

JOHN & SALLY'S WEDDING

BY DAVID GOODMAN

An introductory note about this manuscript. There are many ways to do a wedding service. If you find anything here that is helpful, please use it freely with no obligation. Any additional ideas or ceremonies that you find effective please send to T-NetWorker so we can share them with our readers. Send those and any comments to David Goodman, T-Net@comcast.net or P.O. Box 460579, Aurora, CO 80046-0579

Some may wonder why I have formatted this in phrases rather than sentences. I find this method helps me familiarize myself with a manuscript. Since typically I do not have much time to master a wedding manuscript, this makes it much more accessible to me. I find the relative formality of a wedding allows me to be more tied to my manuscript than I would be in a sermon, yet this format makes it much easier to maintain periodic eye contact and still find my place easily when I return to the manuscript. Portions I will read outright, I leave in block paragraphs. For a complete description and rationale, please go to the T-NetWorker Newsletter, October 2003.

In addition, if I saw this manuscript offered by someone else I might wonder how I could ever turn out a finished product like this for each wedding. Please understand. I start with this as a template. I add and edit my comments for each service. And while you may find grammatical errors in this manuscript, the typical wedding manuscript I use (and don't publish) have many, many more. Thankfully, listeners at weddings are much more forgiving than readers so don't feel like you must produce a "finished" manuscript.

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PROCESSIONAL

(When Bride and Father reach the front, the Mother of the bride and the Parents of the Groom step forward one step)

(To the Couple)

What a Day!

It is finally here.
John and Sally.
It all started with that first date.
Who would have known
that first date would lead you both
up that isle
to stand together, here
before all these friends and family
to enter into the mystery and majesty
of a one flesh relationship?

(To the Congregation)

This is indeed a great day
and on behalf of
John and Sally
the Smith family
and the Jones family
I want to thank everyone here for coming
for sharing in our joy and celebration.

First, we want to begin by addressing our most honored guest
as we encircle John and Sally with our love
and our prayers.

Would you bow with me?

INVOCATION

Our Father
We stand here with John and Sally
asking you to be, not only guest of honor,
but to acknowledge you as author and finisher of all we do.

John and Sally stand here by faith in Jesus Christ.
And in doing so they look forward to seeing you some day
as part of the Bride of Christ
at heaven's grand Wedding celebration.
They now wish to be united in His name
They and we ask your blessing on all that we do.

We bow to you Lord,
In Jesus' name, Amen.

Please be seated *(Parents stay standing)*

(To the Couple)
Here you are, Sally
on your father's arm.
No father was ever prouder
to bring a daughter down the isle.
And well he should be.

And John, I remember Sally saying
that on your first date
when she slid her arm into yours
She thought this feels good.

PRESENTATION OF BRIDE AND GROOM

(To the Parents)
So now, she will let go of her father's arm
to take yours
to walk together wherever God, in His grace
may lead you both

While traditionally, we call this next part the "giving away"
As Christian parents

we have already given our children back to God
but our human tendency is to take back what we give to God

So it is good that once again you affirm that
your son and daughter belong to your Heavenly Father
so He can make them one flesh,
a new family, born on this day.

(Example of addressing my relationship to the Father of Bride)

Don, I don't think anyone has ever spoken harder words to me
with, with at the same time, more kindness and love, than you have.
I am grateful and it is an honor for me to be part of this very special occasion.

Who gives Sally to become one with John?

(Don and Mary answer "We do.")

George and Patricia, I've really enjoyed getting to know John. He reflects well on you.
Scripture is clear that a Man must also leave father and mother to become one with his
bride. Do you also give John to become one with Sally?

(George and Patricia answer "We do.")

To honor you, John and Sally have written these tributes.

GROOM'S TRIBUTE TO HIS PARENTS

First John writes this to you, George and Patricia
Mom and Dad,

I'm taking this time to let you know how much you mean to me.

You have given me everything I could ever need. More importantly, you have taught me how
to live. Growing up you instilled a sense of discipline, diligence, and love. I will take these
principals with me always, and will instill them in my family.

