

ARE YOU OBVIOUSLY MARRIED IN PUBLIC?

<https://fiercemarriage.com/are-you-obviously-married-in-public>

- [00:00:00] **Ryan:** Alright, Selena, we'll, just start with this. What does it mean [*Selena giggles*] when you ask, "Are you married?" in public? What are we getting at there?
- Selena:** I think we're really getting to the heart of whether or not you are being transparently married. [*Laughs*] Is that right?
- Ryan:** Yeah! That sounds about right, yeah.
- Selena:** So, when things are getting hard and you don't really like your spouse in that moment or you're having some dry times in your marriage, how are you remaining married when you're in public or at work or not with your spouse?
- Ryan:** And being *obviously* married? Yeah.
- Selena:** And how can you continue to be obviously married when you don't really want to sometimes? [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** So, I think there's a few ways this plays out.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** There's the, "I'm angry and frustrated. I'm lashing out." And there's also the sense, if there's this low grade sort of disconnection happening and you're at work or you're at the coffee shop or you're at the gym or at the grocery store and you kind of want to feel like you still got it [*Selena laughs*] because you're feeling disconnected with your spouse.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Right? So, you kind of are waiting to see if guys or gals are noticing you and if they're casting glances your way. [*Selena giggles*] And so, it kind of becomes this way to boost your self-esteem.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Right?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Anyway! So, this episode is dedicated to that topic of how can we be obviously married in public and how can we do that even when we feel like maybe at home everything's not everything we wish it could be.
- Selena:** Mm.

Ryan: So, anyway, thanks for joining us. We'll see you on the other side.

[00:01:25] <Intro Sequence>

[00:01:55] **Selena:** Well, my life is *always* how I wish it could be. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: Yeah, sure. That is the last week and a half. We'll—

Selena: We'll testify here.

Ryan: Ladies and gentlemen, I'm just going to say, it's been... it's been rough, hasn't it? I feel like, [*Exhales a sigh*] man, so we're editing this book. It's called *See Through Marriage*, and it's *all* about living transparently. And in a lot of ways, this episode is playing into that topic.

Selena: [*Clicks tongue*] Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Ryan: But we just got the edits back a few weeks ago and we're making those edits, and we were—

Selena: When we're trying to have a baby...

Ryan: [*Huffs*] Tryin'. And, I think—

Selena: Just kidding.

Ryan: I think you're doing alright. You're succeeding.

Selena: Not trying. Sorry.

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] It takes time!

Selena: She's growing, but we're four weeks out and... she's breech. So, we're trying to make that... happen.

Ryan: Yeah, that's a bit scary.

Selena: We've never had that before. So...

Ryan: It's a bit scary, because they're looking at, you know, you've got to flip this kid or got to go have a C-section, which—

Selena: Go under the knife.

Ryan: Is, you know, you've never had a major surgery like that!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And it's reasonably scary.

Selena: It's just a lot of trust that God is asking of us.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And that's good. That's good for us to... be walking through. But it just feels a bit like a fiery furnace on a lot of levels. [*Laughs*] So, we're all being sanctified, I think, in some deep parts of our hearts.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Which is okay! And good.

Ryan: And yeah. And—

Selena: We talk about it all the time, right? [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: And life has just been so, so stinking full.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, I started seminary at Westminster Theological Seminary three weeks ago; I'm in the third week, and I'm like, "This was... not a mistake. It's just man, it's a lot—"

Selena: Maybe the timing. [*Laughs*] We don't know!

Ryan: I'm really glad that I'm just doing *one* class right now, 'cause, man, it is very rigorous, very good, very rich, and I'm learning a ton! But it's *so* much reading!

Selena: Mm...

Ryan: I'm reading *volumes* of books! [*Both laugh*] Anyway! So, right now, you said everything's always the way we want it to be. [*Ryan laughs and Selena chuckles*] And I think right now—

Selena: [*Chuckling*] I'm joking.

Ryan: It's a little less relaxing than we would like...

Selena: I'm very joking.

Ryan: We have less margin than we're used to.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: But God is still good, and by God's grace, you and I have stayed connected.

Selena: Yeah! It's a season.

Ryan: It hasn't always felt that way, but...

Selena: It's a season and we're figuring out new rhythms and all the things that we talk about on Fierce Marriage are just happening right now to us! *[Laughs]*

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: How do we communicate better? How do we stay intentional about our intimacy?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: How do we... spend our money? How do we *[Laughs]* make priorities?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: All the things! And how do we be honest with the people around us, you know? *[Inhales]*

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So!

Ryan: So anyway, like we talked about in the intro, this episode's all about combating infidelity, pursuing each other covenantly by being married in public!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And all of that, and what all that means for a husband and for a wife. It'll be a good conversation. Before we do that, let's do our housekeeping really quickly! I'm going to try to make the really fast. Thank you to you, listeners, raters, reviewers, who have left a comment and a rating on iTunes or whatever podcast platform you prefer! That helps! It encourages us. We got some construct— I'll say it's constructive feedback; it wasn't positive, but it was constructive! *[Chuckles]*

Selena: On the Patreon? Or...?

Ryan: It was on iTunes.

Selena: iTunes? Okay!

Ryan: But you know what? We're always learning.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: It's interesting to hear how some people kind of perceive how we're communicating, and it's not always the way we *intend* to be perceived!

Selena: I got to look up that comment.

Ryan: And so, you kind of got to be—

Selena: Missed that one! [*Laughs*]

[00:04:58] **Ryan:** You've got to have some thick skin! But, anyway! We always welcome that, so I thank you if you've left a rating and a review. If you haven't, please do! That always is encour— Well, not always. It's mostly encouraging! [*Both chuckle*]

Selena: Please leave a nice one! [*Both chuckling*] We're a bit raw right now.

Ryan: [*Ryan and Selena laughing*] Okay, yeah. [*Ryan continues in a pitiful voice*] I'm in tears. Ok, so the second piece is Patreon. Our Patreon community has been just so phenomenal!

Selena: So great.

Ryan: So encouraging. So, it's patreon.com/fiercemarriage. That's where we partner with our listeners, directly supporting this ministry.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: We don't do ads. If you haven't noticed, there's not any ads, or at least there's very *few* ads. We had a few early on. And the reason for that is 'cause we just wanted to be a church global funded. Right? So, people at church capital see people who are followers of Christ, disciples of Christ around the world who want to see God's vision for marriage, His design for marriage perpetuated in culture, loud and clear with the proclamation of the gospel right smack dab in the middle of it. We want those people to be partnering with us!

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: 'Cause we feel like that's what we're about the business of doing, and so, the beneficiaries of it are the ones that are actually helping us carry that torch forward. So, if you want to be part of that, we would ask for two things. First, pray. Pray and see if that's something God is calling you to do as a family, to partner with Fierce Marriage financially for a period of time. And that could be \$2 a month, it could be \$5 a month, it could be whatever God leads you to do. Just pray. That's the first one. Second one, if that's you and you feel called, take action. And the way you take action is you go to patreon.com/fiercemarriage, and you can find links all throughout the show notes and stuff. This is not short at all. [*Selena giggles*] The last one is if you have any questions, go to fiercemarriage.com/podcast. You can hit the button there and leave a question, or you can call or text 971-333-1120.

Okay, so hopping into this podcast!

Selena: Hopping, not jumping.

Ryan: We're hopping. [*Selena laughs*] We're hippity-hopping.

Selena: It's hard to not say, isn't it?

Ryan: [*Exhales*] Selena likes to say that. It's okay.

