

WHY THE “PROVERBS 31 WOMAN” ISN’T WHO I THOUGHT SHE WAS

<https://fiercemarriage.com/why-the-proverbs-31-woman-isnt-who-i-thought-she-was>

- 00:00:00 **Selena:** Okay. This is not just an episode for women. I know the title might be a dead giveaway. *[Laughing]* Lots of things.
- Ryan:** Well, who knows what will title it by the time it goes live? So...
- Selena:** Yes. But we are talking about the Proverbs 31 woman, but *more so* we are talking about some of the things that we struggle with, I think, as believers, *married couples* who are believers.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** And we have these ideas and things that we’re striving for, that maybe even we found in the Bible, and we think that this is something that we’re supposed to be *doing*.
- Ryan:** Hm.
- Selena:** And maybe it's not. Maybe it's less about doing, more about being. So, we’re going to talk about that today. We’re going to go through our heart check. We’ve got lots to do today! So, we are excited to see you on the other side to do all that. You can’t do it on this side; got to do it on that side. *[Ryan chuckles]* So... We will see you on the other side!
- 00:00:44 **Intro Sequence**
- 00:01:14 **Selena:** Welcome to the other side, friends! *[Both laugh]* How is it?
- Ryan:** “Oh yeah! Ryan’s here too.”
- Selena:** How is it? Ryan’s on this side. You weren’t on the other side?
- Ryan:** *[Ryan exhales]* I’ve just been basking in other side goodness. *[Selena laughs, followed by Ryan]* I got to be honest, and I’m sorry, listeners. Today’s been a bit of a, I don’t know. I feel so *spent* today! And so hopefully—
- Selena:** Are you feeling melancholy?
- Ryan:** I am!
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** I’m feeling a little “melan-kholy.” *[Laughs]*
- Selena:** I’ll let you. I’ll let you.
- Ryan:** No. Yeah! I don’t know. I just—Hopefully it doesn’t come through; obviously we want to give you our best listeners, but I’m just being honest. I feel like I just, and I didn’t, but I feel like I just had a really hard cry, and I’m exhausted. *[Both laugh lightly]*
- Selena:** You did cry *[Ryan laughs a little harder]* a little today.
- Ryan:** *[Inaudible]*
- Selena:** We did talk about some stuff, some hard things!
- Ryan:** We were talking about crying. And we looked up that video on YouTube, “best cry ever.”
- Selena:** *[Laughs]* You did! But that didn’t make you cry.
- Ryan:** It makes me laugh.
- Selena:** There’s just some things that have been online, I think, that have been ultra-emotional for us. So, anyways. *[Pauses]* Moving on! *[Both laugh]*
- Ryan:** *[Ryan laughing]* “Yeah. Just, whatever. Just shut up.” *[Selena laughing loudly]* “Just deal with your own—” *[Ryan chuckles]* Okay!

Selena: We are going to talk about a lot of things today. But before we do that, let's do our housekeeping real quick.

Ryan: Mm. Of course. So, thanks to listeners, raters and reviewers. If you haven't yet, please do rate and review on iTunes. That means a lot to us, it helps other people, gets the word out.

Secondly, if you want to support this podcast, you can do that through patreon.com/fiercemarriage. That partnership, I think, is the most biblical way—I don't want to say it's the only way, but it just feels good for this podcast, meaning that people who are listening to are the ones supporting it.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: We don't have any ads; we don't do anything like that. We have transcriptions now, because of our patreon supporters.

Selena: Woo!

Ryan: We're working out the best way to present those. If you feel like you want to be on mission with us, you can do that!

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: [Patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage). We just ask two things! You pray about it and if God leads you through prayer, that you would act on His leadership. So!

Finally, if you have any questions or hear anything that prompts a question, you can ask! Go to fiercemarriage.com/podcast; there's a button there. There's also a phone number you can call or text: 571-333-1120.

Selena: You *are* tired! 971-333-1120.

Ryan: Oh, my goodness! It's 971.

Selena: Not five; you might get someone else! *[Laughs]*

Ryan: Who knows?

Selena: *[Laughing]* But go for it!

Ryan: Why? *[Chuckles]* A little phone call roulette!

Selena: Tell'em 'bout Jesus! Tell'em 'bout Jesus. *[Ryan laughs]* So, 971-333-1120. And thank you to those who have *listened* and who have rated and given reviews!

Ryan: I said that!

Selena: I didn't hear it.

Ryan: I said it really quick!

Selena: Oh, okay... Well, I'm just going to emphasize again.

Ryan: *[Laughing]* Okay.

Selena: A little goes a long ways, people! Do it!

Alright! We're going to jump into our heart check. I like jumping! I don't want to hear about it. *[Laughs]*

Ryan: Okay. Whatever. Let's do it.

Selena: We're going to talk about a heart check.

Ryan: A heart check is... A heart check is this.

Selena: I'm gettin' there! *[Ryan laughs]* Goodness!

Ryan: Can we just record the podcast already?! *[Chuckling]*

Selena: Ryan is...

Ryan: *[Chuckling]* While I go take a nap!!

Selena: *[Chuckling]* He's in a hurry here.

Ryan: We haven't had food! I need a *banana*.

Selena: He's "hangry"! [*Both laugh*] Hangry and tired. So am I! And I'm pregnant, so... We're just going to push through.

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: Alright. So, what book is in your hand? This is a heart check, so it consists of three questions; we do this on occasion, just to kind of give you insight into our little lives. I don't know. Sometimes passing on a good book is really fun to do, too. I only take people that have *told* me about books, usually.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Or that have posted them on Instagram, and I value their input, then I will look into it.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: I won't just go on Amazon and look for a book, but anyways! "What book is in your hand?" This is the heart check, the first question. Second question, "What voice is in your ear?" And third, "What is stirring in your heart?" So, what voice is in your ear could be anything from worship to podcasts, to a preaching... preacher! [*Ryan snickers and Selena laughs*]

Ryan: Or even music. Yeah!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, this is a good tool if you want to connect with your spouse too, if you guys are hitting the bit of a... a ceiling in your communication, this helps.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Okay, so, what book's in my hand? I'll just start. I'm reading Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 2, by [*Selena snickers and Ryan laughs*] Herman Bavinck.

Selena: [*In a mocking voice*] "I am reading... ber-ber-ber-berinck." [*Laughs*]

Ryan: It sounds... It's—

Selena: Hoity-toity.

Ryan: It's because I'm...

Selena: Huffy-puffy.

Ryan: I'm going to school...

Selena: Just kidding.

00:05:00 **Ryan:** Online, and it's amazing!

Selena: No, its... Yes! You've shared a lot with me.

Ryan: It's awesome.

Selena: And I've been encouraged by it, and challenged and...

Ryan: Yeah. It's deep, deep stuff that—

Selena: We've had some good conversations around it.

Ryan: *Deep*, big truths that I feel like have impacted *every* aspect of how I read the Bible, and how I talk to you! And how I worship, and how I pray. I mean, it's profound! I just wish we had more of this in our lives earlier, to be honest.

Selena: Would you say this was the book that was caught bringing vocabulary to kind of things and big truths that you...

Ryan: Yeah...

Selena: Kind of understood, or is this not that one?

Ryan: Yes and no. Yeah.

Selena: 'Cause you're reading a lot of books right now.

