# Wedding Ceremony Readings & Poems

Some I have written most I did not. Most are from other books and sites. If anyone is due credit for them, please email me at [Gregg@TheWeddingMan.Net](mailto:Gregg@TheWeddingMan.Net) I am happy to include your name as author

Reading 1

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens.

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 standing together and facing the world.

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

Reading 2

BRIDE and GROOM, this celebration is the outward token of your sacred and inward union of hearts.

It is a union created by your loving purpose and kept by your abiding will.

It is in this spirit and for this purpose that you have come here to be joined together.

Reading 3

So, as important as this ceremony is, the foundation of your marriage was formed long before we ever came here today, and that is the love that you share.

Love is gentleness

Love is kindness

Love understands and love forgives.

It is loyal through good and bad

Love hopes for the future

Love is everlasting.

Love makes up for things that you may not have.

Without love, no matter what you do have it is never enough.

So, search for love.

Share your love.

But most of all, Enjoy your love.

Reading 4

Most would agree that it is love that keeps people together when they’re confronted with that immense sky, with those infinite distances that separate even the closest of men and women.

But what kind of love?

Poets, priests and philosophers, and no small number of cabbies, barbers and bartenders have debated this question.

We speak of spiritual love, passionate love, love eternal… but the phrase that may capture the reality of this emotion best is “stirring the oatmeal” love.

When you’re willing to stand in your bathrobe on a cold kitchen floor at 5:00 AM, and stir the oatmeal so your spouse can have a little more sleep—and not even think twice about why you’re doing it—then you have a love that can last a lifetime.

As Carl Jung once wrote, “feeling is a matter of the small.” Such simple, pragmatic experiences are the best places for love to take root.

In such ground, love blossoms over time, becoming deeper, more beautiful, and more profound.

Love so deep, intimacy so profound, cannot help but suggest transcendence, a shifting of human experience into the realm of the spiritual.

This is what makes marriage a unique milestone in any relationship.

BRIDE and GROOM  have been together for \_\_\_\_\_\_ years.

They seem as close as any two people can be.

Yet they felt the need for something more: a rite of passage.

We define marriage as a sacrament, something that is itself defined as “a rite ordained as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.”

An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.

That is why we are here: to witness this visible sign.

These words, these actions—they are the manifestation of that inward grace. In this way, a marriage is like a mirror.

It lets us look into depths that cannot be seen directly, and reflects the spirit of the two being joined as one.

Reading 5

Your marriage is the coming together of your two souls for the purpose of manifesting your hearts’ desires and the truth of your being with one another.

Marriage will bring to you all of the unlimited possibilities of consciously choosing to become all that you desire, giving you the opportunity to become your highest vision of your Self.

This path is not only incredibly challenging but very rewarding as well; it brings to each of you the choices that you want to have for your own growth as well as the wonderful moments of divine blessing that you yearn for in your lives.

Marriage is a path of divine humanness.

It takes great courage and commitment to continue a conscious and loving union with one other.

Through your commitment, the breath of human experience will be born, from the highest of highs to the lowest of lows.

This level of commitment to yourself and each other will open the door to receiving all that you desire, from the conscious to the unconscious.

The very act of joining with each other will increase your potential for self knowledge, joy, fulfillment, peace, and growth a hundred fold because until you have fully committed to each other, the well spring of God’s gifts have only a small river in which to flow through you.

Marriage is the union of your souls, a divine process that your essence longs to experience. It is your nature, and the truth of who you are.

By committing to each other, you commit to life more intimately.

You no longer have the luxury of leaving when the going gets tough and the ugliness comes to the surface. Your lifelong commitment brings to you an opportunity for joy that would be unparalleled for each of you alone.

The joys are that much stronger and the happiness that much richer. The wisdom is deeper and more developed, and the journey itself fuller and more beautiful.

The path of true marriage is not for the meek.

It requires courage and strength, as well as an open mind and a heart filled with hope and joy.

Through the mirror of each other, marriage teaches you compassion, understanding, trust, commitment, love, gentleness, and patience.

Within your marriage, all things are possible; all dreams, goals, and visions are possible within your Holy Union.

Marriage denies you nothing, and only gives to you that which you truly desire.

Your marriage is the coming together of friends into Union. It requires you to soften, enjoying the special qualities of your present moments.

It can bring you comfort in times of need, solace when you despair, and safety when you are afraid.

A lifelong, loving marriage brings to you more peace than a life filled with quietude and solitary meditation.

It takes the peace of your connection with God into your relationship and into all that you say, think, and do.

Because you have prayed for every gift available to you, your marriage leaves no stone unturned, enriching your lives beyond your wildest dreams, and making you greater than you ever imagined.

Reading 6

To make this relationship work, therefore, takes more than love.

It takes trust, to know in your hearts that you want only the best for each other.

It takes dedication, to stay open to one another, to learn and grow, even when it is difficult to do so.

And it takes faith, to go forward together without knowing what the future holds for you both.

While love is our natural state of being, these other qualities are not as easy to come by.

They are not a destination, but a journey.

The true art of married life is an inner spiritual journey.

It is a mutual enrichment, a give and take between two personalities, a mingling of two endowments, which diminishes neither, but enhances both.

So, it is on this Summer eve, let us rejoice yet know that we are here not just to observe but also to participate in this marriage ceremony.

May we all remember that the path of love is meant to be walked together with God and with all of humanity.

No persons in a love relationship can have meaning apart from their family, their friends and their community.

Reading 7

A Little Something

Love is the greatest gift that we can offer to one another.

That is what makes marriage so very special, and a cause for joy and celebration for all of us who have come here today to share in this event.

It is my personal hope and prayer that those of you who have already taken the vows of marriage will witness the love of these two people, and as you listen to them share their vows, perhaps it will strengthen for you the memory of your happy day, and remind you of the meaning of the vows you yourselves once took.

Perhaps it will even strengthen just a little bit the bond of love that has been growing between you, and if any of this should happen, it would certainly be the greatest gift that BRIDE and GROOM could offer all of us on their wedding day.

Reading 8

Love is always Patient and kind.

It is never jealous Love is never boastful nor conceited.

It is never rude or selfish.

It doesn’t take offense.

It is not resentful.

Love takes no pleasure in other people’s sins, but delights in the truth.

It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes

Reading9

by Eric Fromm  
Love is not simply a relationship to a specific person; It is an attitude; an orientation of character, which determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole, not toward one “object” of love.

If a person loves only one other person and is indifferent to the rest of his fellow person, this love is not love but a selfish attachment, or an enlarged egotism.

If you truly love one person, you love all persons, you love the world, you love life.

If you can say to somebody else, “I love you” you must be able to say, “I love through you the world, I love in you also myself.

Reading 10

by Carl Sandburg  
I love you for what you are, but I love you yet more for what you are going to be.

I love you not so much for your realities as for your ideals.

I pray for your desires that they may be great, rather than for your satisfactions, which may be so hazardously little.