Selena: I like to *jump*. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: I just want to transition because that was a long business time. [*Laughs*]

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Business time... I like jumpin'.

Ryan: Okay. So, what are we talking about?

Selena: We're going to jump *into* being obviously married in public life. And I think we need to give credit where credit is due.

Ryan: Yes!

Selena: Because our good friends, Dave and Ashley Willis, they have the Naked Marriage podcast, I believe?

Ryan: Yep.

Selena: And they're pastors and leaders and just *amazing* ministers of the gospel in terms of the arena of marriage. They did an episode called "Single in Public?" So, are you single in public even though you're married? So, are you acting single in public? And so that's kind of the episode that spurred us on to talk about being obviously *married* in public. So, if you want more on that, definitely check it out. Dave and Ashley are awesome! We love them!

Ryan: Actually, I didn't listen to it because I just saw the title, but I'm sure it's awesome, 'cause Dave and Ashley are incredible.

Selena: [*Chuckling*] They are. They're so funny.

Ryan: I want to give credit to one more spot!

Selena: Okay!

Ryan: Michael Hyatt.

Selena: Oh yeah.

Ryan: He had this quote that I just love! It's... What is it? He says, "I will speak often and lovingly of my wife. It is the best adultery repellent known to man."

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: "I will speak often and lovingly about my wife. It is the best adultery repellent known to man."

Selena: So good, and so hard to do, right? If you're really mad at me or something.

Ryan: Yep.

Selena: Which it never happens, but... [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Well, yeah, yeah. Just happened today! [*Both chuckle*] We had to work through some things...

Selena: Welllll... [*Laughs*]

Ryan: [*Speaks in a funny voice*] 'Cause you a sinner.

Selena: Uh-huh.

Ryan: [*Resumes normal voice*] I'm a sinner too.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: Yeah. I mean, what does that mean to speak often and lovingly? It's not an obnoxious thing.

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: But it's... if you're talking to somebody, I mean, if you're a spouse in your family, they should be a big part of your life.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: They're not just... an accessory to your life. [*Selena laughs*] Your spouse should be a *big* part of your life!

Selena: Right...

Ryan: They're not the main thi—You know, Christ is the main thrust of life—

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: But you know what I mean? So—

Selena: Well, and I think there's two different ways this kind of plays out. I think relationally, person to person, but also on social media. Like, are we married on social media or...? And I'm not going to judge people that have *just* pictures of themselves, 'cause I've done that. [Ryan chuckles] But I think sometimes it helps to repel any curiosity or anything when there's a picture of me *and* Ryan there.

Ryan: So, you're saying the fa—

Selena: Or my family.

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: It might repel other people from wanting to interact in a inappropriate way, maybe?

Ryan: 'Cause there's definitely...

Selena: You definitely put out a vibe, I think, with certain pictures that you can post about yourself.

Ryan: Oh, my word, yes.

Selena: Even though it says "married" in your status. You know, let's just...

Ryan: [Snickers] I'm sorry.

Selena: I don't know! I'm just going to take it up a notch!

Ryan: I just got to be a little bit abrasive here.

Selena: Uh-oh!

Ryan: Because... Okay, I don't go on Instagram... because it's not a healthy place for me.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: It either makes me *covet* other people's things, their lives, their achievements.

Selena: [Laughs] Other people.

Ryan: It makes me insecure. It makes me *compare* to other people.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Or, frankly, it makes me head down the path of lust.

Selena: Right. Yeah.

[00:09:59] **Ryan:** And I'm saying that it makes me, but, you know, I'm obviously a participant [Chuckles]—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: If I choose not to run away from that temptation.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, I'm not trying to shirk responsibility.

Selena: No.

Ryan: But I'm saying that I don't spend time because—

Selena: But not opening that door is... [Chuckles]

Ryan: Yes. Well, it's like if you're an alcoholic, don't park in the parking lot of a liquor store.

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: And so, one of the things that drives me... up a wall is when you see obviously a woman who is taking a picture where she *knows* that she looks a certain way.

Selena: [Smacks lips] I always think it's funny to watch those people when we see them trying to take [Laughing] a picture...

Ryan: And they're like, "Pose!" And you could tell that it's like they're trying to show...

Selena: It's just funny! I've totally done that! [Laughs]

Ryan: And be very attractive. They're trying to—

Selena: Not that! But...

Ryan: They're trying to be the most attractive they can be.

Selena: Yes, yes...

Ryan: And then there's a verse. It's Philippians 4:19!

Selena: Oh no...

Ryan: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." [Laughs]

Selena: Ohhh, nooo...

Ryan: And there's—What?! I mean, what are you doing? What is the— I don't get it!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I mean, should I get it?!

Selena: I don't know.

Ryan: I don't get it, because it's like, okay, you're *clearly* putting a lure... in the water... to get somebody to interact with—

Selena: Well, there's some form of disbelief or a lack of understanding of the gospel and truth probably at some level, if you're posting a verse, and then you're in a bikini or something, right? *[Laughs]* I'm not saying I've seen that, but if you're posting a picture that's something sensual, and then you have a verse, I'm like, "I don't really... get that." That's a little contrary, it seems like.

Ryan: And what I'm referring to is not just like, "Oh, you did your hair nice and you had a little bit of makeup on."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or, "You're an attractive—" I'm saying that there is a *definite* clear... you have to sensual, like, there's a line that it crosses into.

Selena: Right. "I'm putting a vibe out here."

Ryan: Yes.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And so, I just want to be clear. I'm not talking about being a prude online.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I'm saying that there is a line that I think—

Selena: The vibe is being put out, and it doesn't make sense. *[Laughs]*

Ryan: So, when you see a husband or a wife doing that, and they're in there, you know, for some husbands I see, it's like it's all their pictures of their abs and stuff, and it's 'cause I follow a lot of fitness guys. *[Selena laughs]*

Selena: Well, if they're fitness guys, they might be...

Ryan: Okay. And they got a Bible verse, and like, "I love my wife."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: But it's just all these pictures of them showing off their body. And okay, maybe if you're trying to sell that you actually can produce results and all that, I get it. I don't know.

Selena: Ahhh! You know, I don't like your abs. [*Ryan chuckles*] They're not my favorite.

Ryan: [*Laughing*] You don't like my abs?!

Selena: You know what my favorite part of you is?

Ryan: What? [*Chuckles*]

Selena: Will you say it?

Ryan: [*Speaks with an accent and enunciates every word*] Nice, firm buttocks! [*Both laugh*]

Selena: [*Chuckling*] There it is! [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: It's a Notting Hill quote, by the way.

Selena: No. I like you, though.

Ryan: It's 'cause I eat...

Selena: All of you!

Ryan: I just eat mayonnaise.

Selena: Anyway!

Ryan: [*Laughing*] Like it's yogurt!