Ryan: Yeah. Another one I'm reading is, I would *highly* rec—The Reformed Dogmatics, I think you kind of have to be geared up for it. This one, however, I'm going to

recommend is, I think, is a much more accessible read, and it's called God's Word Alone. It's by Matthew Barrett. It's an amazing, it's just basically reviewing the doctrine of sola scriptura all the way back to the early reformers, and it's unbelievable how it draws lines between historical context and today.

Selena: I like that. That's awesome.

Ryan: And why God's word is *still* the defining authority and the ultimate authority *in* the world, and the Christian life especially, but really in the world in general. So, I'm reading that! Yeah.

Selena: Nice.

Ryan: And as far as the voice that's in my ear, I've been listening to a lot of Blessed by a Broken Heart! *[Both laugh]* It's not what you think, people.

Selena: *[Inaudible]* It's not what you think. Go look that one up on Spotify! *[Chuckles]*

Ryan: It's not what you'd think. It's not the reason I'm melancholy today; it's the reason I have energy today! It's an awesome, really kind of funny, awesome, metal band, with a lot of synth. *[Both chuckle]* It's really great! *[Ryan laughing]*

Selena: It is. I think we've kind of bonded over that.

Ryan: That's not a spiritual thing, I mean as far as—

Selena: It's okay to have fun things.

Ryan: I've been listening, but—

Selena: Spiritual things can be fun too...

Ryan: But usually the voice in your ear is who's speaking into your *life* in a way that's bringing growth and...

Selena: I know... Sometimes you just got to rock out!

Ryan: Honestly, *you* have been *that* voice in my ear.

Selena: Aww.

Ryan: You have been so encouraging to me, and you minister to me in profound ways, and so, yeah. You're in there! You're right in there!

Selena: Thank you!

Ryan: With those rock stars. *[Selena laughs]* The stirring in my heart, honestly, I'm just struggling with trusting God's word even more.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And trusting, 'cause a lot of times we approach God's word, speaking of sola scriptura *[Selena chuckles]*, God's word alone, the book, we approach it with this, "Okay. It *must* satisfy... my requirements for *me* to deem it as true and worthwhile and useful."

Selena: Mm. Hm!

Ryan: That's not how we're supposed *[Selena laughs]* to approach God's word!

Selena: Whaaat?

Ryan: Right? It bears its authority on *us*. We listen to what *it* says; we don't put it through our labyrinth of qualifications to make it worthwhile in our own hearts and minds. So, that's what I've been reading, and it's been great! And that's what's been stirring in my heart, honestly, is having more of a faith that is *true* faith, and not faith that is propped up by reason.

Selena: Huh!

Ryan: So, now it's your turn.

Selena: Well, that's interesting. I feel like that's been the core of our conversation *mostly*. *[Laughs]* Is just, like, what is faith and what does it look like? 'Cause we grew up with knowing God, right? Our whole... lives.

Ryan: Yeah, in theory, I guess. But yeah. [*Selena laughs*] I feel like I haven't really gotten to know Him until the last decade.

Selena: Sure!

Ryan: Even though I grew up "in a Christian household."

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: My parents are great, but God has just been faithful in calling me, even now.

Selena: Yes, and part of that is just human development too, I think, right? Like, when we're young. I think that's why *we're* so adamant about teaching our kids about the things of God, like, putting words to things so quickly and vocabulary, and filling their brains as little file cabinets, so that when they're maybe not as old as us, they'll have those words for God to be able to bring some truth to.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: So, that's the hope and prayer.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Anyways! What books is in your hand? I've got two, always. New Morning Mercies by Paul Tripp. Incredible! I don't read every day, but it's great because I don't have to feel guilty about that. But when I do read it, knocks my socks off. [*Ryan chuckles*] I'd say I read it about three or four [*Selena chuckles*] times a week. It's just *super* good. It's intense and awesome!

Ryan: He's so good at making deep truths so clear.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: And applicable.

Selena: Yes. Yes! Second book is Homeschooling Bravely. I don't know if I mentioned that. Anyways! It's a really great book of teaching your kids with confidence, like resting in the Lord, knowing that this is a calling, and it's not always just something we're doing to avoid certain things or whatever.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: So...

Ryan: By the way, we do have other *fun* books in our hands, too. But these books we consider fun, but they're, I mean there's nothing like a good *fiction* book—

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: To carry you away.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: Right now, in the season we're in [*Selena chuckles lightly*], there's not as much time for that sort of reading. I feel like I'm reading...

Selena: Well, we were, and, I mean, [*Sighs*] I just finished All the Light We Cannot See, and that was intense. It was a big book. And I'm kind of ready for a—He's an incredible writer! It was just hard to [*Ryan chuckles*] ... stomp through, but then—

Ryan: Little bit of a slog.

Selena: I'm like, "I'm too far! I can't stop." [*Ryan laughs*] "Everybody's raved about this!"

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] Yeah.

Selena: So, I guess chalk it up to me and my pregnancy brain being like...

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: "I feel like I need more." So, looking for that next fiction.

Ryan: I've really enjoyed... Sorry, I'm interrupting and taking over your thing.

Selena: It's okay.

Ryan: But I really enjoyed essays and *short stories*.

Selena: Yeah. Yeah.

Ryan: I feel like that's a really almost episodic way of approaching the text.

00:10:00 **Selena:** Maybe that's what [*Chuckling*] we've been doing, 'cause we've been doing a lot of read-aloud at our house, and I've been reading to the girls.

Ryan: Yeah. What's that book? That book's awesome.

Selena: Oh, Old World Echoes?

Ryan: Old World Ech—Yeah!

Selena: Echoes... It's [*Inaudible*]

Ryan: It's a tongue-twister!

Selena: Yeah. Yeah! We were reading Norse mythology; it's just a collection of short stories, and it's been really great! [*Quickly laughs*] Really great, bringing up some good questions.

Ryan: Mm. Yeah.

Selena: What voice is in my ear? Gosh, this is going long. Sorry guys! Voice is in my ear? Just worship music, honestly. We've been listening to—Is it Ross King? 'Cause we're learning scripture memory with our school. And anyways, Genesis 1:1-27, the girls know it because it's a song!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And it's an awesome! And I listen to it, and then I read the scripture, and it's in King James, and it's so poetic and amazing. So... Boom! There you go.

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] Boom. Alright!

Selena: What's stirring in your heart? I'm just trying to figure out—I'm anticipating life with a new baby, and what that's going to look like.

Ryan: So, full disclaimer, this episode is being recorded in *advance*.

Selena: *Pre-recorded*.

Ryan: So, by the time this actually goes out, we're probably going to be taking some time off. We wanted to have the podcast *carry on* without us! [*Selena laughs*] So, actually, you're in the moment, thinking, "We're going to have a baby." But when people hear this, we'll probably *have* a baby.

Selena: Have a baby. Yes!

Ryan: God willing! And if everything goes according to plan, we will have a child, new child, in our arms.

Selena: Yes, by the time this airs.

Ryan: Out with the old; in with the new! [*Selena laughs*] The older ones are ready.

Selena: [*Laughs*] I don't think that's—[*Laughing*]

Ryan: They can go!

Selena: [*Laughing*] They can go. They've been taught.

Ryan: They've been taught, at three and five years old, they're ready!

Selena: Ready to go! So, anyways.

Ryan: Okay!

