**Biblical Readings**:

# 1 Corinthians 13

(New International Version)

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now, we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

# John 4, 7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

# Song of Solomon 2, 10-13; 8, 6-7

My beloved speaks and says to me:
‘Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;
for now 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 turtle-dove
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.’

# Genesis 2: 18-25

The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

**19** Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. **20** So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam[a] no suitable helper was found. **21** So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs[b] and then closed up the place with flesh. **22** Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib[c] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

**23** The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.”

**24** That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

**25** Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

# Colossians 3: 12-17

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

# 1 John 4: 7-12

**7** Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. **10** This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11** Dear friends, since God so loved us,we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

## *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.

# Just a New York Poem | Nikki Giovanni

i wanted to take
your hand and run with you
together toward
ourselves down the street to your street
i wanted to laugh aloud
and skip the notes past
the marquee advertising “women
in love” past the record
shop with “The Spirit
In The Dark” past the smoke shop
past the park and no
parking today signs
past the people watching me in
my blue velvet and i don’t remember
what you wore but only that i didn’t want
anything to be wearing you
i wanted to give
myself to the cyclone that is
your arms
and let you in the eye of my hurricane and know
the calm before

and some fall evening
after the cocktails
and the very expensive and very bad
steak served with day-old baked potatoes
after the second cup of coffee taken
while listening to the rejected
violin player
maybe some fall evening
when the taxis have passed you by
and that light sort of rain
that occasionally falls
in new york begins
you’ll take a thought
and laugh aloud
the notes carrying all the way over
to me and we’ll run again
together
toward each other
yes?

**Let's Get Married**

let's get married on a Tuesday with a six-piece from Harold's as our witness.

Let's get married at noon & then again at three-thirty when the school day lets out & a whole block of dandelions flower our ceremony.

Let's get married under a full moon & then again under a new moon,
so every celestial being can witness our vows.

Love, one wedding isn't enough for me. I want to propose again & again.

On a Wednesday because you did the dishes.

On a Thursday because we woke up next to each other again.

Say yes. Say less. I'll be on one knee asking you to share in the delight of knowing each other.

Let's get married because Chicago. Because St. Louis is a city on a map.
Because your name is my favorite word.

Let's get married because there are vows we can only make in the dark.
Because we don't need a witness to say i do.

Let's get married because it's raining and that's supposed to be good luck.

mi amor, mi cielo, mi vida,

Let's get married in every language we can & can't speak. Under every god.

My god, the way you look at me is a miracle i believe in.

Because we get one life. one. say yes. then, say yes again.

Let's get married after we get married because underneath every word i write
there is one word i carve into every desk.

One word I tag onto every building on every block of my heart.

Marry me: make me (no, not complete),
but a little more alive than i've ever been.

# **Instructions for Life in the New Millennium**

by his holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.
And that a loving atmosphere in your home
is the foundation for your life.
Be gentle with the earth,
be gentle with one another.
When disagreements come
remember always to protect the spirit of your union.
When you realize you've made a mistake,
take immediate steps to correct it.
Remember that the best relationship is one
in which your love for each other
exceeds your need for each other.
So love yourselves, love one another,
love all that is your life together
and all else will follow.

# “*How Falling in Love is Like Owning a Dog*” by Taylor Mali (edited)

How falling in love is like owning a dog.
First of all, it’s a big responsibility.
So think long and hard before deciding on love.
On the other hand, love gives you a sense of security.
When you have a leash on love, ‘ain’t no one going to mess with you

On cold winter nights, love is warm.
It lies between you and lives and breathes and makes funny noises.
Love wakes you up all hours of the night with its needs.
It needs to be fed so it will grow and stay healthy.

Love doesn’t like being left alone for long.
But come home and love is always happy to see you.

It may break a few things accidentally in its passion for life,
but you can never be mad at love for long.

Love leaves you little surprises here and there.
Love makes messes. But then love gives you big kisses.
And you laugh at the little things it does.

Sometimes love just wants to play. Running you around the block,
pulling you in several different directions at once, or it winds around and around you until you’re all wound up and can’t move.

And love brings people together. People who have nothing in common but love, stop and talk and greet each other on the street.

Throw things away and love will bring them back, again,
and again, and again.

