

Wedding Policy
Pastor Alan Dodson

Marriage is a special part of God's plan for humanity. In the Garden of Eden, He instituted the sacred estate of marriage. God gave the first bride away and performed the first ceremony. Because it is a sacred and holy establishment, I do not take it lightly. 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.

Things You Should Know

1. Because of my view of marriage, I will not promise my services to any couple until after I have met with them.
2. Do not assume that I, or any other minister or official, will be able to perform your ceremony on a specific date. A couple should consult with the minister before a date is set.
3. I require all couples I unite in marriage to have completed premarital counseling from an evangelical Christian perspective prior to the wedding. It is not necessary that I provide the counseling, however, if I do not, I require a written statement from a professional Christian counselor or evangelical pastor.
4. 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).
5. If either party has been previously divorced, please be aware of the following:
 - I will not render my services to any couple in which either party has been divorced for less than one (1) year.
 - I will thoroughly explore the background of the divorce in counseling. In some instances, a prior divorce will disqualify the couple from my service.
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.

If I Agree to Officiate Your Wedding, Please Understand:

1. The ceremony will be saturated with scripture and Christian nuances.
2. While I will personalize and adapt my ceremony to the flow of your wedding, I will not change the basis of my familiar ceremony.

3. You must submit a detailed outline of your ceremony to me during the fourth counseling session.
4. For a formal wedding, you must have a coordinator (paid or volunteer). I will not coordinate or choreograph a wedding.

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.
- 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.

Fees

- If you are a member of Cornerstone Baptist Church, please accept my counseling as my wedding gift to you. Also, payment is not expected for my performing the wedding.
- Otherwise, the following fees should be paid directly to me:
 - \$50.00 per counseling session.
 - \$50.00 for the rehearsal (it is not necessary for me to participate in the rehearsal as long as I have a detailed outline).
 - \$100.00 for the ceremony.
 - If the ceremony is not at Cornerstone Baptist Church, mileage should be reimbursed roundtrip from my home to the wedding site at the standard I.R.S. mileage rate.

(In Lexington, I found that I had to have this fee statement. Because of the location of the church campus, I received a lot of wedding inquiries from outside the congregation. If I were serving in other locations such as small towns or rural settings, I probably wouldn't include it.)

If you have read this material and preliminarily qualify for my services, please call the office soon to set up the first appointment. Then, we will schedule four counseling sessions as detailed above.