Selena: Have just a fun conversation to check in with your spouse. When you go on a date, put your phones down.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Ask each other these questions. Talk about it!

Ryan: And if you don't have a book in your hand or a voice in your ear, I think it's a good reminder that maybe you should get a book in your hand and somebody speaking into your life.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: A voice in your ear often times is somebody in your life, *or* a pastor that you maybe listen to on your commute or what-not.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Or maybe it's the Fierce Marriage podcast! Who knows?

Selena: [*Giggling*] Who knows?

Ryan: Alright.

Selena: And I never plug ours! I just kind of been like, "Listen to podcasts!" [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah. [*Chuckles*] Welp, and it's funny because they *are* listening to a podcast. [*Laughs*]

Selena: [*Laughing*] They are listening to a—

Ryan: Hey, good for you!

Selena: Oh, the irony.

Ryan: Listener.

Selena: Oh, the irony. So, a while ago, I wrote a post about this idea of a Proverbs 31 woman because I had kind of been hit with a new truth about it, and a new revelation around it. I get demoralized; I used to get demoralized reading this.

Ryan: It's a tall bill, right?

Selena: Well, yeah. As a woman, a wife, a mom, like...

Ryan: Tall order.

Selena: There's all these cultural and just societal expectation. "Do this! Be this! Show this!" You know? "Have all these things. Don't show weakness! Don't be ugly." But then, on the flip-side—

Ryan: [*Ryan laughing*] Don't be ugly?! That's not in there! [*Both laughing*]

Selena: In culture and societies expectations—

Ryan: Whaaat?

Selena: Nobody wants to see you're ugly, right? On social media?

Ryan: Oh, my goodness!

Selena: Is that just me? Maybe it's just me. [*Ryan laughs*] But then there's the flipside that...

Ryan: [*Ryan chuckling*] So offensive! [*Selena laughs*] You can't help it if you're ugly. [*Selena laughing*] I'm ugly! I feel like I'm ugly, and I can't help it! [*Selena laughs louder*] I have a lot of ugly parts of me.

Selena: You're not. Anyways!

Ryan: Yeah...

Selena: The flipside of that, too, is there's always this beautiful mess that Ryan just *loves*. [*Ryan chuckles*] Which is often an attempt to *be* transparent.

Ryan: That's tongue-in-cheek.

Selena: But often times, it just glorifies the mess rather than simply stating, "I'm in this hard time of my life..."

Ryan: And calling out of the mess. Yeah.

Selena: "But, God." Right? So, there's this part of me that is just like, "How do I connect this Godly woman to my day-to-day life? How do I understand *who* she is, who this person that is being described, how is she a part of my life with three kids, you know? Like, a new-born, a preschooler, and an almost elementary school-age kid. How does this all work out and connect?" So, this blog post really it has just come from a new revelation that I felt like God opened my heart and my

eyes to. And again, you'll hear a lot about Proverbs 31, but I think there's probably two *big* ideas here that can be applied to both husband and wife.

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: The first one is that the stuff in scripture, this particular scripture, is not prescriptive; it's not "Do these things and then you will have this." It's *descriptive*; it's "This is what happens when..."

Ryan: "This other truth is being lived out."

Selena: Right! When Jesus *is* who He is supposed to be in your life, *this* is the fruit that you will see. And I think that's true across the board! Right? Not just as a wife, not just as a mom or...

Ryan: Yeah! I mean, to use another example, right? To make the same point.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: In Titus 1, we have the qualifications of elders, right?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And this is more of a man-focused one, right? And so, it's kind of, I think, the inverse of this is that these are not qualifications to prescribe to men who want to aspire to be elders; this is a description of a man who is worthy of the elder, and elder is a biblical word for pastor, caretaker, overseer, shepherd, bishop. They're all kind of synonymous here, so, I don't want to get hung up on terms. But the point is that if someone's going to lead in the church, in the actual *body* of the church, they have to be described by this body of text, in Titus 1.

00:15:04 **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: It's the same thing here in Proverbs 31.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And that's what you're saying is...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But the inverse is true! We'll read it and say, what does it—We'll just start with Proverbs 31. What verse we got here?

Selena: 31:10 is where we kind of start reading.

Ryan: 31:10, "An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels." And so, the way we read that is we say, "Oh, I want to be an excellent wife." You would read that, not me. [*Both laugh*] And so, "I want to be an excellent wife." Okay. And so, all of the sudden we're running it through our filter of excellence.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: How can we be an excellent person like we feel like we're called to be? "Oh, it means I need to strive more, it means I need to work harder."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It means I need to do all these things, and instead that excellence is *already* there, and He's just describing this, right?

Selena: Right. Right!

Ryan: I mean obviously there's a lot more to it than that, but yeah.

Selena: Yeah. And I think, yeah, and the truth here that I think I shared in my blog post was that we *are* because of *who* Christ is.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: I am an excellent wife because Christ has transformed and helped me become who He wants me to be, which is described in these verses, right? I'm not saying that this is the *only* thing for a wife, but...

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: There's, again, and I think—Sorry. I'm trying to go back because you defined your terms differently, right? Like the world may describe something as excellent that the Lord may say is *not* excellent. Right? And so, again—

Ryan: The world may describe something as excellent that the *Lord* does not say is excellent is what you're saying?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I just want to reiterate that.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: It felt—Yeah.

Selena: A little backwards?

Ryan: I got confused.

Selena: Okay. Sorry.

Ryan: I'm tired! I got confused. Okay. I just got to...

Selena: I'm pregnant! I'm always confused. *[Both laugh]*

Ryan: Not anymore!

Selena: Not anymore. That's alright. *[Both laughing]* *What?* Now I'm really confused. No. But okay. So, again, we're defining our terms of being within the Bible.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: We're talking about, you know, this is the words of a king, an oracle that his mother taught him, you know? She, the *mother*, is trying to paint this picture of a Godly wife, and saying, "These are the things that are going to come out of a—" Not come out of. That sounds so, like, "This is the fruit that is going to be born from a wife who fears the Lord."

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And these are things that will happen and that will come to pass *because of* who she is, because of who God is to her.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Does that make sense?

Ryan: Right. Yeah. I never caught that before, that it's an oracle that his mother, King Lemuel—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: His mother *taught* him!

Selena: Right there.

Ryan: So, he's not just spouting this off and saying, "Hey, listen ladies."

Selena: No!

Ryan: "This is the woman that fears the Lord, and this is why she's amazing." He's saying that, "My mom taught me this!"

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "Taught me this is the descriptor; these are descriptions of a woman who fears the Lord."

Selena: Right!

Ryan: So, what's the *focus* on there? It's not on becoming this woman; it's on fearing the Lord.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And I think *that* is a, I mean, on every level of the Christian life, that's where we need to *[Chuckles]* find ourselves.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: The Bible teaches the [*Both speak together*] fear of the Lord is [*Ryan speaks solo*] the beginning of *wisdom*!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Fearing the Lord is nothing more than saying, and it's *everything* that goes into saying, "God, You are God and I am not."

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: "I am human, *You* are not. I am imperfect, you are Holy."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: "You are huge! I am tiny. You are powerful, I am weak. You are everything that I can't be. You are God! Therefore, I will let *You* be God."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "I am no longer going to be god by myse—Or I'm not going to try and be god, and act like I've got it together!"

Selena: Right!

