

Dr. MacRae Interviewed by Jim Neher 8-14-79

I thought I'd say a few words today about marriage. In the first place I think it's important we realize that for the Christian the seriousness of marriage. It is for life. And therefore it is important that we spend a great deal of time and thought making sure that we make no mistake. The ~~normal~~ normal condition of man is to be married. The Bible does speak of certain situations in which a person who is not married can perform greater service for the Lord. But it is not the usual, the normal thing.

Many women have no choice in the matter. That I think is very unfortunate, but that is the way our civilization is set up. Any man can marry any time he wants to. Find somebody. So I think that is definitely unfair in our situation but there is nothing we can do about that. But I do think it is very very important that a man be sure he is making the right decision and is not being carried away by emotion, by feeling.

I had a theory which may not be anything to it, but I incline to think that a man has a subconscious image in his mind which is usually based on his own mother. He suddenly gets a thrilling attraction toward a woman who in some way reminds him of that subconscious image, and it may be just a matter of the eye, the look of the eye. Perhaps more apt to be that than anything else.

In this kind of tremendous feeling people usually get is usually quite undependable. You read in Shakespeare who when Juliet was 14, Romeo who I suppose was 2 or 3 years older, I don't know, had been absolutely crazy about a woman and he switched to Juliet just like nothing. The other woman would not pay any attention to him. Juliet felt just the same way toward him as he did toward her, and eventually they each killed themselves because they could not get married. That is romantic theory which is easy for people to get. The trouble is that when people marry with that kind of an idea, their expectations are usually of a wild thrill that is going to last through life and such thrills don't last through life.

Some group I heard of (a very wonderful Christian group) I'm not sure whether it was the old Moravians or what group it was, that they sent missionaries--a great many -- and they would send a young man out to a new field and he would work and get started. Then the elders at home would pick out a wife for him and send her to him. She would arrive and help him with his work. The marriages that are planned like that by people who know both of them, or marriages that are planned by the parents (if the parents have the means to get full information and are people of very considerable intelligence) often have worked out much better than our American system in which so often there is a big thrill. I think the fact there is so much of this Romeo and Juliet idea