Marriage, a Playful Adventure?

Luke Hulley 25 March 2025



“When he had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac **laughing** with Rebekah his wife.” (Genesis 26:8)

This passage describes how Isaac and Rebekah were discovered – they had been pretending to be brother and sister for security reasons, but something about how they interacted gave their game away.

The word translated here as ‘laughing’ has a variety of subtle meanings that are picked up in other Bible translations. It carries a sense of playfulness and joy, to joke or laugh together.

What a beautiful window into a healthy marriage!

Now, it may just be that the word was chosen as a euphemism for sexual intimacy, but the point remains the same. Something beautiful is being conveyed here that is probably the reason we get married in the first place.

One of the major reasons we marry is that we are looking for a playmate. I still remember the night I decided I wanted to marry my wife. It was after an evening in town when we had gone off with a bunch of friends to a hip-hop indaba. We all dressed up like gangster rappers and laughed so much that my face hurt the next day.

> One of the major reasons we marry is that we are looking for a playmate.

I remember thinking, 'Imagine being married to a person I have so much fun with?' I was sold. Unfortunately, we can forget about this fun, playful side of marriage and get too serious over the long journey of life.

It is interesting that Isaac and Rebekah were on a journey together. As were Abraham and Sarah. The book of Hebrews says that we, like them, are journeying through this life, living the nomadic life. We don't settle, we keep moving because we are looking forward to the heavenly city, which will be our reward and our permanent home.

When God called Adam and Eve, He gave them a task to do together. Their calling was a joint calling – to tend the Garden of Eden. How exciting to have a playmate with whom you can fulfil a calling?

So much of marriage is venturing into the exciting world of the unknown, together. It is a shared adventure. Even putting ministry to one side – having a baby together, for example, is an exciting venture into the unknown. Buying and settling in a new home together would be another example.

This is also very true in the world of the Kingdom. When you start leading a community together, you are stepping into the unknown – it is terrifying, but also exhilarating.

I remember when I got the call to come on to eldership after being married for only a few weeks. Both Zandi and I were shocked but also thrilled, and we tackled the new world of eldership with faith and zeal.

> The danger is that in working so hard in the service of God, you can lose the sense of adventure, play and joy in your marriage.

The gifting of married couples is different, but we are called together to minister and serve, to fulfil God's calling on our lives. Like Adam and Eve. Like Isaac and Rebecca.

The danger is that in working so hard in the service of God, you can lose the sense of adventure, play and joy in your marriage. You can forget the thrill of being able to do what you love, together.

So, we come back to the question, if peeping Abimelech had to spy on you and your wife

together, would he catch you laughing? Would he find you playing and teasing each other? Or would he see two very serious-looking individuals not having much fun anymore?

This article was originally published on Luke Hulley's personal blog as Is Your Marriage a Playful Adventure? on 22 January 2025, and has since been revised and published on 25 March 2025 on Four12 Global.