Thank you for all the sacrifices and decisions you have made in your lives for my benefit.
The support and guidance you have given me has led me to where I am today. You always
gave me the independence to make my own choices, but I always knew you were right there
ready to catch me if I fell.

I know you will continue to be behind me supporting me, and I will always remember where
home is.

BRIDE'S TRIBUTE TO HER PARENTS

Mom and Dad I want to acknowledge you during this rite of passage in my life. I could not be
standing here without your love, support and strength you have given me.

I can remember your smiling faces and love in each of the significant stepping-stones in my life. The time you have invested in me is invaluable and will be with me always.

You have taught me to live a life of excellence, with a heart for God through demonstration in your own lives.

Since the moment I was born, your hearts and hands have molded me into the person I am today. I have always been loved, taken care of, and listened to.

There are many times I did not affirm you for what you have done. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all those times I haven't, tell you how much I love you for every time I didn't, and let you know how much I admire you both.

You are such wonderful parents. I will always be grateful that God gave me to you.

(Then John and Sally greet their respective parents and then return to their position facing the pastor while parents take their seats.)

SCRIPTURE READING

Here are the scriptures that you John and Sally, have selected through the course of your preparation for marriage. These are God's words to guide and empower you in your life as one flesh.

(Selected Scripture Passages)

CHARGE TO THE GROOM

John:

You have many gifts. You are bright and a quick study. Sally has told me a number of things about you, all complimentary. But what impressed me most was when she said you "are the most unselfish and generous person" and that that "astounds her." I can't think of better qualities to bring into a marriage.

A lot of people think that the personal magnetism that happens between two people and tends to draw them irresistibly together should keep them together through out their marriage.

John, have you ever played with magnets? You know how magnets if lined up with opposite poles attract. then you know how if you switch that polarity the very same magnets repel.

That's how easy it is in a marriage.

The very same mysterious forces
that draw us together
will push us apart.
When that happens, only one magnet needs to move.
To be generous enough to make that move
is an admirable thing.

That's why, John, you are taking on
the hardest job you may ever face.

No truly great love just happened.

You work for a company that sells equipment for manufacturing
all sorts of engine parts, and handles and knobs that we use every day of our lives.
But these machines don't work by themselves
so you go and work with engineers
who have a design in mind and you show them
how they can make that design a reality with those machines they just bought.
These engineers aren't stupid; they just haven't learned the skills you have.

Now, before all these people
you are committing yourself to fashioning a love relationship
that in many ways exists in your imaginations.
And John, God has not only given you
all the ability you need
He has also given you the power of his Spirit indwelling you,
But you will need help.

I like the way you both have talked to me about
how you rely on each other for coaching and help.
That is the only way it happens.
Because as you craft this marriage you will see things about yourself
reflected back to you by each other
that you would just as soon not see.
But your marriage will only be as good
as you are willing to grow and change
and take coaching from each other
and also to bring others in
who can take you to next level.

What you are committing to
on this day.

To see your responsibility
first and foremost
Is to take all your abilities
in making dreams become realities
in overcoming challenges with creative solutions

to learn and master new skills
to pour those gifts and abilities
into crafting your one flesh relationship with Sally

In your work
you may be called upon to create
some incredibly useful
and beautiful objects
But nothing that has as much lasting significance for eternity
than well crafted, Godly one flesh relationship.

Your commitment today
is to love Sally
to serve and sacrifice yourself for her
as Christ sacrificed himself and serves the church . . .
to discern how God has uniquely created her
and gifted her to serve others.
Your commitment is to ensure that Sally
develops all the wonderful potential
God has placed within her.

John, is that the sort of husband you want to be? (Yes)
Will you be? (I will)
I believe your covenant is primarily with God
and then with Sally
to receive her as your wife
and to give yourself as her husband for all this life.
Do you make this as a sacred covenant with God
and then with Sally? (I do)

CHARGE TO THE BRIDE

Sally

You are the picture of a beautiful bride.

