
OVERSEAS FIELD REPORT

A publication dedicated to making known the ways in which God is showing Himself strong on the behalf of those who serve Him.

Volume 1, Issue 5

Written by Joshua Steele & Kelsie Powell

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A story of love, romance, and God's faithfulness in bringing together two of His children under seemingly impossible circumstances...

“Dear Kelsie, Although you do not know me, I have been corresponding with your parents for the past month or so in regards to a possible courtship with you. I have really enjoyed getting to know them, and in a way getting to know you through them...Your mother and father wrote to me recently, saying that they felt this would be a good

time to let you know about all of this.

And so my purpose in writing you this letter, is to see if you would be willing to begin a courtship relationship, with the goal of marriage in mind should the Lord so direct us...

Very Sincerely,

Joshua Steele ”

The Bible says in Proverbs, “A prudent wife is from the Lord.” It also says they are quite rare: “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.” Having been a full time missionary overseas for nearly three years, I was beginning to wonder how and when I would ever find a wife. While I knew that I could trust God completely in this area, it seemed

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Bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those under the power of darkness and proving to the world that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.



From Kelsie...

It was a balmy evening in March. The tree branches waved in the breeze and ducks swam in the nearby pond. My little brother and I skipped stones on the water while my parents strolled along the winding path. "Kelsie," my dad called, "we have something to show you." Wonderingly, I untied the burgundy ribbon from the parchment paper scroll that he handed me and began to read. "Dear Kelsie...my purpose in writing you this letter is to see if you would be willing to begin a courtship relationship..."

* * * * *

The story actually begins back when I was about 14. At that time I made a commitment that I would not give my heart away to any young man until I had received my dad's permission and blessing to do so. My goal was to involve my parents as much as possible in the process of finding a life partner. I knew that this would mean waiting, putting romance on hold so to speak, until God had given His clear direction through my parents.

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ENGAGED!

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quite discouraging at times. There are not too many American girls in Ukraine, and I just didn't feel right telling God that I was going home to the US to go "girl hunting." After all, it was God who first noticed that it was not good for Adam to be alone. God put Adam to sleep, God did the the operation, and God gave Adam his woman. Though it was often difficult for me to wait, I knew that it was best. God's way is always best. And so I continued on, praying that God would bring the right girl at the right time.

And then one day, just when it seemed that God didn't want me to be married any time in the next 20 years, I received an e-mail from my mom. (I get lots of those, but this one was particularly interesting!) She wrote about a young lady that she and my sisters had



Having some fun at SeaWorld in San Antonio

met who was absolutley phenomenal. Her name was Kelsie. She was currently living at home with her parents, but had quite a history of ministry both in the United States and abroad. She was fluent in Spanish, and could also speak Mandarin (Chinese) as well as some French. But best of all, my sister Jennifer assured me, Kelsie had been praying that she could marry a missionary!

Now here was something new. I had known many godly young

ladies in my time, but I must confess I had wondered to myself what kind of a girl would want to give up life in America and move to Ukraine. And yet, here was a girl who seemed quite prepared for such a change.

So I wrote to her father and, after giving a brief explanation about myself and my ministry in Ukraine, I asked if he would be willing to

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The Steele Family: Mike, Cathy, Joshua, Jennifer, Jessica, Jonathan, Jeremy, and Josiah

ENGAGED!

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consider allowing me to court his daughter, Kelsie. To my surprise, he wrote back and said, "Yes!"

During this time I was serving in Thailand, but already had plans to return to Ukraine and continue my ministry there. After a little over a month, Mr. Powell wrote me saying that he felt it was time to let Kelsie in on all that was going on. (Thus far, our correspondence had been quite secret, and Kelsie had no idea that any of this had transpired.)

We decided that I would write Kelsie a letter, introducing myself and asking her permission to court her with the goal of marriage in mind should God so direct. The Powells printed my letter on parchment paper, and during a family walk in the park, presented it to Kelsie.

The next day, I anxiously checked my e-mail and found her reply: "*Dear Joshua,...As far as I can determine based on my parents' clear direction, God's apparent orchestration of these events, and the general concurrence of our life goals, I feel I may confidently answer "yes" to seeking God's will*



Planning the wedding at the Powell's new home in Canada

for the two of us regarding marriage."

That was March 13th. For nearly two months we corresponded via e-mail while I completed my work in Thailand, and then we continued as I returned to Ukraine. Finally, on May 7th, we saw each other for the first time in person when I flew to Fort Worth.

Our first meeting was quite a unique experience. Although we had never actually seen each other face to face, it felt like a reunion of life-long friends who had simply been apart for many years.

Kelsie and I began spending time together on dates or various other activities. The more we got to know each other, the more evident it was that this was the hand of God. Finally, I wrote again to her father and formally asked his blessing to marry Kelsie. He enthusiastically agreed!

Now all I needed was to plan the proposal. I guess it's normal for guys to want to surprise their girlfriends, and I was no different. With the help of my family, I worked out a plan.