A satisfied flower is one whose petals are about to fall.

The most beautiful rose is one hardly more than a bud wherein the pangs and ecstasies of desires are working for larger and finer growth.

Not always shall you be what you are now.

You are going forward toward something great.

I am on the way with you and therefore I love you.

Reading 11

Author Unknown  
Love me because I try to touch life within the framework of uncertainty.

Love in me the shadows of my indecision as I strive to gain knowledge.

Love in me the silence of my hurts and the noise of my confusions.

Love me for the feeling of my heart not the fears of my mind.

Love me in my search for the truth though I may stumble upon fallacy.

Love me as I pursue my dreams sometimes retarded by illusions.

Love me as I grow to know myself even during the times of stagnation.

Love me because I seek God’s harmony not man’s discord.

Love me for my body that I wish to share with affection, wrapping you in warmth.

Love me because we are different as we are the same.

Love me that our time together will be spent in growing, kindling the world with understanding. Love me not with expectations but with hope.

I will love you the same.

Reading 12

A Touch of Heart  
There was a time … a moment I felt all alone but then the sun shined upon me bearing gifts of love, friendship and harmony Everlasting love shared and expressed through you to me. The prayers, the cares, the gestures brought forth to me heal my soul for at times I’d only known to give but failed to accept and receive with grace. I’m not alone now for your warmth overwhelms me your spirit fills my sour, and I am ALIVE with your love.

Reading 13

From the Gift of The Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh  
When you love someone, you do not love them all the time, in the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility. It is even a lie to pretend to. And yet this is exactly what most of us demand. We have so little faith in the ebb and flow of the tide and resist in terror its ebb. We are afraid it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity; when the only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity — in freedom in the sense that dancers are free barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern. The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping, even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what it was in nostalgia, nor forward to what it might be in dread or anticipation but in living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now. Relationships must be like islands; one must accept them for what they are here and now, within their limits … islands, surrounded and interrupted by the sea, and continually visited and abandoned by the tides.

Reading 14

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.

Reading 15

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 which 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!

Reading 16

The Art of Marriage, By Wilfred Arlan Peterson

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 at no time taking the other for granted; the courtship should not end with the honeymoon, it should continue through all the years.

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

It is standing together facing the world.

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

It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice, but in the spirit of joy.

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

It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo or the wife to have the wings of an angel.

It is not looking for perfection in each other. ‘

It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding and a sense of humor.

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 establishing a relationship in which the independence is equal, dependence is mutual and the obligation is reciprocal.

And finally, it is not only marrying the right partner, it is being the right partner.

Reading 17

The One, By Bernie Taupin  
I saw you dancing out on the ocean Running fast along the sand A spirit born of earth and water Fire flying from your hands In the instant that you love someone In the second that the hammer hits Reality runs up your spine And the pieces finally fit All I ever needed was the one Like freedom feels where wild horses run When stars collide like you and I No shadows block the sun You are all I have ever needed Baby, you’re the one

Reading 18

Thoughts in a Garden, By R. Gerhardt  
This is a special place, a place where people have brought beautiful living plants, here to establish them, to nurture and care for them, that they may forever surround us with the beauty we now see. And into this place where we stand, you have brought something beautiful — the relationship that is becoming your marriage. Here you are declaring it and pledging it, promising to establish and nurture it. We are aware of the special beauty between the two of you, just as we are aware of the special beauty of this place. We are with you now in this appropriate place to celebrate your relationship as it is and as it is yet to be, and in doing so, we ask only that you remember how your life together will have the same seasons and needs as this garden. There will be growth like spring and loss like fall; there will be giving as the blossoming flower, and rest as the seed beneath the snow. All the seasons will be yours, but remember, too, that gardens are not must happenings. The more wonderful the garden, the more skilled the gardener. So you will have to care deeply for the life that is yours together, and nurture it. You will have to appreciate your differences and cultivate them. You will have to take care of yourself, if for no other reason than out of love for the other. And you will need the support of family and friends to reach full growth. As you caringly chose this place to declare your marriage, so remember its lessons for your life together through the seasons that are yours to share. And may those seasons bring you and yours joy and happiness.

Reading 19

The Covenant of Marriage  
Marriage has certain qualities of contract, in which two people take on the housekeeping tasks of living, together, to enhance life’s joy. However, marriage is more than a contract. Marriage is a commitment to take that joy deep, deeper than happiness, deep into the discovery of who you most truly are. It is a commitment to a spiritual journey, to a life of becoming — in which joy can comprehend despair, running through rivers of pain into joy again. And thus marriage is even deeper than commitment. It is a covenant — a covenant that says: I love you. I trust you. I will be here for you when you are hurting, and when I am hurting I will not leave. It is a covenant intended not to provide haven from pain or anger and sorrow. Life offers no such haven. Instead, marriage is intended to provide a sanctuary safe enough to risk loving, to risk living and sharing from the center of oneself. This is worth everything.

Reading 20

The Key to Love  
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 other’s 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…  
realizing 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.

Reading 21

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.  
And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.  
If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.  
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; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.  
For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect;  
but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away.  
When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways.  
For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.  
Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.  
So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Reading 22

Blessed are the man and the woman who have grown beyond themselves and have seen through their separations. They delight in the way things are and keep their hearts open, day and night. They are like trees planted near flowing rivers, which bear fruit when they are ready. Their leaves will not fall or wither. Everything they do will succeed.

Reading 23  
I love you, not for what you are, but what I am, when I am with you.

I love you not only for what you have made of yourself, but 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 frivolous and weak things that you cannot help seeing there, and for drawing out into the light all the beautiful and radiant things that no one else has 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 everyday not a reproach, but a song.

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

You have done it by being yourself, my companion and comforter, guide and friend, the one I love.

Reading 24

Love is the strongest feeling known an all -encompassing passion an extreme strength an overwhelming excitement Love is trying not to hurt the other person trying not to change the other person trying not to dominate the other person trying not to deceive the other person  
Love is understanding each other listening to each other supporting each other having fun with each other.  
Love is not an excuse to stop growing not an excuse to stop making yourself better not an excuse to lessen one’s goals not an excuse to take the other person for granted  
Love is being completely honest with each other finding dreams to share working towards common goals sharing responsibilities equally  
Everyone in the world wants to love. Love is not a feeling to be taken lightly Love is a feeling to be cherished, nurtured and cared for Love is the reason for life

Reading 25

From This Day Forward  
From this day forward, let us laugh together, and plan together, let us find our favorite places, and go together…  
Let us enjoy the sunshine, and the rain, being alone together, and in crowds together…  
From this day forward, together, Let us love! Let Us Walk Together

Let us walk together yet not as one, but such that our shadows are separate and distinct, such that our souls are unbound and free.

Let us share our time, yet do not give all your time, nor take all of mine for in order to develop to the fullest, to be free, we must have solitude and individuality.

