



READINGS AND BLESSINGS



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Contents

Blessing For A Marriage", by James Dillet Freeman	3
Benediction of the Apaches	4
On Love by Thomas a Kempis	4
Marriage Joins Two People in the Circle of Its Love - by Edmund O'Neill	5
Time in A Bottle by Jim Croce	6
A Good Wedding Cake	6
CORINTHIANS 13.....	7
Marriage.....	8
From "The Irrational Season", by Madeleine L'Engle	9
Love Is Friendship Caught Fire by Laura Hendricks.....	9
A History of Love by Diane Ackerman.....	10
On Love by Thomas a Kempis	10
Dr Seuss.....	11
You know you're in love when you can't fall asleep because reality is finally better than your dreams	11
I Love You by Roy Croft	11
excerpt from "The Art of a Good Marriage", by Wilferd Arlan Peterson	12
I Am Love.....	13
Looking For Your Face by Rumi.....	14
Sonnet XLIII", from "Sonnets from the Portuguese by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.....	15
Sooner or Later	15
Hug O' War by Shel Silverstein.....	15
Sonnet 17 by Pablo Neruda	16
Desiderata by Max Erhmann (1927)	17
excerpt from "Any Husband or Wife", by Carole Haynes	17
Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare.....	18
Sonnet 116 by William Shakespeare.....	18
The Merchant of Venice Act 4, Scene 1 (spoken by Portia), by William Shakespeare	19
From "The Hymn of the Universe", by Teilhard de Chardin	19
"On Love" and "On Marriage" ,.....	20
excerpts from "The Prophet", by Khalil Gibran	20
"Friendship"	21
"The Magic of Love", by Helen Steiner Rice.....	22
"The Invitation", by Oriah Mountain Dreamer	23
"Why Marriage", by Mari Nichols.....	24

“Foundations Of Marriage”, by Regina Hill.....	25
From “ <i>The Hungering Dark</i> ”, by Frederick Buechner	26
Ceiling.....	26
From the <i>The Alchemist</i>	27
From <i>The Awakened Heart</i>	27
True Love Defined	28
Untitled Selections:.....	29
"The Key to Love"	30
"If Thou Must Love Me"	31
"The Promises of Marriage"	32
"The Promise"	33
"Prayer of Love"	33
“Beyond the Reflection”	34
"A Lifetime of Love"	34
A Reflection on Unity	34
Hand Blessing by Rev Daniel L Harris	35
Mouthful of Forevers	36
Wishes On Second Marriage.....	37
Songs about second love	37
"The Second Time Around"	37
"Scars And All.....	38
"I'd Love To Be Your Last"	39
If you're marrying the same person again!.....	40
Second Time Love	40
A Blessing for The Journey”	41
To Love is Not to Possess.....	42
Union.....	43

Blessing For A Marriage",_by James Dillet Freeman

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring, and may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding.

May you always need one another -- not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you to know your fullness. A mountain needs a valley to be complete. The valley does not make the mountain less, but more. And the valley is more a valley because it has a mountain towering over it.

So let it be with you and you.

May you need one another, but not out of weakness.

May you want one another, but not out of lack.

May you entice one another, but not compel one another.

May you embrace one another, but not out encircle one another.

May you succeed in all-important ways with one another, and not fail in the little graces.

May you look for things to praise, often say, "I love you!" and take no notice of small faults.

If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back.

May you enter into the mystery that is the awareness of one another's presence -- no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side, and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities.

May you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy.

May you have love, and may you find it loving one another."

Benediction of the Apaches

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter to the other.

Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.

Now there is no more loneliness for you, for each of you will be companion to the other.

Now you are two bodies, but there is only one Life before you.

Go now to your dwelling place, to enter into the days of your togetherness.

And may your days be good and long upon the earth

On Love by Thomas a Kempis

Love is a mighty power, a great and complete good.

Love alone lightens every burden, and makes rough places smooth.

It bears every hardship as though it were nothing, and renders all bitterness sweet and acceptable.

Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better in heaven or earth; for love is born of God.

Love flies, runs and leaps for joy.

It is free and unrestrained.

Love knows no limits, but ardently transcends all bounds.

Love feels no burden, takes no account of toil, attempts things beyond its strength.

Love sees nothing as impossible, for it feels able to achieve all things.

It is strange and effective, while those who lack love faint and fail.

Love is not fickle and sentimental, nor is it intent on vanities.

Like a living flame and a burning torch, it surges upward and surely surmounts every obstacle.

Marriage Joins Two People in the Circle of Its Love - by Edmund O'Neill

Marriage is a commitment to life, to the best that two people can find and bring out in each other.