But most of all, love needs love.
And in return, love loves you and loves you and never stops

# All I Know About Love by Neil Gaiman

This is everything I have to tell you about love: nothing.
This is everything I've learned about marriage: nothing.
Only that the world out there is complicated,
and there are beasts in the night, and delight and pain,
and the only thing that makes it okay, sometimes,
is to reach out a hand in the darkness and find another hand to squeeze,
and not to be alone.
It's not the kisses, or never just the kisses: it's what they mean.
Somebody's got your back.
Somebody knows your worst self and somehow doesn't want to rescue you
or send for the army to rescue them.
It's not two broken halves becoming one.
It's the light from a distant lighthouse bringing you both safely home
because home is wherever you are both together.
So this is everything I have to tell you about love and marriage: nothing,
like a book without pages or a forest without trees.
Because there are things you cannot know before you experience them.
Because no study can prepare you for the joys or the trials.
Because nobody else's love, nobody else's marriage, is like yours,
and it's a road you can only learn by walking it,
a dance you cannot be taught,
a song that did not exist before you began, together, to sing.
And because in the darkness you will reach out a hand,
not knowing for certain if someone else is even there.
And your hands will meet,
and then neither of you will ever need to be alone again.
And that's all I know about love.

# “*Love*” by Roy Croft

I love you
Not only for what you are,
But for what I am
When I am with you.
I love you,
Not only for what
You have made of yourself,
But for what
You are making of me.

I love you
For the part of me
That you bring out;
I love you
For putting your hand
Into my heaped-up heart
And passing over
All the foolish, weak things
That you can’t help
Dimly seeing there,
And for drawing out
Into the light
All the beautiful belongings
That no one else had looked
Quite far enough to find.

# "*Those That Truly Love*" by Louis de Bernières

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

Love is not breathlessness,
it is not excitement,
it is not the promulgation of eternal passion.
That is just being "in love" which any fool can do.

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

# “*Love Sonnet 17*” by Pablo Neruda

I love you without knowing how, or when, or from where.
I love you straightforwardly, without complexities or pride;
so I love you because I know no other way
than this: where I does not exist, nor you,
so close that your hand on my chest is my hand,
so close that your eyes close as I fall asleep.

***A successful marriage is like concrete***.

Concrete is made when three elements are mixed together.
A successful marriage is unconditional love, unwavering trust and a commitment to always be the best version of yourself for you and your partner.

When concrete is made correctly, and the three elements are present, it seems indestructible. It can face the storm as easily as the sunshine.

But concrete is not indestructible. It can crack or chip. Sometimes the crack needs repaired, but sometimes, life will grow in those cracks instead.
A flower with sprout in the middle of a sidewalk.

A successful marriage is that to me.
It is concrete that is never repaired but instead finds beauty in its cracks.
It is seemingly indestructible but if the weathering makes it weak at any time, it allows something beautiful to grow, and just like that,
the crack is unnoticed, and the concrete remains.
If we are as solid as concrete, there is no storm we cannot weather.

- S. Hill

# *"He's Not Perfect"* by Bob Marley

He's not perfect. You aren't either, and the two of you will never be perfect. But if he can make you laugh at least once, causes you to think twice, and if he admits to being human and making mistakes, hold onto him and give him the most you can. He isn't going to quote poetry, he's not thinking about you every moment, but he will give you a part of him that he knows you could break. Don't hurt him, don't change him, and don't expect for more than he can give. Don't analyze. Smile when he makes you happy, yell when he makes you mad, and miss him when he's not there. Love hard when there is love to be had. Because perfect guys don't exist, but there's always one guy that is perfect for you.

***Revised for a ceremony (not gender specific)***

They're not perfect. You aren't either, and the two of you will never be perfect.

But if they can make you laugh at least once, cause you to think twice,
and if they admit to being human and making mistakes,
hold onto them and give them the most you can.

They aren't going to quote poetry, they're not thinking about you every moment,
but they will give you a part of them that they know you could break.

Don't hurt them, don't change them, and don't expect for more than they can give.

Don't analyze. Smile when they make you happy, yell when they make you mad,
and miss them when they're not there.

Love hard when there is love to be had. Because perfect people don't exist,
but there's always one person that is perfect for you.