Let me wander in solitude, when I need to be alone, yet be near, when I need you. Let us share our love. Give freely of your love, but do not smother me, my soul must breathe a free air. Take my love, but do not demand it, for love given of obligation, is stale and without life. Let us share our lives.

Share my life, but do not try to shape it. Let me share your life, but do not let it revolve around me. Let us share ourselves. Accept me as I am, do not attempt to change me to fit your dreams.

Respect me for what I am, not for what I was or one day may be. Share yourself with me, but do not allow me to limit your freedom or bind your soul. Let us share our minds, thoughts, goals, values and dreams. Let us develop these within ourselves without restriction or loss of freedom

Thus our two free souls, may wander together as they develop in freedom. As we share our lives, as we walk through life together, know my love is yours, but not my soul for it must be free.

Reading 26  
For one human being to love another human being: that is perhaps the most difficult task that has been entrusted to us, the ultimate task, the final test and proof, the work for which all other work is merely preparation. Loving does not at first mean merging, surrendering, and uniting with another person – it is a high inducement for the individual to ripen, to become something in himself, to become world, to become world in himself for the sake of another person; it is a great, demanding claim on him, something that chose him and calls him to vast distances.

Reading 27  
A wedding is between two reflections of God. Two pairs of eyes see one vision. They are dedicated to serve one another and the humanity at large. Two minds come together to help each other realize their true nature. Going side by side with the right partner is a good way to reach God quickly. When the husband’s and the wife’s love for each other blends together and becomes love of God, marriage is a divine institution.

Reading 28

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 each one of you be alone.

Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.  
Give your hearts, but not into each other’s keeping. For only the hand 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.

Reading 29  
When you were children, you talked like children, but now that you’ve grown, you should be done with childish things and put them away. When you were children, you looked into a mirror that gave only a blurred reflection of reality. But with love and maturity, you shouldn’t be afraid to look into that mirror and see each other face to face. Be swift like the wind in loving each other. Be brave like the sea in loving each other. Be gentle like the breeze in loving each other. Be patient like the sun who waits and watches the four changes of the earth in loving each other. Be wise like the roaring of the thunder clouds and lightning in loving each other. Be shining like the morning dawn in loving each other. Be proud like the tree who stands without bending in loving each other. Be brilliant like the rainbow colors in loving each other. Now, forever, forever, there will be no more loneliness because your worlds are joined together with the world. Forever, forever.

Reading 30  
When you love someone you do not love them all the time, in the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility. The only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity, in freedom, in the sense that dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern.

The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what was in nostalgia, nor forward to what might be in dread or anticipation, but living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now. One must accept the security of the winged life, of ebb and flow, of intermittency.

Reading 31  
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, which 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.

Reading 32  
A soul mate is someone who has locks that fit our keys, and keys to fit our locks. When we feel safe enough to open the locks, our truest selves step out and we can be completely and honestly who we are; we can be loved for who we are and not for who we’re pretending to be. Each unveils the best part of the other. No matter what else goes wrong around us, with that one person we’re safe in our own paradise. Our soul mate is someone who shares our deepest longings, our sense of direction. When we’re two balloons, and together our direction is up, chances are we’ve found the right person. Our soul mate is the one who makes life come to life.

Reading 33

Marriage is a commitment to life, the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other relationship can equal. It is a physical and an emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime. Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life’s most important relationships. \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_\_ are each other’s best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener, and critic. 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 a love that is deeper than life. When two people pledge their love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique unto 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 each other and takes a lifetime to fulfill.

Reading 34

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.

Reading 35

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.

Reading 36

True love is a sacred flame  
That burns eternally, and none can dim its special glow or change its destiny. True love speaks in tender tones and hears with gentle ear, True love gives with open heart and true love conquers fear. True love makes no harsh demands It neither rules nor binds, and true love holds with gentle hands the hearts that it entwines.

Reading 37

Our community is shared, if in a different way, by those who have passed beyond this life. Their roles in the lives of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are no less remembered and honored as we savor today’s joyous moments. Join with us, then, in remembering and honoring all these people, and in particular \_\_\_\_\_\_. In their memory, let us pray silently together for just a moment.

Reading 38

\_\_\_\_\_, today as you look into \_\_\_\_\_’s eyes know and feel that your father is standing here beside you. Know how deeply he loves you. Know his pride in you and let his blessing for your wedding day be known in your heart. All those here who knew him feel his presence, and his never ending love for you and your mother is what made you the woman \_\_\_\_\_ fell in love with. He was there the day you were born and he is here the day you marry your prince. His wish and prayer is that you be truly happy, and smiling all the days of your life. Let us all honor his wish today and begin….

Reading 39  
Constance, the empress of Rome, remarked that when St. Francis and St. Clara were in each other’s company, the spark between them glowed so bright that the convent and surrounding wood appear to be on fire. So bright that the folk of Assisi rushed to quench the flames.  
“How I envy the folk of Assisi who saw those mystic flames,” Empress Constance would say.  
Well, how lucky each of us are today to witness the glowing spark here between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Reading 40  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_, the relationship that you have nourished together stands for love that will blossom and grow with each passing day. It is very appropriate that you have chosen the lotus as the theme of your wedding for a lotus flower has qualities that mirror your relationship.

The lotus flower grows out of the mud and muck into a beautiful and inspiring blossom. The petals of a lotus are actually very strong and can withstand heavy weather.

Your relationship has weathered many challenges – including distance and time – that most relationships wouldn’t survive. Your belief in each other and dedication to your future through all of your challenges makes this day that much sweeter for the two of you and an awe inspiring miracle to those who have witnessed what you have overcome together.

Reading 41  
Take bread away from me, if you wish,  
take air away, but  
do not take from me your laughter.

Do not take away the rose,  
the lance flower that you pluck,  
the water that suddenly  
bursts forth in joy,  
the sudden wave  
of silver born in you.

My struggle is harsh and I come back  
with eyes tired  
at times from having seen  
the unchanging earth,  
but when your laughter enters  
it rises to the sky seeking me  
and it opens for me all  
the doors of life.

Next to the sea in the autumn,  
your laughter must raise  
its foamy cascade,  
and in the spring, love,  
I want your laughter like  
the flower I was waiting for,  
the blue flower, the rose  
of my echoing country.

Laugh at the night,  
at the day, at the moon,  
laugh at the twisted  
streets of the island,  
laugh at this clumsy  
boy who loves you,  
but when I open  
my eyes and close them,  
when my steps go,  
when my steps return,  
deny me bread, air,  
light, spring,  
but never your laughter  
for I would die.

Reading 42  
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 don’t know any 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.

Reading 43  
Had I the heaven’s embroidered cloths,  
Inwrought with golden and silver light,  
the blue and the dim and the dark cloths  
of night and light and the half-light,  
I would spread the cloths under your feet:  
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;  
I have spread my dreams under your feet;  
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

Reading 44  
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.