It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other human relationship can equal; a joining that is promised for a lifetime.

Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships.

A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener, and critic.

There may come times when one partner is heartbroken or ailing, and the love of the other may resemble the tender caring of a parent for a child.

Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller; memories are fresher; commitment is stronger; even anger is felt more strongly, and passes away more quickly.

Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid.

It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing love through the seasons of life.

When two people pledge to love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique to themselves, which binds them closer than any spoken or written words.

Marriage is a promise, a potential, made in the hearts of two people who love, which takes a lifetime to fulfill.

Time in A Bottle by Jim Croce

If I could save time in a bottle, the first thing that I'd like to do, is to save every day 'till eternity passes away, just to spend them with you.

If I could make days last forever; if words could make wishes come true; I'd save every day like a treasure and then, again, I would spend them with you.

If I had a box just for wishes, and dreams that had never come true; the box would be empty, except for the memory of how they were answered by you.

But there never seems to be enough time to do the things you want to do, once you find them.

I've looked around enough to know that you're the one I want to go through time with.

A Good Wedding Cake

Author Unknown

4lb of love.

1lb butter of youth.

½lb of good looks.

1lb sweet temper.

1lb of blindness of faults.

1lb of self forgetfulness.

1lb of pounded wit.

1lb of good humour.

2 tablespoons of sweet argument.

1 pint of rippling laughter.

1 wine glass of common sense.

1oz modesty.

Put the love, good looks and sweet temper into a well furnished house.

Beat the butter of youth to a cream, and mix well together with the blindness of faults.

Stir the pounded wit and good humour into the sweet argument, then add the rippling laughter and common sense.

Work the whole together until everything is well mixed, and bake gently for ever.

CORINTHIANS 13

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, Love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It does not dishonour others, it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails.

But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled, where this is knowledge, it will pass away.

For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears.

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: Faith, Hope and Love. But the greatest of these is LOVE.

Marriage

Edmund O'Neill

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From "The Irrational Season", by Madeleine L'Engle

Ultimately there comes a time when a decision must be made.

Ultimately two people who love each other must ask themselves how much they hope for as their love grows and deepens, and how much risk they are willing to take.

It is indeed a fearful gamble.

Because it is the nature of love to create, a marriage itself is something which has to be created.

To marry is the biggest risk in human relations that a person can take.

If we commit ourselves to one person for life this is not, as many people think, a rejection of freedom; rather it demands the courage to move into all the risks of freedom, and the risk of love which is permanent; into that love which is not possession, but participation.

It takes a lifetime to learn another person.

When love is not possession, but participation, then it is part of that co-creation which is our human calling.

Love Is Friendship Caught Fire by Laura Hendricks

Love is friendship caught fire; it is quiet, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving.

It is loyalty through good and bad times.

It settles for less than perfection, and makes allowances for human weaknesses.

Love is content with the present, hopes for the future, and does not brood over the past.

It is the day-in and day-out chronicles of irritations, problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories, and working toward common goals.

If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack. If you do not have it, no matter what else there is, it is not enough."

A History of Love by Diane Ackerman

Love.

What a small word we use for an idea so immense and powerful.

It has altered the flow of history, calmed monsters, kindled works of art, cheered the forlorn, turned tough guys to mush, consoled the enslaved, driven strong women mad, glorified the humble, fueled national scandals, bankrupted robber barons, and made mincemeat of kings.

How can love's spaciousness be conveyed in the narrow confines of one syllable?

Love is an ancient delirium, a desire older than civilization, with taproots spreading into deep and mysterious days.

The heart is a living museum. In each of its galleries, no matter how narrow or dimly lit, preserved forever like wondrous diatoms, are our moments of loving, and being loved.

On Love by Thomas a Kempis

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Dr Seuss

We are all a little weird and life's a little weird, and when we find someone whose weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up with them and fall in mutual weirdness and call it love.

You know you're in love when you can't fall asleep because reality is finally better than your dreams

I Love You by Roy Croft

I love you, not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you.

I love you, not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me.

I love you, for the part of me that you bring out.

I love you, for putting your hand into my heaped-up heart, and passing over all the foolish, weak things that you can't help dimly seeing there, and for drawing out, into the light, all the beautiful belongings that no one else had looked quite far enough to find.

I love you, because you are helping me to make of the lumber of my life, not a tavern, but a temple.

Out of the works of my every day, not a reproach, but a song.

I love you, because you have done more than any creed could have done to make me good, and more than any fate could have done to make me happy.

You have done it without a touch, without a word, without a sign.

You have done it by being yourself. Perhaps that is what being a friend means, after all.

excerpt from "The Art of a Good Marriage", by Wilferd Arlan Peterson

A good marriage must be created.

