

## THINGS MY FUTURE SON-IN-LAW NEEDS TO KNOW

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A year or so ago I wrote a column about things I want my son to know. I received more comments on that column than any other thing I have ever written. Since then I have wanted to write a similar column about my two daughters. After trying to do this for the last year, I realize that telling them not to burp in public is not much guidance. Luckily, they have my wife to help them with some of the finer points of becoming a woman.

I do, however, have some pointers for whatever boys are interested in marrying my daughters. Here are some of the points, in no particular order.

- Understand that I go into this not liking you. I view you as something trying to take my daughter away from me. That is why I don't smile when I see you. The best I can do is to not openly berate you.
- You need to love Jesus. Until you do that, you can't fully love my daughter.
- I need to know where you go to church and the name of your pastor. If he doesn't automatically recognize your name, we have problems.
- You had better know something about agriculture or sports. Otherwise, we won't have anything to talk about. And by sports, I don't mean soccer.
- If you have any piercings on your head, you need to take them out before you get to my house.
- Every time you see my daughter, you better compliment her on something.
- My daughter likes chocolate. And so do I.
- You need to treat my daughter like the princess she is. She is better than you deserve. Her job is not to meet your needs and to make you happy. That is your job toward her.
- If you have any sort of emotional baggage caused by your family, get that straightened out before you try to become part of my family.
- If you ever hurt my daughter, I promise you will see Jesus.
- You can call me "Mr. Bates". Once we get to know each other, you can call me by my first name- "Doctor".
- If you can't grow a real beard, then don't try at all.
- I expect to see my daughter at Christmas. I realize you have to see your family at holidays also. You can go to their house on President's Day.
- I expect you to have a plan for a career. If you don't, go away and come back when you do.
- You can be a vegetarian. But if it is because you think it is healthier, or because you think producers abuse livestock, expect a training session.

As I write this column, I find myself getting angry at some boy that I don't even know. I let my wife read over this before sending it in. She helps control some of the hostility. I reserve the right to add more points to this column as I see fit. I continue to pray that my daughters set their standards higher than their mom did.