

Why marriage just gets better

By Kate Ward

So before you hate me for bragging about my marriage, hear me out. I am not at all saying that my marriage is perfect or that my marriage isn't hard work. Marriage is for sure the most difficult thing I have ever done because it is the longest commitment that I have ever made. It has its highs as much as its lows and some days I just persevere because of the promise that I made to God and John on my wedding day. So why does it get better? Here is what I mean...



The longer I have been married, the better I have learned to pick my battles. When I was a newlywed, I picked at every little thing that I felt was "wrong." My husband never had to wonder what I was thinking, I told him everything. Now that I am 16 years in, I pick my battles and don't nag about the small stuff. Do these things still bother me? Yes. But I have learned to let go and have grace on the stuff that isn't huge and just pick the battles that truly matter.

I have learned that the limited time we have to be alone doesn't have to be perfect, but it still is necessary. Any parent knows, that once you have kids, date nights don't just happen. You have to deliberately take the time, and most of the time something will get in the way. But instead of letting it ruin the precious time that we have, I have learned to breathe and just be thankful for this time to connect no matter what goes wrong. Laughing together always makes for great memories.

I have learned what being on the "same team" truly means. When John and I were going through premarital counseling, our mentors always challenged us to remember that we are on the same team. Whether we disagree or fight, we are in this together, going towards the same goal. Over the years, this piece of advice has become more real. My husband has seen me at my worst and at my best. He has been by my side through the delivery of my kids, huge loss, overwhelming sadness, major accomplishments, and numerous failures. He has shown, through his faithfulness, that he is on my side no matter what.

When God talks about marriage in the Bible, he equates a husband and wife to himself and the church. What a high calling! But in that intense standard, I see the importance of my unwavering faithfulness and limitless love for my husband. Can I do that on my own? No. But God doesn't ask us to do anything that he won't help us do. Praying for God's help on this journey is not just an option, it is a necessity. Only with his perfect love can I do this relationship well.

The longer you are with someone, the more your memories, yours kids, your families, and your home, all help to truly connect you together. It isn't perfect, but it's real. It isn't always happy but it's worth it. I always tell my husband that I am more committed today to him then I was 16 years ago. That young girl truly loved him, but she didn't understand the real work it takes to "honor and cherish" another. She was committed, but she didn't feel the intense heaviness of what it was to stay "in sickness and in health."

The more I learn about marriage, the more I learn about grace and forgiveness. Knowing someone so well and loving them anyway is a decision, not a feeling. And to be known so well, and see what true commitment looks like, that just gets better every day.