

WHO IS THE AUTHORITY IN YOUR MARRIAGE?

<https://fiercemarriage.com/who-is-the-authority-in-your-marriage>

- [00:00:00] **Selena:** Today we are going to talk about who the authority is in your marriage. [Inhales] And that... word has a lot of connotation, I feel like.
- Ryan:** It's a bit of a loaded word.
- Selena:** It's like a bomb. [Chuckles]
- Ryan:** [Chuckling] It's a bomb! Are you going to tell them what you though we should call this episode?
- Selena:** Mm... What did I say?
- Ryan:** [Laughs] You gotta say it!
- Selena:** [Laughing] "Who's on Top?" [Ryan laughing] But again, very misleading.
- Ryan:** In the org chart of your marriage...
- Selena:** Uh-huh. Very misleading.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Not, I mean, somewhat. [Ryan laughs] But we were just joking about that.
- Ryan:** It would have been a play on words.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** A pun, if you will. [Chuckles] Anyway! Yeah, authority! Okay. So, it's frustrating to think about authority at times because, frankly, as humans, we want to be in the authority and the ultimate authority. It goes all the way back to Genesis 3.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** So, this dynamic of authority and dealing with it in a healthy way, *viewing* it in a healthy way. Also—
- Selena:** I'd say in a *Godly* way.
- Ryan:** Healthy, Godly way. Well, I think they kind of go side-by-side [Chuckles].
- Selena:** I would argue that, but okay.
- Ryan:** How is anything Godly not going to be healthy for us?

Selena: Okay...

Ryan: [*Both laugh*] Okay. Point made! Boom! [*Selena laughs*] I'm right.

Selena: I just think there's words that go with "healthy" that don't go with "Godly" is what I'm saying.

Ryan: Okay. Well, that's *your* opinion. [*Selena chuckles and Ryan laughs*] So—

Selena: Again, *I* am the authority. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] So, how we view it, how we approach it, and also how we wield it where God has asked us to do that. Don't worry! It's going to be a fruitful conversation, and we will see you on the other side.

[00:01:21] <Intro Sequence>

[00:01:51] **Selena:** Now I feel like I have to name something that is—

Ryan: [*Inhales*] Yeah. Name one thing that's—

Selena: Is healthy, but not Godly. [*Ryan chuckles*] Or what the world would consider healthy... but not Godly.

Ryan: Oop! You're changing it! You're changing it.

Selena: Okay. My premise is changing?

Ryan: [*Laughs*] Yes!

Selena: [*Sighs*] Ugh...

Ryan: Anything that's Godly, is going to be healthy for us in the long run.

Selena: M'kay.

Ryan: Anything that's *healthy*, as the world calls it, might not be Godly, right?

Selena: I guess I'm just thinking physically healthy, 'cause you could be—

Ryan: [*Inhales*] But Biblically healthy means Biblically Godly [*Inaudible*].

Selena: Well... I feel like you're changing it now.

Ryan: Well, [*Selena snickers*] this is a Christian marriage podcast [*Selena laughs*], so... [*Both inhale*] Okay. So, okay. Where did this come from, this idea of authority, and why are we talking about it? And to be candid, okay, we just wrapped up the first season where we were the chaplains for our minor league affiliate, the

Tacoma Rainiers. They're the minor league affiliate of the Seattle Mariners. [Sniffs] And so, we just wrapped up that season, and we were going through the book of Matthew for the entire season, doing a chapter a week, and we just ended on Matthew 21, which is essential what this is talking about.

Selena: [Selena clicks tongue] Right, right. And we'll [Ryan inhales] get into that a little bit more. But before we get into that, we should talk about our housekeeping, 'cause you always like to...

Ryan: Well, we've got to give a preview—

Selena: Vacuum over it.

Ryan: Of what we're going to— [Selena chuckles] Mow over? [Both chuckling] I have no idea! [Selena laughs] Your pregnancy words are just out there... Okay.

Selena: [Inhales] Housekeeping?

Ryan: Okay. We'll keep it fast.

If you would, we'd appreciate a rating and a review in the podcast app that you use! It helps us get the word out. It's very encouraging. We do read those, and periodically we do share those, and it just helps people know what they're getting into. [Inhales] Also, share this podcast with your friends and family members. We haven't asked for that, really, ever. [Both laugh] But go ahead and share it online!

Selena: I feel like it's such a good resource, because it's not really about *you*, right? And you can say, "Oh, I heard this episode, and it was super helpful!" And it [Ryan smacks his lips] can be kind of a [Inhales]...

Ryan: You could be like—

Selena: A blessing, but also a...

Ryan: It's a conversation starter.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: You could say—

Selena: A push! [Chuckles]

Ryan: "Hey, listen to this guy Ryan. He's off the rails!" [Selena chuckles] "You got to listen to this guy [Both chuckling], 'cause he's an idiot." I'm kidding. [Both inhale] But, anyway. Share it! Rate it, review it, all that good stuff. That's kind of how the internet works.

