

# Subversive marriage

By [David Warkentin](#)

June 9, 2011

People often think things that are creative, or even subversive, in culture will be the newest or best things around - the type of ideas that no one else has thought of. Risk and originality go against the grain of what's generally accepted as the norm. And every period of history has examples of people subverting culture by modeling a different and better way of being in the world. These examples are both big (abolition of slavery) and small (rock'n'roll - ok, I guess, that's big too!). Or take technology. The last decade has seen Apple dominate with innovation after innovation. Forget [love wins](#), new wins!

But

in the process of this creativity for how we function in this world, we too easily forget that what's old can be just as creative or subversive as what's new.

I had the privilege of officiating a wedding this past weekend. Every time I go through the process of preparing for a wedding I'm reminded how this most ancient of rites ([Gen. 2:24](#)) is perhaps one of the most counter-cultural and subversive acts one can participate in. For many today, the old adage "two are better than one" (Eccl. 4:9) has been amended: "Two are better than one...*only if it suits me.*"

Love

gets relegated to mere personal satisfaction - where any notion of sacrifice and commitment is secondary to personal happiness. Too often, to quote a pastor, "marriage in our society has become a commodity" where if we grow tired of our partner, we simply trade them in "for a newer and sleeker model." Love - even love within marriage - becomes something we create by ourselves, a sort of intangible force that is somehow supposed to sustain us through thick and thin. Sadly, such love

repeatedly falls short of sustaining relationships over the long haul.

## Marriage

commitment on the other hand - a covenant relationship - isn't built on a set of principles for relational success, high running emotions, or simply a bunch of words couples say to each other in a marriage ceremony. To be sure, the feeling of love in a wedding are a great thing and should be celebrated! (I make sure I say this in the ceremony :-).

But significant to love within the covenant of marriage is its root, beyond ourselves, in the character of God - a God who himself "is love" (1 Jn. 4:8) And this love isn't new. It's old, eternal. God's love is a giving love. A persistent love. A sacrificial love. A truly beautiful love. And a love, that today, makes marriage a subversive reflection of God's intention for all us - to love and be loved.

*Originally posted at [Considerations](#).*