**Relationship Topic** – Before You Date My Daughter hearwelldone.org

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| Before spending any time in exclusive relationship with my daughter, you must: 1)  **Know the purpose of this relationship**, 2)  **Possess five foundational qualities** of a man of God preparing for marriage – and 3)  **Be** **growing daily** in them. We believe that God ordains courtship, not dating.  We feel that the American version of dating is often "divorce practice" – and not God’s will or God’s best for you, or our daughter. **Courtship is the process of discovering if this is the person of God’s choosing for you to marry.**  It will probably not take a lengthy period of time.  It will involve both of you, and both of our families.  We believe God will confirm it relatively soon.   If He reveals this is not the person for you to marry, the exclusive relationship is over.  God does not want you investing time in another man’s wife, nor does God want our daughter investing time and emotion into another woman’s husband.   While many believe that you could marry any number of people, (and certainly marriage will take work, as you will choose to love sometimes when you don’t feel like it) we believe that God designed one individual for you to marry.  **Just like God brought Eve to Adam**, just like God brought Rebekkah to Isaac, we believe He has a person created to be joined together with you since before you and they were born, for you to become one with, to follow God’s joint purpose and destiny for both of you, and together to reflect God’s love to the world.  In light of this, we believe spending any time in exclusive relationship with someone who is not the person you will marry, is not stewarding your time and emotions in the way God would have you.  Nor will we allow our daughters to enter into such a relationship.  In the process of courtship, **the goal is to discover God’s will for you to marry this person or not** to marry them.  As soon as God reveals that to both of you, you will either release them to pursue God (trusting Him to bring their mate in his perfect time) or marry them in the perfect time that He reveals.   We personally don't believe in first boyfriends, simply because that implies there will be a second, or even a third.  While there is a chance that a courtship may end with release rather than marriage, our prayer for our daughters, is that they never have a first boyfriend, but an only boyfriend that becomes their only husband.  God will ultimately decide and we trust his plan.**First** we’ll state the obvious.  You cannot marry my daughter if you don’t have an education and a job.  If you cannot provide for yourself, how will you ever provide for a wife and a family?    **Second**, to enter into any exclusive relationship with the purpose of discovering Gods will to marry her, you must possess Five Foundational Qualities or pursuits. |

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| The Five Pursuits of a Young Man**#1   PURSUE GOD.**    We’re not just talking about having accepted Christ as your Savior, going to church regularly, and living a lifestyle that reflects this decision.  By pursuing God we mean an obedience relationship.  This means you are actively pursuing full obedience to Christ in time, thought and money decisions - where God makes these daily decisions in your life, not you.  It’s what disciples of Jesus Christ do - Live like Jesus did.  **#2  PURSUE EDUCATION.**   We don’t expect a perfect 4.0.  You are not required to be valedictorian, but priority #2 in your life right now is your education.  If you are still in school, Education is your job.  If you don’t take this responsibility seriously in this season of your life (and do it to the best of your ability) neither will you take seriously your responsibility on your job, your career and providing for a family.  Luke 16:10 - You must first be faithful with little. **#3  PURSUE A SKILL.**   You should be developing world class skill at something.  This does not include video games.  The Word of God says, “Show me a man skilled at his labor, he will stand before kings, he will not stand before obscure men.”  A man’s skill opens doors for him.  The skill itself is not as important as the fire, the commitment and the perseverance required to develop it.  Whether guitar, drums, football, baseball, computers, 4H – your life should have an extra-curricular pursuit that demonstrates commitment and excellence at a high level. **#4  PURSUE WORK.**   If you are not a worker, you will not marry my daughter.  This goes beyond just the experience of earning a paycheck.  This pertains to working with all your might at the job before you.  Not only working hard when you are told, completely and with excellence, working for the LORD, not for men.  But it also means attentiveness – seeing a need and working hard to meet it.  When there is work to be done, are you the first in line to help?  Are you the one who stays until the job is complete no matter how long it takes?  Or are you the one who becomes scarce (nowhere to be found) when there is work to be done.  Do you stack chairs at church?  Do you help clean up after meals, or events?  Do you look for opportunities to help neighbors or people in need?  Are you willing to sweat, to get your hands dirty, to sacrifice your comfort for the benefit of others – as the Holy Spirit directs you?  Do you serve?  Do you find out what my daughter needs and help her with her responsibilities to ease her burden?  If you are not a worker, you will never get my consent to marry my daughter.**#5  PURSUE LOVING PEOPLE.**   This means **treating people like Jesus loves them**.   Is your conversation kind, caring?  Does every word you say build up others?  Do you refuse to slander?  Meaning:  Do you refuse to say anything (either true or untrue) that would lessen someone’s reputation in the eyes of others?   Do you actively ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into conversations and opportunities to point people to the truth, love, and hope of Jesus Christ?   This is a Great Commission mentality - something required to be a fruitful believer in Christ.  It is one of the qualifications to be able to be the spiritual leader of your family.The reason these requirements are so important, is that my daughters are pursuing these also.  I wouldn’t recommend you consider marrying any young woman who didn’t equally possess these same qualities. Therefore, you must possess them, if you will be qualified to lead my daughter in marriage.  Husbands have to lead by example, and lead in love, giving up their very life for their wife.  |

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| Finally: we are praying that God brings ONE young man into our daughters' life, at the perfect time - to pursue marriage through courtship, with God confirming His perfect will and timing in that decision.  We fully trust God to determine the timing **not only** of engagement and marriage, but even the timing of the first introduction of that young man to our daughter, and the beginning of the courtship relationship.   Our daughters are pursuing God, not a courtship prospect, so we may find that God's timing of that introduction may not match our personal experience, or our preference for each daughter.   However, we FULLY trust God to bring them into a young man's life at HIS perfect time, and then bring them both through courtship to the decision of His choosing regarding marriage.  To Whom it May concern:  Before You Date My Son…Know that my son possesses these qualities and is growing daily in them.  My daughters are praying for and have yet to find - someone like their brother.  Know that I would never allow you to spend any time in exclusive relationship with my son, if He did not possess these qualities (as much for you as for him).  No matter how much he might like you, or even I might approve of you, I would tell you plainly - He’s not ready, or he’s not for you.  So if we support your relationship with Him, we believe God brought you to him, and brought him to you.  God will first grow you in Himself, then grow you together.  He will reveal his perfect timing for marriage.  God is faithful – You can trust Him, He will do it.  |

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