Reading 45

I like you and I know why.  
I like you because you are a good person to like.  
I like you because when I tell you something special, you know it’s special

And you remember it a long, long time.  
You say, remember when you told me something special  
And both of us remember

When I think something is important  
you think it’s important too  
We have good ideas  
When I say something funny, you laugh  
I think I’m funny and you think I’m funny too  
Hah-hah!  
I like you because you know where I’m ticklish  
And you don’t tickle me there except just a little tiny bit sometimes  
But if you do, then I know where to tickle you too  
You know how to be silly  
That’s why I like you  
Boy are you ever silly  
I never met anybody sillier than me till I met you  
I like you because you know when it’s time to stop being silly  
Maybe day after tomorrow  
Maybe never  
Too late, it’s a quarter past silly  
Sometimes we don’t say a word  
We snorkel under fences  
We spy secret places  
If I am a goofus on the roofus hollering my head off  
You are one too  
If I pretend I am drowning, you pretend you are saving me  
If I am getting ready to pop a paper bag,  
then you are getting ready to jump  
HOORAY

That’s because you really like me  
You really like me, don’t you  
And I really like you back  
And you like me back and I like you back  
And that’s the way we keep on going every day

Reading 46

Love has wisdom that can solve every problem. It possesses the great patience which waits until, drop by drop, an ocean is formed. Love is royal in dignity, brave in spirit, unbreakable in substance, and divine in nature. It does not complain, does not judge. It transforms everything that it touches. It rules everything to which it presents its own Light. It understands and yields only to conquer fully. Love has numberless resources and inexhaustible energies.

Reading 47

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 stretching deep into dark 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.

Reading 48  
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.

Reading 49  
The key to love is understanding …  
The ability to comprehend not only the spoken word,  
but also those unspoken gestures,  
the little things that say so much by themselves.  
The key to love is forgiveness….  
to accept each other’s 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 …  
realizing 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.

Reading 50  
Oh my love!  
How very like a rose you are,  
My regal, fragrant, floral star;  
I truly love you, love you, love!

Oh, my love!  
When in the sun’s reflecting hues  
You bask, no task may I refuse  
Because I love you, love you, love!

Oh my love!  
Should I, by chance, be severed free  
Of senses made to smell and see,  
I’d feel your nearness next to me  
As one hand feels another darkly there  
And presses to another as in prayer;  
I’d know that feel of kinship’s care  
As I now know this heart of mine  
Shall ever love you, love!

Oh my love!  
Should that axe of ages activate  
To prematurely untogether all,  
All aspirations must, like dreams, abate  
Until horns of Michael call;  
Yet, when two lives are merged, as we,  
And each becomes the other’s me,  
Then, servitude’s the highest free  
And, in oneness, we shall be  
Together everlasting!  
Such a trite catastrophe  
Could never mar our unity  
Because my spirit loves the love of loving you!

Reading 51  
“But in love  
something miraculous happens.  
In loving someone,  
we give them  
an ideal against which  
to measure themselves.  
Living in the presence  
of that ideal,  
the beloved strives to fulfill  
the lover’s expectations.  
In this way,  
Love makes of us  
the bravest and best persons  
that we are capable of being.”

Reading 52  
Understand, I’ll slip quietly  
Away from the noisy crowd  
When I see the pale  
Stars rising, blooming over the oaks  
I’ll pursue solitary pathways  
Through the pale twilight meadows  
With only this one dream,  
You come too.

Reading 53  
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 proved,  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Reading 54

The institution of marriage was begun that a man and a woman might learn how to love and, in loving, know joy; that a man and a woman might learn how to share pain and loneliness and, in sharing, know strength; that a man and a woman might learn how to give and, in giving, know communion.

]The institution of marriage was begun that a man and a woman might through their joy, their strength, and their communion, become creators of life itself.

Marriage is a high and holy state, to be held in honor among all men and women.

Marriage is a low and common state, to be built of the stuff of daily life.

Men and women are not angels, nor are they gods. Love can become hatred; joy, sorrow; marriage, divorce.

But human beings are not condemned to failure.

Love can grow even in a real world.

The wounds of sorrow can be healed, and new life built on the learnings of the old.

This is the reason for our gathering today: to renew our faith in the strength of hope and the power of love.

Reading 55  
When a man and a woman are in love,  
his life lies within hers and her life lies within his.  
Each lives as an individual,  
yet they also live for one another.  
Each strives for independent goals,  
but they also work together to achieve their dreams.  
When a man and a woman are in love,  
they will give to one another what they need to survive and help fulfill each other’s wants.  
They will turn one another’s disappointment into satisfaction.  
They will turn one another’s frustration into contentment.  
They will work as a mirror,  
reflecting to each other their strengths and weaknesses.  
They will work together  
to alleviate the emotional walls that may separate them.  
They will work together to build  
a better understanding of one another.  
They will learn to lean on each other,  
but not so much as to be a burden on the other.  
They will learn to reach out to one another, but not so much as to suffocate the other.  
They will learn when it is time to speak and when it is time to listen.  
They will be there to comfort each other in times of sorrow.  
They will be there to celebrate together in times of happiness.  
They will be one another’s friend,  
guiding each other to the happiness that life holds.  
They will be one another’s companion,  
facing together the challenges that life may present.  
When a man and a woman are in love,  
his life lies within hers and her life lies within his.  
Together they will love one another for the rest of their lives and forever.

Reading 56  
To be married is to enter a new realm of life.  
You have left behind the room of childhood and now have stepped over the threshold  
into the room of adult love and commitment.  
It is within the bonds of this commitment that two distinctly different personalities are blended into one…this process takes years.  
It is like the weaving together of two distinctly different kinds of thread into a whole new cloth…a cloth with many functions.  
It is a tent… a covering from the hostile elements of the changing seasons.  
It is a colorful quilt… that warms the two who share it.  
It is a sheer, gauzy curtain… that offers privacy while allowing the sunlight to shine through.  
But the most beautiful and enduring marriage of all is not merely the weaving of two lives, but of three, For woven into the strongest unions is the golden strand of God’s love that endures forever.  
May the cloth of your marriage be woven of three strands,  
For “…a threefold cord is not easily broken.”

Reading 57

And you husbands, show the same kind of love to your wives as Christ showed to the church when He died for her.

That is how husbands should be toward their wives, loving them in the same kind of way.

For since a man and his wife are now one, a man is really doing himself a favor and loving himself when he loves his wife!

No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it just as Christ cares for His body, the church, of which we are all parts.

Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, giving them respect and treating them with honor since they are heirs together with you in the grace of life (Ephesians 5:25, 28-30; 1 Peter 3:7).

Reading 58

If you can find a truly good wife, she is worth more than precious gems!

Her husband can trust her, and she will richly satisfy his needs.

She will not hinder him, but help him all her life.

She is a woman of strength and dignity, and has no fear of old age.

When she speaks, her words are wise, and kindness is the rule of everything she says.

She watches carefully all that goes on throughout her household, and is never lazy.

Her children stand and bless her; so does her husband. He praises her with these words, “There are many fine women in the world, but you are the best of them all!”