In marriage the "little" things are the big things.

It is never being too old to hold hands.

It is remembering to say, "I love you" at least once a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is having a mutual sense of values, and common objectives.

It is standing together and facing the world.

It is forming a circle that gathers in the whole family.

It is speaking words of appreciation, and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is not only marrying the right person -- it is being the right partner.

I Am Love

Some say I can fly on the wind, yet I haven't any wings.

Some have found me floating on the open sea, yet I cannot swim.

Some have felt my warmth on cold nights, yet I have no flame.

And though you cannot see me, I lay between two lovers at the hearth of fireplaces.

I am the twinkle in your child's eyes.

I am hidden in the lines of your mother's face.

I am your father's shield as he guards your home.

And yet... Some say I am stronger than steel, yet I am as fragile as a tear.

Some have never searched for me, yet I am around them always.

Some say I die with loss, yet I am endless.

And though you cannot hear me, I dance on the laughter of children.

I am woven into the whispers of passion.

I am in the blessings of Grandmothers.

I embrace the cries of newborn babies.

And yet... Some say I am a flower, yet I am also the seed.

Some have little faith in me, yet I will always believe in them.

Some say I cannot cure the ill, yet I nourish the soul.

And though you cannot touch me, I am the gentle hand of the kind.

I am the fingertips that caress your cheek at night.

I am the hug of a child. I am love.

Looking For Your Face by Rumi

From the beginning of my life I have been looking for your face, but today I have seen it.

Today I have seen the charm, the beauty, the unfathomable grace of the face that I was looking for.

Today I have found you, and those who laughed and scorned me yesterday are sorry that they were not looking as I did.

I am bewildered by the magnificence of your beauty, and wish to see you with a hundred eyes.

My heart has burned with passion and has searched forever for this wondrous beauty that I now behold.

I am ashamed to call this love human, and afraid of God to call it divine.

Your fragrant breath, like the morning breeze, has come to the stillness of the garden.

You have breathed new life into me.

I have become your sunshine, and also your shadow.

My soul is screaming in ecstasy.

Every fibre of my being is in love with you.

Your effulgence has lit a fire in my heart, and you have made radiant for me the earth and sky.

My arrow of love has arrived at the target.

I am in the house of mercy, and my heart is a place of prayer.”

Sonnet XLIII", from "Sonnets from the Portuguese by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, -- I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! -- and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Sooner or Later

Sooner or later we begin to understand that love is more than verses on valentines, and romance in the movies.

We begin to know that love is here and now, real and true, the most important thing in our lives.

For love is the creator of our favorite memories, and the foundation of our fondest dreams.

Love is a promise that is always kept, a fortune that can never be spent, a seed that can flourish in even the most unlikely of places.

And this radiance that never fades, this mysterious and magical joy, is the greatest treasure of all -- one known only by those who love."

Hug O' War by Shel Silverstein

I will not play at tug o' war. I'd rather play at hug o' war, where everyone hugs instead of tugs, where everyone giggles, and rolls on the rug, where everyone kisses, and everyone grins, and everyone cuddles, and everyone wins.

Sonnet 17 by Pablo Neruda

I don't love you as if you were the salt-rose, topaz or arrow of carnations that propagate fire: I love you as certain dark things are loved, secretly, between the shadow and the soul.

I love you as the plant that doesn't bloom, and carries hidden within itself the light of those flowers, and thanks to your love, darkly in my body lives the dense fragrance that rises from the earth.

I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where, I love you simply, without problems or pride: I love you in this way because I know no other way of loving but this, in which there is no I or you; so intimate that your hand upon my chest is my hand, so intimate that when I fall asleep it is your eyes that close.

Desiderata by Max Erhmann (1927)

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant, they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery.

But let not this blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams; it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy."

excerpt from "Any Husband or Wife", by Carole Haynes

"Let us be guests in one another's house, with a deferential "No" and courteous "Yes." Let us take care to hide our foolish moods behind a certain show of cheerfulness. Let us avoid all sullen silences. We should find fresh and sprightly things to say. I must be fearful lest you find me dull, and you must dread to bore me any way. Let us knock gently at each other's heart, glad of a chance to look within—and yet let us remember that to force one's way is the unpardoned breach of etiquette. So we shall be host and hostess, until all need for entertainment ends. We shall be lovers when the last door shuts. But what is better still, we shall be friends."

Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade
Which in eternal lines to time thou grow'st
So long as men can breathe and eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

Sonnet 116 by William Shakespeare

"Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
Oh no, it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering barque
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come.
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me prov'd,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved."