Love is just not looking at each other and saying,
“You are wonderful”.
There are times when we are anything but wonderful.
Love is looking out in the same direction,
It is linking your strengths to pull a common load.
It is pushing together towards the far horizons, hand in hand.
Love is knowing that when our strengths falter,
We can borrow the strength of someone who cares.
Love is a strange awareness that our sorrows will be shared;
That joys will be enriched and multiplied by the joy of another.
Love is knowing that someone else cares,
That you and they are not alone in life.

(Unknown)

## *The One*

When the one whose hand you're holding
is the one who holds your heart,
When the one whose eyes you gaze into
gives your hopes and dreams their start,
When the one you think of first and last
is the one who holds you tight,
And the things you plan together
make the world seem just right,
When the one whom you believe in
puts their faith and trust in you,
You've found the one and only love
you'll share your whole life through.

*Author unknown*

## *The Art of a Good Marriage*

A good marriage must be created.
In your 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 each day.
It is never going to sleep angry.
It is having a mutual sense of value and common objectives.
It is standing together and facing the world.
It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.
It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating
gratitude in thoughtful ways.
It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.
It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.
It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.
It is not only marrying the right person,
it is being the right partner

*Wilfred Arlan Peterson*

# 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.

–*Unknown*

## *Why Marriage?*

Because to the depths of me, I long to love one person,
With all my heart, my soul, my mind, my body …
Because I need a forever friend to trust with the intimacies of me,
Who won't hold them against me,
Who loves me when I'm unlikable,
Who sees the small child in me, and
Who looks for the divine potential of me …
Because I need to cuddle in the warmth of the night
With someone who thanks God for me,
With someone I feel blessed to hold …
Because marriage means opportunity
To grow in love in friendship …
Because marriage is a discipline
To be added to a list of achievements …
Because marriages do not fail, people fail
When they enter into marriage
Expecting another to make them whole …
Because, knowing this,
I promise myself to take full responsibility
For my spiritual, mental and physical wholeness.
I create me,
I take half of the responsibility for my marriage
Together we create our marriage …
Because with this understanding
The possibilities are limitless.

*–Unknown*

## *Union*

You have known each other for years, through first glance of acquaintance to this moment of recommitment. At some moment, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way. All those conversations that were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks — all those sentences that began with "When we're married" and continued with "I will" and "you will" and "we will" — those late night talks that included "someday" and "somehow" and "maybe" — and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart. Just two people working out what they want what they believe what they hope for each other. All these common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, "You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed — well, I meant it all, every word." Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another — acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years. You have learned that good company and friendship count for more than good looks.  And you have learned that marriage is a maze into which we wander- a maze that is best got through with a great companion. Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this is my husband, this is my wife.

*Robert Fulghum*

## *I carry your heart with me*

i carry your heart with me
i carry it in my heart)
i am never without it
(anywhere i go you go, my dear;
and whatever is done by only me is your doing, my darling)

i fear no fate (for you are my fate, my sweet)
i want no world
(for beautiful you are my world, my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root
and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky
of a tree called life;
which grows higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart
i carry your heart (i carry it in my heart)

*E. E. Cummings 1894-1962*

# Prayer for a Marriage

When we are old one night,
and the moon arcs over the house
like an antique china saucer,
and the tea cup sun
follows somewhere far behind
I hope the stars deepen to a shine
So bright you could read by it, If you liked,
and the sadness we will have known will go away for a while,
in this hour or two before sleep,
and that we kiss, standing in the kitchen,
not fighting gravity so much as embodying its sweet force,
And I hope we kiss, Like we do today,
Knowing so much good is said in the primitive tongue —
From the wild first surprising ones,
To the lower dizzy ten thousand infinitely slower ones -
And I hope while we stand there in the kitchen,
Making tea and kissing,
The whistle of the teapot wakes the neighbors.

— Steve Scafidi

# The Place Poem

I could open the doors and the windows
to great winds
Let everything be scattered,
like loose sheets of paper
Let tumbling take sense and proportion
from what we have put in order.
That suits us,
but it would not change anything.
You have come in,
and your entrance has been final.
You do not leave me,
nor do I leave you, beloved.
We have made this house our place,
And our shelter.
When we go out,
we will go out together.

—Ted Enslin

## *“Guess How Much I Love You”* ***by Sam McBratney***

Then he looked beyond the thorn bushes, out into the big dark night. Nothing could be further than the sky.