Secondly, if you want to partner with us, we would be honored if you would! We just ask that you pray about it, because we want partners that are really on mission to see God's vision of marriage perpetuated in our culture and in our generation.

Selena: Oof...

Ryan: It is definitely needed!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Right? Where everything is relative, we're saying that, no, God's truth is not relative; it's absolute.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And we need to align ourselves with it. We don't need to manipulate it to align itself with what our relative view of how things should be.

Selena: Man! That's a good segue into authority right there!

Ryan: [Laughs] Woah!

Selena: Hello!

Ryan: Right? Some consistency. That's good.

Selena: Here we go.

Ryan: So, anyway, if you want to be on mission with us, just pray. Ask God, hey, is this something that your family should do? And what we mean by being on mission is through patreon.com/fiercemarriage. You can basically partner with us financially. It keeps us ad-free. It supports our family. It supports the folks that go into making this happen.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Namely, [Inhales] babysitting, and paying rent and all that, and paying for technology and all that kind of stuff.

Selena: [Snickers] Technology that *did not* work well enough last week! [Laughing]

Ryan: Yeah. We had to re-record last week. So, it's patreon.com/fiercemarriage. Anything works there, from \$2 on up.

Finally, if you have questions, go to fiercemarriage.com/podcast. There's a button there where you can leave a question online, or you can call or text this number, and we do read these: 971-333-1120. [Inhales]

[00:05:11] **Selena:** So...

Ryan: That's it!

Selena: Getting back to your point about where this conversation came from. A little check in with us is that, yes, we ended this baseball chapel. [*Inhales*] We were chaplains, and we were in those rolls for the Tacoma Rainiers, and it was really great to get to know some of the wives.

Ryan: Yes.

Selena: So, it's been a blessing all the way across the board, and yesterday, we were recording this early, so it was on a Sunday, was the last homestand game! It was such a nice day! And it was so great to see the wives, girlfriends, fiancés, and just say our little good-byes, 'cause the guys are flying out today, and then they're done at the end of the week. And so, then they go into their off-season, which is great, 'cause I think all their families are looking forward to that. But it's just been such a blessing for us to be able to minister together. So, Ryan would minister to the guys in the dugout; I would minister to the ladies on a different day we could find [*Inhales*] time for, and that's kind of what that looks like. And it was really great to get to know their kids, and just open our home and... Yeah! So, there's that. And with that, we were studying Matthew 21, and typically the guys and the girls don't always study the same chapter, but we thought it would be beneficial [*Chuckles*] for them to have something to maybe talk about. [*Inhales*] So, we talked about—You talked, I think, more about *authority*, which I did talk about Jesus' authority being challenged, but I think it was more in, like, where do we fall as believers? Like, am I really understanding *who* Jesus is, and therefore responding from that understanding and belief? Whereas you were a little more...

Ryan: I was looking at the picture—

Selena: Which we'll get into [*Chuckles*]. Yeah!

Ryan: Of authority that Jesus has been painting throughout all of Matthew.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And then, in 21...

Selena: It's like He comes out.

Ryan: He is doing something *different*.

Selena: He's claiming it. And, yeah...

Ryan: And it creates this different visceral reaction, and then is obviously analogous to *our* reaction to that same authority claim!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And it's got us to thinking, "Okay. So, how does *this* bear weight on our marriage?"

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "And how does how we respond to this passage affect how we approach our marriage as individuals, and as people, as sinners who need grace and need sanctification constantly?"

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: And so, yeah. It's—I don't know, I could just—

Selena: I feel like it was a beneficial talk.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: At least for us to learn, hopefully. [*Chuckles quickly*] The feedback seemed good! [*Laughs*] So, [*Inhales*] hopefully God is able to use even our shortcomings and our speech to further His will in peoples' lives.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: But yeah. Talking, really kind of defining what we're talking about today, is not necessarily a *rolls* issue. It's not who's the head and who's the submissive one, although there will be some obvious overlap and probably some same vocabulary around it. But the overall question we're trying to answer is talking about who is the authority in your marriage, because I think as Christians we believe, "Well, God in His word," right?

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: But when we function, we don't necessarily act that out. [*Laughs*] Especially if our emotions are high.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Or if there's big decisions to be made and we're to be the benefactors of such decisions or [*Chuckling*] whatever. And we want to get the most that we can out of something, and maybe it's not always beneficial. And so, how do we make, if God is not already the authority, or are there areas, which there inevitably are areas of our life that are not submitted to His authority, what does that look like and how does that affect our marriage?

Ryan: Yeah. And you had talked about [*Pauses and inhales*], for a lot of marriages, their *kids* are the authority.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I don't want to jump ahead 'cause you told me specifically [*Selena laughs*] not to jump ahead. [*Ryan chuckles*]

Selena: No. Well, defining authority, 'cause I was saying "governing authority," and you were like, "No. Governing isn't really the right *word*." Authority is like the power right to give orders and make decisions and enforce—

Ryan: You're using the dictionary definition right now.