Ryan: "But instead, I'm going to trust *You* to be the Lord of my life."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "I'm going to trust *You* to save me; I can't save myself."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And I think that's the same tendency here in marriage, in womanhood, or manhood, right?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: We tend to say, "I am the—" This is our—

Selena: [*Laughs*] "I am."

Ryan: Well, this is the symptom of our culture, right? I am the decider of my destiny.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I am in control of what I become as a person, both in terms of my character and my career.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: The life I've built, anything like that. That's not the Christian way!

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: The Christian way is God is in control, I am not, and He is the one that creates the change and creates the transformation.

Selena: Right. Well, and there's—

Ryan: From the inside-out, not the outside-in.

Selena: Which requires that sweet submission, and just—I can't think of the word. Resignation!

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: To God and the gospel. Like, when is the gospel ever been something that we *strive* for, right?

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And we *so easily* just fall into that stream of thought. And as I went back and read all of these verses through that lens of, "I don't have to strive, this is who I am," my heart was lifted.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: The weight was shifted. It wasn't, again, it's not on me anymore. It's on Him.

Ryan: That's really good. That's really good! Why don't we just go ahead and read through it?

Selena: [*Laughs*] Yeah. I don't think we've read through it yet. [*Laughing*]

- Ryan:** Perfect.
- 00:19:51 **Selena:** So, Proverbs 31, verse 10 through 31. “An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar. She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong. She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. She puts her hands to the,” to the “dy-stuff”? —“distaff.”
- Ryan:** I’m not sure what *that* is.
- Selena:** [*Chuckling*] “And her hands hold the spindle. She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known at the gates when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the merchant. Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ‘Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.’ Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.”
So...
- Ryan:** Wow. Okay. So, there’s so much happening in that scripture.
- Selena:** Yeah! There’s a lot of specifics, but I think they’re kind of grouped together.
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** In this is what she does, this is what she puts her hands to, this is what she’s not afraid of—
- Ryan:** Interesting.
- Selena:** And her personality—
- Ryan:** Wow.
- Selena:** Not personality. I don’t want to go that far.
- Ryan:** Yeah! But her inclinations, right?
- Selena:** Yes!
- Ryan:** Because of who she is.
- Selena:** Right. Right.
- Ryan:** So, but I hear this, and this is what we’re trying to kind of push against today, is I read this stuff. It’s like she does him good and not harm all the days of her life. [*Selena chuckles*] She rises while it is yet night and provides *food* for her household and portions for her maidens.
- Selena:** I know, and I’m like, “Ahh... We have a newborn!” [*Ryan laughs*] How do I—?”
- Ryan:** [*Laughing*] Yeah!
- Selena:** I mean, I’m getting up in the night and I’m feeding my kid; I’m not feeding anybody else! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah. Yeah, and she goes, and she opens her hand to the poor, and she reaches out her hands to the needy.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And she does not—Her lamp does not go out at night!

Selena: Well, part of me thinks—

Ryan: In that she is up working, and...

Selena: Part of me thinks this is an all at once, does this all the time thing, right? But I don't necessarily think that's *always* the case. I think, again, the mother who's speaking here to her son, like this oracle that he has memorized, basically, is this idea of this is what you will see her doing.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: You'll see her making these things. You'll see her with a generous spirit; she will have a generous spirit.

Ryan: But if we read it as a list of to-dos...

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And this is really corny, but our friend Kyle says it all the time, "It's not a list of to-dos, it's a list of ta-dahs!" [*Selena chuckles and Ryan laughs*] I'm sorry! I can't even say that with a straight face.

Selena: Ta-daaahs! [*Chuckle*]

Ryan: Because it's almost like, "Look at this!"

Selena: It's the ta-dah of the gospel.

Ryan: "This is already here."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: This is the way she is, it's not what *you* need to strive to be.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: This is already a description of who she is. And like you said, it's not an all-inclusive, all the time thing.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: In moments, you'll recognize she is maybe up late at night, because she is laboring for her household.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or her hand is not closed to the poor and the needy; she is open and generous to these people. This is just describing. It's not that she wakes up early, does all these chores, goes out, serves the poor—

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Right.

Ryan: Goes and does these things every day.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: For the rest of her life.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But *still*, I think that the emphasis is on the fact that this is a *description*, and not a *prescription*.

Selena: Right! Absolutely! And I think that, again, there's attributes that the mother is trying to show her son. Like, the heart of her husband trusts her.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: He will have no lack of gain. You know, her husband *praises* her. Basically, her husband is known in the gates, and when he sits among the elders of the land.

Ryan: [*Ryan laughs*] Sorry! That's a really interesting [*Selena chuckles*] thing, because I talked about elders earlier...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And how, 'cause we're going to talk about husbands a little bit here, so...

Selena: Well, yeah. Being an elder, you're in a place of visibility, I think.

Ryan: Sure! And it, by virtue of being an elder, it is saying another full list of things like this—

Selena: Right! The box—

Ryan: That are describing [*Selena laughs*] the kind of person that *he* is.

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: And therefore, the kind of person that she has attracted, or the kind of person that he has attracted. Look how they're both attracted to each other!

Selena: [*Laughs*] Right!

Ryan: And it's—

Selena: So, if you do these things [*Ryan laughs*], then you should attract a husband, an *elder* husband, right? [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: That's not what it— [*Both laughing*] In other words, a spiritual leader.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And a leader in your community.

Selena: But that's *not* what's being said here.

Ryan: And that's not what's happening. Yeah.

Selena: And I think that's been such a revolution—[*Chuckles*] Revelation!

Ryan: A revelation, yeah.

Selena: It's been a revolution too in my life. [*Both laugh*] But you know, you grow up hearing this in the church, maybe, and seeing this of, "*This is the Proverbs 31 woman; these are the things that she does.*" And we start striving for those things instead of striving to know the Lord and understand who He is and know who we are *because* of who He is. We, as wives, can be generous to the poor because we are secure and *God* is our provider, right?

00:25:05 **Ryan:** Mm.

Selena: We can be loving, and—

Ryan: Wow.

Selena: Go ahead.

Ryan: That is a *huge* thing 'cause it's so easy just to be like, "Oh yeah, that's the Christianese, pat answer to it." But when you're generous *outside* of your means...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: You're doing that from a place that is non-existent here in this world, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And it's not that you have to be foolish, okay?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But if *God* is leading you to give generously to somebody in your community, say it's a neighbor.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And you don't have time to sit down with her.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: You don't have time to sit down and help, or let her kids come over so she can go—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You know, maybe run an errand, or you don't have time to *serve* them.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But if you're generous to her, out of a place that is based in the Gospel...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: It's coming from a well that it doesn't terminate in *you!* It ends in Christ.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: It's *bigger*, deeper, purer, cleaner—

Selena: So good.

Ryan: Clearer water.

Selena: So good.

Ryan: And so, I just didn't want to gloss over that. If you're able to give, like this says, or open your hand to the poor, give to the poor, that means just serve your community, give out of your resources to others, even when you can't.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That's a sign of the gospel *in* you!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Not you just being a good person. [*Chuckles*]

Selena: Yeah. So true! So true. And I think that one of the harder verses or two that they kind of feel weighty, again, if your perspective is...

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: "This is me doing it, not God doing something in me, and then this is the fruit that's pouring out," is verses 11 and 12, like, "The heart of her husband trusts in her and he'll have no lack of gain. She does him good and not harm all the days of her life."