You know one thing I like about you and John?
When you said,
“I love how we work through problems like adults
and play like children.”

Don't ever lose either of those.
To play like children
is to not let grownup cares
rob you of the joy of God's creation
of the wonder of each other.
The Bible opens with a picture of Adam and Eve and God
together in childlike abandon.
Marriage, at its best, can give us a taste

of the openness and beauty God created us for
and one day, in Christ, we can experience once again.

But that does not happen without two people
willing to “work through problems like adults.”
And Sally perhaps have noticed
how many adults
have difficulty acting like adults . . .
. . . how many people play like adults
and work through problems like children.

I know because I’ve done it myself.

Sally, you love people.
You love to communicate.
In your job you work hard
to understand the message your clients need to get out
then you network
make visits,
calls
emails
to not just to get a message across
but to establish a relationship
that gives you the ability to communicate
the heart and soul of your client.
That takes intentionality,
Persistence,
and a beautiful spirit like you have.

So on those days
when you find you and John
have gotten it mixed up
and you are fighting like children.

You are committing yourself to use every skill you have
to repair and rebuild your relationship.

Sally, your commitment today
is to love John above all others
To study him
to understand how God has uniquely created him.
To know his heart . . .
the dreams, the joys, the fears . . .
to build him up
when life brings him suddenly back to earth.
To bind his wounds
to lift him up
to heal

to inspire.

To remember that your first responsibility
will always be to John.

With all the many demands life brings your way
put your best energy there.
Make your relationship a treasure chest
of love and joy,
experiences and adventures shared
of victories won
defeats endured and then overcome,
of dreams
of hopes
of carefully counted blessings.

Then this treasure chest
will be an abundance that those you love
will draw from whenever they are in need.

Your friends,
extended family
and all whom you meet
will draw from these riches
the accumulated treasure of your relationship.

Sally, is that the sort of wife you want to be? (Yes)
Will you be? (I will)
I believe your covenant is primarily with God
and then with John
to receive him as your husband
and to give yourself as his wife for all this life
Do you make this as a sacred covenant with God
and then with John? (I do)

VOWS Then turn to each other
and repeat these vows you have prepared.

John, repeat after me:
I, John, take you Sally,
to be my wedded wife.
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better or 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,
to which I pledge you my faithfulness.

Sally:

I, Sally, take you John,
to be my wedded husband.
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better or 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,
to which I pledge you my faithfulness.

RING VOWS

John (*Frank hands over the ring*)

As Christ loved and served the church
so I promise
to love, serve and give my life for you.
This ring I give thee
in token and pledge
of our constant faith
and abiding love.

Sally (*Jessica hands over the ring*)

As Christ loved and served the church
so I promise
to love, serve and give my life for you.
This ring I give thee
in token and pledge
of our constant faith
and abiding love.

PRAYER

Father,
We bow before you
in worship and adoration
You are the Creator of all humanity
And it was you who ordained marriage
as a relationship you will bless and prosper.
We ask that you would unite **John** and **Sally**
as one flesh

That they might grow to know in an ever-increasing way
the joy that committed love can bring
We pray your strength for every challenge
your wisdom for every problem
your grace in every circumstance
your blessing as they endeavor to find
your best
In our Savior's name
Amen

CANDLE LIGHTING

Now two candles
kindled from two separate flames
merge into one.

(Music begins immediately after my intro above). (I go down to the front. After the candle lighting the couple turns to face the congregation while I stand 10-15 feet in front of them to one side).

PRONOUNCEMENT

Now, in accordance with the laws of this state
and by the authority given me by the church
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
I now pronounce you husband and wife.

You may kiss the bride.

BENEDICTION

Now John and Sally
go out into the world in peace
have courage
hold on to what is good
return no one evil for evil
strengthen the fainthearted
honor everyone
love and serve the Lord
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit
May the Lord bless you and keep you
the Lord be kind and gracious to you
the Lord look upon you with favor
and give you peace.
Amen

Let me introduce to you . . . Mr. And Mrs. John Paul Jones

RECESSIONAL