Selena: We are— [*Laughing*] Why are we talking about this? I think we've covered that in a few ways. We really want to combat infidelity I think emotionally as well, by being somewhat obvious about the fact that we're married, right? Online, in public, face to face. We're not trying to be obnoxious about this, like I feel like you always mention that you're married or something in some sort of conversation if it feels like, not even just if, but you speak lovingly and oftenly, just like Mike Hyatt says.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: But I don't think we have to be over the top.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Like, “I’m married. Don’t talk to me,” you know? It’s like, you can have conversations with people, and if for some reason you feel like it’s creeping into the— it’s kind of crossing the line or getting close to it, you know, then I think those are always good times to bring up your spouse.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: I honestly don’t think I have conversations that long with people that don’t know me [*Chuckles*] and they don’t know I’m married. Right? And that don’t respect that relationship and covenant.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: But yeah, I have had [*Selena chuckles*] to state the obvious to some people. I’ve been caught—not caught! Sorry, that’s a bad word. But I’ve been *in* Starbucks working, and I’ve had two guys sit down, and they’re talking, and then for some reason they start talking to me. And I’m just like, “Okay.” And I’m trying to be nice. And somehow, I have to say, “Yeah, my husband,” and they’re like, “Oh, you’re married?!” And I’m like, “What do you think this ring is on my finger?” [*Ryan chuckles*] That I’m only wearing one ring... on my left hand! [*Selena chuckles*]

Ryan: I got you the biggest one I could afford, which was a gift from my grandma, so... [*Laughing*]

Selena: No! And it was like, “It’s the Fierce Marriage ring.” Hello, plug. But I was just like, “Uhhh...” [*Chuckles briefly*] So, I mean, not that everybody doesn’t know, but really this is all about living in the light and being married, honoring our covenant that we made before God and man and to each other. We’re not going to hide that fact, no matter what state our marriages is in, or where we’re at with each other. We are going to walk in the light that Christ has given us. And just because our relationship might be hard in the moment doesn’t mean that we are going to hide the fact that we’ve made a covenant with each other.

Ryan: Yeah, as you were talking, I was thinking through, okay, where do we see Go— So, God has a covenantal character. Right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, this is all about living your covenantal relationship with your spouse in a way that’s *obvious for* what? The glory of God.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: For the health of your relationship.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And to honor your spouse. Okay.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, where do we see God's covenantal character? I don't go too far off the outline here, but I just want to brush by a few passages. So, Judges 2.

Selena: Mm-hm.

[00:14:58] **Ryan:** We talked about that in church, which is an amazing... [Laughs] We're going through the book of Judges at church, and it's—

Selena: They dropped that a couple of weeks ago, and we're all like, "What?!" [Laughs]

Ryan: I love it! I love it because—

Selena: [Laughing] And it's been really great, yeah.

Ryan: It's very gritty. It's a tough book to get through...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: If you're not willing to do the work. But if you do the work, you can see the gospel on every page.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: But, so, I thought of Judges 2.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: 2 and 3, where Israel is called. They said they whored themselves after other gods; this is when they were going into the land of Canaan.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And they had worshiped the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and those sorts of things. And God is basically saying like, "I would have blessed you, but instead you whored yourself."

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: That's the word they use! It's like you *gave* yourself over. You *abandoned* our relationship and started another relationship with these other gods, these foreign gods, these dead gods, by the way.

Selena: Hm...

- Ryan:** That can't actually do what I do for you. So...
- Selena:** Shouldn't even be called gods.
- Ryan:** Yeah! It's lowercase "god."
- Selena:** Little g's! Little g's.
- Ryan:** And so, just pause right there! In terms of our covenant, like... so often we romanticize things.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** And we think if you're just in the grocery store, okay, and you're picking out avocados. [*Both laugh*] Healthy fats, alright, people? [*Ryan chuckles*] And you're picking out your avocados, and you're peeking over the fruit rack. [*Both laugh*] At someone else's fruit rack.
- Selena:** [*Selena chuckles*] This is going downhill... [*Both laugh*]
- Ryan:** [*Both laughing*] Sorry! But... [*Ryan laughs*] But you're wondering, "Are they...?" You know? And you're kind of like, you had this romanticized view, as like if someone sees you as attractive or they basically check you out, and you can think, "Hey! I still got it." And what are you actually trying to do in that situation?!
- Selena:** [*Chuckling*] Right.
- Ryan:** That's the thing! Are you going to abandon your spouse and go over and talk to that person and start a relationship with them, which, by the way, they have a whole set of baggage that they're not putting on display at that moment?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And so, all of their weird world beliefs [*Selena chuckles*], all of their nuances and things, like, are you really going to abandon...
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** This covenant that you have with this person that you built a friendship with—
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And you're in a relationship with and a life with, for this lower-case g god?
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** So to speak.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, there's that, and then there's Ezekiel. And this is really [*Laughs*] Ezekiel 16. It's intense. Okay, so, it's called "The LORD's Faithless Bride." And over and over again, okay, so the refrain here is God is saying this. He says, "'I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord, and you became mine.'" Okay? So, that's Ezekiel 16:8. Incredible, right? And these are the people of God continually being faithless brides, and God is saying, "Still, I'm going to cover you."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: "I'm going to bring you into the fold." Right? This is during, I think, during one of the exiles. And so, He does that, but the language here is *so* strong because, again, they're turning away from their covenant with God, the covenantal relationship that He has spent all of their history building. Okay, so in marriage, we spent all of our history building our covenantal relationship! Okay, and then it says this, He says, "You ate fine flour and honey and oil. You grew exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty." But God is saying that I've nourished you into a place of beauty as a *nation*!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: As a people. It says, "...exceedingly beautiful and advance to royalty. And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendor that I had bestowed to you, declares the Lord." That's verse 14. Verse 15! Something switches here. He says, "But," new paragraph, "But you trusted in your beauty and played the whore because of your renown and lavished your whorings on any passerby; your beauty became his. You took some of your garments and made for yourself colorful shrines, and on them played the whore. The like has never been, nor shall ever be." Right? So, He's saying, "You've been— !"

Selena: He's intense!

Ryan: It's intense! [*Selena laughs*] I'm not going to deny that! [*Ryan chuckles*] But, you know what? God can say that because He has spent hundreds of years, up to a thousand years, of the you know, I don't know how many years exactly, but the whole of history in the nation of Israel covenantly wooing her as His bride, and she's whoring herself. So, we can do that. We are the bride of Christ. We can do that, obviously, in the ways that we sin, in the ways that we turn, but looking at God's covenantal character and how marriage is a *reflection* of that covenantal character, we oftentimes will take this beauty, this confidence that we have because of our relationship, or this context that we have because of our marriage, and just flippantly put it there for any passerby.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: To take a glance or to initiate a relationship and, God forbid, any sort of emotional or sexual affair.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: All that to say is as we go through the rest of this conversation here for the next 20 minutes...

Selena: Mm-hm.

[00:20:00] **Ryan:** Remember that we are called into a covenantal relationship for our good, secondarily, primarily for God's glory.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And it's for God's glory because our covenant and our ability to display love within it is in a direct reflection of God's covenantal character.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: In how He's loved us, in the person-work of Christ.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And also, how He's loved the people of Israel throughout their history, and what we see throughout the entire Bible.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, just keep that in mind.

Selena: And I think it begs the question, you know, we talked about *love* a couple of episodes back, and God's biblical love versus culture and society's definition of love. We have everything in the world screaming at us that love is a feeling to be pursued, that it's *easy*.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: It's something that just kind of happens to us, this idea that it's just contractual! It's very self-serving. God is love and love is God. But that's not what the Bible says.

Ryan: What you mean by that, and in case someone didn't hear that, is we oftentimes will misconstrue that verse that says God is love as *if* it says love is

God, meaning that anything that I deem as loving is authoritative in my life, meaning that whatever I feel like love is, that's what it is. Popular culture reinforces that.

Selena: And that's not the case...

Ryan: That's not the case!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, you're saying—

Selena: By the Bible's definition of love, which is the truth and the true definition of love, is that love is from God and that God is love, but that doesn't switch. [*Laughs briefly*] And His love is perfected *in us*.

