

We stand here, at the beginning of a new thing today, because of the ending of some other things: the ending of solitude and loneliness, the end of the crush of grief, the end of the fear of loving again. We stand here, today, on this glorious afternoon in this glorious spot of creation, because of second chances, because of this God we have who gives second chances to our beloveds.

The fact that you two stand up here this day says something about your confidence in second chances. With this second chance you kind of know what you're in for, or what you may be in for – the good and the bad and the heartbreaking of it. But this love, this relationship, this commitment to each other is compelling, and here you are.

But maybe all of this isn't really about second chances. Maybe it's not about that at all. Maybe it really is about that stuff Paul described: faith and hope and love.

Faith in each other: the faith that this is a person I can trust; that this is a person who's been through as much hell as I have and like I have come through to the land of the living; that this is a person I want to waltz with early and often.

Hope that something good was learned the first time around; hope that some of the things that happened before won't happen this time; hope not that



I will change this person, but that I will be changed for the better because I am committed to this person.

And love, that four-letter word we toss about like a frisbee on a spring day. You two know what love is, what real love is. You know how love gets you through the grief and the loss and the disappointment. You know how love makes a tarnished old piece of life look shiny and new. You have watched each other love your parents; you've watched each other love your brothers and sisters; you've watched each other love and raise your sons. And you admire how each other loves, and you're inspired by that, and you want to be in the midst of all of that adorable radiance.

We may well be here because of second chances, but really, I don't think there's any chance to this at all. You have worked too hard to suggest that your marriage is the offspring of whimsy or serendipity or luck. You have been loved by people who didn't want to see you alone; you've been encouraged by your family and your friends and some professionals; you've been held up by each other. You have been wise and patient. And now you get the joy, and the rest of your life, together, and the waltz.

A future in 3/4 time: now that's a second chance.