Selena: That's the *dictionary's* enforce—

Ryan: Don't just act like you just came up with that off the cuff. [*Laughs*]

Selena: Sorry. [*Selena laughs*] I'm not. [*Ryan laughs*] I was going to say that!

Ryan: [*Laughing*] Oh.

Selena: See?

Ryan: Oh.

Selena: Enforced obedience. In other words, what we discuss, and you said, is the person, place, or organization or institution to whom we are accountable to. And so, again, we all say as Christians, "Well, *God*," right? But [*Inhales*] we function so differently when it comes to our marriage, or any really familiar relationship, I feel like.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: The familiarity, at least for me, it's—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: There's a default that comes quicker, I think.

Ryan: Mm-hm. And to me, we have to go all the way back to what we've just defined, authority. But I like to think of it, like, it's where the buck stops, right?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: It's where we have to report in and give an account for something that we are responsible for. And I love that the word "author" is part of authority.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And 'cause we see the authorship of [*Quietly inhales*] God...

Selena: Mm.

[00:09:59] **Ryan:** As the ultimate authority. Okay. So, just cosmologically [*Laughs*]... [*Inhales and smacks lips*] Looking at where the world came from.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Okay. God reveals Himself in a few different ways. Right? He reveals Himself in His creation.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: You can see His fingerprints on it if we just look close enough long enough. [*Inhales*]

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: We'll see Him!

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: If we're honest. Because we just frankly don't have any answers aside from Him. [*Selena chuckles*]

Secondly, He reveals Himself in His word.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: The Bible. And He reveals Himself in His Son, right? In the God-man, Jesus.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Christ. [*Inhales*] And so, all of those are *shouting* His authority, because they are marks of His authorship.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Right? I watched a video [*Selena giggles*] yesterday morning [*Both chuckles*]. It was all about... I think it was called—Did you delete it? I think you deleted the title.

Selena: [*Laughing*] I probably did.

Ryan: It's The [*Chuckling*] Mathematical Challenges of Darwinian Evolution. Okay. I don't know if—

Selena: He's starting seminary, people. So... [*Laughs*] [*Inaudible*]

- Ryan:** Yeah, well... I don't know if I'll have time to go any deeper [*Selena laughs*] on this kind of stuff once that officially starts [*Ryan chuckles*], but... [*Ryan inhales*] And so, these scientists, and I think it was a computer guy, a computer-science guy from either Princeton or Yale, or one of those Ivy League schools.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** It was a guy who, he runs a think-tank here, but he's a biologist in Seattle.
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** And then another guy who's, I think, a philosopher and a, I want to say, physicist-philosopher. I don't know! He's *smart*. [*Ryan sniffs in and inhales*] And they were just talking about how Darwinian evolution. But the conclusion they came to is that for Darwin's theory of the origin of the species to be true, it would mean that there would have to be a vast number of mutations that were productive between protein chains, right? And this is kind of nerdy but bear with me. [*Ryan quietly inhales*] So, *for* macroevolution, so from like, this is [*Selena clears her throat*] again the Darwinian view.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** It's not something we subscribe to, 'cause frankly I think it takes *more* faith to believe this than it does to believe in the God [*Chuckling*] of the Bible [*Sniffs in and inhales*] because the evidence just isn't there. And these guys are talking about that, and they're *not* Christian guys. [*Inhales*] And so, they're talking about how, okay, so, if you have this primordial goo and that somehow something happens to where life starts there... Okay, to get to that point's a miracle!
- Selena:** [*Snickers*] Right.
- Ryan:** And then they're saying, "Okay. From there, you have microorganisms, and then from microorganisms you get into different bacteria, from bacteria you get into fish, and then lizards, and then this is all very rough-cut or whatever [*Selena laughs*], fish, lizards, mammals, apes, humans. Right? So, they get to this point, and these guys are saying that for *that* to happen, the odds of that happening are *so*... It would take *so* much time to basically make the odds pan out.
- Selena:** To perfect it. Yeah.
- Ryan:** That there's no way—That's the problem with evolu— [*Selena clears her throat*] Like, no matter how long you say the universe is, or how old you say the universe is, the earth is, there's just no time. There's not enough time. [*Selena quietly inhales*] They said it's a one in 77-trillion-trillion-trillion chance that you would have a productive non-fatal mutation in the single protein. [*Inhales*]

Selena: Yeah. I believe that.

Ryan: Okay. 77-trillion-trillion-trillion. Ladies and gentlemen, that's 36 zeros. [*Selena laughs*] Okay. There's not even a trillion people on the planet.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: There's not even more than, I don't know, I think there's like 8-billion people on the planet.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: [*Chuckles*]So, come on. [*Inhales*] Unreal.