The Merchant of Venice Act 4, Scene 1 (spoken by Portia), by William Shakespeare

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, [Jew,]
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy."

From "The Hymn of the Universe", by Teilhard de Chardin

"Only love can bring individual beings to their perfect completion, as individuals, by uniting them one with another, because only love takes possession of them and unites them by what lies deepest within them. This is simply a fact of our everyday experience. For indeed at what moment do lovers come into the most complete possession of themselves if not when they say that they are lost in one another? And is not love all the time achieving - in couples, in teams, all around us - the magical and reputedly contradictory feat of personalizing through totalizing? And why should not what is thus daily achieved on a small scale be repeated one day on world-wide dimensions?

Humanity, the spirit of the earth, the synthesis of individuals and peoples, the paradoxical conciliation of the element with the whole, of the one with the many: all these are regarded as utopian fantasies, yet they are biologically necessary; and if we would see them made flesh in the world what more need we do than imagine our power to love growing and broadening, till it can embrace the totality of human beings and of the earth?"

"On Love" and "On Marriage" ,

excerpts from "The Prophet", by Khalil Gibran

"On Love" "Then said the student Almitra, Speak to us of love. And he raised his head and looked upon the people, and there fell a stillness upon them. And with a great voice he said: When love beckons to you, follow him, though his ways are hard and steep. And when his wings enfold you yield to him, though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you. And when he speaks to you believe in him, though his voice may shatter your dreams as the north wind lays waste the garden. For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is he for your pruning. Even as he ascends to your height and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the sun, so shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth."

"On Marriage" "Then Almitra spoke again and said, and what of Marriage master? And he answered saying: You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore. You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days. Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God. But let there be spaces in your togetherness, and let the winds of the heavens dance between you. Love one another, but make not a bond of love: let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls. Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone."

"On Children" , by Khalil Gibran "And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, 'Speak to us of Children.' And he said, 'Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They come through you, but not from you. And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love, but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies, but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward, nor tarries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children, as living arrows, are sent forth. The Archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far. Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness, for even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.'"

"You Were Born Together", by Khalil Gibran

"You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore. You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days. Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God. But let there be spades in your togetherness. And let the winds of the heavens dance between you. Love one another but make not a bond of love. Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls. Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each of you be alone, even as the strings of the lute are alone though they quiver with the same music. Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping. For only the land of Life can contain your hearts. And stand together, yet not too near together, for the pillars of the temple stand apart, and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow."

"Friendship" by Judy Bielicki

"It is often said that it is love that makes the world go round.

However, without doubt, it is friendship which keeps our spinning existence on an even keel.

True friendship provides so many of the essentials for a happy life-it is the foundation on which to build an enduring relationship, it is the mortar which bonds us together in harmony, and it is the calm, warm protection we sometimes need when the world outside seems cold and chaotic.

True friendship holds a mirror to our foibles and failings, without destroying our sense of worthiness.

True friendship nurtures our hopes, supports us in our disappointments, and encourages us to grow to our best potential. (Bride) and (Groom) came together as friends.

Today, they pledge to each other not only their love, but also the strength, warmth and, most importantly, the fun of true friendship."

"The Magic of Love", by Helen Steiner Rice

“Love is like magic, and it always will be,
For love still remains life's sweet mystery.

Love works in ways that are wondrous and strange,
And there's nothing in life that love cannot change!

Love can transform the most commonplace
Into beauty and splendor and sweetness and grace.

Love is unselfish, understanding and kind,
For it sees with its heart, and not with its mind.

Love is the answer that everyone seeks;
Love is the language that every heart speaks.

Love can't be bought, it is priceless and free.
Love, like pure magic, is life's sweet mystery!!”

"The Invitation", by Oriah Mountain Dreamer

"It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the center of your own sorrow, if you have been opened by life's betrayals, or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pain.

I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide or fade it or fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own; if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, be realistic, or to remember the limitations of being a human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you're telling me is true. I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself; if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul.

I want to know if you can be faithful and therefore be trustworthy. I want to know if you can see the beauty even when it is not pretty everyday, and if you can source your life from its presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and still stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the silver of the full moon, "Yes!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done for the children.

It doesn't interest me who you are, or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away.

I want to know if you can be alone with yourself, and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments. "

“Why Marriage”, by Mari Nichols

Because to the depths of me, I long to love one person with all my heart, my soul, my mind, my body...

Because I need a forever friend to trust with the intimacies of me, Who won't hold them against me, Who loves me when I'm unlikable, Who sees the small child in me, and Who looks for the divine potential of me...

Because I need to cuddle in the warmth of the night with someone who thanks God for me; with someone I feel blessed to hold...

Because marriage means opportunity to grow in love in friendship...