“I love you right up to the moon,” he said, and closed his eyes.

“Oh, that’s far,” said Big Nutbrown Hare. “That is very far.”

Big Nutbrown Hare settled Little Nutbrown Hare into his bed of leaves. He leaned over and kissed him good night. Then he lay down close by and whispered with a smile, “I love you right up to the moon — and back.”

“An Origin Story” by Sarah Kay and Phil Kaye

But I have seen the best of you and the worst of you, and I chose both.
I want to share every single one of your sunshines and save them for later.
I will tuck them into my pockets so I can give them back to you
when the rain falls hard.

Friend, I want to be the mirror that reminds you to love yourself.
I want to be the air in your lungs that reminds you to breathe.
When the walls come down, when the thunder rumbles,
when nobody else is home, hold my hand, and I promise I won’t let go.

Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love. How on earth can you explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as first love?

Put your hand on a stove for a minute and it seems like an hour.
Sit with that special person for an hour and it seems like a minute.

That's relativity.

— **Albert Einstein**

**I Like You by Sandol Stoddard Warburg (long version)**

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 snurkle 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.
If you go away, then I go away too;
or if I stay home, you send me a postcard.
You don't just say,
Well see you around sometime, bye!
I like you a lot because of that.
If I go away, I send you a postcard too.
And I like you because
if we go away together,
And if we are in Grand Central Station,
And if I get lost
Then you are the one that is yelling for me.
And I like you because
when I am feeling sad
You don't always cheer me up right away.
Sometimes it is better to be sad.
You can't stand the others
being so googly and gaggly every single minute.

You want to think about things.
It takes time.
I like you because if I am mad at you,
Then you are mad at me too.
It's awful when the other person isn't.
They are so nice and hoo-hoo
you could just about punch them in the nose.
I like you because if I think I
am going to throw up,
then you are really sorry.
You don't just pretend you are busy
looking at the birdies and all that.
You say, maybe it was something you ate.
You say, the same thing happened to me one time.
And the same thing did.
If you find two four-leaf clovers,you give me one.
If I find four, I give you two.
If we only find three, we keep on looking.
Sometimes we have good luck,
and sometimes we don't. If I break my arm,
and if you break your arm too,
Then it's fun to have a broken arm.
I tell you about mine, you tell me about yours.
We are both sorry.
We write our names and draw pictures.
We show everybody
and they wish they had a broken arm too.
I like you because
I don't know why
but Everything that happens is nicer with you.
I can't remember when I didn't like you.
It must have been lonesome then.
I like you because because because
I forget why I like you, but I do.
So many reasons.
On the 4th of July
I like you because it's the 4th of July. On the fifth of July,
I like you too. If you and I had some drums
and some horns and some horses,
If we had some hats and some flags
and some fire engines,
We could be a HOLIDAY.
We could be a CELEBRATION.
We could be a WHOLE PARADE.
See what I mean?
Even if it was the 999th of July,
Even if it was August,
Even if it was way down at the bottom of November,
Even if it was no place particular in January,
I would go on choosing you.
And you would go on choosing me.
Over and over again.
That's how it would happen every time.
I don't know why.
I guess I don't know why I really like you.
Why do I like you.
I guess I just like you.
I guess I just like you.
because I like you.

“I Like You” by Sandol Stoddard Warburg (Shorter version)

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
You know how to be silly
That’s why I like you
If I am getting ready to pop a paper bag,
then you are getting ready to jump
I like you because when I am feeling sad
You don’t always cheer me up right away
Sometimes it is better to be sad
You want to think about things
It takes time
I like you because if I am mad at you
Then you are mad at me too
It’s awful when the other person isn’t
I can’t remember when I didn’t like you
It must have been lonesome then
Even if it was the 999th of July
Even if it was August
Even if it was way down at the bottom of November
I would go on choosing you
And you would go on choosing me
Over and over again
And that’s how it would happen every time

The Amber Spyglass by Phillip Pullman.

“I will love you forever; whatever happens. Till I die and after I die, and when I find my way out of the land of the dead, I’ll drift about forever, all my atoms, till I find you again… I’ll be looking for you, every moment, every single moment. And when we do find each other again, we’ll cling together so tight that nothing and no one’ll ever tear us apart. Every atom of me and every atom of you… We’ll live in birds and flowers and dragonflies and pine trees and in clouds and in those little specks of light you see floating in sunbeams… And when they use our atoms to make new lives, they won’t just be able to take one, they’ll have to take two, one of you and one of me.”