Selena: Well, and to say that something has to evolve, I guess, that much; I was watching this show that a friend from one of the wives from the Rainiers that talked to me about it. It's called Diagnosis. [*Inhales*] It's not a bad show. It's about people, like, crowdsourcing basically, [*Inhales softly*] medical information. And they had one little girl who had a genetic mutation, essentially, and it was so small, and it did it on its own.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: It was so minute, but the effects on her *life*, like she would just kind of get paralyzed and kind of fall over and melt.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And there was *no one* else... Well, there's one other family that they identified in Denmark, and there's other people that have this somewhat similar mutation, but it doesn't have the *exact* same effects.

Ryan: Wow.

Selena: [*Inhales*] So, for that to happen and for that—I just can't imagine having to mutate all—

Ryan: Having to be productive.

Selena: Productively mutate all of the genes to make, and chromosomes and everything, to make that happen.

Ryan: Yeah! And the conclusion they came to is it had to happen early on enough in the development of the organism.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, like, in utero for example.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: For a baby.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Well, it'd have to happen then to be *meaningful*, but even then, there would be so—the side effects would be so catastrophic that it would most likely lead to death.

Selena: Well, and that was the thing, is they didn't find necessarily a cure, but they're working on something that can maybe help alleviate some of the symptoms.

Ryan: Sure.

Selena: Which, I'm like, "Gosh! That would take so much research and time, and there's a whole dedicated laboratory and biotech companies [*Inhales*].

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Sorry, not biotech, but tech companies that are working on *just* this one... gene! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Mm-hm. So, the point we're trying to make, and we're wondering what's the marriage podcast? [*Selena laughs*] Why are we talking about this stuff? [*Selena inhales*] Because... Even those secular scientists, and what you're talking about now is even the vast bank of human knowledge, right? We are *so* quick to take away God's authority from a creation that so clearly shouts it.

[00:15:09] **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: And we, as a society, want all the things of the king without the king himself. And we are willing to go to the Nth degree to say that this has to be random.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's not a science question; it's a heart question!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: The question of authority and authorship, and granting God the authority to be the creator, it's not a science question.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: If we're honest, as these scientists were, they came around to the conclusion that there *has* to be a designer.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That there— [*Laughs*]

Selena: A master designer [*Slightly chuckles*]. Yeah.

Ryan: And they didn't want to use the word "god," [*Selena clears her throat*] but they threw out the word Judeo-Christian.

Selena: Well, they had to because of the platform they were on.

Ryan: They had to toss it out because—Yeah. I mean, they *mentioned* it, but that's about it.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, what we're saying is that even though God has given us clear authority in some areas of our lives, we want to take it back because we think we know better.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: We think that somehow we've mastered these big questions [*Selena laughs and Ryan inhales*] in our marriage, and if I don't have to submit to God's word, I don't have to submit to the Son of God, Christ Himself, I don't have to submit to the creative authority of God.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I can figure it out on my own. [*Inhales*] And a lot of the ways this works out in a marriage is... we start seeing wherever our gut takes us, that becomes the governing authority, meaning the *entity*, the organization, the person or the idea that we are submitting ourselves to...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And the alter on which we are sacrificing our sacrifices.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: The idol that we are worshipping.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, it could be kids, right?

Selena: Right.

- Ryan:** It could be where everything has to measure up with what we want for our kids. We live in a culture that is very [*Selena clears her throat*] kid centric.
- Selena:** Right. [*Ryan inhales softly*] Well, it could even be our spouse in this imbalance and lack of understanding, or just a blatant disregard for what the Bible says is *headship* and submission, right? [*Selena inhales*]
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** And that whole dynamic. And there's been a lot of questions that have come in from couples who's extended family have been the authority and spoken over certain topics and subjects, and how much *strife* and disunification. [*Chuckles*] That's a big word for—That was, like, a \$10 word; I didn't need to use that.
- Ryan:** No. Yeah. Well, in-laws, right? You're talking about in-laws?
- Selena:** Yeah. Like, they're not advocating for their marriage, there's a lot of unity that's being destroyed *because of* this understanding of authority, or the whole family's like, "Oh yes. These are the authority on this subject, and this is how you do it, and..."
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** You know, we kind of submit to that.
- Ryan:** And what's happening in that instance is you might have your parents who are adversarial; they're not advocating, like you said, and *they* see their nuclear family as the authority.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** The thing worth preserving.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And that's not biblical. In biblical terms, your marriage has become a new nucleus.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** A new family. And that is the covenant that is meant to perpetuate the next generation.
- Selena:** Right. And that doesn't mean you cut off and disown your family, obviously.
- Ryan:** No.
- Selena:** But there's a sense of...

Ryan: The authority shifts, for sure.

Selena: Yeah! Yeah. And I think you and I have had to work through that in the last couple of years.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: As far as adulting, I think. *[Laughs]* And having a family, and what that looks like as far as—

Ryan: And creating healthy boundaries.

Selena: Authority! Yeah.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And creating boundaries. *[Inhales and snickers]* I'm already convicted about, like, we shouldn't even call this talk, "Who Is the Authority." It should be "Why Isn't God Your Author— *[Both laugh]* Why Have You Not Submitted Yet?" Like, *[Selena snickers]* God is—

Ryan: Well, what we ask ourselves. *[Laughs]*

Selena: Right. *[Chuckles]*

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Why do we ask ourselves...? There's so much order to our world.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And there's so much *power* in understanding all of that, and how could anything else be in authority—

Ryan: Yeah. *[Inhales]*

Selena: To that? So, I guess...

