

Published by the  
Methodist Church of New Zealand  
1967

BR 314

# THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

## THE DECLARATION

*At the day and time appointed, the persons to be married stand together before the minister, the man on the right hand, and the woman on the left. Then the minister says:*

We are gathered together here in the sight of God and in the present of this congregation to join this man and this woman in marriage. This is a way of life instituted by God, and Holy Scripture commands all men to hold it in honour. Our Lord Jesus Christ blessed it by his presence at Cana of Galilee.

Hear what our Lord says about it:

“From the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female’. ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. So they are no longer two but one.’ What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.”

Mark 10:6-9

Marriage is therefore not by any to be undertaken lightly or ill-advisedly, but reverently and seriously, duly considering the purposes for which it is ordained.

It is ordained:

That husband and wife may give to each other life-long companionship, help, and comfort, both in prosperity and in adversity;

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That God may hallow and direct the natural instincts and affections created by himself, and redeemed in Christ;

That children may be born and brought up in families in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God;

That, marriage being thus held in honour, human society may stand upon firm foundations.

*The minister may say:*

These two persons have come here to be made one in this holy estate. But if anyone here knows any just cause why they may not be married according to the discipline of the Church and the law of this land, let him now make it known, or else for ever hold his peace.

*If no impediment is alleged, he says to the persons who are to be married:*

I charge you both in the presence of God, that if either of you knows any reason why you may not be joined together in marriage, you do now confess it.

*If no impediment is admitted, the minister says:*

Let us pray.

Almighty and most merciful Father, without whose help we cannot do anything as we ought, we pray that thou wilt enrich these persons with thy grace, that they may enter into the marriage covenant as in thy sight, and truly keep the vows they are about to make, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Then the minister says to the man:*

A.B. will you have this woman to be your wife, to live together according to God's word in the holy state of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and keep her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all other, remain faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

*The man answers:*

I will.

*Then the minister says to the woman:*

C.D. will you have this man to be your husband, to live together according to God's word in the holy state of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and keep him, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all other, remain faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

*The woman answers:*

I will.

*Then the minister may say:*

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

*And the father, or whoever takes his place, answers:*

I do.

*Then the minister says to the man and woman:*

You will take each other by the right hand.

*And the man says after the minister:*

In the presence of God and before these witnesses I, A. take you, C., to be my 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 us do part.

*And the woman says after the minister:*

In the presence of God and before these witnesses I, C., take you, A., to be my 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 and to cherish, till death us do part.

*The minister, taking the ring, may pray:*

Bless, O Lord, the giving of this ring, that he who gives it and she who wears it may ever be faithful to each other, and continue in love so long as they both shall live; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The minister delivers the ring to the man, who puts it on the woman's finger and holds it. The man then says after the minister:*

This ring I give you in token of the vow and covenant now made between us; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*If the woman gives the man a ring, the ceremony is repeated.*

*Then the minister asks the people to rise, and says:*

Now that A.B. and C.D. have made a covenant together in marriage before God and this company, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, I declare them to be husband and wife.

*And he joins the right hands of the man and woman together and says:*

Whom, therefore, God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

*The man and the woman kneel, while the congregation remains standing, and the minister says:*

Most merciful and gracious God, our Father, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named; send thy blessing upon A. and C. whom we bless in thy name; that living faithfully together, they may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant between them made, and may remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy law; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully look upon you with favour; and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may so live together in this life that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. **Amen.**

## THE BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

*Here a hymn may be sung or psalm 67 said or sung (No. 9 in Ancient Hymns and Canticles).*

*The following or some other lesson is read from the New Testament:*

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

I Corinthians 13:4-8,13

*A brief address may be given.*

*Then the minister may say:*

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Christ have mercy upon us.**

Lord have mercy upon us.

**Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Lord, save thy servants.

**And let them put their trust in thee.**

O Lord, send help from thy holy place;

**And evermore defend them.**

Be unto them a tower of strength;

**From the face of their enemy.**

O Lord, hear our prayer:

**And let our cry come unto thee.**

*The minister may say one or more of the following prayers:*

Almighty and everlasting Father, who hast given to mankind the ordinance of marriage, and dost hallow it with thy blessing: grant that thy servants A. and C. now joined together as husband and wife, may bear each other's burdens, share each other's joys, and, together fulfilling the duties of their home, ever be faithful to each other in love and obedience to thy word; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who didst share at Nazareth the life of an earthly home: reign in the home of these thy servants as Lord and King; give them grace that they may minister to others as thou didst minister to men, and grant that by deed and word they may be witnesses of thy saving love to those amongst whom they live; for thy holy name's sake, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

O merciful Lord and heavenly Father, by whose gracious gift mankind is increased: bestow upon these thy servants the heritage and gift of children, and grant that they may live together so long in godly love and honour, that they may see their children brought up in Christian faith and virtue, to thy praise and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty Lord, and everlasting God, direct, sanctify and govern us in the ways of thy laws and in the works of thy commandments; that through thy most mighty protection we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. **Amen.**