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: It's selfless, it's covenantal, it's not easy. It's very active and inten— It requires *action* and intentionality. It's a way of being. Again, you see “The Way of Love” is the title of 1st Corinthians 13, typically.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Again, reinforcing that it's not just a feeling or something to be pursued. Are there feelings of love? Absolutely! I think that those are a result of actions taken, intentional actions. You know? “I'm going to love my husband, despite what I feel.”

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: And that the feelings, they will follow. I say that almost always happens, at least for me. And if not, that's alright. [*Chuckling*] God's still calls us to love!

Ryan: You can still love.

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Yes!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Love is a mark of a believer. You know? The biblical way of loving is very contrary to the world's definition of love. And so, it brings glory to God when we are loving the way He loved us. By loving God and our neighbor...

Ryan: Yeah, yeah.

Selena: Our first neighbor being our spouse, we're *abiding* in God, we're bearing *fruit*, where that fruit is *glorifying* to God.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So, when we're loving in truth, in words and our actions and our deeds, that speaks and testifies to the power of God in our life, the sovereignty and the presence of God in our life and in our marriage.

Ryan: I love that you... go all the way down to the core of knowing what love is, 'cause a lot of times it's our... forgetfulness of what real love is that drives us into not being married obviously in public, right?

Selena: Yeah. Yeah!

Ryan: And so, you have a quote here, and I don't know, if you wrote it, you're a genius.

Selena: I did.

Ryan: [*Both chuckle*] It says, "It's hard to be married in public if you're struggling in private." Right?

Selena: Yes. I did write that!

Ryan: And this is the caveat! The caveat is it's hard to be married in public if you're struggling in private *if* you don't understand the definition of love.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: If you do understand the source, an example of love that we have in Christ.

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: So, by looking and grounding our self... God, it's so easy to just float with the breeze when it comes to our definition of love.

Selena: Right. And the tides. Yeah.

Ryan: And we have to be grounded and anchored and rooted in scripture!

Selena: It doesn't change. Yeah.

Ryan: Scripture! Not just an idea, okay? And that's what I want to be clear with.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Not just... an idea, not just even what your church teaches, not just what we're *saying*. But *you* have to go to scripture and let that be your foundation, firm and secure. Right?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: That *anchor* for your soul, for what love is.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And so, okay. What does that have to do with being married in public? Well, if I am committed to loving you, and I'm rooted in scripture in that...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: However we are. I'm not going to go outside of our covenant to try and find any sort of validation for that love. That love is already valid.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Our love is already valid. It's *been* valid because I know it's not a feeling.

Selena: Hm...

Ryan: My feelings are not valid at that moment. [*Both laugh*] If my feelings... I would love to have my feelings validated.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But I can't get my feelings of love validated by someone who's not the object of my love.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I have to get those validated by you and by Christ. And I need to talk to you about that. We need to work through it together.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: I'm just run outside, but I *stay* in the arena and we [*Chuckling slightly*] wrestle it out.

Selena: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Ryan: Married people style, sometimes. [*Chuckles*]

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] Sometimes, you just got to hug it out!

Selena: [*Chuckling*] You just got to hug it out.

Ryan: But just talking, you know?

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: And actually coming to the table and not running away from it.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, I think this behavior is more of a running away than it is a staying.

[00:24:58] **Selena:** Absolutely. And these definitions of love, they really come into play when we hit some of those tension points in our marriage.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: That we really, again like you said, we want to look outside of it. We want to maybe flirt with somebody online or we want to just interact or comment or just get some sort of... minuscule affirmation from someone else that we are still cool or we're still hot or we still got it in some ways [*Chuckles*], you know? And that really can start, I mean, you may be thinking it's really not a big deal, right, if you comment on something or whatever? But I think the more— it's just like stepping into cold water. The more time you spend in it, the more acclimated you get, the deeper you want to go.

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: And so, I think it starts to break down trust, and I think it happens faster than you think!

Ryan: So, you're talking about online; I'm going to jump in here. And there's also offline...

Selena: Well, offline. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

Ryan: Versions of the— non-online! [*Both chuckle*] Very articulately way to say that.

Selena: Person to person. Face to face.

Ryan: So, here's an example that to me feels really clear.

Selena: Kay.

Ryan: Is I used to travel to Chicago every year, once or twice, to do this conference I was a part of, and I would speak, and I would stay. I would spend a few days there because I'd meet with clients and do those sorts of things. And—

Selena: You love Chicago.

Ryan: I love the city!

Selena: [*Inaudible*]

Ryan: I'd always stay in the thick of it [*Selena giggles*], like right in the middle of one of the neighborhoods, and I'd do an air B&B thing. Man! It would be so easy... to do anything that you would not be aware of. Like there's nobody there keeping me accountable. I'm *staying* by myself.

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: In an air B&B. I'm going, many times, I'm going out to eat by myself, which is horrible! [*Selena laughs*] It's not fun. But the thing is—

Selena: Sometimes, it's fun as a mom! [*Laughs*] Just kidding.

Ryan: But you get lonely.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: You're in the city.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And it's like there's so many people, but you feel so lonely.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, in those moments, what happened is I would make a commitment. Even before I started doing these trips, I'd make a commitment to be accountable to you.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Basically say, "Hey! Here's what's off limits," right? I'm not going to eat alone with anybody. I'm not going to have any meetings alone with any women.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: I mean, I can eat alone with the guys. I'm not going to eat alone with any women.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: I'm not going to look at anything online, even though we're apart for a week, and sexually, that's a temptation and all that. And so, obviously, I'll be missing you physically.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And then you are free to ask me those questions. But that's kind of an accountability conversation. But when it comes to going out... So, here's, again, I'm getting around to the really practical thing, is there's this amazing burger place in Chicago. It's called Au Cheval, and it's *unbelievable!* I... I can't exaggerate how good [*Selena chuckles*] this place is. And the burgers are incredible. And I'll even go there alone, I don't even care. I'll go there alone at ten o'clock at night, like I have to eat [*Selena chuckles*] 'cause the reservations are that hard to get. [*Selena giggles*] And so, I go in there and there's always these hipster people working there and all these sorts of things. And inevitably, there's a waitress who is attractive, and obviously they're not there to pick up guys. They're there to work. So, I just go out of the way to be like, "Yeah, I'm here on business and my wife's back home, and I can't wait to get back. Here's my order," type of thing. [*Selena chuckles*] And you try to make it organic, so you're not being obnoxious about it.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: But definitely, I'd rather be obnoxious. [*Both laugh*] If it comes down to—

Selena: You err on the point of obnoxious or err on the side of obnoxiousness.

Ryan: Yeah, yeah. And I'm not saying that I've been perfect in that, because there's definitely been times in our relationship—

Selena: What...?

Ryan: At the gym or whatever, and there's... Years and years ago, I think down in Palm Desert when we lived down in California, I'd go to the gym, and it's not that I would flirt or anything, but I just wasn't *super* overt about, "Hey, this is my wedding ring. Look at it!" You know?

Selena: Right. [*Laughs*] Right.

Ryan: You know, 'cause I kind of wanted that validation.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And I realized that that was a path to death. So...

Selena: Mm, yeah. Yeah! And I think any real points of conflict that cause... We talked about tension points. Those are points, again, that where there's conflict or distance or disagreement or disengagement, maybe, with each other.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: I think it's just bringing it down, getting a little granular with what kind of tension points are you talking about. Maybe disagreement about how you're spending your finances, you know? I think that's...

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: It sometimes is the little things that just put you in a spiral, at least for me. That's been my M.O. [*Both chuckle*] the last few days. Call it pregnancy hormones or whatever, but sometimes there's just little things that kind of... just rub you the wrong way, and then you don't want to talk to your spouse [*Selena laughs*] about it right now. [*Ryan chuckles*] You're heated, you don't want to talk, you don't want to engage...

