



Pastor's Policy Statement for Weddings

Pastor Gabe Manjarrez

Because of the numerous and varied requests a pastor receives to perform weddings, it is necessary to have a written policy concerning for whom I will or will not officiate a wedding. The union of marriage is important to God as he has instituted it. I feel that I am responsible to God for my part in the process. Therefore, I have personally adopted this policy. Please read it carefully. I do not expect all who read this policy to agree with every stand I take, but at least to understand that with this statement I am attempting to avoid both the misunderstandings and the arbitrariness which could arise without such a statement.

As a pastor, I am more interested in establishing Christian homes than I am in simply officiating at weddings. In light of this, I have adopted the following guidelines:

1. I will advise a Christian not to marry an unbeliever. “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness” (2 Corinthians 6:14).
 - If either party has been previously divorced, please be aware I will not render my services to any couple in which either party has been divorced for less than one year. I will thoroughly explore the background of the divorce in counseling.
2. The couple must agree to regular counseling, six sessions, at least a week apart.
3. The couple attend or agree to attend church regularly.
4. Between the time I begin working with the couple and the time of the wedding, the couple must neither live together nor have intercourse.
5. It also needs to be understood that no commitment to officiating a wedding will be made until I have met personally with the couple.
6. I will not unite any couple in which either party is under the age of eighteen (18).
7. I will not perform same-sex marriages.
8. The ceremony will be saturated with scripture and the Christian worldview.
9. While I will personalize and adapt my ceremony to the flow of your wedding, I will not compromise my allegiance to Jesus Christ and my convictions of the Scriptures.
10. You must submit a detailed outline of your ceremony to me during the fourth counseling session.

Furthermore, it is hoped that all who read this statement will appreciate my attempt to base my personal convictions squarely upon God's Word, as well as my belief that each person also has the right and the responsibility to study and obey the Scriptures for himself or herself. These guidelines are based upon personal conviction, but it is understood that situations arise in which some flexibility might be appropriate.

Counseling

- My counseling program requires a minimum of four (4) sessions with the couple together and one (1) session each with the bride and groom alone. (6 sessions are preferred, but not required)
- The first appointment is not a counseling session.
- My counseling program requires a minimum of three (3) months to complete and should be completed one (1) month prior to the date of the wedding.



- You will discuss many subjects throughout your time together. These subjects include marital roles and responsibilities; skills for communicating and resolving conflicts; realistic management of finances; your sexual relationship; your family of origin; and much more!
- Your relationship strengths will be discussed, as well as areas that need growth.
- You should expect to be challenged, strengthened, educated, and better prepared for your upcoming marriage. You will probably experience some laughs, some tears, and some pleasant surprises!
- You should leave your counseling sessions with some problem areas identified, some new marital skills learned, and most importantly - a more realistic expectation of what marriage will be like!

Fees

As I will be taking time away from my family on the day of your wedding, my family has requested that I extend a small fee of \$200 to be paid to me prior to the ceremony. I thank you for taking your time to consider me to be your officiant for your wedding.

“He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.”

(Proverbs 18:22, ESV)