

The McElreath's Secret to a Happy Marriage (One Simple Daily Practice)

I love going to wedding showers. It is such a joy to see young couples starting their own Christian homes. More often than not, when I am invited to a wedding shower, I am given a slip of paper to share marriage advice with the new bride. I always share the "secret" I am about to share with you today.

Which leads me to a confession. My title should probably be considered "click-bait." There is no ONE secret to a happy marriage, and there is nothing secret about it. Everything needed to make a marriage successful is clearly spelled out in God's Holy Word.

HOWEVER, the practice I will share with you has helped my husband, Mac, and I weather storms we could have never imagined when we exchanged our vows in marriage more than six years ago. It has helped us crowd out parasites that could destroy our marriage and helped us truly enjoy each other.

Every night, the last thing we do before finally going to sleep is share with each other **one thing we are thankful for** and pray with each other before we go to sleep. We have two rules:

1. It must be something that happened *that day*. You cannot say something that you are looking forward to tomorrow or something you are grateful for in the past. It has to have happened that day.
2. You may not repeat what the other person said. You must come up with your own thing you are thankful for.

On even-numbered days, I will pray. On odd-numbered days, Mac will pray.

It seems like such a simple thing, but the effects have been so profound.

1. It helps us eliminate complaining.

Our Lord hates complaining so much. We must realize that complaining is so sinful because it shows a deep underlying distrust in the Lord to provide for our every need.

2. It helps us resolve our differences before we go to bed.

It is impossible to thank God and stay angry at your spouse. When you think how merciful the Lord was to you in that day alone, it helps you be more forgiving in your own heart. It prompts Mac and I to settle our differences before we go to sleep.

3. It helps us find the Lord in every storm.

I am thinking now about nights where we had faced terrible, unimaginable loss during the day. On those nights, it was so encouraging to look back over the day and see that God was there, still loading us with His benefits. Thanking Him for those blessings has strengthened us during each storm.

4. It helps us realize our "successes" are not our own.

When we go to thank the Lord for great victories, the Lord always sends us reminders that those victories were not done in our own strength. He GAVE us those victories. It strips those merits of self-pride as we see who truly allowed those victories in our life.

This simple act of thanking the Lord every night has helped us in our marriage more than we could tell. The more you start thanking the Lord, the more you enjoy your life. You enjoy your spouse and your children so much. It's hard to tear down your spouse or complain about your life when you are thanking the Lord.