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And it's in those moments of just the tension that I think the enemy is prowling, right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: I think when you're arguing, you can argue about all kinds of things. Kids, priorities, time, etcetera. Pick something! [*Selena laughs briefly*] We always are arguing in our marriage, and... Not always— That sounds bad. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: Well, there's always opportunities for it! Yes.

Selena: Yes! There's *plenty* of opportunities. And then kind of what you touched on a bit is just sexual attention. You know, if we haven't had sex or been intimate in a long time, then it's going to create obviously some physical tension, but some emotional... deficits, I believe. [*Laughs*]

[00:30:07] **Ryan:** Yeah.

Selena: And there's going to be—

Ryan: Sure!

Selena: Some, you know, not questioning, but... I don't know! Just kind of some insecurities, I think, that could fester longer than they need to.

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: And... sometimes the tension is not maybe so... obvious. Sometimes there's some subtle tension in your relation—

Ryan: I would...

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: No, I would argue that that's probably *mostly*...

Selena: Mostly subtle.

Ryan: Low grade.

Selena: Yeah! Yeah.

Ryan: And it builds over time.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Bit by bit—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: To the point where you don't even realize. It's almost like you don't even realize that you are living in this way.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That you're kind of hiding the fact that you're married when you're at work.

Selena: Which is why, I think—

Ryan: Or when you're talking to certain people.

Selena: A lot of our focus in Fierce Marriage and the topics that we talk about are how can you connect... more? How can you close that distance between each other?

Ryan: Right.

Selena: How can you *pursue* each other?

Ryan: Right.

Selena: How can you pray for each other? How can you... align your beliefs and make sure that you're on the same page?

Ryan: That's huge.

Selena: That's because there's so much tension within that. And that definitely can chip away at your trust, it can chip away at your security and assurance *in* your covenant with each other if you're not on the same page in understanding these things. 'Cause I think those are the things that when you are... together and unified, it strengthens your covenant and it strengthens your walls, I feel like, to when you go out and you're— I think we all know if somebody's

checking us out! Right? But you don't need to return the check-out kind of thing. [Laughs]

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Because I feel, I'm not feeling, but I *know* I am secure in my covenant with my husband. I *know* that I can trust him when he's in Chicago for a week, that nothing's going to happen that we can't talk about or that we can't walk through or that he's not going to be honest with me about. But that's taken time!

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: That's not just overnight, you know? You take time! You've got to be intentional about connecting. You've got to be intentional about pursuing each other and praying for each other!

Ryan: And that connection has to be honest and transparent.

Selena: And consistent. And yep.

Ryan: And consistent.

Selena: Yep.

Ryan: Because a lot of times there's a degree of connection!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But it may not be the deep, getting into actually being—

Selena: Like, repellent connection.

Ryan: *Fully* known. Yeah.

Selena: Kind of...

Ryan: Or just being *fully* confident that I am loved by you—

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: Even though I don't feel lovable all the time.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Knowing that I can bring to you... You know, this is the love of God in Christ, right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That He knows us in and out. And He knows us... While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: It was *in that* grossness that He gave Himself to us.

Selena: Mm... Mm-hm.

Ryan: And so, that Christ like love in marriage, it looks like the fact that we're connecting, yes. We're building our friendship. We're laughing together. We're building memories together. We're spending time together.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But we're actually *honest* in that.

Selena: Right! It's not just checking off the boxes, posting it on Instagram and it's just *hollow* and... some sort of actions that we just are doing and going through the motion, not actually—

Ryan: Well, but it can feel— That's the thing, though. But again, I want to nuance it a little bit because I feel like there's not an overt... "I'm going to hide from."

Selena: Sure. No, sure.

Ryan: It's maybe some couples don't realize that they are not fully being honest with each other.

Selena: Mm-yeah.

Ryan: And they may be—Not that you have to unearth every—

Selena: No.

Ryan: You have to go where the Spirit leads in this.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And where you feel convicted.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: If there's anything you're actually *actively* hiding, I think that's a dead giveaway that you need to unhide it.

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: And you need to reveal it.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: Whether that's a past sin, a past shame, a past hurt, a past fear...

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: Whatever that thing is, I mean, that's being known in that place. And I think the reason why that's important is because without that connection and that grounding in the love of Christ as exemplified in your spouse, ideally—

Selena: Right!

Ryan: Not every marriage is perfect. No marriage is perfect! *[Laughs]*

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Without that, it's so tempting then to romanticize...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And, I don't know. I just think you have to be honest with who you are.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Okay. So, we talk about this in our *forthcoming* book.

Selena: Well, yeah. And we talk about transparency, 'cause you—

Ryan: But being transparent, sorry, I want to finish the thought real fast.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: Being transparent *with* God, right?

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Saying, "This is who God is," like, *actually* seeing Him for the whole He set apart, righteous, merciful, just God.

Selena: Well, and confronting the lies that you might be believing about Him as well.

Ryan: Yes!

Selena: 'Cause I think there's perceptions that we have about God that are just not true!

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: They're just our own human...

Ryan: It's just whatever. Yeah.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: We've absorbed it somehow.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And being honest with ourselves! Like, am I a sinner in need of a Savior?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: 'Cause I think a lot of times, in culture specifically, our default posture is, "Hey, I'm not that bad of a person." [*Selena laughs*] I don't need—

Selena: "I'm a good guy!"

Ryan: I mean, I need Jesus when I sin, but in general I'm pretty good.

Selena: "I'm a good person." Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: Right?

Selena: Yep!

Ryan: And that scripture doesn't teach us that.

Selena: No.

Ryan: It doesn't teach us that.

[00:34:56] **Selena:** And if we go to scripture and we look about— "Look about." [*Selena chuckles*] Look up [*Both chuckle*] and talk about God's love and what that means, we *have* to bring transparency and light into it. There's absolutely no way we can *truly* love, I feel like, how God... not feel, but I *know* God loves us! He loved us, again, while we were still sinners. He knows the core of our sin, and yet He still chose to die. And I mean, that's just one aspect of the gospel.

Ryan: Mm. Yeah.

Selena: But 1st John 2:9-11 says, “Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: And I chose that verse because I think, sometimes, we do claim to be in the light. Right? We feel like we're abiding, we're doing the right thing, but there's always this stumbling. And if there's a consistent stumbling and there's this consistent darkness that you feel like you're being faced with, darkness being sin and stuff that you're hiding, then it's going to start blinding us in terms of our covenant, in terms of how we're loving each other, in terms of how we're being married in public.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: To what extent, you know? And... You want to read something?

Ryan: Well, no. I'm just looking up a verse. Go ahead!

Selena: Okay. And then John 15:12-13, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.” And I think, how does that apply here? Again, laying down our need for affirmation, laying down our emotions, maybe some need for security and assurance that we've still got it in some way. Laying that down and allowing that to die and saying, “Greater love has no one than this. I'm going to lay this down. I don't need this. I am in love with my spouse. I have made this covenant, and I am going to keep God's commandment in this area, even though we're at odds right now. I'm going to fight for this.”

Ryan: Hm... No, that's really good. I'm just thinking through this verse. Again, you brought up the one from 1st John.

Selena: Mm-hm. There's a lot of in 1st John and John also. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Yeah. There's a lot of love going on in 1st John.

Selena: [*Chuckles*] Lot of love.