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: And I'm like, "Well, I think I was pretty disrespectful or sassy or was not..."

Ryan: [*Laughs*] Sassy?

Selena: I was not doing you *good*, right?

Ryan: Salty.

Selena: [*Snickers*] Salty?

Ryan: You get salty. That's it.

Selena: [*Snickering*] Salty. Yes! I was not doing you good; I was doing you harm, and yet God still uses those moments, right? He's so faithful to *use* those moments to transform our hearts, to help us to repent.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: To come back to our husband and say, "I'm sorry. I was wrong in this area." And even the husband, coming back to his wife and saying, "You know, I was trying to do this and I was not paying attention to *you*, or I was not being a good, loving husband and I was engaged with other things, and I'm coming back to you," right? So, I think marriage just provides such a good bedrock for us to see the fruit of God to be produced in our life. Like, it's so *evident*, I think, within the marriage covenant, because...

Ryan: Right.

Selena: There's just that consistency of your marriage partner, right? It's not different relationships. Yes, you can see fruit in different friendships!

Ryan: You're not able to just bounce from surface to surface to surface.

Selena: Right! You're always—

Ryan: This forces you to go deeper.

Selena: Right. You're always with this person, so there's familiarity, there's a consistent knowing of each other. [Laughs]

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: That I think is just one unique aspect of how knowing God is really the means of which the spiritual fruit is produced in our lives.

Ryan: Yeah! Well, let's talk about that because—

Selena: Which is this. [Laughs]

Ryan: If this is a description of maybe Christ in us, right? Of the gospel. So, we were going to go through, and we're not going to re-read it, but we're going to talk through it.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Through the lens of the gospel. But what does the gospel actually say about us? We always need these reminders!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: We always need to be pointed back to Christ, 'cause I'm so good at forgetting the gospel.

Selena: Yeah. We look at ourselves so fast and so quick.

Ryan: Colossians, one of my favorite books in the Bible, and it's in Colossians 3:3 it says, "For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Then Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." So, we talked in a recent episode, we talked about Adam and Eve in the garden hiding.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Because of their sin, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: They were naked and unashamed, then they sinned, and then they hid, and they were ashamed.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And they were still naked, and God clothed them...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: In grace. Graciously, I'll say.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He actually created skin clothes for them.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay. So, they were hiding, right? And then I saw someone tweet recently, "It's just as Adam and Eve hid behind the trees in the garden, now we hide behind the tree of the cross."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Now we hide behind another tree. It's Christ on the cross, and we are hidden in Christ. That's what Paul's saying here to the Colossians, "For you have died."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "And *your life is hidden* with Christ, in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, that's an amazing reminder of what it means to actually, yes, we're dead in our sin.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But then our life is hidden in Christ—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And we are *raised* with Him...

Selena: Renewed.

Ryan: And renewed and will appear with Him in *glory*.

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: How amazing is that?! I don't want to lose track of the amazingness [*Both chuckling*] of the gospel, because what are we without the gospel, right?

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: We're not Christians, we're not anything. We are nothing without the gospel.

Selena: Right! Right.

Ryan: So, let's look at verse nine and ten again. Is it verse ten?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: You have that in your notes. Yeah.

Selena: Yeah, it was verse ten.

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: In Colossians 3.

Ryan: Okay. So, he's talking to the Colossians still, "And you've put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; Christ is all, and in all." Okay. So again, it's putting us, our identity, back in Christ.

00:30:10 **Selena:** Yeah.

Ryan: Not in our—Look at it! Not in our nationality, not in our even being one of the people in God's nation.

Selena: One of God's peop—Right. Right.

Ryan: Or Greek or Jew or whatever. You're not in your obedience, your circumcision or uncircumcision.

Selena: Slave of free.

Ryan: Slave or free. Yeah! Economic place, whatever. Christ is all and in all! Okay? So, now, from that place of identity we can read this with a totally different lens.

Selena: Mm-hm! Mm-hm!

Ryan: And as husbands, okay this is not just for wives, but as husbands, I can now read it with a different lens too, as I see my wife. It's not a list of things that I want for my wife to perform against.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: It's not a checklist saying, "Oh, you made me feel terrible, so you missed verse four or whatever that is." [*Chuckles*]

Selena: [*Laughs*] Verse 11.

Ryan: Verse 11! [*Selena laughs*] "You're not the Proverbs 31 woman. So, fix that will ya? And come back and talk to me later." [*Ryan chuckles and Selena laughs*] No, but now I can say, "Okay. Here's how my wife has done me good."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "And not harm, all the days of her life."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: How she is a blessing to me because she's a gift from God.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: She is somebody that God joined me with.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, now I start to see this more of as a description of her and not a list of things that she's either meeting or failing to meet.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: Right.

Selena: And I think that I feel like these are really intentional things, you know? Like, verse 21, "She's not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet." So, obviously scarlet is a very expensive material. [Chuckles] Not saying that all of God's people are dressed up to the nines, right? We're not talking about *brands* here. [Chuckles] We're talking about how she is not afraid of things that she can't control.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And I think that oftentimes, as wives, we can fall into this mindset or heart orientation of being afraid of not having enough.

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: Which, again, there's a lot that can play into that. Or being afraid of things that we can't control, you know? She's not afraid of snow. Can she control snow? No. [Ryan laughs] She cannot control the weather. But she's not *afraid* of things for her household because she's clothed in basically the riches and provision of God, right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And that is different than the world!

Ryan: I think about the opposite extreme of this.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: The wife who is completely off the rails, or even just the person who's off the rails in terms of fear.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Like, letting fear run the show.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: I'm always afraid my—

Selena: I'm worried.

Ryan: Kids are going to die. [Chuckles briefly] Like...

Selena: I have anxiety.

Ryan: They're going to get injured or something bad's going to happen to them.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Or we're not going to make ends meet this month.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or we're going to—You know, there's so many things where fear can just rule and reign!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And what, yes, we're called to apply wisdom.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: We're not going to be idiots.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But at the same time, whether or not your wise or foolish, it's going to snow! [Laughs]

Selena: [Chuckling] Right! Right.

Ryan: The difference is who do you trust in the snow?

Selena: Right. Right!

Ryan: Who do you trust in that uncontrollable circumstance?

Selena: Who do you fear, right?

Ryan: Who do you *fear*?

Selena: The woman who fears the Lord...

Ryan: And that's another way of saying you trust the Lord.

Selena: Yeah. Yeah!

Ryan: That's another way you trust Him to be God!

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: You understand that He's God and you're not!

Selena: You trust that He's going to take care of your family...

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: In ways that you don't understand, maybe. And it might not look the way that you're expecting or wanting or demanding, right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: But you're trusting in God. Again, I just love that there are just some intentionalities that are written here, right? She opens her hand to the poor; she puts her hands to the staff. She's at work! She doesn't take any—Where was that verse about idleness is not in her? "She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness." So, she looks well to the ways of her household. She's not just a task master, and she's not just task-driven either.

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: But she's looking to the wellness of her household, and so she's not idle. She can't be! Not when God's saying, "There are things to be done and there are *children* I've given you to take care of," right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And to love, and to teach them my ways. There is a *husband* that needs to be encouraged to be respected, to be submitted [*Chuckles*] to in some ways, right?

