

Become the Power Couple the Enemy Can't Stand

“During the rule of Herod, King of Judah, there was a priest assigned service in the regiment of Abijah. His name was Zachariah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron. Her name was Elizabeth. Together they lived honorably before God, careful in keeping to the ways of the commandments and enjoying a clear conscience before God” (Luke 1:5-7, MSG).

Now, this? Is a wonderful life! This is exactly what I want my marriage to look like. Zachariah and Elizabeth, living in the same call, walking in the same truth, pursuing the same character goals. And in response to the way they've fashioned their family, God gives them the keys to the next generation and they give birth to the bridge between the years of dark silence and the years of brilliant redemption.

So many dating couples fall into the trap of giving themselves primarily to one another. They give up ministry, get immersed in the process of falling in love—which is a *great* process, and it definitely deserves some attention, but they often don't find a way back to the things that God had spoken to them before the hearts and flowers fell.

It's easy to believe that finding the right person actually *is* the bulk of God's purpose—kind of like the finish line—and all that we were doing before was a diversion to keep us occupied while waiting for the ultimate matrimonial prize. If that's our mindset, we can easily spend the bulk of our energy after “I do” on keeping our marriage safe, our stuff safe, our time safe and our kids safe.

I've watched hundreds of couples walk this out, and I've found that the most excellent and exciting relationships are those that allow God to multiply their kingdom purpose rather than

trimming it down to fit inside the safety of the American dream.

Husbands and wives who encourage one another to step into the fullness of God's call and character, who push each other to become carriers of His authority to the world around them (even when it's costly), and who keep their vision globally and eternally focused—those marriages are not just happy. They're dangerous.

Bo Stern is a blogger and author of the newly-released *Beautiful Battliefields* (NavPress). She knows the most beautiful things can come out of the hardest times. Her Goliath came in the form of her husband's terminal illness, a battle they are still fighting with the help of their four children, a veritable army of friends and our extraordinary God. Bo is a teaching pastor at Westside Church in Bend, Ore.