

## **Bible readings suitable for weddings**

### **A reading from Genesis, chapter 1**

God said, “Now we will make humans, and they will be like us. We will let them rule the fish, the birds, and all other living creatures.”

So God created humans to be like himself; he made men and women. God gave them his blessing and said:

“Have a lot of children! Fill the earth with people and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the ocean, the birds in the sky, and every animal on the earth.

“I have provided all kinds of fruit and grain for you to eat. And I have given the green plants as food for everything else that breathes. These will be food for animals, both wild and tame, and for birds.”

God looked at what he had done. All of it was very good! Evening came and then morning—that was the sixth day.

Genesis 1:26–31

## A reading from Genesis, chapter 2

The Lord God said, "It isn't good for the man to live alone. I need to make a suitable partner for him." So the Lord took some soil and made animals and birds. He brought them to the man to see what names he would give each of them. Then the man named the tame animals and the birds and the wild animals. That's how they got their names.

None of these was the right kind of partner for the man. So the Lord God made him fall into a deep sleep, and he took out one of the man's ribs. Then after closing the man's side, the Lord made a woman out of the rib.

The Lord God brought her to the man, and the man exclaimed,

"Here is someone like me!

She is part of my body,

my own flesh and bones.

She came from me, a man.

So I will name her Woman!"

That's why a man will leave his own father and mother. He marries a woman, and the two of them become like one person.

Genesis 2:18–24

## A reading from the Song of Solomon

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.'

Set me as a seal upon your heart,

as a seal upon your arm;

for love is strong as death,

passion fierce as the grave.

Its flashes are flashes of fire,

a raging flame.

Many waters cannot quench love,

neither can floods drown it.

If one offered for love

all the wealth of one's house,

it would be utterly scorned.

Song of Solomon 2.10-13; 8.6,7

## **A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes**

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.

Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 (NRSV)

## **Psalm 127**

<sup>1</sup>Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain. Unless the Lord guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain.

<sup>2</sup>It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved.

<sup>3</sup>Sons are indeed a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.

<sup>4</sup>Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth.

<sup>5</sup>Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

## **A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans, chapter 12**

Be sincere in your love for others. Hate everything that is evil and hold tight to everything that is good. Love each other as brothers and sisters and honour others more than you do yourself. Never give up. Eagerly follow the Holy Spirit and serve the Lord. Let your hope make you glad. Be patient in time of trouble and never stop praying. Take care of God's needy people and welcome strangers into your home.

Ask God to bless everyone who mistreats you. Ask him to bless them and not to curse them. When others are happy, be happy with them, and when they are sad, be sad. Be friendly with everyone. Don't be proud and feel that you are smarter than others. Make friends with ordinary people. Don't mistreat someone who has mistreated you. But try to earn the respect of others, and do your best to live at peace with everyone.

Romans 12:9–18

## **St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 13**

What if I could speak all languages of humans and of angels?

If I did not love others, I would be nothing more than a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

What if I could prophesy and understand all secrets and all knowledge? And what if I had faith that moved mountains?

I would be nothing, unless I loved others.

What if I gave away all that I owned and let myself be burned alive?

I would gain nothing, unless I loved others.

Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. Love isn't selfish or quick tempered. It doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do.

Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil. Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting. Love never fails!

Everyone who prophesies will stop, and unknown languages will no longer be spoken. All that we know will be forgotten. We don't know everything, and our prophecies are not complete.

But what is perfect will someday appear, and what isn't perfect will then disappear. When we were children, we thought and reasoned as children do. But when we grew up, we quit our childish ways.

Now all we can see of God is like a cloudy picture in a mirror. Later we will see him face to face. We don't know everything, but then we will, just as God completely understands us.

For now there are faith, hope, and love.

But of these three, the greatest is love

1 Corinthians 13:1–13

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## **A reading from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter 5**

Honour Christ and put others first. A wife should put her husband first, as she does the Lord. A husband is the head of his wife, as Christ is the head and the Saviour of the church, which is his own body. Wives should always put their husbands first, as the church puts Christ first.

A husband should love his wife as much as Christ loved the church and gave his life for it. He made the church holy by the power of his word, and he made it pure by washing it with water. Christ did this, so that he would have a glorious and holy church, without faults or spots or wrinkles or any other flaws.

In the same way, a husband should love his wife as much as he loves himself. A husband who loves his wife shows that he loves himself. None of us hate our own bodies. We provide for them and take good care of them, just as Christ does for the church, because we are each part of his body. As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother to get married, and he becomes like one person with his wife." This is a great mystery, but I understand it to mean Christ and his church. So each husband should love his wife as much as he loves himself, and each wife should respect her husband.

### **A reading from St Paul's letter to the Colossians, chapter 3**

God loves you and has chosen you as his own special people. So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient. Put up with each other, and forgive anyone who does you wrong, just as Christ has forgiven you. Love is more important than anything else. It is what ties everything completely together.

Each one of you is part of the body of Christ, and you were chosen to live together in peace. So let the peace that comes from Christ control your thoughts. And be grateful. Let the message about Christ completely fill your lives, while you use all your wisdom to teach and instruct each other. With thankful hearts, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. Whatever you say or do should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, as you give thanks to God the Father because of him.

Colossians 3:12–17

### **A reading from the first letter of St John, chapter 3**

Children, you show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely by talking about it.

When we love others, we know that we belong to the truth, and we feel at ease in the presence of God. But even if we don't feel at ease, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if we feel at ease in the presence of God, we will have the courage to come near him. He will give us whatever we ask, because we obey him and do what pleases him. God wants us to have faith in his Son Jesus Christ and to love each other. This is also what Jesus taught us to do. If we obey God's commandments, we will stay one in our hearts with him, and he will stay one with us. The Spirit that he has given us is proof that we are one with him.

1 John 3:18–24

### **A reading from the first letter of St John, chapter 4**

My dear friends, we must love each other. Love comes from God, and when we love each other, it shows that we have been given new life. We are now God's children, and we know him. God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him. God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. Real love isn't our love for God, but his love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven. Dear friends, since God loved us this much, we must love each other.

No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is truly in our hearts.

God has given us his Spirit. That is how we know that we are one with him, just as he is one with us. God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. We saw his Son and are now telling others about him. God stays one with everyone who openly says that Jesus is the Son of God. That's how we stay one with God and are sure that God loves us.

God is love. If we keep on loving others, we will stay one in our hearts with God, and he will stay one with us.

1 John 4:7-16

### **A reading from the first letter of St John, chapter 4**

We have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.

We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:16-19

### **A reading from the Gospel of St John, chapter 15**

I have loved you, just as my Father has loved me. So remain faithful to my love for you. If you obey me, I will keep loving you, just as my Father keeps loving me, because I have obeyed him.

I have told you this to make you as completely happy as I am. Now I tell you to love each other, as I have loved you.

John 15:9–12

### **A reading from the Story of Ruth, chapter 1**

Ruth said,

“Do not press me to leave you  
or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go;  
where you lodge, I will lodge;  
your people shall be my people,  
and your God my God.

Where you die, I will die—  
there will I be buried.

May the Lord punish me,  
and more as well,  
if even death parts me from you.

Ruth 1:16-17