Ryan: Oh, snap! He said it.

Selena: I know, I know, I know.

Ryan: That's why I appreciate your boldness in that, 'cause it's what God's word says, and some—

Selena: Well, and because, yeah—

Ryan: Obviously, there's distortions of that, but yes.

Selena: Yes! But as daughters of Eve, I guess you can say our bent is to want to take that control from our husbands, to—

Ryan: Usurper! [*Snickers*]

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Usurp! [*Ryan laughs*] Yeah, well, that's what God says in His word in Genesis, your desire will be for you husband, but he will rule over you.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And so, I think that that's God's way of loving us, right? And giving us instruction and clarity on how to respond to His word, and how the Holy Spirit *empowers* us and *helps* us to respond to His word. And the Holy Spirit produces this fruit *in* us, to not be idle.

00:35:02 **Ryan:** Mm.

Selena: But not being idle is good! Not being just comfortable and [*Chuckles*]—I better reign it in a little bit. [*Both laugh briefly*] But there are things that God has for us

to do, and it's going to take time and energy, and it's going to make us have to die to some parts of ourselves.

Ryan: Mmm...

Selena: And that's *good!* That is good!

Ryan: So, here's the dance that we must dance right now. [*Selena laughs*] Okay? Because it can easily sound like we're saying the opposite of what we already said.

Selena: Uh-oh!

Ryan: Meaning that, hey, these things are good, now *be* okay with this! But... Okay?

Selena: [*Laughs*] That's true. Yep!

Ryan: You need to be *okay* with looking well to the ways of your household—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Because... That's what God's word says! And, you know—

Selena: But we can *do* that.

Ryan: We need to nuance it. But here's the thing!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: *That* only comes from a place of security and identity that's *outside* of the household itself.

Selena: Nailed it!

Ryan: So, all of these things are *worthy* pursuits!

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: Okay? And we're not saying just be lazy and just let wherever the cards fall...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: However, you feel like being, just hope and pray that God turns [*Selena chuckles*] you into the person you're supposed to be!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: There's an aspect of sanctification...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: In the Christian life that is *part* of salvation; it's not part of salvation, but part of the gospel is, yes, you've called out of death, that's salvation.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: You've been saved by no work of your own, by grace alone and by faith alone, in Christ alone. That is the salvation part of the Gospel! Then the other part of it is, now, go make disciples!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Let's *be* disciples, let's follow, actually follow the footsteps of Christ! That's the part that they get—It all comes down to just the source, okay? So, if you look at this and say, "Wow. I haven't looked well to the ways of my household."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: "I'm always eating the bread of idleness," whatever that means! [*Ryan laughs*] I'm sorry!

Selena: Eating your bonbons is what *you're* doing.

Ryan: Just, yeah, that's what Selena does [*Selena chuckles*] all day when I'm *working*.

Selena: No! I—

Ryan: She just sits around sippin' mimosas [*Both chuckling*] and eating bonbons!

Selena: Oh, my...

Ryan: But you know that conviction, though!

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: There's times in my life when I'm like, "Man, I have been lazy!" Okay? I've not diligently—

Selena: Mm-hm. [Both laugh] I'm just kidding!

Ryan: [Laughing] Goodness! Where I've not diligently cared for what God has entrusted into my care.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Okay. That's a sweet conviction!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's sweet in the sense that I know it's from a loving Father.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It still hurts, because I know that I still need to—

Selena: Well, there's a deeper issue that you're acknowledging that's happening!

Ryan: Right! And I'm not *doing* it because I'm trying to get God to love me.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But now I'm looking at it from God has loved me and He's called me, and I'm not loving Him back in this way.

Selena: Right... Right.

Ryan: And it's okay to love Him back intentionally. That's what self-control is!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: The fruit of the Spirit.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Self-control, love, joy, peace, patience, guidan—All that good stuff!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, now I can actually turn around and say, "Okay. Lord, You're right."

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: "I love You! Thank You for loving me. *Help me!*"

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "Sanctify me in this way."

Selena: So good.

Ryan: And so, I think there's the *two* sides to this, really.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: There's the *prescriptive* side... Not prescript—There's a *descriptive* side!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And then there's the, "Okay, since it's descriptive, *where* in my heart, if it's not describing me—"

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "Where am I in some way disbelieving the *deeper* truth of the gospel underneath that?"

Selena: Right. Right!

Ryan: That motivation, whether it's fear—

Selena: So good!

Ryan: Or doubt, or—

Selena: So good!

Ryan: Or you're not recognizing the *full* sovereignty and goodness and *bigness* of God!

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: That would enact us to act in a certain way.

Selena: So good!!

Ryan: Sorry, I'm going on a tangent here, but...

Selena: No, it's good though! I think it's really bringing some clarity just around this whole idea of fearing the Lord produces *fruit*, and then what do we do with that fruit, right?

Ryan: Wow.

Selena: And how are we handling it? Are we just obsessing with the fruit itself, or are we sharing it, are we investing it, are we being stewards of it, are we partaking of it, are we doing with it what God wants us to do with it? And *because* of what He has already established in our lives, our identity is in Him. It is not in what we look like, it is not in how we act, but it is in *Him*.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And it's from that place that we can see that we don't have to be afraid of things we can't control, that we can consider a field, right? We buy it, and with the fruit of our hands, we plant. Right?

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: We can dress ourselves with strength, make our arms strong. We can *do* these things, not out of a place of fear or a place of lack, but a place of being rooted in Christ. My identity is in Him. He is my provision. He is my God. And I can respond to my husband in a way that is not... harsh, that is not disrespectful, that is not—I am *free* to respond to him in that way, even when he doesn't deserve it! And when he's not—

Ryan: Hm...

Selena: I'm not feeling it, right? [*Chuckles*] We are not connecting, and I don't feel like I should *have* to be nice to him, or loving, or kind, or gentle, or extend any grace to him!

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: But, because Jesus has done all of those things for me, and because He is—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Sanctifying me and He is allowing me to walk through some of this discomfort and some fire. Because of that, I *can* respond to my husband lovingly.

Ryan: Beautiful. One of the things that came to mind was, it's going to sound out of left field, but 1 Samuel 17, David and Goliath. Okay. So—

00:40:04 **Selena:** I'm David. [*Ryan laughs*] Just kidding! [*Both laughing*]

Ryan: Yeah. Okay. So, there's a few things here going on.

Selena: I just want to take the hero.

Ryan: Typically—

Selena: I want to be the hero. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Typically, when people read, like in Sunday school, you'd read the story, and they'd be like, "David and Goliath! Look at how God used this small boy, this unlikely hero, to *sleigh this giant* and deliver the people of God," right? From this war, right?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, we'll read that and be like, "Hey, you're David. Who's your Goliath?"

Selena: [*Chuckles*] Yeah.

