

33yearserevaluated

2 Cor 5:9-10 NIV

*So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*

**\*We would like to make it clear that being single is held in high regard by both Jesus and the Apostle Paul  
Matt 19:12; 1 Cor 7:8**

## **Evaluating 33 Great Years Together**

*(What we would do the same and what we would do differently --- by Fred and Joan Nelson)*

### **A. What we would do differently:**

*During our courting stage (2/72-6/73)*

1. We would involve our parents more in our courtship
2. We would submit our relationship to a Godly mentor
  3. We would not kiss until we were married
  4. We would not spend so much time alone
5. We would have a shorter engagement (6 months or less)

### **B. What we would do the same:**

*During our courting stage*

1. We would again ask each other some intelligent questions about the key issues of life (see attached page of Questions for Mr. Right)
2. We would again stay out of the sack (see attached page on Role Reversals)
  3. We would again stay out of debt
4. I would again ask Joan's parents for permission to propose to her

### **C. What we would do differently:**

*During our marriage*

#### **1. Faith**

- a. We would devote more time to prayer
- b. We would be less busy in ministry

#### **2. Family (one another, kids, parents and siblings)**

- a. We would plan more family adventures with the girls
- b. We would lighten up and get less frustrated over the small stuff
- c. We would read more to our kids and watch less T.V.
- d. We would discuss our failures with the girls more frequently

- e. We would treat our parents with more honor (“as though they were precious to us”)

### **3. Friendships**

We would be less concerned with having the approval of others

### **4. Finances**

We would worry less about making ends meet

## **D. What we would do the same:**

### *During our marriage*

#### **1. Faith**

- a. We would again agree in prayer everyday
- b. We would again passionately study and apply God's Word
- c. We would again speak the truth in love (see attached Playing by the Rules)
- d. We would again make “Christ-like kindness” our way of life (our marriage is never "out of the woods")
- e. We would again make a practice of thinking "charitably " of everyone including one another (see attached How to Fall Either In or Out of Love)
- f. We would again be active in a Bible-believing church body

#### **2. Family**

- a. We would again date each other regularly
- b. We would again have no “off limits” subjects in our home
- c. We would again make our sex life a priority
- d. We would again seek out Godly counsel from a “mentor or mentoring couple”
- e. We would again make our nightly walks a priority

#### **3. Friendships**

- a. We would again invest significant time in a “covenant” type group of long term friends in Christ

#### **4. Finances**

- a. We would again choose to live simply (spending significantly less than we earned)

**“Small “right decisions” made over a long period of time pay huge dividends.” FMN**

**IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR MY GIRLS  
TO ASK THEMSELVES REGARDING MR. RIGHT**

1. Does he love Jesus at least as much as I do?
2. Does he want to serve Jesus at least as much as I do?
3. Does he love me at least as much as Dad does? Does he pursue me?
4. Does he treat me as well as Dad does?
5. Do we agree on money? 1. Earning? 2. Giving?  
3. Saving? 4. Spending?
6. Do we have similar career aspirations? Or do they conflict?
7. Do we agree on where we would want to live?
8. Do we have similar interests? hobbies?
9. Do we have similar interests in sex? (This is determined by discussion & not by practice!)
10. Do we have similar interests in children?
11. Do I like and enjoy his family? Does he like and enjoy mine?
12. Do I respect him? Could I cheerfully submit to his leadership?
13. Can and will he occasionally say "I was wrong, will you forgive me"?
14. Is he enslaved to anything: ie
  - a. alcohol?
  - b. drugs?
  - c. pornography?
  - d. work?
  - e. recreation?
  - f. pride?
  - g. money?
  - h. the Internet?
  - i. etc.?

