in a richer and fuller way. Perhaps it is true, "love is lovelier the second time around." Love is such a simple word, but so profound when truly understood. Countless songs and poems and books have been written about love to help us comprehend its deepest meanings. The greatest description of love ever written says, "*Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud, never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way nor is it irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly ever notice when others do it wrong. It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out. This kind of love knows no boundaries to its tolerance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope, no limit to its endurance. It can outlast anything. Love is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has failed. These three things remain: faith, hope, and love...but the greatest of these is love.*"

As you stand on the threshold of a new beginning, look at life through the eyes of FAITH; look at life through the eyes of HOPE, and look at life through the eyes of LOVE. If you do, the past will grow dimmer, and the life that lies before you will become brighter.

WEDDING VOWS

(Bride/Groom) _____, (Option A) God has given us a second chance at happiness. (Option B) We have been given a second chance at happiness. Before I met you, I was only half a person with an emptiness in my heart, but your love has filled that void completely and I am whole again. Today is the first day of the rest of our lives. As we begin a new life together, I promise to give my future to you in faith, my heart to you in hope, and my life to you in love. (These vows are best if read simultaneously to each other.)

EXPLANATION OF THE RINGS

I will now ask you to seal the vows you just shared with each other by the giving and receiving of rings. The perfect circle of the ring symbolizes eternity. The gold is a symbol of all that is pure. It came from the ground as rough ore that had to be tried by a refiner's fire in order to melt away all the impurities. May these rings symbolize not only your eternal love for each other, but also the melting away of the past. So now, all that remains is the pure essence of your love.

EXCHANGE OF THE RINGS

(The Officiant shall say): May I have the token of (Groom's) _____ love for (Bride) _____?
(Officiant receives ring from Best Man.)

(The Officiant shall then say): (Groom) _____, please repeat after me.

(Bride) _____, I give you this ring / as a symbol of my love for you. / Just as this band encircles your finger, / may you always feel encircled by my love.

(The Officiant shall say): May I have the token of (Bride's) _____ love for (Groom) _____?
(Officiant receives ring from Maid of Honor.)

(The Officiant shall then say): (Bride) _____, please repeat after me.

(Groom) _____, I give you this ring / as a symbol of my love for you. / Just as this band encircles your finger, / may you always feel encircled by my love.

LIGHTING OF THE UNITY CANDLE

(Or Other Optional Wedding Tradition)

The lighting of the Unity Candle can represent many things. For you, (Groom) _____ and (Bride) _____, may it always be a reminder that the fires of love have once again been rekindled in your hearts. As you light this single candle from your two separate candles, we are reminded that prior to this moment, you each walked a separate path. Starting today, you will walk down life's path together as one...hand in hand, heart to heart, flesh to flesh, and soul to soul. May the path you walk together be filled with the warmth of love which is now symbolized by the lighting of this Unity Candle.

WEDDING BLESSING

May your marriage be blessed with faith for the future. May your hearts be filled with the happiness of hope. May your lives be enriched with an everlasting love. May this new beginning open the door to life's richest and deepest experiences. May you build a life together that will be a lasting testimony that a second chance at love is for all who are willing to put the past behind and move forward into the future with FAITH, HOPE and LOVE.

PRONOUNCEMENT

(Groom) _____ and (Bride) _____, as you exchanged vows with one another, we witnessed the miracle of faith. As you gave and received these rings, we witnessed the miracle of hope. As you seal this commitment with a kiss, we will witness the miracle of love. Sharing with you in these three miracles gives me great joy as I now pronounce you husband and wife.

KISS

(The Officiant shall say): (Groom) _____, you may kiss your Bride.

(Bride and Groom kiss.)

PRESENTATION

(Bride receives bouquet from Maid of Honor and the Officiant shall say): Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my privilege to introduce to you (Mr. and Mrs.) _____.