Ryan: And this is 1st John 3:18. Now, he's talking about loving someone else, a brother specifically, being an action.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: A brother or sister in Christ, or otherwise. Just a person... just being an action.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Right? And so, it's 1st John 3:18. Some of you probably know it. It says, "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." Okay. So, that's the coffee cup verse, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: That's the one you'd see on the side of the coffee cup. And actually, I think we're putting it on the side of a coffee cup right now. *[Both laugh]*

Selena: *[Laughing]* #FierceMarriage!

Ryan: *[Ryan chuckles]* It's going to be for our Patreon people. *[Selena laughs]* Just a little tidbit preview. That's why I thought *[Ryan chuckles]* of it *[Selena laughs]*, 'cause we just deci— but here's the thing is, and maybe if you get that cup somehow and you think through this, verse 19 I think is where it gets really powerful. Okay, so, verse 18, again, says, "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." It means put your money where your mouth is when it comes to love.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Then it goes on! "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers."

Selena: Oh, that's good. I was going to talk about that.

Ryan: *[Selena chuckles]* "But if anyone has the world's goods and see his brother". Sorry. That is actually the verse prior to that.

Selena: Verse 16, yeah.

Ryan: That's the verse prior to that. And then, so verse 19, after loving in deed and in truth, says "By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything." That's exactly what you were talking about!

Selena: Mm-hm. He knows everything.

Ryan: Our heart condemns us.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Right?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, we have to do what? We have to run and hide behind the person and work of Christ.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Because in the person and work of Christ, God proved that He loved us despite our sin.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And actually loved us *enough* in such a way to satisfy the requirements of our sin.

Selena: So good!

Ryan: And we see that same type of love in a covenantal marriage.

Selena: Right. And we, again, in that other episode that we talked about love, loving how Christ loves us, but looking at Jesus as our example of love and our authority on love, He didn't... You read— It's so funny, 'cause he, Ryan, looks at the rundown, but not always to the full extent to it. [*Both laugh*] And so, I had that verse, 1st John 3:16, "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers."

Ryan: Oh, wow! Yeah.

Selena: But the examples, Jesus didn't just jump off the cross and say, "This hurts too much!" [*Chuckles*] "I don't like this. I think I'm done now."

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: He didn't just jet out and say, "This is too much for me," you know? Did He have His final moments of facing mentally and physically, knowing what He was about to endure and having to sort of reconcile that?

Ryan: Yeah.

[00:40:00] **Selena:** Yes! I think that just shows the duality of who He was at that moment, of fully God and fully man. And so, I think that, yeah, like you said, God, the only love that we can extend has to come from Christ, and it has to come from this place of, again, laying down our lives for our spouse *in the biggest* moments and in the smallest moments, right?

Ryan: Right.

Selena: The smallest moments of not glancing at that attractive person at the grocery store and checking out their fruit rack. [*Both laugh*] Just kidding! Or not... You

know what I mean? Not engaging at any level *because* they're, well, A. There's no reason to, but B. We are laying down that fleshly desire.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: We are laying down our lives for our spouse, for our covenant, for the glory of God, for our good, for the growth of His kingdom.

Ryan: Yeah. So, we keep coming back to the true definition of love, which is, again, this last week's full episode.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I believe it was last week's. We keep coming back to it, because that is really like our ability to remember and/or forget that is going to determine how obviously we are married in public.

Selena: It's all rooted in this... Yeah. Mm-hm.

Ryan: And so, it's not just, "Hey everyone! I'm married. Look at my big ring and look at how I'm married I look."

Selena: Mm-hm. "Look at my tattoooo!"

Ryan: Yeah. [*Chuckles*] "Look at my... wife... shirt." I love my wife shirt. [*Laughs*] Which I don't own one of those, but I do love my wife.

Selena: [*Selena chuckles*] I wish you would just prove it in there. [*Ryan laughs*] 'Cause I don't really know until you wear the shirt. So...

Ryan: Yeah. Aw, man. Okay. [*Selena chuckles*] I'll get a shirt that says, "Whipped!" [*Ryan laughs*]

Selena: [*Chuckles*] Worse. Just worse.

Ryan: [*Laughing*] I'm just kidding! No! Okay. So, it's not just being, but it's...

Selena: No, it's very true. It's very true.

Ryan: It's not just being obvious about these things, but actually knowing and honoring your spouse. Okay. So, it's being obvious in the sense that, hey, I'm bringing you up in public whenever the opportunity arises or if ever it feels like there's this ambiguity.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: I'm clearly saying, "Yeah, I got my wife and my daughters at home and love'em, and blah, blah, blah. My wife's great." [Selena chuckles] Bragging about your wife...

Selena: "Here's my order. Go away!" [Laughs] Just kidding!

Ryan: But also...

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: Here's another thing, this is kind of on the accountability side of it, is if ever I kind of realize that I'm not being as disciplined with my like glances. Right?

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: I try to remember... How would Selena feel if she saw however I'm behaving? Right?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Or hearing whatever I'm saying?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I want to say and do things that would be completely Selina honoring.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And you would *feel* honored and you would respond in an honori—honored—with honored... feelings. [Both chuckle] That was redundant.

Selena: A lot of honor! [Both laugh]

Ryan: So, okay. So, with love at this foundation, let's get really practical. Again, we're talking about being married in public.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: You have some examples here, but I want to lay out a quick framework.

Selena: M'kay.

Ryan: Really, really quick. So, I think every couple needs or desires— they need and desire these three things in their marriage.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Right? And these three things will... they're general things and the categories of things will inform kind of how you handle these situations of needing to be obviously married in public or online.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay. So, the first one's purpose. We need to have a clear sense of mission, a clear sense of purpose. That comes back down to the definition of love, definition of covenant, what the gospel is, who you are in Christ. Okay? *You* need to agree on those things... If you don't agree on those things, it's going to be really hard at times to live this out.

Selena: Mm! It's going to be tough. Yeah.

Ryan: The second one is you need connection.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Okay, so, we need to have this sense of you are my wife and that's more than just a contractual relationship, but I'm actually covenantally and spiritually interwoven with you.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: We are one flesh.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: We're not two fleshes living in one house! [*Both chuckle*] We are one flesh living *as* one flesh.

Selena: In one house! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: In one house! [*Both laugh*] And so, you and I need to have a true connection there.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, that means there's an emotional connection. There's a, obviously, a spiritual one. There's a physical connection that's happening.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: There's feelings of love being exchanged. There's words of affection being exchanged and received. There's clear lines of communication that are established. And it's good! Right?

Selena: Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: We're connecting. We feel like we're connecting. There's that satisfaction that comes from that.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: That's the second one. The third one is kind of the bridge between the two, and it's this, I would say, just tools.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Things that you need to actually get you there. So, we have our books, The 31 Day Pursuit Challenge. That's really just a tool to help you... get on purpose together.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: On the same mission together and live out the actions of love, or The 40-Day Prayer Journey. That's another thing that's about getting on the same mission with God in certain terms of what He says about love and how you can love your spouse and pray over him or her. And that's just really about getting on the same page if you do that together and having a tool to actually foster those feelings of affection.

[00:45:01] **Selena:** Mm.

Ryan: And those connection moments with each other.

Selena: Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: And so, I don't know. But with those three things in hand...

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: I think this becomes a lot more organic and being organically, obviously married in public. *[Chuckles]*

Selena: Right. *[Chuckles]* Organically, obviously.

Ryan: Yep.

Selena: A little bit of alliteration with an O. Nice job!

Ryan: *[Chuckles]* Yeah, yeah.

