

A firm foundation Anniversary Bible ceremony

Teri Easterling

Preparation

The ceremony calls for a worship leader and four speakers. The speakers could include the children of the couple. The speakers should feel free to add specific examples that apply to the couple. Also needed are an accompanist, an instrument, and Baptist Hymnals.

Purchase a modern translation of the Bible or New Testament, such as *Good News Bible*, *New American Standard Bible*, or the *New International Version*.

This Bible is to be used by the couple as they continue to witness. It may be passed on to a prospective or new Christian.

Borrow eight children's unit blocks or large interlocking blocks to build the foundation visual.

Set up a table with a large Bible (on a stand, if possible); decorations appropriate to the anniversary (check the back of a calendar or date book for this information); and space to place the blocks.

Ceremony

Worship Leader: We have come today to honor (wife) and (husband) on their (number) wedding anniversary. This achievement and their witness as a couple to serve as examples to us for the need of a firm foundation in God and His Word. Hebrews 3:4 (GNB)* reminds us, "Every house, of course, is built by someone-and God is the one who has built all things."

Join me in singing the first verse of "How Firm a Foundation" (*Baptist Hymnal*).

(*Sing.*)

Speaker 1: (read Eph. 2:20-22): The relationship built with Christ as the cornerstone does grow and become a sacred temple where God lives. Your marriage has been a demonstration of a sacred temple where God lives.

(Place first block on the table.)

Speaker 2: (read 1 Peter 2:6-8): The witness the two of you give individually and as a couple in your daily lives and church work shows the truth of these verses. Christ as the cornerstone of a believer's life is of great value and keeps one from stumbling morally.

(Place second block on the table.)

Worship Leader: Sing with us now verses 2 and 3 of "How Firm a Foundation."

(Sing.)

Speaker 3: (read Matt. 7:24-25): (Wife and husband), your married life has had plenty of rains, floods, and fiery trials, many which only you know. But, as your marriage is built on the rock of belief in God and His infinite goodness, you have been able to withstand these onslaughts. You have often come out closer stronger because of them.

(Place third block on table.)

Worship Leader: Sing verse 4 of "How Firm a Foundation" with us now.

(Sing.)

Speaker 4: (read Prov. 3:5-8): The foundation stone of trust in the Lord has given security and direction to your marriage. Your humbleness in seeking His will for your lives is inspiring.

(Place fourth block on table. A square or rectangle foundation should now be formed.)

Worship Leader: Let us pause a moment in a prayer of thanksgiving for the foundation stones already mentioned.

(Lead in prayer.)

Sing with us now all verses of "O God in Heaven, Whose Loving Plan" (*Baptist Hymnal*, 1975 edition).

Speaker 1: (read Prov. 24:3-4 and 1 Cor. 13:13): Wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and of course, love lend support to any relationship, particularly to a marriage. We see and salute these qualities and foundation stones in your marriage, (wife and husband).

(Place the fifth block on the top of one of the four previously placed.)

Speaker 2: (read 1 Cor. 3:9b-15): In these verses we are told again of the importance of Christ as a foundation. We are also reminded of the importance of what is placed upon that foundation. The gold and precious stones on your foundation, (wife and husband), are the lives you have influenced and will influence; your children, your friends and acquaintances, and other family members.

(Place sixth block on the others.)

Speaker 3: (read Heb. 13:2 and 1 Peter 4:9): Your hospitality to Christians and non-Christians through the years has been a witness of your love for your home and for God.

(Place seventh block on the foundation.)

Speaker 4: (read Josh. 24:15-16): The Israelites made a conscious choice to follow God. You also have made this choice individually and have carried your commitment to follow God into your marriage. Your commitment has grown and become stronger as you have shared life together.

(Place the eighth block on the foundation.)

Worship Leader: (read Heb. 10:25): (Wife and husband), because you have not neglected gathering with other Christians in church and fellowship, you have given further witness to the foundation of your lives and marriage. The body of believers is able to honor you and your marriage today.

As you continue to bear witness for our Lord, we want to help you by presenting this modern translation of the Bible. You may use this Bible as you see fit in the witnessing situations in which you find yourselves. You may even give it away if that will help bring another person to the Lord.

We are grateful for your example of a home built on the foundation of Jesus Christ. We pray for you as you continue to serve Jesus Christ

through your home. Let us now sing, "God, Give Us Christian Homes" (*Baptist Hymnal*) as a hymn of commitment for you and for us as we build Christian homes.

**Good News Bible*, Today's English Version (TEV): Used by permission, American Bible Society.