Ryan: One other one I want to mention is our friends can be the authority in our marriage.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Meaning a lot of times, we're making decisions to impress them to the detriment—

Selena: Yeah. Of our marriage.

Ryan: Or career.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay. So, taking a job that's too intense, or requires too much of you.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Work hard. Sometimes that means seasons of long hours, but if you're consistently working a job that is directly contributing to the disintegration of your marriage [*Chuckles*]...

Selena: Right...

Ryan: That's a problem, and that means that thing has become the authority in your life.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: 'Cause God did not say to you, "Go work the best job you at whatever cost!"

Selena: Right.

Ryan: God didn't say that! He said to husbands, "Love your wife as Christ loved the church. Wives, submit to your husbands," in a way that is Bible-based, not world-based."

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] But the same thing happens with friends. Right? And by friends, I mean this, is that a lot of times we have friend groups that, we're speaking personally, but also, I think, generally...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] Your friend group will determine, in a lot of ways, the types of things you value. And so, if you have a friend group that is very, maybe, affluent or values, maybe, [*Chuckles*] I'm thinking of, [*Inhales*] what's that show with Chip and Joanna Gaines?

Selena: [*Laughs*] What's that show?

Ryan: What's that show? What's it called?

Selena: [*Inhales*] Fixer Upper. [*Breathy laugh*]

[00:19:58] **Ryan:** Fixer Upper! Okay. I don't like those shows, so I've never really watched it. So, I'm sorry.

Selena: You watched a few, though. You actually liked them.

Ryan: And I did not like them.

Selena: So, they were—*[Chuckles]* Okay.

Ryan: It's because it stressed me out. *[Selena laughing]* 'Cause it makes me feel like I'm inadequate, makes me feel like I'm not cool, and it makes me feel like I can't decorate.

Selena: Oh, babe...

Ryan: And also, they destroy everything.

Selena: Who's authority I'm under.

Ryan: Well, I'm telling ya! *[Selena laughs]* I just go and read my Bible when you're watching that show.

Selena: *[Quietly laughing]* I don't believe it...

Ryan: *[Inhales]* I'm kidding! *[Lightly chuckles]* And they're obviously awesome *[Selena clears her throat]* people!

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: So, I'm not trying to say that it's their fault. *[Ryan laughs]* It's my own heart problem! *[Selena laughs]* But the point I'm trying to make is that you have, maybe, a friend group that values these things, and so they're spending time, energy, money...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: To do the thing they value—

Selena: While they're marriage is in shambles.

Ryan: Well, I don't want to assume that. But if they're the authority and all the sudden you're like, "Well, I have to have this or I'm going to be totally discontent."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "And it's going to take the effect on my marriage." We're not actually going to God as the authority at that point, maybe.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's just in that one area of our lives. I'm not saying *every* area is like this.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: But in that one area of your life, that might be the case.

Selena: Yeah. [*Ryan inhales*] So, how is God not the authority, or where is God not the authority in your marriage, I guess might be a really good question?

Ryan: [*Inhales*] Culture too! Okay? I'm doing it! I'm sorry.

Selena: Go for it!

Ryan: You keep wanting to go down the line, but culture's a big one because if—This is a *huge* one, okay? 'Cause if culture—

Selena: No! It is!

Ryan: Does not value marriage—

Selena: It is.

Ryan: In the same way, and if all the sudden—

Selena: Well, we meet online, and we want to get married, and... [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Well, if all the sudden you're unhappy...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Your marriage is not that important to culture.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Like, you should be able to dissolve it, just, by calling the judge, basically.

Selena: Your happiness is more important.

Ryan: Yes!

Selena: Your happiness is the authority.

Ryan: Well, that's what they say, and that's obviously not true!

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And so, if that's the case and culture's popular opinion is the authority, you're not going to value Christian marriage. You're not going to value covenant.

- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Covenant is not a worldly idea.
- Selena:** No.
- Ryan:** It's not an idea the world likes, or even...
- Selena:** Understands.
- Ryan:** Understands, or—
- Selena:** Or wants to understand. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Or values *remotely*.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** [*Ryan inhales and Selena clears her throat*] It's the opposite. It's contract. As soon as you give me something, I'll give you something that you want, you give me what I want in return, and as soon as that's done our contract is up!
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Covenant is not that. It's the opposite of that. Which we talk about that *all* the time. So, [*Ryan chuckling*] go back and find one on covenant [*Selena laughs*] if you wanted to go deeper in that. [*Ryan inhales*] And we look at the covenantal character of God as one of the key— Just as God is love, God is also covenantal in character.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** He's made covenants with His people throughout the entirety of the Bible. Jesus is the *fulfillment* of His promise!
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** And so, when we look at our covenant as God with the authority *over* it, we're going to value the *covenant* more than we're going to value our own happiness.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** We're going to value the covenant more than we're going to value the opinions of our friends and pundits and [*Selena chuckles*] people online and people who think, "Oh, you should just ditch him. He's worthless," or whatever.
- Selena:** Yeah.