Maybe - Author Unknown

Maybe...We are supposed to meet the wrong people before meeting the right one so that, when we finally meet the right person, we will know how to be grateful for that gift

Maybe...it is true that we don't know what we have got until we lose it, but it is also true that we don't know what we have been missing until it arrives

Maybe...the happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way

Maybe...the best kind of love is the kind you can sit on a sofa together and never say a word, and then walk away feeling like it was the best conversation you've ever had

Maybe...you shouldn't go for looks; they can deceive. Don't go for wealth; even that fades away. Go for someone who makes you smile, because it takes only a smile to make a dark day seem bright.

Maybe...you should hope for enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human, and enough hope to make you happy

Maybe... Love is not about finding the perfect person, it's about learning to see an imperfect person perfectly.

**Scientific Romance by Tim Pratt**

If I became lost in
the multiverse, exploring
infinite parallel dimensions,
my only criterion for settling
down somewhere would be
whether or not I could find you:
and once I did, I'd stay there even
if it was a world ruled by giant spider-
priests, or one where killer
robots won the Civil War, or even
a world where sandwiches
were never invented, because
you'd make it the best
of all possible worlds anyway,
and plus
we could get rich
off inventing sandwiches.
If the Singularity comes
and we upload our minds into a vast
computer simulation of near-infinite
complexity and perfect resolution,
and become capable of experiencing any
fantasy, exploring worlds bound only
by our enhanced imaginations,
I'd still spend at least 1021 processing
cycles a month just sitting
on a virtual couch with you,
watching virtual TV,
eating virtual fajitas,
holding virtual hands,
and wishing
for the real thing.

A Lovely Love Story by Edward Monkton

*(“things” and “shopping” can be changed to suit the couple’s personality.)*

The fierce Dinosaur was trapped inside his cage of ice.
Although it was cold, he was in happy in there. It was, after all, HIS cage.

Then along came the Lovely Other Dinosaur.

The Lovely Other Dinosaur melted the Dinosaur’s cage with kind words and loving thoughts.

I like this Dinosaur, thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur. Although he is fierce, he is also tender and he is funny. He is also quite clever though I will not tell him this for now.

I like this Lovely Other Dinosaur, thought the Dinosaur. She is beautiful and she is different and she smells so nice. She is also a free spirit, which is a quality I much admire in a dinosaur.

But he can be so distant and so peculiar at times, thought the the Lovely Other Dinosaur.
He is also overly fond of Things. Are all Dinosaurs so overly fond of Things?

But her mind skips from here to there so quickly, thought the Dinosaur. She is also uncommonly keen on Shopping. Are all Lovely Other Dinosaurs so uncommonly keen on shopping?

I will forgive his peculiarity and his concern for Things, thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur.
For they are part of what makes him a richly charactered individual.

I will forgive her skipping mind and her fondness for Shopping, thought the Dinosaur.
For she fills our life with beautiful thought and wonderful surprises.
Besides, I am not unkeen on shopping either.

Now the Dinosaur and the Lovely Other Dinosaur are old. Look at them.

Together they stand on the hill telling each other stories and feeling the warmth of the sun on their backs.

And that, my friends, is how it is with love.
Let us all be Dinosaurs and Lovely Other Dinosaurs together.

**From *Jane Eyre***, by Charlotte Bronte

"I have for the first time found what I can truly love–I have found you. You are my sympathy–my better self–my good angel–I am bound to you with a strong attachment. I think you good, gifted, lovely: a fervent, a solemn passion is conceived in my heart; it leans to you, draws you to my centre and spring of life, wrap my existence about you–and, kindling in pure, powerful flame, fuses you and me in one."

**The Beauty of Love – Anonymous**

The question is asked: “Is there anything more beautiful in life than a young couple clasping hands and pure hearts in the path of marriage? Can there be anything more beautiful than young love?” And the answer is given: “Yes, there is a more beautiful thing.

