



DATE	February 18, 2018
SPEAKER	David Smith
TITLE	Consumer or Covenant
SERIES	Whether you're a newlywed or celebrating your golden anniversary, you've probably come to realize that a good marriage requires hard work. Let's talk about what people with healthy marriages know and do to keep their relationship strong.

If love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage, why do so many marriages fail today? Today's sermon explains that our culture is trending towards a consumer relationship and explains why a covenant marriage is the essence of happy marriages.

1. How do we see evidence in today's culture that marriage used to be about us and now is about me?
2. David tells us that "Love is measured in primarily what you give." How do we compare this to Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 13:3 that "If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not love, I gain nothing." Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 to see definitions of love that can be put into action.
3. The sermon today defines two types of relationships: Consumer (lasts until the "vendor" stops meeting your needs at a cost acceptable to you) vs. Covenant (based on a vow, with a future promise where the good of the relationship takes precedence over the individual).
What relationships do you have that are consumer? Covenant? Are their consumer relationships you have that should be covenant?
4. Ephesians 5:22-30 instructs husbands and wives to make a mutual commitment to the good of the other because of Jesus. In reality, we know that this commitment may sometimes be one-sided in many marriages. Look at Hosea 3:1. How is the story of Hosea a beautiful example of a covenant marriage built on self-sacrifice, unconditional love, and grace?
5. Still looking at Ephesians 5:22-30, how does modern culture rebel against this idea of submission? How would you explain your understanding of this passage to someone who disagrees with it? How can we make sure our relationships are Christ-centered when we are surrounded by influences that insist the world's way is better?
6. Many of us push back at the idea of agape love, especially when unreciprocated. Romans 8:28, 31; Ephesians 3:20; and Philippians 4:13 remind us that God can give strength and restoration in any situation. Can you give examples of marriages OR relationships you have seen restored when there was seemingly no hope?
7. One of the visuals David gave to explain a covenant marriage was to tie yourself to the mast. What are some practical ways we can tie ourselves to the mast to stay committed? What can you start doing this week to make sure your marriage and relationships are covenant?