Selena: *[Laughs]* So, how can we be married in public? What are some tangible ways, if we're at work or we're out somewhere where our spouse is not around, and a couple things that we've thought about is just not having ongoing or long

conversations with someone of the opposite gender? Again, it depends on the situation.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: But still, it's not like I'm going to go meet someone, a guy, for coffee and talk to him for an hour. Like, that's just weird. If there's nothing... Even if you're working, like you've worked...

Ryan: I don't want to dismiss it as weird. I think you would consider that really weird. I think a lot of... And I would, too.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Because that's the culture that we have lived in.

Selena: In our relationship, yeah. I'm sorry. That makes me weird. Thanks.

Ryan: But there are husbands and wives who, say you are a dental assistant. [*Selena laughs*] Right? And you—

Selena: We've been to the dentist a lot too, people. [*Both laughing*] This is why are we [*Inaudible*].

Ryan: It's one of the reasons!

Selena: There's three out of four of us that have been to the dentist in the last two weeks. [*Laughing*]

Ryan: Wait, I didn't go?

Selena: Oh, you're going! Sorry.

Ryan: I'm going, but that's just for a routine checkup! [*Laughs*]

Selena: That's what you think.

Ryan: Which means I better floss. [*Selena laughs*] I better start flossing again. [*Ryan laughs*]

Selena: Boom! Blood everywhere. [*Both laughing*]

Ryan: Bam! Done. Blood everywhere. [*Selena laughs*]

Selena: [*Inaudible*]

Ryan: Yeah. So...

Selena: [Chuckling] Okay.

Ryan: So, say your a dental assistant or whatever, and you happen to work alongside another capable professional who's the opposite sex.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And you just say, "Hey, let's go out to Frangioni's for burritos." [Both laugh] It's a Italian burrito place. It's delicious! [Both laughing] And it's, you know, it's not a romantic setting. It's just like maybe a foo—

Selena: Right! Let's go get a drink, hang out, whatever.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay, that might feel pretty innocuous because, clearly, it's a working relationship and you've...

Selena: My question is, though, do you have to do it guy and girl? Couldn't you invite somebody else? That seems—

Ryan: But that person is my friend, and I want to have a drink with that person because they're my friend, and...

Selena: Well, make more friends... [Laughs]

Ryan: So... That's what I'm saying, that that's probably not a good idea.

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: I'm with you.

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: 'Cause what happens is that friendship... it's a start of something, okay?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Okay? And it starts to begin cracking that door...

Selena: Yeah. There's a lot of time for conversations...

Ryan: If you want to hang out with that person, invite him or her and their spouse over to your house. And build a cou—

Selena: Right, right. Niiice.

- Ryan:** Boom! [*Selena laughs*] Build a relationship with them, couple to couple.
- Selena:** Couple to couple, yes.
- Ryan:** That is, maybe if they're not believers, then that gives you a reason to bring them over and actually start having deeper conversations that are not just about the weather or about the sports team.
- Selena:** Right!
- Ryan:** Or whatever.
- Selena:** Because that shows it's not this just one-sided interest, that you may have to hide this conversation because... I think the second point here, too, is being aware of the topics that you may be talking about with somebody of the opposite sex... Ideally, you're having somewhat of short conversations. I guess I keep going back to this waiter/waitress type thing, or like short interactions with other... people.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** But obviously there's more interactions that you can have with someone [*Ryan chuckles*] of the [*Selena laughs*] opposite gender. But obviously avoiding anything sexual or talking about anything with looks that you might be seeking a compliment, which is hard because sometimes you're like, "Oh, I totally got these new shoes!" Right? And I think the spirit of that is it can be innocent, but you really have to just be *cautious* about what you're talking about and *why* you're talking about it. You got to be clear about things. And again, I think the whole couple to couple is... the way to go! And it just really shows that you respect *that* marriage.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** And you... value it. And again, for God's glory, we are going to talk to them couple to couple about anything hard, anything outside of even work, or whatever.
- Ryan:** Yeah. I think another really clear example's at the gym. And actually, 'cause what happens is you get in a rhythm of going to the gym and you're going every morning at the same time or every day of the week at the same times or the same classes or whatever, there's a good chance you're going to cross paths with the same people.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And the same people, that's where you have an opportunity to begin kind of this...

Selena: Right. There's a familiarization.

Ryan: Weird familiarity.

Selena: Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: And maybe never even talk, but you see each other and you both notice each other.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And are you taking an opportunity, if one arises, to *clearly* bring your spouse into that conversation?

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: Or clearly, maybe lift with your ring finger out. [*Both laugh*] You know what I mean? Do something—

Selena: Get one of the Fierce Marriage rings, people! They'll save your lives. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: And I've gotten to the point where I feel so bad for women at the gym because I feel like you feel like— You went to a ladies gym for a while.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: But then you started coming to the YMCA with me.

Selena: Yeah, when I got pregnant, I had to slow things down a little bit.

Ryan: You had to slow things down a little bit. [*Selena laughs*] And I was like, "Man, I feel so *bad* for you because..." It doesn't matter. Like, guys could even— They're not even trying to pick you up. Was that the right word? [*Ryan laughs*]

[00:50:05] **Selena:** Sure. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: I don't even know.

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: They're not trying to hit on you.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: But they just have wandering eyes, or they just—

Selena: Yeah.

- Ryan:** Maybe don't realize if they're standing in a place that makes you feel uncomfortable, like if you're doing squats or something [*Selena laughs*] and some dude's standing *right* behind you...
- Selena:** There's just no easy way to do those. You can wear a long shirt over your whole body, and it's just like...
- Ryan:** Right! And so, I'm so conscious of that when I'm at the gym and there's ladies around, and I'm like, "I don't want to be..."
- Selena:** That guy... Yeah.
- Ryan:** "A reason for their discomfort."
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Or, "I don't want to be that guy." So, I'm just trying to look at the ceiling [*Selena laughs*], like try to look at the floor.
- Selena:** Yeah, yeah.
- Ryan:** Look at my phone or at the ceiling. I don't know. Some of that's not on me. But anyway! So, I think in those [*Selena laughs lightly*] instances, you can really...
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** You can take opportunities if you find that you are allowing...
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** This to go on longer than it should.
- Selena:** Absolutely. And another obvious one, just ask about their spouse. If for some reason it's really easy to engage with somebody in a conversation [*Both chuckle lightly*], and your—
- Ryan:** "So, are ya married?" [*Both laugh*]
- Selena:** [*Laughing*] No! If they—
- Ryan:** [*Laughing*] That's not what you're getting at? "It's been great working out. So, are you married or what?"
- Selena:** That's n— [*Both laugh*] Definitely not the setting I was imagining when— [*Both laughing*] When I was writing that question, or that comment.
- Ryan:** If it makes sense, you can...

Selena: If it makes sense.

Ryan: Yep.

Selena: Like, “Hey, I see that you're married. Are, you know...” [Ryan snickers] I don't know. I've had to think on my feet!

Ryan: So, what do you think of that guy? Huh?

Selena: [Laughing] Not like that!

Ryan: I know, I know.

Selena: But you know what I mean! Like, I feel like it's been—it happens weirdly, like maybe at a conference or something. And you're meeting new friends, and then for some reason, like *you* leave me, and the guy's wife leaves him, and then we're like sitting here try— We're like, “Okay. I guess we have to talk now and not awkwardly walk away from each other.” Right? But just be like, “Oh, hey! So how long have you guys been married?” Or, you know...

Ryan: There you go! That's— There you go.

Selena: Talking about real life married stuff kind of thing. [Ryan laughs quietly] So, again, just ask is there any part of you that you're trying to hide?