\*Read - Deut. 30:11-20

**The Key Question: Are you convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt, that when the "chips are down," Mr. Rite will make his decisions based on God's Word rather than on his "feelings?"**

## **Role Reversals**

*(from Strike the Original Match by Chuck Swindoll)*

**A great deal of my counseling time is invested in the lives of couples planning to get married. During the three premarital counseling sessions, I probe deeply into their relationship. We discuss their lives from several perspectives: spiritually, emotionally, financially, socially, and sexually. It is not uncommon for those I plan to marry to have been intimately involved with each other. I require that this be stopped if such has been the case. Before we proceed I have each one promise me that from that day on (until they are married) they will sustain restraint and self-control in their relationship.**

**Here's why. If promiscuity is not completely stopped for a period of time before marriage, then after marriage a strange reversal in their roles occurs. The young bride marries with disappointment over the violation done against her by her fiancé. She soon becomes dominant and aggressive, taking the role of leadership from her husband because of a mixture of resentment and anger. And the man? Well, he feels, guilty, disappointed with himself, and ultimately becomes passive.**

**She takes charge (and hates it) while he backs off (and feels miserable). All because their intimate relationship was incorrectly set in motion before marriage.**

**Of the hundreds of unhappy couples I have counseled who finally admitted to premarital promiscuity, I can hardly recall an exception to this strange pattern.**

***Playing by the Rules***  
(7 Keys to Healthy Human Relationships)

I believe that the universal appeal of sports stems from the fact that in this one arena of life nearly everyone who participates voluntarily plays by the rules of the respective game. Everyone seems to understand that without rules and a commitment to follow them, the game will be of no interest to its players or the spectators. If, in our daily interactions with those around us, we fail to adhere to a few elementary rules of conduct, the "game" of life becomes nearly intolerable, and deep personal relationships become impossible. Over the years I have found the following principles to be simple and obvious, but are frequently overlooked in our attempts to resolve the conflicts in our lives. If you want to have rich and meaningful human relationships that make your life full, then you must:

1. **Say what you mean, and mean what you say.**  
*(Be a person of integrity.)*
2. **Do your best to understand what the other person is saying before you respond.**  
*(Be a person of intelligence.)*
3. **Have no "off limits" subjects; everything is open for discussion.**  
*(Be a person of courage.)*
4. **Be kind; never use profanity or rage to gain advantage.**  
*(Be a person of class.)*
5. **Overlook the "small stuff," and most of it is "small stuff."**  
*(Be a person of character.)*
6. **Determine to resolve every conflict as quickly and completely as possible; "walking off the field" is not allowed.**  
*(Be an ambassador of peace.)*
7. **Always take the high road.**  
*(Be a person like Jesus.)*

Matt 7:12 NIV

*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

**How to Fall Either In or Out of Love**  
(Control Your Thoughts or They Will Control You)

Let's define *love* in English: Webster's describes it as "affection based on admiration or benevolence"

3 Greek words for *love* (#2 & #3 are found in the New Testament)

1. *eros* - "a strong sexual attraction"
2. *phileo* - "a tender affection" (a sense of deep admiration for a friend)
3. *agape* - "an act of will whereby one earnestly desires the best for the person being loved"

*\*infatuation* - "a foolish or extravagant love or admiration" (this intense emotion develops quickly and without adequate information or commitment)

**VIP** Any human being can be attracted to another by their intelligence, charm, good looks, etc. This "spark" of initial interest can easily be fanned into a "blaze" of emotions that our society calls *love*, but in fact, is an *infatuation*. This highly volatile emotion increases or decreases in direct proportion to the quantity and intensity of the thoughts we have for the other. For instance, a wife can *fall out of love* with her husband by consistently entertaining strong "uncharitable" thoughts about him. In the same manner she can *fall in love* with another man by regularly dwelling on intense "charitable" thoughts about him. This is why Jesus reminds us in the Sermon on the Mount that both murderous and adulterous thoughts can be so damaging to our personal relationships. This same wife can, if she so desires, ask God's assistance and choose to reverse the process and *fall out of love* with the illegitimate individual and *back into love* with her spouse.

*\*Facts* are the killer viruses of infatuation. (from Everyman's Battle)

**What the Bible Teaches about the Importance of Our Thinking**

1. Job 3:25 – what I feared has come upon me (NIV)
2. Prov. 23:7 – for as he thinks (reckons in his soul) within himself, so he is (NASB)
3. Rom. 12:2 – be transformed by the renewing of your mind (NIV)
4. 2 Peter 3:1 – to stimulate you to wholesome thinking (NIV)
5. 2 Cor. 10:5 – we take captive every thought (NIV)
6. Phil. 4:8 – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things (NIV)

