



## Choosing Your Vows

Dear Couple:

Your vows basically come in two parts. The first is “The Charge,” otherwise known as the Declaration of Consent or Statement of Purpose.

Its function is to ask the question, “Are you ready to do this, and have you given your consent to the vows you will now say?”

The second part is your *actual* vow, and can be expressed in very formal/traditional or personal/contemporary ways.

It functions as your official response to the charge and is should reflect the manner in which *you* want to commit yourself to your spouse.



# The Charge

## Declaration of Consent or Statement of Purpose

### Traditional (One)

**Officiant:** \_\_\_\_\_ (groom), will you have this woman to be your wedded wife to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, keep yourself only for her so long as you both shall live?

**Groom:** I will.

**Officiant:** \_\_\_\_\_ (bride), will you have this man to be your wedded husband to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, keep yourself only for him so long as you both shall live?

**Bride:** I will.

### Traditional (Two)

**Officiant:** \_\_\_\_\_ (groom), do you purpose to live with \_\_\_\_\_ (bride) in a fashion consistent with God's design for marriage? Do you purpose to love her, honor her, and be faithful to her in times of personal need and personal blessing? Do you pledge, with God's help and to the best of your ability, to seek to establish and maintain honest, open, and loving communication between yourself and \_\_\_\_\_ (bride)? Forsaking all others, do you promise to remain faithful to \_\_\_\_\_ (bride) as long as you both shall live?

**Groom:** I do.

**Officiant:** \_\_\_\_\_ (bride), do you purpose to live with \_\_\_\_\_ (groom) in a fashion consistent with God's design for marriage? Do you purpose to love him, honor him, and be faithful to him in times of personal need and personal blessing? Do you pledge, with God's help and to the best of your ability, to seek to establish and maintain honest, open, and loving communication between yourself and \_\_\_\_\_ (groom)? Forsaking all others, do you promise to remain faithful to \_\_\_\_\_ (groom) as long as you both shall live?

**Bride:** I do.

### Alternative Declaration of Consent (One)

**Officiant:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, is it your intention to try to share with each other your joys and sorrows and all that the years might bring each another and to live as husband and wife?

**Response:** We do.

### Alternative Declaration of Consent (Two)

**Officiant :** “\_\_\_\_\_, will you take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your wife/husband? Do you commit yourself to her/his happiness and self-fulfillment as a person? Do you promise to love, honor, and trust her/him in sickness and in health, in adversity and prosperity, and to be true and loyal to her/him so long as you both shall live?”

**Response:** I do.

### Alternative Declaration of Consent (Three)

**Officiant :** “\_\_\_\_\_, will you have this woman/man to be your wife/husband to live together in marriage? Will you love her/him and give her/him your respect? Will you comfort, honor, and keep her/him in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow, so long as love and life shall endure?”

**Response:** I do.

### Alternative Declaration of Consent (Four)

**Officiant :** “\_\_\_\_\_, do you now choose \_\_\_\_\_ to be your wife/husband, to share your life openly with her/him, to speak truthfully and lovingly to her/him, to accept her/him fully as she/he is and delight who she/he is becoming, to respect her/his uniqueness, encourage her/his fulfillment, and compassionately support her/him through all the changes of your years together.”

**Response:** I do.

### Alternative Declaration of Consent (Five)

**Officiant:** \_\_\_\_\_, (bride) will you tell your family and friends why you are here today?

**Bride:** Friends and loved ones, I am here today to tell you all that I have found a person with whom I desire to share my life and hopes, with whom I yearn to form the greatest intimacy that two persons can share — the intimacy of love and of passion combined.

**Officiant:** \_\_\_\_\_, (groom) will you tell your family and friends why you are here today?

**Groom:** I am here because I have found a woman. \_\_\_\_\_, to love, to trust, to share with — a woman with whom I desire to build a home and family. I plan to give her of my possessions as well as my passions, and I wish all my loved ones to know that.



## Traditional Vows

### Traditional Vows

Repeat after me:

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, do take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my lawful 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.”

Repeat after me:

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, do take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my lawful 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 and to cherish till death do us part.”

### Updated Traditional Vows

*(Groom first; then bride)*

“As a further sign of your heartfelt desire, I invite you to repeat these words after me:

In the presence of God, and before these witnesses, I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_, 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; in joy and in sorrow; to love and to cherish and to be faithful to you alone, as long as we both shall live.”

“As a further sign of your heartfelt desire, I invite you to repeat these words after me:

In the presence of God, and before these witnesses, I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_, 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; in joy and in sorrow; to love and to cherish and to be faithful to you alone, as long as we both shall live.”

## Denominational Vows

### Basic Protestant Vows

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, take thee, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wedded wife/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 do us part, according to God’s holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith  
[or] pledge myself to you  
[or] plight thee my troth.”

### Lutheran Vows

“I take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband from this day forward to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us.”

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband, and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will respect, trust, help, and care for you; I will share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will try with you better to understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and the worst of what is to come, as long as we live.”

### Episcopal Vows

“\_\_\_\_\_, wilt thou have this woman/man to be the wedded wife/man to be thy wedded wife/husband to live together after God’s ordinance in the Holy Estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her/him? Comfort her/him, honor and keep her/him, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others keep thee only unto her/him as long as you both shall live?”