Charm can be deceptive and beauty doesn’t last, but a woman who fears and reverences God shall be greatly praised (Proverbs 31:10-12, 25-29).

Reading 59

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 fails.

So faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:4-7,13)

Reading 60

Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud, never haughty or selfish or rude.

Love does not demand its own way nor is it irritable or touchy.

It does not hold grudges and will hardly ever notice when others do it wrong.

It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out.

This kind of love knows no boundaries to its tolerance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope, no limit to its endurance.

It can outlast anything.

Love is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has failed (1 Corinthians 13:4-7,13)

Reading 61

Love works in ways that are wondrous in strain, and there is nothing in life that love can’t change, love is the answer that everyone seeks, love the language that every heart speaks, love can’t be bought, its priceless, and free, and love is like pure magic, it is life’s sweetest mystery.

On many occasion you have told me that you both are each other’s best friend. and on this day your wedding you lay down your life for each other that now in good times and bad, in sickness and health in a love that is patient and kind that believes all things hopes all things and endures all things \_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_ you are called to give and to give

And this is why a poet once said if you found a smile that’s the sweetest one you have ever know, and if you have heard a voice within the echoes of your own, and if you have felt a touch that stirs the longing of your heart, and a seamless end to end, if you believe that some things in life are just meant to be, then you have found your soul mate, and your hearts own destiny.

Reading 62

There is a reading that is read at every wedding but most don’t pay attention anymore because they have heard it so often, yet when men ask, what is love, and how do I know that I love, what are the qualities of love, no better description has ever been given. And it says that love is patient, love is kind, it is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does seek its own interests, it is not quick tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrong doing, but rejoices over truth, it bares all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things, Love, true love never fails.

Reading 63

Pastor: Family and friends, we are gathered here today to join with Groom and Bride in the celebration of their wedding. Marriage is far more than the civil union of two people. History tells us that as long as civilization has existed, the joining of a man and woman into a new family through marriage has been a core part of every culture. When two people choose to publicly declare their love and shared commitment to each other something miraculous happens and we are privileged to be witnesses to it. Groom and Bride have chosen to make solemn oaths that will bind their hearts and lives together. It is as if, for a moment, the universe stops and watches with us as Groom and Bride become, for this moment, the focal point for all the joy that life can hold.

Reading 64

Beyond the wedding day, marriage is the challenge to claim that joy, to build on the love and vows that will be declared today and to surround each other with all the possibilities that a life of love can hold. To share in this moment with Groom and Bride is a privilege and an honor but also a responsibility. As we witness the declaration of their love and fidelity, let us each commit anew to our own relationships and to Groom and Bride that we will always strive to support, build and encourage theirs.

Reading 65

As Groom and Bride publically declare their intentions and say their vows, I ask that all those present to bear witness. This moment, both solemn and joyful, reminds us of what the great Greek philosopher Aristotle said, "Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies." Today Groom and Bride arrived as two and will leave as one.

Reading 66

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have opened their hearts to one another, and today in just a few moments will share their vows of marriage together. We are deeply grateful to them for opening their hearts to us as well, inviting us to witness and share in this precious moment. To this day they bring the fullness of their being as a treasure to share with one another. Their marriage is being entered into reverently, with the recognition of a true union which has been discovered. For what greater joy is there for two human souls than to join together to strengthen each other in all their endeavors, to support each other through all sorrow, and to share with each other in all gladness?

Reading 67

We hope that the words and spirit of our gathering may be filled with a truth that will deepen with the passing years. We hope, too, that the meaning of the vows that \_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are about to share with one another will deepen as well, as they discover the endless possibilities of this life together. This is a love which need not be tarnished by common events, but which can flower both in deepest adversity and in greatest joy.  
  
Reading 68

As the years go by, you will find more and more in one another a loveliness which neither comes nor goes, which neither flowers nor fades, no longer even taking the form of face or hand or words or knowing. Everything in your marriage can partake of this mysterious beauty beyond beauty, until wherever you turn you see reflections of this loveliness.

Reading 69

We ask that the vision you have of one another be always informed by that radiant power which first brought you together. Love is stronger than your conflicts, bigger than life's changes, the miracle always inviting you to learn, to blossom, to expand. It is to love that you must always return.

Reading 70

When a goldsmith is refining gold to make jewelry, he puts the gold into a pot and brings it to a boil. As the gold is melted down, it becomes transparent and all of the impurities of the gold are brought to the surface. The goldsmith then scoops out the impurities and what is left behind is the pure gold. A wedding ring is a circle representing unending love and the gold represents purity. Today, as Groom and Bride are joined together in marriage, they have become transparent with one another; all of the impurities that were brought into the relationship before today have been washed away and what are left are Groom and Bride standing pure and spotless before you. As they put these rings on each other’s finger, they are promising to one another that their love will be unending and that their commitment will last a life time.

Reading 71

Welcome to the marriage of Groom and Bride. You have been asked to gather here to witness and share in the joy of this union. We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments, to give recognition to the worth and beauty of love, and to cherish the words which shall unite Groom and Bride in marriage. Groom and Bride, in the days ahead of you, there will be times of difficulty and conflict. When you find yourselves in these situations, I ask you to reflect on this marriage advice:   
  
Let your love be stronger than your anger.  
Learn the wisdom of compromise, for it is better to bend than to break.  
Look for the best in your beloved rather than the worst.  
Confide in your partner and ask for help when you need it.  
Remember that true friendship is the basis for any lasting relationship.  
Give your spouse the same courtesies and kindnesses you bestow on your friends.  
Say "I love you" at least once a day.

Reading 72

Today is a day you will always remember -- the greatest in anyone's life. You'll start off the day just two people in love and end it as husband and wife. It's a brand new beginning, the continuation of a journey that started long ago, with moments to cherish and treasure. And although there'll be times you both disagree; these will surely be outweighed by pleasure.

You'll have heard many words of advice in the past, when the secrets of marriage were spoken, but now you know that the answers lie hidden inside, where the bond of true love lies unbroken. So live happy forever as lovers and friends, it's the dawn of a new life for you, as you stand there together with love in your eyes from the moment you whisper, "I do." Know and remind each other that all your hopes and your dreams can be real and may success find its way to your hearts. Tomorrow can bring you the greatest of joys, but today is the day it all starts.

Reading 73

Friends, we come together in this home to share with Groom and Bride at the most important moment in their lives. Marriage was instituted by God in the Garden of Eden when He saw that it was not good for man to be alone. Christ beautified marriage with His presence in Cana of Galilee when He wrought His first miracle. It is commended by the Apostle Paul who likened it to the holy union which exists between Christ and his Church, in which our Lord Jesus is called the Bridegroom and His Church, the Bride.

Reading 74

We have come here today to celebrate the love between Groom and Bride in the presence of God and you, their family and friends. We see it in the faces of Groom and Bride who stand before us, but we experience it in our own hearts as well. This love is powerful enough to untie the strong entangled knot of life. It is a love which is spoken of in all religions, which kindles our souls with hope and which is our true home, our true meeting place.