On May 19th, I invited her out to lunch at a nice little French cafe, and then to a park in Dallas "so we could take some pictures." As we were driving over to Dallas, my



The Powell Family: Danny, Cindy, Kelsie, and Hudson

mom had already placed a dozen white roses and a tiara in an antebellum mansion in the park. The whole experience promised to be very romantic, except for the fact that when we arrived at the mansion, it dawned on me that I had never been there before. I did not know which room the flowers were in! So, as calmly as I could I just led Kelsie around the mansion, looking at the different exhibits, as though this were just a leisurely tour. All the while I was frantically searching for the flowers! And then I spotted them. Thankfully, Kelsie was busy looking at an antique camera and hadn't seen them yet. I called to her from across the hallway, and said, "Hey Kels, look at this." Thinking it was another antique, she came strolling across, and then suddenly stopped when she spotted the flowers. I had placed a tag on them that said, "I love you, Princess Kelsie." "Kelsie," I said, "there is something I've been wanting to ask you." As I got down on one knee, I pulled out the ring, presented it to her, and asked her to marry me. To my great delight, she said, "Yes!"

Kelsie is my first and last girlfriend. She is the only one I have ever dated, and she is the joy of

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FROM KELSIE...

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That was one of the best decisions I ever made, but at times it was a difficult road to follow. One young man or another would show some interest, and my father would turn him away. Although I didn't always understand the reason for my parents' decisions, I didn't waver in my conviction; God would clearly direct my life through my authorities.

After high school I spent several years traveling to different countries and studying foreign languages. During that time I determined that God was preparing me to work with foreigners. As I thought about marriage, I knew that I wanted a man who would have a similar calling, and even one whose ambitions and goals in serving the Lord would far surpass mine. It often seemed that no such man existed.

About a year and a half ago, my family and I moved to a small Oklahoma town called Bartlesville. It did not seem to me like a place of great opportunity, and certainly there could be no hope of finding an ideal marriage part-

ner there. Or so I thought.

Little did I expect to stand in a park in that very town and open a letter from a man on the other side of the world, inviting me to begin the most precious relationship I would ever know. Not only were my parents excited about him, but it also became evident that he was the kind of man I had been praying for. "...I am a missionary. I work primarily in the country of Ukraine. My purpose in life is to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost." I answered his letter, "Dear Joshua...As far as I can determine based on my parents' clear direction, God's apparent orches-

I LOVE YOU

Our world today often presents us with a very skewed picture of what love is. The highest attribute of a holy God has been misrepresented as some emotional thrill, without any personal responsibility or commitment. But God designed true love to be for those who give themselves sacrificially to one another for life. It was May 13th when Josh first wrote

"I love you, Kelsie"

on a card and presented it to me with a vase full of red roses. He had waited a long time to be able to say those words, and now the time had come when he could back them up with his life. And I knew he meant it.

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tion of
these
events, and the gen-
eral con- currence of our
life goals, I feel I may confidently

How YOU can Pray...

- Pray that God would send out more laborers into His harvest.
- Pray that God would give Kelsie success as she learns Ukrainian.
- Pray for the Beals, Nathan Day, Mark Hovik, and the others laboring with us in Ukraine.
- Pray that God would pour out His blessing and wisdom as we attempt to reach students through English teaching.
- Pray that God would make us effective as a married couple in bearing fruit for His kingdom.

answer "yes" to seeking God's will for the two of us regarding marriage."

No, I didn't even know him at the time, but I knew enough about him to see that the hand of God alone was responsible for bringing this about. And I would soon find out all about him. Many letters followed, in which we discussed everything: Bible study, missions, life experiences, children, things we had learned from our parents, finances, and of course, our future. The more we wrote, the more evident it became that God had specially prepared us for each other. What's more, we were able to document our goals for the future and the things we had envisioned

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5 "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

FROM KELSIE...

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for our lives.

By the time Joshua was able to come to the States, our relationship was already well grounded. We "met" on May 7th, feeling more like best friends seeing each other for the first time. Not more than two weeks later, Joshua was in front of me on one knee with a diamond ring in his hand. I could not have been more delighted or confident about saying "yes" if we had been courting for months. God had abundantly manifested His hand in our lives, and we had both our parents' full blessing and approval.

As I look back now over the years of waiting and wondering, my heart rejoices to see how God has led, and that in His goodness He brought Josh into my life. I can wholeheartedly say: it was SO worth the wait! ♥

ENGAGED!

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my life. By God's grace, Kelsie and I have saved our hearts for each other, and it is with great joy that we look

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forward to our wedding on September 18th, 2004. Following our honeymoon, we will be returning to Ukraine together where we will continue in the work to which God has called us.

In summary, I would like to share a verse of Scripture which Kels and I have quoted many times since the beginning of our relationship. I Corinthians 2:9 says, "...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." God writes the best love stories. I know I speak for Kelsie as well when I say that we are grateful beyond words for His love towards us in saving our souls and in bringing us together. He has taught us what true love means, and it is only because of His love that we are His children: forgiven, cleansed, and now on the threshold of paradise. ♥



To God be the Glory

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