

Of course I don't know the situation. It may be he could not. But that is one side of this: the devil putting you into a marriage you should not be in because of minor superficial characteristics that attract you and that seem to carry you beyond your strength and understanding. Resist them. Pray to the Lord that you will be able to go slow and think these things through.

Before the World War, I would have spoken twice as long on that aspect as I would today because in those days very few seminary students were married. Today most of them are married. So today the other end of that is the most important to speak about. That is, when you've given your word. When you have taken a vow till death do us part. Then a Christian who is going to serve the Lord effectively should remember that vow and not allow his mind to drift on to other possibilities.

I have known a ~~many~~ number of men who have been doing a very effective work for Christ and whose lives have been wrecked as far as Christian testimony is concerned by their becoming interested in some other person, or by their wife going off on some tangent. There was one man who was doing a great work for the Lord. One day he was supposed to be home for lunch at noon, and someone came in and wanted counselling and he talked to them in the office until someone else came in. And then a woman came in who was in difficulty and he drove her to the hospital where she could be cared for, and he got home about 3 p.m. When he got there he found his wife had gone!

He went over to her sister's home c. 40 mi. away. His wife's sister came to the door and said, You will never see your children again. For the next 2 years he went into secular work. Every little while he'd come to see me and discuss with me whether he could get back into the ministry again. His wife claimed he'd had a fascination for a young woman in the church and that had entered into it. He himself said, I worked so hard in counselling people and in trying to help them that I neglected my wife. If I'd given as much attention to thinking of her welfare and to thinking of helping her as I did to helping other people in the congregation, this would never have happened.

He told me he wanted to get back into full time Christian service but the last I heard he is in secular work, working on Sundays, never going to church. How the devil succeeded in that case. If you marry, the Lord calls you to give attention to that woman. No matter what she does or what changes may come or what attitudes she takes, He calls you to remember the vows you have taken and to remember that marriage is not being carried away on a silvery cloud into a land of great joy, but it is working together to build a happy marriage. Alas, in many a seminary there is a real problem. People are so busy that they drift apart.