Reading 75

Groom and Bride have opened their hearts to one another, and today in just a few moments will share their vows of marriage together. We are deeply grateful to them for opening their hearts to us as well, inviting us to witness and share in this precious moment. To this day they bring the fullness of their being as a treasure to share with one another. Their marriage is being entered into humbly before God with the recognition of a true union which has been discovered.

Reading 76

Our prayer for Groom and Bride is that the words and spirit of their marriage may be filled with a truth that will deepen with the passing years; that the meaning of the vows that Groom and Bride are about to share with one another will deepen as well, as they discover the endless possibilities of this life together. This is a love which does not need not to be tarnished by common events, but which can grow in faith and trust and flourish both in deepest adversity and in greatest joy.

Reading 77  
Within the Bible, nothing is of more importance than love. We are told the crystalline and beautiful truth: “God is Love”. We are assured that “Love conquers all”. It is love which brings you here today, the union of two hearts and two spirits. This is the miracle of marriage. Not only is it a physical and emotional connection between the couple but it is also a spiritual union. As your lives continue to interweave as one pattern, remember that it was love that brought you here today, it is love that will make this a glorious union, and it is love which will nourish this marriage to grow into all that it is meant to be.

Reading 78

The Buddhist Scriptures;  
The Buddha's Sermon at Rajagaha; Verses 19-22  
"Do not deceive, do not despise each other anywhere. Do not be angry nor bear secret   
resentments; for as a mother will risk her life and watches over her child, so boundless be your   
love to all, so tender, kind and mild.  
  
Cherish good will right and left, early and late, and without hindrance, without stint, be free of   
hate and envy, while standing and walking and sitting down, whatever you have in mind, the   
rule of life that is always best is to be loving-kind."  
  
Reading 79  
The Hindu Scriptures;  
The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad; Selected Verses  
"A wife loves her husband not for his own sake, dear one, but because the Divine Beloved lives   
in him. A Husband loves his wife not for her own sake, dear one, but because the Divine   
Beloved lives in her. Children are loved not for their own sake, dear one, but because the Divine   
Beloved lives in them... All things are loved not for their own sake, but because the Divine   
Beloved lives in them. The Divine Beloved must be realized. Hearing about and meditating upon   
the Divine Beloved, you will come to understand everything in life...  
  
As long as there is the sense of separateness, one sees another as separate from oneself... But   
when the Divine Beloved is realized as the indivisible unity of life, who can be seen by whom...   
who can be spoken to by whom, who can be thought of by whom, who can be known by   
whom?"

Reading 80  
From Pope John Paul II  
"You will reciprocally promise love, loyalty, and matrimonial honesty. We only want for you   
this day that these words constitute the principle of your entire life; and that with the help of the   
divine grace you will observe these solemn vows that today, before God, you formulate."

Reading 81  
Genesis 2:15-24  
"The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the   
LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but   
of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it   
you shall die." Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will   
make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the   
field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and   
whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all   
cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not   
found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and   
while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the   
LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then   
the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called   
Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother   
and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh."

Reading 82  
Ruth 1:16-17  
"But Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go   
I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my   
God; where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more   
also if even death parts me from you."

Reading 83  
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12  
"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the   
one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to   
help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?   
And if one prevails against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly   
broken."

Reading 84  
Song Of Solomon 2:10-13  
"My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the   
winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has   
come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the   
vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

Reading 85  
Song of Solomon 8:6-7  
"Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy   
is cruel as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot   
quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it   
would be utterly scorned."

Reading 86  
Matthew 19:4-6  
"He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male   
and female and said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his   
wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What   
therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. "

Reading 87  
Mark 10:6-9, 13-16  
"But 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 flesh.   
So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man   
put asunder." â€¦ And they were bringing children to him, that he might touch them; and the   
disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it he was indignant, and said to them, "Let the   
children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say   
to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he   
took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them."

Reading 88  
John 2:1-1  
"On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there;   
Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of   
Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do   
with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells   
you." Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding   
twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to   
the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So   
they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not   
know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of   
the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and   
when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."   
This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his   
disciples believed in him."

Reading 89  
John 15:9-12  
"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my   
commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and   
abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your   
joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

Reading 90  
1 Corinthians 13:1-13  
"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a   
clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all   
knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.   
If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain   
nothing. 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; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for   
knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but   
when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I   
thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For   
now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand   
fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the   
greatest of these is love."

Reading 91  
Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33  
"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and   
gave himself up for us a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God€¦Be subject to one another out   
of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is   
the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As   
the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands.   
Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he   
might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might   
present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she   
might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own   
bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes   
and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "For this   
reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall   
become one flesh." This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and   
the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she   
respects her husband."

Reading 92  
Colossians 3:12-19  
"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness,   
meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another,   
forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all   
these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of   
Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.   
Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and   
sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And   
whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to   
God the Father through him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in   
the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."

Reading 93  
I Ching  
"When two people are at one  
in their inmost hearts,  
they shatter even the strength of iron or bronze.  
And when two people understand each other  
in their inmost hearts,  
their words are sweet and strong,  
like the fragrance of orchids."

Reading 94  
Bhagavad Gita  
"Look to this day,  
For it is life,  
The very life of life.  
In its brief course lie all the varieties  
And realities of your existence;  
The bliss of growths  
The glory of action,  
The splendor of beauty;  
For yesterday is but a dream  
And tomorrow is only a vision,  
But today well lived makes  
Every yesterday a dream of happiness  
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.  
Such is the salvation of the dawn."  
  
Reading 95  
Song of Solomon 7:10-12 "Growing in Love"  
"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.  
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field;  
let us lodge in the villages.  
Let us get up early to the vineyards;  
let us see if the vine flourish,  
whether the tender grape appear,  
and the pomegranates bud forth:  
there will I give thee my loves."

Reading 96  
Song of Solomon 2:10-13  
"My lover spoke and said to me,  
"Arise my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me.  
See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.  
Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come.  
The cooing of doves is heard in our land.  
The fig tree forms its early fruit;  
the blossoming vines spread their fragrance.  
Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me."

Reading 97  
The Qur'an  
"O believers, be in awe of God,  
and believe in His Messenger,  
and He will give you a twofold portion of His mercy,  
and He will appoint for you a light  
whereby you shall walk, and forgive you;  
God is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate;  
that the People of the Book may know  
that they have no power over anything of God's bounty,  
and that bounty is in the hand of God;  
He gives it unto whomsoever He will;  
and God is of bounty abounding."  
  
Reading 98  
The Qur'an: Chapter, The Women  
"O ye mankind!  
Reverence your Lord  
Who made you from a single being,  
and from that being He made its mate,  
And from the twain He caused to spread  
Many men and many women;  
And reverence God  
By Whom you question one another  
And (pay respect to) the ties of relationship.  
Surely, God watches over you."  
  
