

PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE

THE REHEARSAL: - Is the time when every participant learns what he is to do and when he is to do it. This includes Choir, Ushers as well as the bridal party. The Assistant Pastor can supervise this a few days before.

2. **THE PROCESSION:** - At a pre-arranged signal the Minister, Pastors, Groom, Best man and Head usher will make their appearance in that order coming in from a side room, and take their places at the altar.

Next will come the Bridesmaids, Maid of honour, Ring bearer and/or Flower girls and the Bride on the left arm of her father, friend or whoever would represent her parent.

Note: The guests are to rise at the appearance of the Minister's group and at the entry of the Bridal party, and remain standing throughout the procession. When the Bride has reached the altar, the Minister will indicate that the guests are to be seated.

3. **DECORATION:** - The Head Usher and his team will have arrive two hours in advance of the time of the ceremony to put the final touch on the decoration of the Hall.

4. **Taking Photographs** during the ceremony should be controlled by the Ushers as not to disturb the important Spiritual comments. But Video camera if available, may be used in a very careful manner to cover the ceremony.

5. If the **Reception** or Entertaining the Guests followed immediately, there should be a different programme and different Co-ordinators for this. During this time, the wedding cake may be cut gifts or presents could be gathered for the Couple and the Couple may be given sometime to give brief testimonies each and the Choir may go-on entertaining the Guest.

COUNSELLING

(The couple-to-be, would have to book an appointment with the Senior Pastor that he may be able to counsel them on the topics that are out-lined below)

- a. The sacredness of the marriage and its continuing bond.
- b. The mutual adjustments necessary for a happy marriage.
- c. The preservation in the married life of the love, thoughtfulness, and mutual understanding of the courtship.
- d. Preparation for the physical aspects of married life, either by referral to the family physician, or competent and well-written books.
- e. An understanding about finances, household expenses, savings and tithing.
- f. Spiritual counsel as to the place Christ shall have in the heart, home, and life. Also the establishment of the family Altar, observance of the Lord's Supper and regular attendance at church.

Additional matters may be included as experience and discretion may dictate. Ample time should be allowed to make the conference meaningful and thorough.

ACFI - ORDER OF MARRIAGE SOLEMNATION

Minister: 'And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh.'

'Who so finds a wife find a good thing, and obtains favour of the Lord.'

Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband does safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.'

'Marriage has always been a joyous occasion, gladdened by the presence and blessing of the Lord Jesus, and crowned with honour and sacred dignity by God Himself. Because God meant that it should bring blessing and happiness to your lives, let us call down His Spirit upon you as you pledge yourselves, each to the other, making your Covenant and taking your vows before Him and His people.'

Minister: 'Let us pray.' – (First Pastor designated)

We are informed by the Word of God that:

Love suffers long, and is kind.
Love envies not, love expose not itself, is not puffed up,
Does not behave itself unseemly, seek not her own
Is not easily provoked, thinks no evil.
Rejoice not in iniquity, but rejoice in the truth.
Bears all things, believes all things.
Hopes all things, endures all things.
Love never fails.

'A union embodying such ideals is not to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Into such a union you come now to be joined.' – Minister.

Before I would proceed with this solemnisation process, I would like to ask this question from this congregation and the people that gathered here this day. Is there anyone here who knows why this marriage should not be solemnised? If there is, let that person say it now or be silent and be silent forever. – Minister.

'Let us pray.' – (Second Pastor designated)

Minister: 'And now _____ the Scripture says:
(Groom's first name)

'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; 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. So ought men to love their wives.'

Minister: 'And _____ the Scripture says:
(Bride's first name)

'Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 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. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.'

Minister: 'And to you both the Scripture says:

'Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.'

_____ do you take _____
(Groom's first name) (Bride's first name)

to be your wedded wife; promising to keep, cherish, and protect her, and be her faithful and true husband so long as you both shall live?