- Ryan:** And, well, he's not worthless in God's eyes.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Ditching him's not something that God's onboard with [*Chuckles lightly*].
- Selena:** Right. Right?
- Ryan:** Now, there are nuances to this, okay? And they're, if you're in an abusive relationship, I think it's good wisdom and I think it's right to find a safe place.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And then get help, and, I'm not saying divorce is going to be the best thing, but I'm saying get a safe place; get help. Get outside help. And if you have to, call the cops. [*Selena chuckles briefly*] There's nuances to that—
- Selena:** Right. There's caveats and nuances that I think we're all...
- Ryan:** Don't fear this. I just don't want to gloss over that 'cause there are people in those situations.
- Selena:** I agree. I agree! Yeah.
- Ryan:** But that's where, honestly, that's an opportunity to trust God even *more* in His authority!
- Selena:** Right. Right.
- Ryan:** [*Inhales*] And say, "This makes *no* worldly sense. It makes no sense in my guts. I'm trusting Your word, that this marriage is worth fighting for!"
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** "And it might be very, very hard, and it might never be resolved on this side of eternity [*Laughs briefly*]. But I'm trusting Your authority, God." See! That's— Tell me that didn't just grate on you? [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Listener! It grates on me to say that, because when someone's in a hard relationship, I want to say—
- Selena:** "Just get out of it!"
- Ryan:** Well, you've tried. Like, I want to say, "Try hard," like, "Try pretty hard. [*Selena laughs*] But at some point, you need... It's okay." I want to say that!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But Biblically speaking, I don't know that I can.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And that's where I have to say, "Okay. I have to submit to God's authority more than I have to submit to another person's."

Selena: Or my own feelings, or emotions, or range on this whole thing.

Ryan: Mm-hm. [*Selena laughs*] Yeah! Exactly. So, it's—

Selena: Not easy!

Ryan: Not easy.

Selena: 'Cause I—

Ryan: [*Sound of something clicking*] Whoop. Go ahead.

Selena: I feel like *everything* goes against... I can sit in Starbucks and every conversation, not every but most conversations, I hear or interactions I see [*Inhales*]... go, and maybe I'm being *too* judgmental, but I really *try* [*Laughs briefly*] not to be.

Ryan: I feel like you're pretty—

Selena: They just grate against what—Okay, maybe not every conversation. But there have been people that I've sat next to and I hear their conversation, I hear how they interact with each other, with their kids, and I'm just like, "Oh my goodness! What authority do you submit—Like... [*Inhales*] You're just okay—"

Ryan: People where there isn't any. Yeah.

Selena: Yeah! You're okay just going with whatever you *feel*, whatever you want to say...

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Which I'm so guilty of this. I'm so guilty of [*Inhales*] just unleashing on Ryan—

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And just word vomit everywhere because I'm sad, I'm mad, I'm emotionally just crazy. Whatever! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: It's alright. I'm rubber and you are glue. [*Snickers*] Whatever you say to me bounces off me and sticks to you! [*Laughs*]

Selena: [*Selena laughs and inhales*] I don't think that's helpful either! [*Both laugh*] I don't think that's very helpful!

[00:25:02] **Ryan:** Well, what you're expressing is the [*Selena clears her throat*], I feel like it's—

Selena: It's so blatant!

Ryan: One of the *symptoms* of—

Selena: The lack of authority is so blatant in our culture today.

Ryan: Well, the authority is me and myself and I.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And what you're expressing is a symptom of our *hyper* individualistic culture.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And that's what's your—It's live your truth. Live *your* best life.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: My truth is—

Selena: Your dreams should drive you. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: I'm going to do whatever I want to say, and how *dare* you judge me.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: 'Cause you've told me about those instances where you're afraid to even—

Selena: You can't say anything!

Ryan: Look at them, because you feel like you're going to get *berated* because they're just on a rant.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And you're basically jumping in front of a steamroller at that point. [*Chuckles and inhales*]

Selena: [*Chuckles*] Right.