Reading 99  
The Qur'an (9:71-72)  
"It requires that a husband and wife should be as garments for each other. Just as garments are   
for protection, comfort, show and concealment for human beings, Allah expects husbands and   
wives to be for one another.  
And the believers, men and women, are protecting friends of one another; they enjoin the right   
and forbid the wrong, and they establish worship and they pay the poor-due, and they obey   
Allah and His messenger; as for those, Allah will have mercy on them; Lo! Allah is Mighty,   
Wise. Allah hath promised to believers - men and women - gardens under which rivers flow, to   
dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss; but the greatest bliss is the   
good pleasure of Allah: This is the supreme felicity."  
  
Reading 100  
The Qur'an (30:21)  
"Among His signs is [the fact] that He has created spouses for you among yourselves so that   
you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has planted love and mercy between you; In   
that are signs for people who reflect."

Reading 101  
Based on the “Tao Te Ching”  
by Lao Tzu  
“Explore and discover that which is within.  
When we find ourselves, we are more easily found by others.  
Without words, without even understanding,  
lovers find each other.  
The moment of finding is always a surprise,  
like meeting an old friend never before known.  
Life and marriage are a wondrous journey,  
ever unfolding an opportunity  
to rediscover ourselves and our beloved  
again and again for even on a shared journey  
the only thing constant is change.  
Embrace it and let it lead you  
to many a glorious tomorrow.”

Reading 102  
Based on the Hindu 7 steps  
“Marriage has in it the power to form a circle of family  
that includes all who are touched by the warmth  
of the love shared by a loving husband and wife,  
creating a common ground of uncommon richness.  
May your marriage bring your souls an abundance  
of spiritual and physical nourishment.  
May you be strong enough to balance one another,  
caring and giving enough to complement one another.  
May you be prosperous in all ways, ever appreciative,  
and grateful for all the gifts your marriage has brought.  
May you see your children grow and thrive.  
And may you live your lives together in perfect harmony,  
As partners, lovers, parents, teachers and best friends.”

Reading 102  
From The Lost Sutras of Jesus  
Christian monks who lived and worked in China from the 6th century on  
“Love leads to truth; perfect love to perfect truth.  
Truth is like the moon reflected in the water;  
when the water is stirred up and muddy,  
the image is blurred and indistinct,  
so it is with human beings when our spirit is clouded.  
Let your love be a pure compassion for one another,  
without seeking its own glory,  
let it be true in your own hearts.  
Let your spirits guide you  
to what is right and true and just.  
This is the way love leads us.”

Reading 103  
The Couple's Tao Te Ching: Always Return  
Lao Tzu, sixth century B.C.E.  
"It is good to know your strength  
But always return to your flexibility  
If you cradle your beloved in your arms  
In nurturing gentleness,  
Love will flow through you.  
  
It is good to achieve things  
But always return to anonymity.  
Your beloved does not need your achievements  
But needs your uncomplicated soul.  
  
It is good to work for change,  
But always return to what is.  
If you accept all things whether painful or joyful  
You will always know  
That you belong to each other."

Reading 104

They say love is blind. I disagree. Infatuation is blind, love is all-seeing and accepting.

Love is seeing all the flaws and blemishes and accepting them. Love is accepting the bad habits and mannerisms, and working around them. Love is recognizing all the fears and insecurities, and knowing your role is to comfort. Love is working through all the challenges and painful times. Infatuation is fragile and will shatter when life is not perfect. Love is strong and it strengthens because it is real.

Reading 105

What is Love by Unknown

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.

Reading 106

1 Corinthians

This is a beautiful and unique version of 1st Corinthians that is perfect for 2 readers.  
“GOD IS LOVE.  
May you have His kind of love for each other.  
LOVE IS PATIENT AND KIND.  
May you be able to lovingly overlook each other’s  
faults and weaknesses.  
LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS OR BOASTFUL.  
May you seek praise for each other and not for yourselves.  
LOVE IS NOT ARROGANT OR RUDE.  
May you give of yourselves for each other’s needs  
and treat one another with utmost respect.  
LOVE DOES NOT INSIST ON ITS OWN WAY.  
May you genuinely listen to each other  
with a willingness to be wrong yourselves.  
LOVE IS NOT IRRITABLE OR RESENTFUL.  
May you be tolerant of each other’s moods,  
always ready to forgive, never holding a grudge.  
LOVE DOES NOT REJOICE AT WRONG  
BUT REJOICES IN THE RIGHT.  
May you experience happiness  
because of each other’s triumphs and successes.  
LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS.  
May you seek to understand each other’s differences,  
knowing you will stick together through it all.  
LOVE HOPES ALL THINGS.  
May you always expect the best in each situation,  
regardless of temporary setbacks.  
LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS.  
May you never give up your commitment  
to work on improving your relationship.  
LOVE NEVER ENDS.  
May you spend the rest of your lives  
together enjoying God’s love.  
GOD IS LOVE.”

Reading 107

The Buddhist Scriptures;  
The Buddha’s Sermon at Rajagaha; Verses 19-22

“Do not deceive, do not despise each other anywhere. Do not be angry nor bear secret resentments; for as a mother will risk her life and watches over her child, so boundless be your love to all, so tender, kind and mild.

Cherish good will right and left, early and late, and without hindrance, without stint, be free of hate and envy, while standing and walking and sitting down, whatever you have in mind, the rule of life that is always best is to be loving-kind.”

Reading 108

Druidic Vow

“We swear by peace and love to stand  
Heart to heart, and hand in hand.  
Mark, O Spirit, and hear us now,  
Confirming this our Sacred Vow.”

Reading 109

The Hindu Scriptures;  
The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad; Selected Verses

“A wife loves her husband not for his own sake, dear one, but because the Divine Beloved lives in him. A Husband loves his wife not for her own sake, dear one, but because the Divine Beloved lives in her. Children are loved not for their own sake, dear one, but because the Divine Beloved lives in them… All things are loved not for their own sake, but because the Divine Beloved lives in them. The Divine Beloved must be realized. Hearing about and meditating upon the Divine Beloved, you will come to understand everything in life…

As long as there is the sense of separateness, one sees another as separate from oneself… But when the Divine Beloved is realized as the indivisible unity of life, who can be seen by whom…who can be spoken to by whom, who can be thought of by whom, who can be known by  
whom?”

Reading 110

From Pope John Paul II

“You will reciprocally promise love, loyalty, and matrimonial honesty. We only want for you this day that these words constitute the principle of your entire life; and that with the help of the divine grace you will observe these solemn vows that today, before God, you formulate.”

Reading 111

Genesis 2:15-24

“The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.” Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So, the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore, a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.”

Reading 112

Ruth 1:16-17

“But Ruth said, “Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God; where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if even death parts me from you.”

Reading 113

Proverbs 18:22

“Who so findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the LORD.”

Reading 114

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Reading 115

Song of Solomon 2:10-13

“My beloved speaks and says to me: “Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

Reading 116

Song of Solomon 8:6-7

“Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned.”