“It is the spectacle of an old man and an old woman finishing their journey together on that path. Their hands are gnarled but still clasped; their faces are seamed but still radiant; their hearts are physically bowed and tired but still strong with love and devotion. Yes, there is a more beautiful thing than young love. Old love.”

**Jane Seymour: A Monologue from the movie "Somewhere in Time"**

*(Edited for use with couples)*

## The one of my dreams is here now.

The one I have created in my mind. The sort of person each of us dreams of in the deepest most secret reaches of our hearts.

I can see you now before me. What should I say now that you are here?
Forgive me, I've never known this feeling. I've lived without it all my life.
Is it any wonder then I fail to recognize you? You brought it to me for the first time.

Is there anyway that I can tell you how my life has changed. Anyway at all, to let you know what sweetness you have given me. There is so much to say and I can't find the words except for these: I love you.

Every Day by David Levithan

"This is what love does: It makes you want to rewrite the world. It makes you want to choose the characters, build the scenery, guide the plot. The person you love sits across from you, and you want to do everything in your power to make it possible, endlessly possible. And when it's just the two of you, alone in a room, you can pretend that this is how it is, this is how it will be."

The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

'I am,' he said. He was staring at me, and I could see the corners of his eyes crinkling. 'I'm in love with you, and I'm not in the business of denying myself the simple pleasure of saying true things. I'm in love with you, and I know that love is just a shout into the void, and that oblivion is inevitable, and that we're all doomed and that there will come a day when all our labor has been returned to dust, and I know the sun will swallow the only earth we'll ever have, and I am in love with you.'

Wild Awake by Hilary T. Smith

"People are like cities: We all have alleys and gardens and secret rooftops and places where daisies sprout between the sidewalk cracks, but most of the time all we let each other see is is a postcard glimpse of a skyline or a polished square. Love lets you find those hidden places in another person, even the ones they didn't know were there, even the ones they wouldn't have thought to call beautiful themselves."

Dangerous Liaisons by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos

"Now, I'm not going to deny that I was aware of your beauty. But the point is, this has nothing to do with your beauty. As I got to know you, I began to realize that beauty was the least of your qualities. I became fascinated by your goodness. I was drawn in by it. I didn't understand what was happening to me. And it was only when I began to feel actual, physical pain every time you left the room that it finally dawned on me: I was in love, for the first time in my life. I knew it was hopeless, but that didn't matter to me. And it's not that I want to have you. All I want is to deserve you. Tell me what to do. Show me how to behave. I'll do anything you say."

Jasper Jones by Craig Silvey

"What I'm feeling, I think, is joy. And it's been some time since I've felt that blinkered rush of happiness. This might be one of those rare events that lasts, one that'll be remembered and recalled as months and years wind and ravel. One of those sweet, significant moments that leaves a footprint in your mind. A photograph couldn't ever tell its story. It's like something you have to live to understand. One of those freak collisions of fizzing meteors and looming celestial bodies and floating debris and one single beautiful red ball that bursts into your life and through your body like an enormous firework. Where things shift into focus for a moment, and everything makes sense. And it becomes one of those things inside you, a pearl among sludge, one of those big exaggerated memories you can invoke at any moment to peel away a little layer of how you felt, like a lick of ice cream. The flavor of grace."

Navajo Blessing:

Now you have lit a fire and that fire should not go out. The two of you now have a fire that represents love, understanding and a philosophy of life. It will give you heat, food, warmth, and happiness.

This new fire represents a new beginning – a new life and a new family. The fire should keep burning; you should stay together. You have lit the fire for life, until old age separates you."

## These I Can Promise by Mark Twain

You cannot promise a life of sunshine;
You cannot promise riches, wealth, or gold;
You cannot promise an easy pathway
That leads away from change or growing old.
But you can promise all your heart's devotion;
A smile to chase away your tears of sorrow;
A love that's ever true and ever growing;
A hand to hold in yours through each tomorrow.

# Irish Blessings and Prayers

Here's a collection of Irish blessings and prayers for your consideration.

