

A photograph of a wedding ceremony. A priest in a black suit and white shirt is seated on the left, reading from a large, open book. He has a white flower boutonniere on his lapel. To his right, a bride is seated, wearing a white, strapless, floor-length wedding dress with a full skirt and a long, sheer veil. She is holding a bouquet of purple and white flowers. They are both seated on ornate, wooden chairs with yellow and white striped cushions. In the background, a large, ornate, gold-colored mirror hangs on the wall, reflecting the scene. The text "Ceremony for Kyle and Carrie" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

**Ceremony for  
Kyle and Carrie**

# CEREMONY FOR KYLE AND CARRIE

## Introduction

We are gathered here today as a community to celebrate with Kyle and Carrie and their families as they stand before the Lord and you and commit the rest of their lives to live together as husband and wife.

I want you to know from the very beginning that this is a worship service, because this is God's idea.

The Bible says that God designed this relationship to be a union of two separate lives into one, and there are some powerful implications for what that means.

In the first century, when a groom was ready to make a commitment to his bride, he would pay a price to redeem her. When the price was accepted, he would go back to his father's house to prepare a place for her, so that they could be together. When he left, the bridegroom could not tell his bride how long it would be before he came back for her. No one but the Father knew the day or hour. The groom was to prepare the place, and the bride was to prepare herself. The groom would be anxious to come back, but it was not up to him. It was up to his father, who would finally say, "Go get your bride."

It was great shame for the bride not to be ready for her bridegroom. So in anticipation of his coming the groom would send the "Friend of the Bridegroom" to announce with a shout his coming. People would start pouring out of their homes. They would light up torches, play tambourines and trumpets, and there would be an amazing celebration. The bridegroom would bring his bride back to the house where all the family and friends were. Once she was inside, the father would shut the door tightly and if you weren't already in, you didn't get in.

Ladies and gentlemen, we the community are here to witness something profound. It is profound because it is a reflection of a spiritual union between Jesus Christ and his church.

Kyle, just as Jesus Christ has asked for the commitment of his bride, the church, so you have asked for and received the commitment of your bride.

Just as he has gone to prepare a place for us, you have worked to prepare a home for the two of you and your family.

Just as Christ, our Bridegroom, awaits the Time in which He comes again to take His bride and present her to the Father, you have anticipated this day, and this Time.

Kyle, the Time has come.

Go get your Bride.

**(Groom and Bride Enter together)**

Kyle and Carrie, you are surrounded by witnesses who have influenced you, family who has loved and nurtured you, friends who have helped make you the man and woman you are today, and a larger community of people who are a part of your past, your present, or your future.

Now we who know you, love you, and respect you, have come to celebrate with you.

Your relationship has grown and flourished in the context of a love for Jesus and a commitment to ministry.

You have grown together, worshipped together, and served God together.

And on the wings of that, God has given you a love for each other that will last a lifetime.

Kyle, you are a living example to me of the character of one of the most loved men in the Bible – King David. He was a man’s man, with the strength of a warrior, the mind of a strategist, and the heart of a poet – and so are you.

Because of the Christ-like character I have seen in you, I have already entrusted to you a significant part of my own ministry and the witness of our church.

Tonight I’m entrusting to you something much more significant – the life and love of my daughter.

This is a night of vows, and I’ll go first. In receiving you into our family, Robin and I are committing to love you just as we love the other members of our family – unconditionally. From this day forward, regardless of your success or failure as a husband or father, we will love you as a lifetime member of our family.

Carrie, your name means “song of joy,” and that’s exactly what you have become in many people’s lives.

I have marveled for years at the ability you have to build relationships or carry on conversations with people of any age.

Like your mom, you live a completely transparent and authentic life.

Like me, you’ll probably love children ‘til the day you die.

And whether it’s playing on the floor with a two-year-old or taking charge of a campus ministry, the most important reflection I have seen in you is a reflection of Jesus.

Tonight one of your lifelong dreams comes true - you finally get to be somebody’s favorite.

And pardon my slap at tradition, but I don’t see this night as giving you away. This is a night of leading you to the threshold of even greater experiences of joy, love, leadership, and ministry. Our new son will carry you across that threshold, and that’s a good thing.

