

## Week Twenty

### Strategies For Protecting Your Marriage From Attractive Alternatives

#### Part 1

1. Our tendency in life is to focus on what we are *not* getting in our marriage rather than what we *do have* in this relationship. This is a biased perception since we cannot possibly see the total picture of the attractive alternative. The solution for the attraction is to refocus on the positive features of our own marriage and on the validity of the marital commitment.
2. In order to protect ourselves, if we are attracted to another, we must first of all think about what is not right with the alternative. For instance, we are not married to the other person so acting on the attraction is inappropriate. Also, we, our mate, our children, and others, would experience gut-wrenching pain and great loss if we acted upon our attraction.

Second, we must look for more specific negative qualities about the attractive alternative. Perhaps he or she does not share our faith, our lifestyle, or our philosophies on child-rearing or handling money. There may also be a hidden obstacle such as an addiction.

Third, refocus on the “positives” in our spouse and our marriage. Use old photos, memorabilia, or journals to refresh your memory. Then, it is important to list our spouse’s positive traits and then express appreciation for them. Above all, avoid rewriting the history of the marriage and convincing yourself that the positives were never there in the first place!

Next week: Strategies for protecting your marriage from attractive alternatives, Part 2.