Ryan: Right.

Selena: You know, in those conversations, or is there any part that you're trying to hide from your spouse? Am I really seeking to honor my spouse in my marriage covenant when I'm alone? Is that something that I want to do and am I doing it? If I'm not, what's happening? Why am I not able to?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Is there some disengagement with the Holy Spirit? Am I not walking in the Spirit?

Ryan: Or am I trying to find satisfaction elsewhere?

Selena: Yeah! Absolutely.

Ryan: So, here's what happens when you do this, just quickly, and I just want to— It's just one thing [Selena chuckles], is... Actually, the more I honor you like this, the more I love you and the more I want to honor you like this.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And it's like it has this snowball effect.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: In my affections for you and my desire to fight for you, even when you're nowhere near me.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: Does that make sense? Like, if—

Selena: And even when you don't like me?

Ryan: Yeah! Well, yeah. Absolutely!

Selena: 'Cause you remember all the good parts about me?

Ryan: Well, because you're still my wife and I still love you!

Selena: I know.

Ryan: You know?

Selena: But when people fight, it's like—

Ryan: “I love you. I just don't like you.”

Selena: [*Chuckling*] “I just don't like you!”

Ryan: But that's usually really short lived. [*Both laughing*]

Selena: [*Selena laughs*] Sorry, I've just— It's just Office quotes through my head. It's just [*Ryan snickers*] nah, I shouldn't. I just can't.

Ryan: Yeah. Some of them are not podcast... able.

Selena: No, not worthy. So anyways, I think a challenge here for every couple is to just ask yourselves, ask each other, and ask yourself in your heart, “Am I obviously married in public?” Ask your spouse, like, “Ryan, do you feel like I am obviously married in public, when we're out together, or do you feel like there's a breach of trust at some level?”

Ryan: No. Yeah, that's good.

Selena: “Is there something that *you* are worried about? Is there something that you are nervous, or you feel like we aren't being as honest and transparent about as we should?” And get granular! Get... down to some of the nitty gritty. If you're like, “Gosh, I feel like you're on your phone, and I don't really know who you're talking to,” or...

Ryan: Mm. Yeah!

Selena: “I don't really know... Why'd you change your profile picture?” [*Laughs*] I laugh 'cause it's, it's not funny, but sometimes... I feel like it can be intentional.

Ryan: I haven't changed my profile picture in... a solid three years!

Selena: Seriously! Our second born's like an infant. [*Both laugh*] In the back. Anyways. So... Be honest with each other! Have a loving, open and transparent conversation. And this is not to start burning... burn your covenant to the ground! This is a let's dive into some of these areas that seem like there might be some sin festering, or there might be some insecurities, or some lies were believing.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And we don't need to live in fear! We need to live and just walk in the Spirit and ask God to help us see these places so that we can be better unified, and our covenant can be built up.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And we aren't ashamed to be... married in public, right? [*Chuckles*] I think that's...

Ryan: And that's the thing. You guys, this comes all the way around to the whole meaning and purpose of marriage. It's not just so that we can have this relationship that is happy-go-lucky and sunshine and rainbows all the time, and we can be awkwardly affectionate in public, and we can never have anything go wrong in our marriage. That's not what it's all about! It's about... being loving, covenantly.

[00:55:05] **Selena:** Yeah.

Ryan: As the Bible defines love and covenant. And marriage *is* the place to have these conversations.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “Hey, where are their enemy outposts in my heart? Why I'm not believing and experiencing the love of Christ? I'm not abiding in Christ... And so, as you have this conversation, it's not just, “Hey, how can I be a better spouse?”

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: That's part of it.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: But it's where am I not believing that God's way is *the way* that I should go?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's the *only* way.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Where am I failing to believe the gospel? And then this repenting and *turning* to belief.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Asking the Ho— Help me in my unbelief. Right? As we see in the gospels. Help me in my unbelief.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So... Anyway. That's what you're here for as my wife, that's what I'm here for as your husband, is to disciple you, to love you, and to give you... enjoyment and infection. Infection? [*Ryan laughs and Selena snickers*]

Selena: Affection!

Ryan: Affection. [*Selena chuckles*] Uh, I'm tired.

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Please don't infect me with anything!

Ryan: Well, that does happen, though, with kids.

Selena: Yeah. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: We all give each other [*Chuckles*] the colds! Anyway. So, that's the whole purpose of it.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: Right? Is to reflect that love. So, let me pray for us. We're short on time, but I think... Anything else you want to add?

Selena: No, I think that's great.

Ryan: Okay. Okay.

Lord, I thank you for just Your covenantal character, and that You've revealed Yourself in Your word as a covenantal, loving God. And then You've called us into a covenantal relationship with You and given us this covenant of marriage through which we can learn [*Chuckles*] exactly what that looks like.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And we can walk it out by the power of Your Holy Spirit. So, I thank you, Lord, for the gift of marriage, and I pray that You would help us to honor it as we are out in public, and we're not around our spouses, that as people marked by our covenant with You, the covenantal love that You've given to us in Christ, as people marked in that way, that we would look *different* when we're out in public, that we would be people that love our spouses *obviously*. And we speak highly of our spouses *generously* when we're in public. I pray that You convict our hearts in places where maybe we're not realizing that that's not our inclination, or we're maybe hiding, or we're trying to find our validation elsewhere, just convict our hearts, Lord. Anyway, thank You for Your word once again. Thank you for this time. And in Your precious name, amen!

Selena: Amen!

Ryan: Alright. This episode is!

Selena: In the can!

Ryan: Alright, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us for the Fierce Marriage podcast! We will see you in about seven days. And until then!

Selena: [*In an intense voice*] Stay fierce.

[00:57:35] <Ending Sequence>

[00:57:54] *Podcast ends.*

PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:04:58]**
 - The Naked Marriage podcast resources:
 - Podcast: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-naked-marriage-podcast/id1437213097>
 - Referenced podcast episode: <https://thenakedmarriagepodcast.simplecast.com/episodes/are-you-single-in-public>
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/strongermarriages>
 - Website: www.DaveAndAshleyWillis.com
 - Michael Hyatt quote:
 - Michael Hyatt. (2012, July 14). What Are You Doing to Protect Your Marriage? (paraphrase used) Retrieved from: <https://michaelhyatt.com/what-are-you-doing-to-protect-your-marriage/>
- **[00:09:59]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Philippians 4:19
 - Misquoted scripture reference; actual verse: Philippians 4:13, *NKJV*
- **[00:14:58]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Ezekiel 16:8b, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Ezekiel 16:13b, *ESV*
 - Ezekiel 16:14, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Ezekiel 16:15-16, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **[00:34:56]**
 - Scripture references:
 - 1 John 2:9-11, *ESV*
 - 1 John 3:18, *ESV*
 - 1 John 3:16, *ESV*
 - 1 John 3:19-20, *ESV*
- **[00:40:00]**
 - The 40-Day Prayer Journey book bundle, by Ryan & Selena Frederick:
 - <https://shop.fiercemarriage.com/collections/devotionals/products/40-day-prayer-journey-couples-bundle-2-books>

FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

Main Site: <https://fiercemarriage.com/>

Shop: <https://shop.fiercemarriage.com/>

Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/fiercemarriage>

Podcast: <https://fiercemarriage.com/podcast>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/fiercemarriage>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/fiercemarriage>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/fiercemarriage>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/fiercemarriage>

Pinterest: <https://pinterest.com/fiercemarriage>

Ask Us Anything: <https://fiercemarriage.com/ask>