Because marriage is a discipline to be added to a list of achievements...

Because marriages do not fail, people fail when they enter into marriage expecting another to make them whole...

Because, knowing this, I promise myself to take full responsibility for my spiritual, mental and physical wholeness.

I create me.

I take half of the responsibility for my marriage.

Together we create our marriage...

Because with this understanding, the possibilities are limitless.

“Foundations Of Marriage”, by Regina Hill

Love, trust, and forgiveness are the foundations of marriage.

In marriage, many days will bring happiness, while other days may be sad.

But together, two hearts can overcome everything...

In marriage, all of the moments won't be exciting or romantic, and sometimes worries and anxiety will be overwhelming.

But together, two hearts that accept will find comfort together.

Recollections of past joys, pains, and shared feelings will be the glue that holds everything together during even the worst and most insecure moments.

Reaching out to each other as a friend, and becoming the confidant and companion that the other one needs, is the true magic and beauty of any two people together.

It's inspiring in each other a dream or a feeling, and having faith in each other and not giving up...even when all the odds say to quit.

It's allowing each other to be vulnerable, to be himself or herself, even when the opinions or thoughts aren't in total agreement or exactly what you'd like them to be.

It's getting involved and showing interest in each other, really listening and being available, the way any best friend should be.

Exactly three things need to be remembered in a marriage if it is to be a mutual bond of sharing, caring, and loving throughout life:

love, trust, and forgiveness.

From "*The Hungering Dark*", by Frederick Buechner

"Matrimony is called holy, because this brave and fateful promise of a man and a woman, to love and honor and serve each other through thick and thin, looks beyond itself to more fateful promises still, and speaks mightily of what human life at its most human and most alive and most holy must always be.

Every wedding is a dream, and every word that is spoken there means more than it says, and every gesture - the clasping of hands, the giving of rings - is rich with mystery.

And so it [is that] we hope with every bride and groom, that the love they bear one another, and the joy they take in one another, may help them grow in love for this whole world where their final joy lies.

Ceiling

You are holding up a ceiling with both arms. It is very heavy, but you must hold it up, or else it will fall down on you.

Your arms are tired, terribly tired, and as the day goes on, it feels as if either your arms or the ceiling will soon collapse.

But then, unexpectedly, something wonderful happens: Someone, a man or a woman, walks into the room and holds their arms up to the ceiling beside you.

So you finally get to take down your arms.

You feel the relief of respite, the blood flowing back to your fingers and arms.

And when your partner's arms tire, you hold up your own to relieve him again.

And it can go on like this for many years without the house falling.

From the The Alchemist

"When he looked into her dark eyes, and saw that her lips were poised between a laugh and silence, he learned the most important part of the language that all the world spoke -- the language that everyone on earth was capable of understanding in their heart. It was love. Something older than humanity, more ancient than the desert. Something that exerted the same force whenever two pairs of eyes met, as had theirs here at the well. She smiled, and that was certainly an omen -- the omen he had been awaiting, without even knowing he was, for all his life. The omen he had sought to find with his sheep and in his books, in the crystals and in the silence of the desert.

"It was the pure Language of the World. It required no explanation, just as the universe needs none as it travels through endless time. What the boy felt at that moment was that he was in the presence of the only woman in his life, and that, with no need for words, she recognized the same thing. He was more certain of it than of anything in the world. He had been told by his parents and grandparents that he must fall in love and really know a person before becoming committed. But maybe people who felt that way had never learned the universal language. Because, when you know that language, it's easy to understand that someone in the world awaits you, whether it's in the middle of the desert or in some great city. And when two such people encounter each other, and their eyes meet, the past and the future become unimportant. There is only that moment, and the incredible certainty that everything under the sun has been written by one hand only. It is the hand that evokes love, and creates a twin soul for every person in the world. Without such love, one's dreams would have no meaning."

-- *Paulo Coelho*

From The Awakened Heart

by Gerald May

"There is a desire within each of us, in the deep center of ourselves that we call our heart. We were born with it, it is never completely satisfied, and it never dies. We are often unaware of it, but it is always awake. It is the human desire for love. Every person in this earth yearns to love, to be loved, to know love. Our true identity, our reason for being, is to be found in this desire...

...love is the 'why' of life: why we are functioning at all, what we want to be efficient for... I am convinced it [love] is the fundamental energy of the human spirit, the fuel on which we run, the wellspring of our vitality. And grace, which is the flowing, creative activity of love itself, is what makes all goodness possible. Love should come first; it should be the beginning of and the reason for everything."