## Blessings

*"May your mornings bring joy and your evenings bring peace. May your troubles grow few as your blessings increase. May the saddest day of your future be no worse than the happiest day of your past. May your hands be forever clasped in friendship and your hearts joined forever in love. Your lives are very special, and God has touched you in many ways. May his blessings rest upon you and fill all your coming days."*

*"May joy and peace surround you both, contentment latch your door, and happiness be with you now, and God bless you evermore. May you live your life with trust, and nurture lifelong affection, May your lifelong dreams come true for you, move ever that direction."*

*"In good times and bad times, in sickness and health, may they know that riches aren't needed for wealth. Help them face problems they'll meet on their way—God bless this couple who marry today. May they find peace of mind comes to all who are kind, may the rough times ahead become triumphs in time, may their children be happy each day—God bless this family who started today. As they go, may they know every love that was shown, and as life it gets shorter may their feelings grow. Wherever they travel, wherever they stay, God bless this couple who marry today."*

*"May love and laughter light your days and warm your heart and home. May good and faithful friends be yours, wherever you may roam. May peace and plenty bless your world with joy that long endures. May all life's passing seasons bring the best to you and yours!"*

*"May the raindrops fall lightly on your brow*
*May the soft winds freshen your spirit*
*May the sunshine brighten your heart*
*May the burdens of the day rest lightly upon you*
*And may God enfold you in the mantle of His love.*
*May the road rise to meet you*
*May the wind be always at your back*
*May the sun shine warm upon your face*
*and the rain fall soft upon your fields*
*And until we meet again my friend(s)*
*May God hold you in the hollow (palm) of his hand."*
—Traditional Celtic

MORE IRISH BLESSINGS

*"Lucky stars above you,*
*Sunshine on your way,*
*Many friends to love you,*
*Joy in work and play—*
*Laughter to outweigh each care,*
*In your heart a song—*
*And gladness waiting everywhere*
*All your whole life long!"*

*"May God grant you always a sunbeam to warm you, a moonbeam to charm you, a sheltering angel so nothing can harm you. Laughter to cheer you, faithful friends near you. And whenever you pray, Heaven to hear you."*

# Traditional Irish Wedding Ceremony Blessing:

May the meaning of this hour be fulfilled through the days and years to come.
May the love of this man and this woman, their unity of spirit,
grow deeper and stronger in the uncertainties and changes of life they will share.
Loving each other, may they love all persons. Trusting each other, may they learn to trust life.
May their love reach out to the love of all, that their lives may bless all whose lives they touch. May they find comfort together in shared hours of shadow, as well as in the bright sunshine of joy. May they be to each other both strong and gentle.
May all who follow their lives with interest and affection have cause to rejoice not alone in their happiness, but in their brave and generous living which makes life beautiful and significant.

"May you have love that never ends,
lots of money, and lots of friends.
Health be yours, whatever you do,
and may God send many blessings to you!"

"May God be with you and bless you.
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune, rich in blessings.
May you know nothing but happiness.
From this day forward."

"May the blessing of light be on you—
light without and light within.
May the blessed sunlight shine on you
and warm your heart
till it glows like a great peat fire.
May your home be filled with laughter
May your pockets be filled with gold
And may you have all the happiness
Your Irish heart can hold.
May your blessings outnumber
The Shamrocks that grow
And may trouble avoid you
Wherever you go.
May luck be a friend to ye,
And be with ye in all yer days,
And may trouble be to ye,
A stranger, always."

# Single Line Blessings

*"May you know nothing but happiness from this day forward."*

*"May there be a generation of children on the children of your children."*

*"May you live all the days of your life."*

*"May you live as long as you want and never want as long as you live."*

No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than once they were. As some of the petitioners in these cases demonstrate, marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. It would misunderstand these men and women to say they disrespect the idea of marriage. Their plea is that they do respect it, respect it so deeply that they seek to find its fulfillment for themselves. Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization's oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes

Justice Anthony Kennedy

*Justice Anthony Kennedy ~*

*The final paragraph of Justice Anthony Kennedy's opinion holding that couples of the same sex have a constitutional right to wed is a cogent statement of what marriage means.*

*To paraphrase Justice Kennedy's reflections on the ancient and time honored custom of marriage; 'No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than they once were. Marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. The nature of marriage is that, through its enduring bond, two persons together can find other freedoms, such as expression, intimacy, and spirituality. This is true for all persons. There is dignity in the bond between all human beings who seek to marry and in their autonomy to make such profound choices. Marriage responds to the universal fear that a lonely person might call out only to find no one there. It offers the hope of companionship and understanding and assurance that while both still live there will be someone to care for the other.'."*