Groom: 'I do'

Minister:

_____ do you take _____
(Bride's first name) (Groom's first name)

to be your wedded husband; promising to love, honour, and obey him, and be his faithful and true wife so long as you both shall live?

Bride: 'I do'

Minister: 'Who gave this woman to be married to this man?'

(Father or friend): 'I do'

"This person would give the minister the right hand of the bride, then he shall retire to his appointed seat. Then the minister will move to join the right hand of the woman with the right hand of the man."

"The man facing the woman and holding her right hand, shall repeat after the Minister:"

“I” _____ take thee _____
(Groom’s first name) (Bride’s first name)
to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse,
for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us
part, according to God's holy ordinance, and thereto I give thee my troth.'

"The woman facing the man and holding him by the right hand, shall repeat after the Minister"

“I” _____ take thee _____
(Bride's first name) (Groom's first name)
to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for
worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, to cherish, and to obey,
till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance, and thereto I give thee my
troth.'

Minister: _____
(Groom's first name)

What token do you give in acknowledgement of these vows?'

Groom: "This ring.'

"Ring is handed to Minister by best man".

"Handing the ring to the groom, the Minister shall instruct him to place it on the ring finger of his bride's left hand".

Minister: 'This ring is of gold, and is precious; so let your love be your most cherished
earthly possession.'

Minister: _____,
(Bride's first name)

What token do you give in acknowledgement of your Vows?

Bride: "This ring.'

"Ring is handed to Minister by maid of honour. Handing the ring to the bride, the Minister shall instruct her to place it on the ring finger of her groom's left hand".

'These rings are a perfect and unbroken circle, the symbol of eternity. So may your love
be to all eternity.

Congregation: Amen!

Minister: - 'With these emblems of purity and endless devotion, showing how lasting
and imperishable is the faith now mutually pledged, you do each the other wed and
these marriage Vows you do here and now forever seal.'

Pastor (designated)

'Let us pray.'

"Then joining their right hands and then the Minister shall place his right hand upon theirs".

Minister: - 'Inasmuch as you have thus consented in holy wedlock, and have pledged the same before God and these friends, and have acknowledged your vows with the token of these rings. I, by virtue of the authority that is vested in me as a Minister of the Word of God, and by the laws of this commonwealth pronounce you husband and wife, united in the pure and holy bonds of wedlock. Those, whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.'

Pastor (designated):

'Let us pray'.

(The Music goes on and the couple embraces and kisses).

Minister:

"The final benediction.

Introduction of the couple as: - Mr. and Mrs_____ *(The family name).*

IT IS MY PLEASURE AND TO THE GLORY OF GOD TO INTRODUCE TO YOU
MR. AND MRS. _____

OTHER AREAS OF PLANNING

1. Introduction of the chief guest of honour.
2. Introduction of the chairman and members of the high table.
3. Matching in of the bridal train.
4. Chairman's opening remark
5. Refreshment
6. Cutting of the cake.
7. Dancing of the couple.
8. Toast of the Bride and Bridegroom
9. Marriage toast.
10. Presentation of gifts
11. Bridegroom's response.
12. Chairman's closing remark
13. Closing prayer/ Benediction.

ORDER OF PHOTOGRAPHING

1. COUPLE
2. BRIDE
3. BRIDEGROOM
4. COUPLE / MINISTERS
5. COUPLE / BEST MAN / CHIEF BRIDES MAID
6. COUPLE / BRIDAL TRAIN
7. COUPLE / SPECIALLY INVITED GUESTS
8. COUPLE / BRIDE & BRIDGROOM'S FAMILIES
9. COUPLE / THEIR DIFFERENT ACTIVITY GROUPS
10. COUPLE / MEN'S FELLOWSHIP
11. COUPLE / DAUGHTERS' OF ZION
12. COUPLE / MEN IN SUITS
13. COUPLE / MEN & WOMEN IN NATIVE DRESSES
14. COUPLE / FRIENDS
15. COUPLE / OTHER WELL WISHERS