True Love Defined

by Cori and Jason Kupisch

(an original poem written by this couple and read at their wedding on 9-27-08)

True love involves admiring one
Despite their many flaws
Cherishing their talents
Accepting their faux pas

They love each other's boisterous laugh
And silly sense of humor
They love each other's intellect,
And calm hippie-like demeanor

They each love the others conversation
Their patience, integrity and strength
They love how the other challenges them
To go to every length

Though neither one is perfect
They pick up each other's slack
And make up for each perfection
That the other person may lack

Forgiving with great ease
Because they both know
There is so much to love
And much more time to grow

All that said and done
I am sure you would admit
That their love is truly complete and enduring
They are each other's perfect fit.

Untitled Selections:

Love is a temporary madness, it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides. And when it subsides you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part.

Because this is what love is.

Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of eternal passion.

That is just being "in love" which any fool can do.

Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident. Those that truly love, have roots that grow towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossom have fallen from their branches, they find that they are one tree and not two.

Out of all the hosts of earth, these two have come, have looked in each other's faces, and have seen their uniqueness and their oneness. Here they have pledged each to the other, to make their future common. Out of the depth of their love they will make their home and in it rear their children. Out of their wisdom they will face the varied experiences of life and draw from each event of the day that which will make them stronger for the next day's adventure. Out of their faith in the love with which they make this venture, may they find growing a courage sufficient to meet all the perilous chance and change which must touch us all.

May all their living be so bright and shining that no darkness about, no sorrow or separation, ever dim the light by which they walk on life's road. Throughout all the days of their years may they remember this day with tenderness and joy, remember it as the day when the glory and the beauty of our precious mortality began to open before them.

But of deep love is the desire to give. More than the living touch of warmth and fire,

More than the shy comfort of the little flesh and hands; It is the need to give Down to the last dark kernel of the heart, Down to the final gift of mind; It is a need to give you that release which comes only of understanding, and to know trust without whimpering doubt and fear.

"The Key to Love"

by Anon, 1st century China

*"The key to love is understanding ...
The ability to comprehend not only the spoken word,
but those unspoken gestures,
the little things that say so much by themselves.*

*The key to love is forgiveness
to accept each others faults and pardon mistakes,
without forgetting, but with remembering
what you learn from them.*

*The key to love is sharing ...
Facing your good fortunes as well as the bad, together;
both conquering problems, forever searching for ways
to intensify your happiness.*

*The key to love is giving ...
without thought of return,
but with the hope of just a simple smile,
and by giving in but never giving up.*

*The key to love is respect ...
realising that you are two separate people, with different ideas;
that you don't belong to each other,
that you belong with each other, and share a mutual bond.*

*The key to love is inside us all ...
It takes time and patience to unlock all the ingredients
that will take you to its threshold;
it is the continual learning process that demands a lot of work ...
but the rewards are more than worth the effort ...
and that is the key to love."*

"If Thou Must Love Me"

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)

*"If thou must love me, let it be for naught
Except for love's sake only.*

*Do not say, 'I love her for her smile - her look - her way
Of speaking gently, for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought*

*A sense of pleasant ease on such a day' -
For these things in themselves, beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee - and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so.*

*Neither love me for Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry:
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!*

*But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayst love on, through love's eternity."*

"The Promises of Marriage"

*"Marriage is a promise of companionship,
Of having someone to share
All of life's experiences.*

*Marriage does not promise that there will
Not be any rough times,
Just the assurance that there will
Always be someone
Who cares and will help you through
To better times.*

*Marriage does not promise eternal romance,
Just eternal love and commitment.
Marriage cannot prevent disappointments,
Disillusionment, or grief,
But it can offer hope, acceptance,
And comfort.*

*Marriage can't protect you from making
Individual choices
Or shelter you from the world,
But it will help to reassure you
That there is someone by your side
Who truly cares,
When the world hurts you
And makes you feel vulnerable,
Marriage offers the promise that there will
Be someone waiting to listen,
To console, to inspire.*

*Marriage is the joining of two people
Who share the promise
That only marriage can make -
To share the sunshine and the shadows,
And to experience a richer, more fulfilling life
Because of it."*

"The Promise"

by Eileen Rafter

*"The sun danced on the snow with a sparkling smile,
As two lovers sat quietly, alone for a while.
Then he turned and said, with a casual air
(Though he blushed from his chin to the tips of his hair),
"I think I might like to get married to you"*

*"Well then, she said, "Well there's a thought,
But what if we can't promise to be all that we ought,
If I'm late yet again, when we plan to go out.
For I know I can't promise, I'll learn to ignore
Dirty socks and damp towels strewn all over the floor.*

*So if we can't vow to be all that we should
I'm not sure what to do, though the idea's quite good".
But he gently smiled and tilted his head
Till his lips met her ear and softly he said*