Ryan: Whose your giant? Right? And how can you have more faith, and how has God prepared you? You know, as David would shepherd the flocks and he would fend off lions and bears.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: He was preparing him, right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: For this moment of truth! [*Selena chuckles*] And so, we often times read that, and we say, “I’m David and this is my Goliath, and I want to conquer that!” [*Selena chuckles*] Well, okay. I think that’s maybe a secondary or tertiary way to read that; I think the primary way to read that is that, like David, Jesus is our deliverer.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Jesus is the unlikely hero. Jesus is the greater David. Okay?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: You might have heard that. Goliath is obviously death, it’s sin, it’s all these things that He came and defeated that, and now as the people of God, we can move forward against the enemy.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay. So, that’s I think the *bigger* way to read that! I think you can probably read it in a few different ways and it still be faithful interpretation of scripture.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And getting out of it what we’re supposed to get out of it. But here’s the thing, is a lot of times *we forget*. Okay? We forget that there’s that salvation moment, where David *did* slough the giant.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Okay, but what happened then? All the people ran into battle!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: All the Israelites *ran* into battle. That was the lynch pin that basically won the war, and now they had to go through and actually slough the enemy.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Okay. So, you’re basically saying that it’s because of Christ’s victory.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Now I can go forth in confidence, doing these actions. Yes! Out of a place of being.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Out of a place of *being* on the winning team, because Christ has won the victory.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But I’m not just called to sit back and lay back and—

Selena: Right. The giant has been *sloughed*, but we still have a battle to fight!

Ryan: Yes!

Selena: And how do we fight this battle?

Ryan: Yes.

Selena: And this is what Proverbs 31 is sort of painting the picture of. Again, this fruit that’s produced is *empowering* us to *fight* these battles.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: I don’t want to get up early and take care of my family, but I *can*, and I get to, and I’m going to. I’m *afraid* of things that I can’t control; well, I don’t have to, and I’m not going to because God has already won this battle.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And I am going to trust in His sovereignty. If you just read through these verses again, it changes everything!

Ryan: It does.

Selena: Not “*it*”! *Jesus*! Jesus changes everything! We are able to be these, as a woman and a wife and a mom...

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Because of who Jesus is.

Ryan: So, let’s get personal here. What are a few ways that you’ve seen this reality bear weight in your life as a wife?

Selena: ... I think just the poetry of these verses has been very liberating in the fact that it’s not, again, there are some specifics, but it’s really painted a picture of the generous heart. Right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And the woman who is confident enough and capable enough to consider fields *without* her husband, right? It’s not like I’m doing something behind your back. It’s because...

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: The verse before that is “He trusts her.”

Ryan: Right!

Selena: “And there’s no lack.” And so, there’s this obvious just *trust* in our foundation, in our covenant, right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And so...

Ryan: I’ll tell ya something. I feel like you—

Selena: I know. I’m not—[*Laughing*] I’m trying to get there! But I’m trying to—It’s like...

Ryan: Well... Okay.

Selena: Very ambiguous. And so, I don’t know how to tangibly say that I’ve—This applies...

Ryan: I’ve seen you become this woman.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: I’ve seen you become this woman in many ways. I don’t want to elevate you to a place of idolatry, but I’m saying I’ve watched God transform your heart in ways, as His identity has been made stronger and *louder* in you!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: I don’t feel like you always had the examples growing up, because of—Your mom’s incredible! You had a divorced home.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: You didn’t have your dad arou—So there’s some of these things that, I think, like you have in confidence—

Selena: I just didn’t *know*.

Ryan: You didn’t know, and you weren’t taught.

Selena: Yeah. [*Inaudible*]

Ryan: And you didn’t have that instilled in you, emotional support, that I think maybe you would have had had things been different at home.

Selena: Sure!

Ryan: And so, for you to come out and say, “Dressing yourself with strength,” right?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And acting out of a place of strength.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I *know* it’s not because you’re just mustering it. I know it’s because God has done a work in your heart, and He has *redefined* you!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He has reidentified you as His own daughter, because even though your earthly father might not have been there...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Right? And so, you ha—

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: So, I see that happening in your heart, and I see it, honestly, the older we get, the more *beautiful* you become...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: In every way, honestly. I'm not just saying that because that's what husbands—

Selena: You're sweet.

Ryan: Are supposed to say.

00:45:03 **Selena:** No.

Ryan: But it's amazing how I can see God work in you.

Selena: Well, and I think that, you know, we wanted to talk about kind of the *role* of a husband in this area of [*Laughing*] Proverbs 31, or this area—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Of no more striving, but let's *be* because Jesus *is*. And I think—

Ryan: Oh!

Selena: As a husband...

Ryan: That's good!

Selena: You're welcome. [*Ryan snickers*] As a husband, you have, again, that line into your— that special line, direct line, into your wife's heart and into her soul, and the words that you speak bear more weight than you know. And so, I think that, as a husband, you can remind her. You can lead her in these, if there's insecurities, fears, doubts, you see a striving that's happening...

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: That is not *from* God, that is a wrong—You know, it's coming from a place of insecurity, bring truth to the situation. Ask questions! Start being that loving husband that is... [*Chuckles*] I hate to say, "like God," but like God, that is asking those questions of, "Why do you feel like you need to do this? Is there something that you're afraid of? Let's talk about it!" Like, take those first steps so that you can start helping *her* unpack *why* she's feeling this way, or why do these things keep coming at her, and why she feels like she can't overcome certain things. Or what are the lies that she's believing? Lead her and help her to understand. Don't just preach at her!

Ryan: Hm...

Selena: Don't just like, "Well, you're just doing this like this. It's wrong!" You know?

Ryan: Well, it's hard because... I mean, that's good.

Selena: It's obvious to people looking out.

Ryan: It is also... a heads up.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Heads up because husbands want to... *fix*, and I found the problem is this part of you's broken. So, fix the part that's [*Chuckling*] broken.

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Right.

Ryan: Well, that might not be the most loving way.

Selena: No!

Ryan: To lead.

Selena: It's not.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: You got to— [*Both laugh*] Just to be clear. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: [*Laughing*] Just to be clear.

Selena: You've got to lead and remind and ask questions.

Ryan: And encourage! Okay? Verse 29—

Selena: Well, that's what I mean by "remind."

Ryan: Okay. So... In verse 28, her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband *also* calls her blessed. Okay? And he praises her! Many women have done excellently, but you *surpass* them *all*!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Okay. That's *only* a husband can say that in a way that is going to resonate on the *deepest* level with his wife! And I think recognizing and exercising that role...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: As a husband, to be the one that says, "Listen. I get it! There are many women who have done excellently, but you know what? Still *you*. *You* surpass them all!"

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: "I choose you; I don't regret choosing you."

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: "I will never regret it! I will never turn from you."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: "I love you! You're the woman that God has given me, and you're a gift!"

Selena: So good...

Ryan: "I love you!" And I think that, as a husband, that's one of the simplest, most profound ways you can just remember [*Chuckling*] that you're not a passive observer of this.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: You can be an active participant in the woman your wife's becoming!

Selena: Yeah! So good.

Ryan: *All* of this goes vice versa, right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, wives to their husbands can be encouraging as well.

Selena: Absolutely!

Ryan: Are not passive.

Selena: Absolutely! Right.

Ryan: But I want to go back quickly to the Titus 1 thing. We're not going to read through it, but just [*Chuckles*] husbands, as you're reading this... Okay. It's real easy to say, "Oh, this is for women. I don't really need this." But remember, this is talking about *her husband*, right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He's an elder. He's *known* at the gates.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I don't know which verse it is; I don't have it in front of me. Which one is it?

Selena: 11.

Ryan: Verse 11. Okay. It says, "Yeah, the heart of her husband *trusts* in her, and he will have no lack of gain." And so, where's the elder one?

Selena: Hm. Oh. I thought you were reading from Titus?

