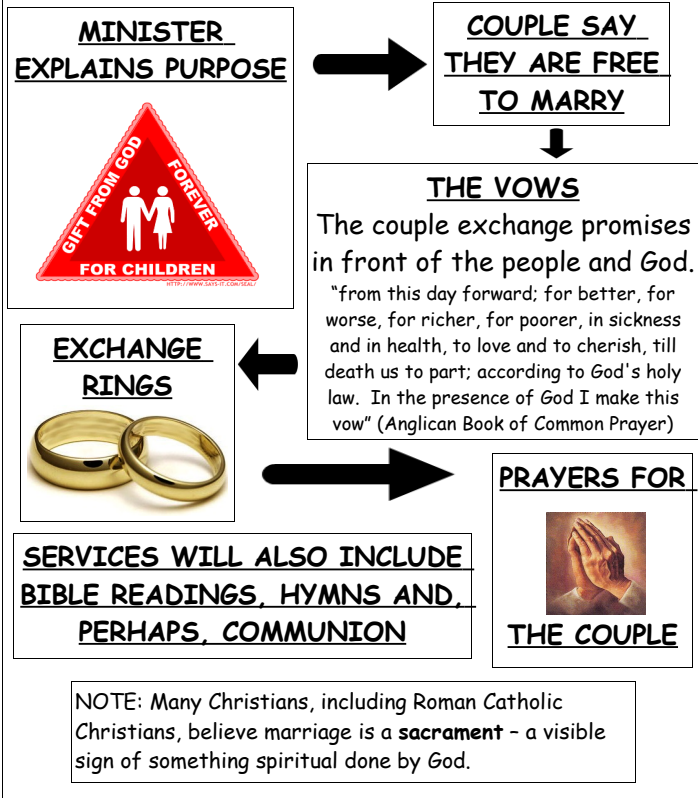


## CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

Christian marriage services take place in church. Christians believe that God witnesses the marriage.



## CHRISTIAN VIEWS OF DIVORCE

In the Bible, Jesus says:

"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. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate. (Mark 10:6-9)

Following this, Christians think that divorce is **wrong**. Churches try to support couples who are having difficulties. However, they also accept that in some cases people may no longer be able to continue living together. Different Christians respond differently to this issue:

### ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

This church believes that marriage is for life. They believe it is a sacrament - done by God. They do not permit divorce, so separated couples should not remarry. Marriages can be **annulled**. This means the original marriage didn't really exist - e.g. because the couple didn't understand the vows.

### CHURCH OF ENGLAND

This church doesn't encourage divorce, but accepts people often do wrong things in their lives and tries to show forgiveness. They allow remarriage.

# Human Relationships Summary

## ROLES OF MEN AND WOMEN IN A MARRIAGE

Christians accept that God values men and women equally. However, some Christians believe that God created them with different roles in mind.

### TRADITIONAL VIEW

The Bible has parts saying that wives should be submissive to their husbands (e.g. 1 Peter 3:1). It was Eve who was created for Adam as a helper and Eve who first ate the forbidden fruit in the creation story. For these reasons some Christians think that the man is the head of the household and their wives should stay at home and care for them and their children.

### MODERN CHRISTIAN VIEW

Other Christians argue that because God values everyone equally and the Bible says: **'There is neither... make nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus'** (Galatians 3:28-29) that men and women should be free to do the role or job that best fulfils them. The couple should support one another in the marriage.

## SEX AND CONTRACEPTION

Christians believe that sex is **something to be taken seriously**. They believe that the 'body is a temple of the holy spirit' (1 Corinthians 6:19) and should be respected. Many Christians believe that sex should **only happen in marriage**. For some Christians, sex is seen as a **special gift from God** - God's first command to Adam and Eve was to 'go forth and multiply'. The joy of sexual love is celebrated in the Song of Solomon - a book of the Bible. Jesus said it made couples 'one flesh'. Some Christians might **emphasise how dangerous sexual lust** can be and leads people into sin and away from higher callings. St Paul advised that 'it is good for a man not to marry' and not have sex.

**CONTRACEPTION** - The Roman Catholic Church opposes **artificial contraception** as they think God created sex for reproduction - God said 'go forth and multiply'. **Some Christians, e.g. the Church of England, support contraception** because it allows couples to plan their families and show their love sexually without leading to children.

**HOMOSEXUALITY** - There are Bible verses that oppose homosexuality. The Roman Catholic Church asks homosexual people to be celibate. Some Christians, e.g. the Quakers, will accept and support homosexual relationships.