Reading 117

Matthew 19:4-6

“He answered, “Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female and said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. “

Reading 118

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16

“But 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 flesh. So, they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.” â€¦ And they were bringing children to him, that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it he was indignant, and said to them, “Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.”

Reading 119

John 2:1-1

“On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” And Jesus said to her, “O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast.” So, they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.” This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.”

Reading 120

John 15:9-12

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

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“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 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; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now, we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So, faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the  
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Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33

“Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

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Colossians 3:12-19

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put-on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.”

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I Ching

“When two people are at one  
in their inmost hearts,  
they shatter even the strength of iron or bronze.  
And when two people understand each other  
in their inmost hearts,  
their words are sweet and strong,  
like the fragrance of orchids.”

Reading 125

Bhagavad Gita

“Look to this day,  
For it is life,  
The very life of life.  
In its brief course lie all the varieties  
And realities of your existence;  
The bliss of growths  
The glory of action,  
The splendor of beauty;  
For yesterday is but a dream  
And tomorrow is only a vision,  
But today well lived makes  
Every yesterday a dream of happiness  
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well, therefore, to this day.  
Such is the salvation of the dawn.”

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Song of Solomon 7:10-12 “Growing in Love”

“I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.  
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field;  
let us lodge in the villages.  
Let us get up early to the vineyards;  
let us see if the vine flourish,  
whether the tender grape appear,  
and the pomegranates bud forth:  
there will I give thee my loves.”

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Song of Solomon 2:10-13

“My lover spoke and said to me,  
“Arise my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me.  
See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.  
Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come.  
The cooing of doves is heard in our land.  
The fig tree forms its early fruit;  
the blossoming vines spread their fragrance.  
Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me.”

Reading 128

The Koran

“O believers, be in awe of God,  
and believe in His Messenger,  
and He will give you a twofold portion of His mercy,  
and He will appoint for you a light  
whereby you shall walk, and forgive you;  
God is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate;  
that the People of the Book may know  
that they have no power over anything of God’s bounty,  
and that bounty is in the hand of God;  
He gives it unto whomsoever He will;  
and God is of bounty abounding.”

Reading 129

The Koran: Chapter, The Women

“O ye mankind!  
Reverence your Lord  
Who made you from a single being,  
and from that being He made its mate,  
And from the twain He caused to spread  
Many men and many women;  
And reverence God  
By Whom you question one another  
And (pay respect to) the ties of relationship.  
Surely, God watches over you.”

Reading 130

The Qur’an (9:71-72)

“It requires that a husband and wife should be as garments for each other. Just as garments are for protection, comfort, show and concealment for human beings, Allah expects husbands and wives to be for one another.

And the believers, men and women, are protecting friends of one another; they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and they establish worship and they pay the poor-due, and they obey Allah and His messenger; as for those, Allah will have mercy on them; Lo! Allah is Mighty, Wise. Allah hath promised to believers – men and women – gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss; but the greatest bliss is the good pleasure of Allah: This is the supreme felicity.”

Reading 131

The Qur’an (30:21)

“Among His signs is [the fact] that He has created spouses for you among yourselves so that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has planted love and mercy between you; In that are signs for people who reflect.”

Reading 132

Based on the “Tao Te Ching”  
by Lao Tzu

“Explore and discover that which is within.  
When we find ourselves, we are more easily found by others.  
Without words, without even understanding,  
lovers find each other.  
The moment of finding is always a surprise,  
like meeting an old friend never before known.  
Life and marriage are a wondrous journey,  
ever unfolding an opportunity  
to rediscover ourselves and our beloved  
again and again for even on a shared journey  
the only thing constant is change.  
Embrace it and let it lead you  
to many a glorious tomorrow.”

Reading 132

Based on the Hindu 7 steps

“Marriage has in it the power to form a circle of family  
that includes all who are touched by the warmth  
of the love shared by a loving husband and wife,  
creating a common ground of uncommon richness.  
May your marriage bring your souls an abundance  
of spiritual and physical nourishment.  
May you be strong enough to balance one another,  
caring and giving enough to complement one another.  
May you be prosperous in all ways, ever appreciative,  
and grateful for all the gifts your marriage has brought.  
May you see your children grow and thrive.  
And may you live your lives together in perfect harmony,  
As partners, lovers, parents, teachers and best friends.”

Reading 133

From The Lost Sutras of Jesus  
Christian monks who lived and worked in China from the 6th century on

“Love leads to truth; perfect love to perfect truth.  
Truth is like the moon reflected in the water;  
when the water is stirred up and muddy,  
the image is blurred and indistinct,  
so it is with human beings when our spirit is clouded.  
Let your love be a pure compassion for one another,  
without seeking its own glory,  
let it be true in your own hearts.  
Let your spirits guide you  
to what is right and true and just.  
This is the way love leads us.”

Reading 134

The Couple’s Tao Te Ching: Always Return  
Lao Tzu, sixth century B.C.E.

“It is good to know your strength  
But always return to your flexibility  
If you cradle your beloved in your arms  
In nurturing gentleness,  
Love will flow through you.

It is good to achieve things  
But always return to anonymity.  
Your beloved does not need your achievements  
But needs your uncomplicated soul.

It is good to work for change,  
But always return to what is.  
If you accept all things whether painful or joyful  
You will always know  
That you belong to each other.”

Reading 135

A Litany Based on “The Prayer”  
Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

Leader: “With all our heart and all our mind we pray to you O Lord:”

People: “Make us instruments of your peace.”

Leader: “For the peace of the world, that a spirit of respect and forbearance may grow among  
nations and peoples, we pray to you O Lord:”

People: “Where there is hatred, let us sow Love.”

Leader: “For our enemies and those who wish us harm, and for all whom we have injured or  
offended, we pray to you O Lord:”

People: “Where there is injury, let us sow pardon.”

Leader: “For all who believe in God in your many names, that our divisions may cease and all  
may be one, as you and the Father are one, we pray to you O Lord:”

People: “Where there is discord let us sow union.”  
Leader: “For those who do not yet believe, for those who have lost their faith, and those in  
despair and darkness that they may receive the power of your love, we pray to you O Lord:”

People: “Where there is doubt let us sow faith.”

Leader: “For the poor, the persecuted, the sick and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and  
all who are in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray to you O Lord:”

People: “Where there is despair, let us sow hope.”

Leader: “For all who live in places where there is evil among men and bigotry and prejudice  
cast their dark shadow; that the yoke of oppression shall be lifted, we pray to you O Lord;”

People: “Where there is darkness let us sow light.”

Leader: “For those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; that they may be comforted and healed;  
give then courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of salvation, we pray to  
you O Lord:”

People: “Where there is sadness let us sow joy.”

(other prayers and petitions may be added silently or aloud)

All: “Grant that we may not so much seek  
to be consoled, as to console;  
to be understood, as to understand  
to be loved, as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born into eternal life.