Ryan: No.

Selena: You want to read from Titus?

Ryan: A husband is known at the gates! There it is!

Selena: 23!

Ryan: 23. "Her husband is known in the gates—"

Selena: Proverbs 31.

Ryan: "When he sits among the elders of the land." Okay. So, there's a lot going in there, but why is the word elder used? Why isn't it not used like, "He sits among the other *rich* landowners of..." It's not just about wealth—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: About status. It's about *character*.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: It's about character. Titus 1 is about *character*, talking about elders. I don't know if there's a direct correlation between this—I want to be honest! I don't know if exactly what the correlation is and should be, but I'm just saying it seems pretty convincing to me.

Selena: Yeah! Yeah.

Ryan: That the word elder's being used, and there's also qualification of elders. Again, elders, it's a spiritual *leader*; it's all about character. So...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Our role is this, husband, men...

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: It's like this is a type of wife that a Godly husband can help produce. Okay? Not that you're my production. [*Selena laughs*] That sounded really weird. But what I'm saying is that... It's amazing how we feed off each other in marriage.

Selena: There's a role for a husband to play in that. Absolutely.

Ryan: And we encourage or discourage Godly character in each other.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And it would *seem* that Godly character begets Godly character.

Selena: Mm...

Ryan: And that is what we're arguing, and what we believe so strongly is *all* of that begins with Godly identity in Christ.

Selena: Yes! Yes.

Ryan: And I love what you said. You said, "The fear of the Lord begets fruit." The fear of the Lord produces fruit, and that's the character we're talking about.

Selena: Absolutely.

00:49:59 **Ryan:** But it starts with *understanding* who God is.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And how He saved us.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So, I guess just the challenge would be for the wife to go back and read Proverbs 31, and I would say a husband *and* a wife. I'd say go back and read it together.

Ryan: Yeah. Read it together!

Selena: And read it through the lens of, "These are not things that I'm striving to be. These are things that God is producing *in* me."

Ryan: Mm!

Selena: “And how do I see them being produced?”

Ryan: That’s good.

Selena: “And maybe where am I stifling that?” You know?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: So, definitely go back and read that through the lens of that. I think this conversation, honestly, was augmented as you and I were just talking, because again it was birthed out of just my epiphany and God’s revelation into *my* heart of like, “This is not a checklist! I don’t put checklists on you. There’s obviously ways I want you to be obedient, [*Selena chuckles*] because I love you and I want you to live in the light and have all the things of Me that are *better* than this world!”

Ryan: Right. God is talking.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: In that scenario.

Selena: Yes! [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: [*Laughing*] Okay.

Selena: And so, but I really feel like it’s poured out into marriage. That’s the only—I mean, they talk about children, the relationship with children a little bit, but...

Ryan: I think that...

Selena: You see the marriage relationship really being highlighted here.

Ryan: Yeah. And your reaction was the reaction to the opposite, which is saying, “Hey, ladies! Don’t you want to be a Godly woman? *Do these things—*”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “To be the woman that you’re called to be.” Whether that’s intentional or unintentional, I think that can be the default stance around this passage.

Selena: Right. And it was very burdensome for many years for me.

Ryan: Yeah. And so, yeah, that was a liberating...

Selena: *Because* I didn’t know Jesus. I don’t think I understood the gospel fully.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And the gospel says that I am because He is, right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Like, I am able to be this woman...

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Because Jesus is *who* He is and doing the work that He is in my life and my heart.

Ryan: So, yeah. Read the passage together, husband and wife. Talk about this. And, yeah. And just encourage each other in the gospel. I think that’s what it comes down to, is remembering who you are in Christ, putting all your hope and faith and trust in Him.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: We hope you’ve been encouraged by this! I know it’s been encouraging to me. This is a passage that I think we could spend a *long, long* time talking through the nitty-gritty of it.

Selena: Yeah. Yeah.

Ryan: So, this was just a *big* overview. We’ve hopefully elucidated, or illuminated, [*Selena giggles*] some new truth in your heart.

Selena: Right.

- Ryan:** As God's word bears its weight on our hearts. So, Selena, I would love it if you'd just pray over the listeners, and particularly the wives.
- Selena:** Okay! [*Laughs*] Sure. Yeah!
- Ryan:** And then we'll close us out.
- 00:52:22 **Selena:** God, thank You so much for Your word that paints a beautiful picture of who we can be because of You. I thank you for the fruit that You are producing in the couples here.
- I pray that wives would be unburdened and liberated and felt given freedom in areas that maybe they were striving. God, that they would find peace and rest and assurance in areas that may have been burdensome and heavy and daunting [*Chuckles*], and things that would weight them down and would blind them God.
- I pray that there would be *vision*, there would be freedom and confidence and faith, God, in the purposes that You are producing in them and that You have the purposes that You have for them right now, God.
- We love you so much and thank you for this time!
- In Your name,
Amen.
- Ryan:** Amen. Alright! Ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much for listening to this episode of the Fierce Marriage podcast.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** This episode it!
- Selena:** In the can!
- Ryan:** It's been a true joy! Anyway. We will see you again [*Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles*] in about seven days! And until then, stay fierce!
- 00:53:37 **Ending Sequence**
- 00:53:56 *Podcast ends.*

PODCAST NOTES

- **00:01:14**
 - Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 2: God and Creation – Herman Bavinck
 - Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/dp/0801026555/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_QnAYDb3AS861T
 - Author's website: <https://hermanbavinck.org/>
- **00:05:00**
 - God's Word Alone—The Authority of Scripture: What the Reformers Taught... and Why It Still Matters (The Five Solas Series) – Matthew Barrett
 - Book link: <https://www.amazon.com/Gods-Word-Alone-Authority-Scripture/dp/0310515726>
 - Author's website: <https://credomag.com/>
 - Blessed By a Broken Heart band:
 - Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/3IN6GYf5xcFCPn6hfGVcZT>
 - iTunes: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/blessed-by-a-broken-heart/110819950>
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/blessedbyabrokenheart/>
 - New Morning Mercies: A Daily Gospel Devotional – Paul Tripp
 - Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1433541386/>
 - Author's website: <https://www.paultripp.com/>
 - Homeschool Bravely: How to Squash Doubt, Trust God, and Teach Your Child with Confidence – Jamie Erickson
 - Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0802418872/>
 - Author's website: <https://www.theunlikelyhomeschool.com/>
 - All the Light We Cannot See: A Novel – Anthony Doerr
 - Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00DPM7TIG/>
 - Author's website: <http://anthonydoerr.com/>
- **00:10:00**
 - Copper Lodge Library: Old World Echoes – Jennifer Courtney
 - <https://classicalconversationsbooks.com/products/old-world-echoes-sc200>
 - Ross King:
 - Genesis 1:1-27
 - Song: <https://www.amazon.com/Genesis-1-1-27-King-Things/dp/B07VMDHPN6/>
 - Video created for Classical Conversations Cycle 2: https://youtu.be/Glg4_MNOIUk

- **00:15:04**
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 31:10, *ESV*
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 31:1-19a, *ESV*
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 31:19b-31, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **00:25:05**
 - Scripture reference: Colossians 3:3-4, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Scripture reference: Colossians 3:10-11, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **00:30:10**
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 31:21, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 31:27, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **00:45:03**
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 31:11, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 31:23, *ESV*

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