*"I promise, to weave my dreams into your own,
That wherever you breathe will be my hearts home.
I promise, that whether with rags or with gold I am blessed
Your smile is the jewel I will treasure the best.*

*Do you think then, my love, we should marry - do you?"
"Yes" she said smiling "I do".*

"Prayer of Love"

My marriage prayer for you is this: That you will always remember the qualities that attracted you to each other when you first met and how you felt as your feelings of attraction turned into respect, admiration and finally love. That you will work hard to turn your feelings of love into acts of love so that nothing and no one can divide you. That you will always have kind and loving hearts that are quick to ask for forgiveness when you are wrong as well as to forgive when your partner is wrong. That your love might grow to hear all things, believe all things, and hope for all things, endure all things. I pray you place your marriage in God's hands, and that your love increases and overflows, beyond anything you can yet imagine.

"Beyond the Reflection"

by Thomas Merton

"The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise we love only the reflection of ourselves we see in them."

"A Lifetime of Love"

Author Unknown

"The most ideal expression of love is the joining in spirit of two people whose hearts are as one.

'Love.....' A word that promises so many happy tomorrows, That gives meaning to everyday moments of sharingThat strengthens and supports in difficult times.....That makes a commitment that never ends. Today is the beginning of a whole new life together ...A life of special moments, shared with love.... Today is the beginning of countless bright tomorrows.....

Filled with all the special dreams you are dreaming of. May the happiness you have found together be yours throughout a lifetime of love."

A Reflection on Unity

Author Unknown

With you, and with our loved ones, I celebrate unity in all the ways it appears in our lives, and in the world. The love of our family and community, the harmony of people working together, and the connectedness of all humanity, regardless of language, beliefs, customs, or geography. In God there is a unity of spirit. As we breathe in...and breathe out, we feel a sacred oneness, and know our unity with all of life.

We, together, contribute to the unity of all people. Being gentle and open, with purpose, creativity, and faith, we help generate unity in the world.

The letter to the Ephesians reminds us to "lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." May your life together be a gift to the Universe.

Hand Blessing by Rev Daniel L Harris

These are the hands of your best friend - Young and strong and full of love for you, that are holding yours on your wedding day, as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow, and forever.

These are the hands that will work alongside yours, as together you build your future.

These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years, and with the slightest touch, will comfort you like no other.

These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief fills your mind.

These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes; tears of sorrow, and tears of joy.

These are the hands that will tenderly hold your children.

These are the hands that will help you to hold your family as one.

These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it.

And lastly, these are the hands that even when aged, will still be reaching for yours, still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch."

Mouthful of Forevers

by Clementine von Radics

I am not the first person you loved.
You are not the first person I looked at
with a mouthful of forevers. We
have both known loss like the sharp edges
of a knife. We have both lived with lips
more scar tissue than skin. Our love came
unannounced in the middle of the night.
Our love came when we'd given up
on asking love to come. I think
that has to be part
of its miracle.

This is how we heal.
I will kiss you like forgiveness. You
will hold me like I'm hope. Our arms
will bandage and we will press promises
between us like flowers in a book.
I will write sonnets to the salt of sweat
on your skin. I will write novels to the scar
of your nose. I will write a dictionary
of all the words I have used trying
to describe the way it feels to have finally,
finally found you.

And I will not be afraid
of your scars.

I know sometimes
it's still hard to let me see you
in all your cracked perfection,
but please know:
whether it's the days you burn
more brilliant than the sun
or the nights you collapse into my lap
your body broken into a thousand questions,
you are the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.
I will love you when you are a still day.
I will love you when you are a hurricane.

Wishes On Second Marriage

by Shishir

Life has given you this new chance.
Your positive thoughts now must enhance.
It's time to be more responsible.
Progress only then will be possible.
It's the result of your past good deeds.
Remove from your life all useless weeds.
A good life partner will give you courage.
Success will be at your door throughout the ages.
She will enlarge your beautiful family,
And the boat of your life will sail very easily.
My good wishes will always be with you,
And happiness will come in a break-less queue.