- Ryan:** Hey. That's a bit of an anomaly, but I think we can relate on various levels.
- Selena:** Yeah. Absolutely! I think there's a lot of pressure that culture puts on us, the counterpressure.
- Ryan:** Mm-kay.
- Selena:** To go against *what* God's authority, what God's word [Ryan smacks his lips] says, and the authority it has in our lives, which I think is why more and more, as I [Selena chuckles] ... As the years pass [Both chuckle]. The women and the people that I really look up to are the people that have had to walk through hard things that *everyone* else would walk away from, or that [Selena inhales] are *in* the midst of the muck and the mire, and they're *still* saying Jesus is sufficient; He is all that I need. [Inhales quickly] *Those* are the people that I'm saying, "Okay! They have faith." Like, "They have grace; they have true love."
- Ryan:** Mm. [Inhales]
- Selena:** "They understand the *authority* of Christ, and they're submitting to it and [Selena inhales quietly and quickly] it's not just this reluctant submission, it's a *joyful* [Ryan inhales] and *glad* submission."
- Ryan:** Well, to trust... Right?
- Selena:** That comes from a trust!
- Ryan:** It's a *trust*.
- Selena:** Yeah. A *deep* place of trust.
- Ryan:** Yeah. It's trust based. So, if we call ourselves Christians, okay, we're confronted with this *big* question of *ultimate* authority and ultimate accountability. [Inhales quickly] Thank God for Christ, because in Him we have complete security, and we have been called *His own*. [Inhales quietly] Okay. But still, as Christians, we have to answer for this!
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And if we're honest, we don't. We usually respond in a few other ways.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** So, we're going to read this passage from Matthew. Selena, if you could, we're going to read about, I don't know, 20 verses or so.
- Selena:** It's Matthew twen—Oh really?
- Ryan:** Well, all of which you got there.

Selena: That was, like, almost 10. So, Matthew 21:23-32.

Ryan: Okay. [*Ryan inhales deeply*] So, we'll read it. We'll read it. I want to unpack a little bit, look at the context of it, and then from there I think we can look at what are our typical heart orientations around this— Well, how do we respond?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And how are we being called to respond to Christ's overt authority in this space. So, go ahead and read that.

Selena: Alright. Verse 23, and it actually is, the title, is "The Authority of Jesus Challenged." [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Boom! [*Laughs*]

Selena: [*Both laughing*] That's where we should start. "And when he entered the temple, the chief priest and elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' Jesus answered them, 'I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. [*Selena inhales*] The baptism of John, from where did it come from? [*Selena pauses*] From heaven or from man?' And they discussed it among themselves, saying, 'If we say, "From heaven," he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "From man," we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet.' So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.'"

The next part is—Do you want to stop there?

Ryan: Well, just a quick pause. So, He's being challenged, right? And then He schools the Pharisees, as He always [*Chuckles briefly*] does.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And then, to illustrate it to the people standing around and to the Pharisees, He launches into this parable, the parable of two sons.

Selena: Right. [*Inhales*] Verse 28, "What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." And he answered, "I will not," but afterward he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, "I go, sir," but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to collectors and the

prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.”

Ryan: So, can you imagine that? These Pharisees, in all their robes, they’re coming up to him and they’ve got their whole entourage. And they’re all decked out, and everybody knows these guys are like the religious pros.

Selena: Well, yeah. There’re the spiritual leaders of the day [*Inaudible*].

Ryan: Yeah! And everybody’s looking at’em and saying, “Okay, these guys, if they’re gonna prove Jesus wrong,” ‘cause, again, Matthew was written *for* the Jewish people to basically be a, sort of an apologetic, and sort of a specific voice, telling the gospel specifically to address heart orientations of Jewish people. Okay?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: [*Inhales and snuffles*] That’s why it starts with the lineage, that’s why you see a lot of these Pharisaical sort of exchanges, [*Inhales*] or Jesus exchanging with the Pharisees like this.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And so, we have the antagonists front and center, and Jesus is saying, “You know what? In all your robes, in all your pomp and all your pro-religiosity, everything you’ve got dialed in, everybody here’s watching you.

[00:30:01] **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: The tax-collectors and the prostitutes will be accepted into my kingdom before you.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Can you imagine how offensive that would have been? [*Ryan chuckles*] So, that’s why I see this part as kind of like... the beginning of the end. [*Ryan laughs and Selena chuckles*] I feel like—And can I go in for—I want to go into the context of this whole chapter, because [*Ryan inhales briefly*] ...

Selena: Yeah. That was the next point. So, yes, you may.

Ryan: Oh, thank you. You’ve given me—

Selena: [*Chuckles*] Thank you for asking. [*Laughing*]

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] The authority has spoken! [*Selena laughs and Ryan inhales*] So, all of Matthew, like I said, Jesus is going about basically showing and telling and teaching and discipling out of this authority. But it’s more of a covert way.

- Selena:** Yeah. He doesn't come out and say it!
- Ryan:** He's public!
- Selena:** And claim it!
- Ryan:** He's not claiming it; He's not whispering.
- Selena:** Entirely.
- Ryan:** But He's not making...
- Selena:** He's not being confrontational about it.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Until now, I feel like, in a lot of ways.
- Ryan:** And so, He's going about doing miracles and showing people, and speaking kindly to people and showing people, doing the beatitudes. The sermon on the mount, He's teaching people.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** He's discipling the disciples, and He's going through all the different life events with them throughout this short period of time. [Ryan inhales] And then, something changes in Matthew 21, where all the sudden now He's not just telling, teaching, showing and discipling, but He comes out [Ryan inhales] and the very beginning of Matthew 21 is the triumphal entry. [Selena snickers] And He comes in on the back of a donkey.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And people are there, and they are looking at him and they say, "Alright! He's it! Hosanna in the highest! [Chuckles] The king has arrived!"
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And He is saying, "I have rode on the back of a donkey so that it would be fulfilled, what the prophet Isaiah said."
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** "In Isaiah." So, He is coming in; He is *boldly* proclaiming it, but He's also *claiming* this slot in scriptural prophecy, saying, "That's me!" Right?
- Selena:** Right.