As wonderful as all those qualities are, the even better good news is that both of you have an awesome foundation to build your home on - the foundation of Jesus Christ Himself. Let's take a minute to worship Him, and welcome Him as Lord in this place. Would you pray with me?

**(prayer)**

One of the most beautiful expressions of God's intention for the love in a marriage is found in the Song of Solomon. There it says:

**Close your heart to every love but mine; hold no one in your arms but me. Love is as powerful as death; passion is as strong as death itself. It bursts into flame and burns like a raging fire. Water cannot put it out; no flood can drown it. But if anyone tried to buy love with his wealth, contempt is all he would get. SOS 8:6-7 TEV**



In the expression of love between two people who are about to be married, there are four commitments that are called for.

First, there is the commitment to close your heart to every other love. The phrase in the traditional wedding ceremony is “forsaking all others.” God gave you the capacity to love many people deeply, but when it comes to this level of committed love, He calls you to save it for your wife or your husband.

Second, there is the commitment of a lifetime. This kind of love faces life and cheats death. It’s a sober commitment you are making today, because it flies in the face of human nature and our culture. But I wouldn’t be standing here if I didn’t think you meant it.

Third, there is the commitment of passion. This is a commitment to fall in love over and over and over again for the rest of your lives. And the only way to do that is to be intentional about it. In spite of the many ways the world gets it wrong, passion does matter. But it isn’t automatic. It has to be cultivated. If you can gross out your teenagers with how crazy you are about each other, that’s a pretty good sign you’re keeping this commitment.

Finally, there is the commitment of personal involvement and sacrifice. “If anyone tried to buy love with his wealth, contempt is all he would get,” the Bible says. Love isn’t a commodity to be bartered over. It is something that is given freely, and received graciously. That sounds easy on your wedding day, but many a marriage has failed or gone cold because husbands and wives reduced their love to something they traded or negotiated over.

Kyle, does this describe the kind of commitments you are making to Carrie today?

*(It does).*

And Carrie, does this describe the commitments you are making to Kyle today?

*(It does)*

## Vows

Kyle, now as an expression of the vows you are making to God and to your wife, take Carrie by the hand and repeat after me:

**I, Kyle, take you, Carrie, as my radiant bride in this holy covenant of marriage. I vow to love and to serve you, protect you and provide for you, To lead in humility and to care for you, To partner with you in building a godly home and glorifying Him in all that we do; In sickness and in health, in prosperity and in famine, Until death do us part. Just as Christ loves the Church, and gave His life for her, I love you and give all that I am to you.**

Carrie, as an expression of the vows you are making to God and to your husband, repeat these vows to Kyle after me:

**Kyle, today I become your wife and you become my husband. You are my best friend and my soul-mate. You are the person that I laugh with, and the person that I cry with. Kyle, you are my favorite. As your wife, I will serve you, listen to you, and believe in you.**

**I will honor you as the spiritual leader in our family, and I will submit to your leadership. I understand that love is a choice. Therefore, I choose to love you no matter the circumstance. I choose to love you for the rest of my life. This is a covenant I make to you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

## Ring Vows

Now as a lasting symbol of the vows you are making to Carrie, Kyle, please take this ring place it on the third finger of Carrie's left hand, and repeat after me:

**I give you this ring to symbolize my delight in you. With all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you. This ring will always be a reminder of the life we now share. For I am yours, and you are mine.**

Carrie, as a lasting symbol of the vows you are making to Kyle, please take this ring, place it on the third finger of Kyle's left hand, and repeat after me.

**I give you this ring to symbolize my delight in you. With all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you. This ring will always be a reminder of the life we now share. For I am yours, and you are mine.**

**(Prayer)**

Kyle and Carrie, we this community and particularly this cloud of witnesses behind me have witnessed your vows to each other and to the Lord, and, when necessary, will encourage you and build you up as you fulfill them. We are blessed by what we have seen. More importantly, I believe the Lord is pleased by what He has seen and heard as well. Because of that, it is my honor as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ to pronounce that you are husband and wife. What God has joined together, let no man put asunder.

AS THEIR FIRST ACT AS A MARRIED COUPLE, Kyle and Carrie wanted to honor the Lord by celebrating communion together after they light their unity candle. Let me encourage you to worship the Lord with us as we remember his body and blood together.

(song)

Kyle, you can kiss your bride.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I PRESENT TO YOU MR. AND MRS. KYLE WILEY.