Songs about second love

"The Second Time Around"

by Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van (sung by Frank Sinatra)

Love is lovelier the second time around
Just as wonderful with both feet on the ground
It's that second time you hear your love song sung
Makes you think perhaps that love, like youth, is wasted on the young

Love's more comfortable the second time you fall
Like a friendly home the second time you call
Who can say what brought us to this miracle we've found?
There are those who'll bet love comes but once, and yet
I'm oh, so glad we met the second time around

Who can say what brought us to this miracle we've found?
There are those who'll bet love comes but once, and yet
I'm oh, so glad we met the second time around

"Scars And All"

by Jeff Carson

I was living hard and fast
Running from my past
On the day that I ran into you
Life had taken its toll
I was staggered by the blows
I'd been through all I could go through

There was scars on my heart
Where love had left its mark
Wounds that I still carried from the fall
Oh but your love built a bridge
Where I'd put up a wall
And you loved me scars and all

With so many flaws
I still wondered what you saw
That made you believe in me
I was no one's hero
Didn't even come close
But you saw something no one else could see

There was scars on my heart
Where love had left its mark
Wounds that I still carried from the fall
Oh, but your love built a bridge
Where I'd put up a wall
And you loved me scars and all

You loved me scars and all

"I'd Love To Be Your Last"

by Gretchen Wilson

If I had it my way, this would be the first time
That I made love
And I would be the first girl that your hands touched
But we've both done our share of livin'
Taking chances we've been given
I've never been too big on looking back
I don't care if I'm your first love,
But I'd love to be your last

If I could do it over I'd have waited for this moment
So I could give my heart to you unbroken
But if our mistakes brought us together
Does it really matter whether
We were saints or sinners in the past?
I don't care if I'm your first love,
But I'd love to be your last

All I know is what I see when I look at you
And what I see when I look at you
And all I see is what I'm feeling down inside
And all I'm feeling is this feeling
That I've finally got it right
When I wake up tomorrow I'm gonna wrap my arms around you
And thank my lucky stars I found you
Cause I know your heart has so much more than anyone has
Touched before, and nothing matter more to me than that
I don't care if I'm your first love,
But I'd love to be your last

If you're marrying the same person again!

Second Time Love

by Joyce Hemsley

Falling in love with you again,
Calling in dreams, for one sweet kiss,
Strolling along down "memory" lane,
Rolling on waves of magical bliss.

Evening is here, the rain has gone,
Gleaming stars cluster high above,
Leaving soon, for a new honeymoon,
Believing in "second time love."

Colours and promises

How to be brave?

How can I love when I'm afraid to fall?

But watching you stand alone,

All of my doubt suddenly goes away somehow.

One step closer

I have died every day waiting for you

Darling, don't be afraid.

I have loved you for a thousand years

I'll love you for a thousand more

Time stands still

Beauty in all she is

I will be brave

I will not let anything take away

What's standing in front of me

Every breath

Every hour has come to this

And all along I believed I would find you

Time has brought your heart to me

I have loved you for a thousand years

I'll love you for a thousand more

A Blessing for The Journey”

by Sensei Egyoku Nakao

Let us vow to bear witness to the wholeness of life,
realizing the completeness of each and every thing.

Embracing our differences,
I shall know myself as you,
and you as myself.

May we serve each other
for all our days,
here, there, and everywhere.

Let us vow to open ourselves to the abundance of life.

Freely giving and receiving, I shall care for you,
for the trees and stars,
as treasures of my very own.

May we be grateful
for all our days,
here, there, and everywhere.

Let us vow to forgive all hurt,
caused by ourselves and others,
and to never condone hurtful ways.

Being responsible for my actions,
I shall free myself and you.

Will you free me, too?

May we be kind
for all our days,
here, there, and everywhere.

Let us vow to remember that all that appears will disappear.

In the midst of uncertainty,
I shall sow love.

Here. Now. I call to you.

Let us together live
The Great Peace that we are.

May we give no fear
for all our days,
here, there, and everywhere.

To Love is Not to Possess

by James Kavanaugh

To love is not to possess,
To own or imprison,
Nor to lose one's self in another.

Love is to join and separate,
To walk alone and together,
To find a laughing freedom
That lonely isolation does not permit.

It is finally to be able
To be who we really are
No longer clinging in childish dependency
Nor docilely living separate lives in silence,
It is to be perfectly one's self
And perfectly joined in permanent commitment
To another-and to one's inner self.

Love only endures when it moves like waves,
Receding and returning gently or passionately,
Or moving lovingly like the tide
In the moon's own predictable harmony,

Because finally, despite a child's scars
Or an adult's deepest wounds,
They are openly free to be
Who they really are-and always secretly were,
In the very core of their being
Where true and lasting love can alone abide.

Union

from The Beginning to End by Robert Fulghum

You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment.

At some point, you decided to marry.

From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way.

All those conversations that were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks – all those sentences that began with "When we're married" and continued with "I will and you will and we will"- those late night talks that included "someday" and "somehow" and "maybe"- and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart.

All these common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding.

The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, " You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed- well, I meant it all, every word."

Look at one another and remember this moment in time.

Before this moment you have been many things to one another- acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years.

Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you.

For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this- is my husband, this- is my wife