“In the name of God, \_\_\_\_\_, I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.”

### Methodist Vows

“Will you have this woman/man to be your wife/husband, to live together in a holy marriage? Will you love her/him, comfort her/him, honor and keep her/him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her/him as long as you both shall live?”

“In the name of God, I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/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, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.”

### Presbyterian Vows

“\_\_\_\_\_, wilt thou have this woman/man to be thy wife/husband, and wilt thou pledge thy faith to her/him, in all love and honor, in all duty and service, in all faith and tenderness, to live with her/him, and cherish her/him, according to the ordinance of God, in the holy bond of marriage?”

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wedded wife/husband, and I do promise and covenant, before God and these witnesses, to be your loving and faithful husband/wife, in plenty and want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, as long as we both shall live.”

### Baptist Vows

“Will you, \_\_\_\_\_, have \_\_\_\_\_ to be your wife/husband? Will you love her/him, comfort and keep her/him, and forsaking all others remain true to her/him, as long as you both shall live?”

I, \_\_\_\_\_, take thee, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband, and before God and these witnesses I promise to be a faithful and true wife/husband.”

### Roman Catholic

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.”

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, for my lawful wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health, until death do us part.”

For the giving of your vows of commitment, I invite you now to face each other and join hands.

## Non-Denominational Vows

### Ceremony One

“I love you. And I look forward to being your friend and companion, your wife/husband and lover for life. I promise to love you and respect you; to stand by you and be faithful to you; to be open and honest with you; and to always work toward our mutual growth. I promise this with the help of God, for the good times and the bad times, till death do us part.”

### Ceremony Two

I, \_\_\_\_\_, cherish you, \_\_\_\_\_,  
For being all that you are,  
All that you are not,  
And all that you can be.  
Know that I am here for you,  
And that your pain will be mine,  
And your joy mine as well.  
All I ask is you – your love – your trust – your caring.  
I choose you to be my wife/husband.

### Ceremony Three

“I take you to be my wife/husband, my friend, my love, and my lifelong companion: to share my life with yours. To build our dreams together, while allowing you to grow with your dreams; to support you through times of trouble, and rejoice with you in times of happiness; to treat you with respect, love, and loyalty through all the trials and triumphs of our lives together; and to give you all the love I can give my whole life long. This commitment is made in love, kept in faith, lived in hope, and eternally made new.”

### Ceremony Four

I, \_\_\_\_\_, choose you to be wife/husband, my friend, my love, the mother/father of my children. I will be yours in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, in failure and in triumph. I will cherish you and respect you, comfort you and encourage you, and together we shall live, freed and bound by our love.”

### Ceremony Five

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, as my wife/husband, to care for you and trust you, to cherish you and respect you, to forgive you and be forgiven by you. I will love you in good times and in bad, when we are together and when we are apart. I promise to be ever faithful, today and for all our tomorrows.”

### Ceremony Six

“\_\_\_\_\_, I promise to be faithful, supportive, and loyal and to give you my companionship and love throughout all the changes of our life. I vow to bring you happiness, and I will treasure you as my companion. I will celebrate the joys of life with you. I promise to support your dreams, and walk beside you offering courage and strength through all endeavors. From this day forward, I will be proud to be your wife/husband and your best friend.”

### Ceremony Seven

“I choose you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be wife/husband, as my friend and love. On this day I affirm the relationship we have enjoyed, looking to the future and to keep and strengthen it. I will be yours in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, in failure and in triumph. Together, we will dream, and live as one while respecting one another, we will stumble but restore each other, we will share all things. I will cherish, comfort, and encourage you, be open with you, and stay with you as long as I shall live.”

### Ceremony Eight

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, for my wedded wife/husband from this day forward, to have and to hold as equal partner in my life, to whom I give my deepest love and devotion. I humbly open my heart to you as a sanctuary of warmth and peace, where you may come and find a refuge of love and strength. I will love you enough to risk being hurt, trust you when I don't understand, weep with you in heartache, and celebrate life with you in joy. I will receive you as my equal throughout all of our days.”

### Ceremony Nine

“I \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be on other than yourself. Loving what I know of you, trusting what I do not yet know, I will respect your integrity and have faith in your abiding love for me, through all our years, and in all that life may bring us.”

### Ceremony Ten

In the presence of God, and before our witnesses and friends,  
I, \_\_\_\_\_ (groom’s name), with joy and in love, take you to be my wife, to be the mother of my children, and the companion of my days. I promise to fully share my life with you, through days of happiness or sadness, abundance or want. I pledge to you my unfailing love always.

In the presence of God, and before our witnesses and friends,  
I, \_\_\_\_\_ (bride’s name), with joy and in love, take you to be my husband, to be the father of my children, and the companion of my days. I promise to fully share my life with you, through days of happiness or sadness, abundance or want. I pledge to you my unfailing love always.

## Civil Vows

### Ceremony One

“ \_\_\_\_\_, do you take \_\_\_\_\_ as your lawfully wedded wife/husband?”

### Ceremony Two

“ \_\_\_\_\_, do you take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your legal wedded wife/husband, to have to hold from this day forward?”

### Ceremony Three

“ \_\_\_\_\_, I take you to be my lawfully wedded wife/husband. Before these witnesses I vow to love you and care for you as long as we both shall live.”