- Ryan:** There's nothing passive or [*Laughing*]...
- Selena:** Which is a very big claim to make to the spiritual leaders of the day, who, *ideally*, right, should have recognized and *known* him.
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** Of everybody, right? Of everybody that should have believed first or been or board first thing, it should have been these guys.
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** But they did *not*.
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** And why is that?
- Ryan:** Yeah. [*Inhales quickly*] Well, why did they not believe him?
- Selena:** Yeah. Why did they not submit to His authority?
- Ryan:** Well, they had a lot of skin in this game, and they thought Jesus was just kind of an aberration. Like, He was a rebel, and He was coming in and just kind of [*Selena inhales*] upsetting the peace.
- Selena:** Well, and I—
- Ryan:** They didn't believe He was the Messiah.
- Selena:** No. And I—
- Ryan:** And that's what He's addressing.
- Selena:** Right. But I also think they had [*Smacks lips*] fear of man. There was a looooot of fear of man happening. They were *very* fearful of the crowds—
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Because the crowd sustained *their* lifestyle. [*Inhales*] The crowds were *massive* and could have [*Chuckling*] probably destroyed them.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** At any given moment. And so, they felt it was so volatile that they had to tread very lightly and very carefully, and Jesus is like, "Yep. And here I come!" Like, marching in, like, without hesitation, with *full* authority.

Ryan: Right! Because they were wanting a king that would come and take the nation of Israel to the next level of—

Selena: Freedom. Well, just have freedom and to—

Ryan: Well, the national... Yeah.

Selena: Yeah. It was more of a political...

Ryan: And that's why Jesus came as not that kind of king.

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: He came as a king on a donkey. And He's saying, what is it? What's the prophecy say to the daughter of Zion? "Behold, your king is coming to you!" Your king. Okay!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: This is from Isaiah, "...humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." [*Inhales and snuffles*] How beautiful is that, that our King, who came to save us...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: This is upside-down kingdom; I love this, because He came not to be served, but to serve.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And here He's *proving* that.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: And so, had they recognized that publicly, they would have totally derailed everything that they had built their lives one!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: They had so much skin in the game that they were on the top of the org chart [*Inhales*] in God's kingdom, and Jesus is coming here, and He is totally leveling, demolishing the org chart. [*Inhales*] He's saying, "There's me, your king."

Selena: He's redefining the authority. Yeah.

Ryan: "I'm the king now, and everyone below me, prostitutes, tax collectors, and if you want, Pharisees, you too..." [*Inhales*]

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: “You can also be a part of this kingdom, but you *have* to submit to my authority.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, before we get too self-righteous here... [Laughs]

Selena: Well, yeah.

Ryan: [Laughing] Because we do the same thing.

Selena: And there’s a big need, right? They recognize... I mean, what’s something that is different between [Chuckles] tax collectors, prostitutes, and Pharisees and elders is that I think there’s more of a recognition of a need for a savior, right? Within [Briefly inhales] the tax collectors and the prostitutes *seeing* a savior, their hearts, I feel like that sometimes can fall heavier on them. Right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: They can be [Inhales] *full*, like he who is forgiven much loves much—What is that? I don’t want to—

Ryan: Yeah. He who is forgiven much loves much.

Selena: Thank you!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: [Inhales] When really, we are *all* forgiven much— ‘Cause if you look at the self-righteousness of the elders and priests, I mean it’s all the same! Right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: We are all the ones that have been forgiven of much.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: But we don’t always understand that, because we take on our own authority in this situation, right? We start to govern things ourselves, and we start to—

Ryan: Mm-hm.

[00:34:59] **Selena:** Sorry. Were you going to say something?

Ryan: No. Okay. Yeah. We—Exactly. We tend to... forget, like we talked about, I think it was Matthew 18.

- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** Forgiveness, and how we are the servant who was forgiven so much, and yet we turn around and we want *our* version of justice.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And God's version of justice, Jesus, with the justice He brought, [*Inhales*] is based on His authority and based on trusting His authority.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** So, I want to say before I got started saying [*Selena laughs*], before we get self-righteous...
- Selena:** Yes. [*Inhales*]
- Ryan:** We're not necessarily the—we're the villains here, right?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** So, we tend to be like Pharisees.
- Selena:** Absolutely.
- Ryan:** Especially if you're listening to this as a Christian person. It's so easy for us to *functionally* not submit to Christ's authority in our lives. And so, what we see in this chapter, and this is just *one* chapter, chapter 21 of Matthew, is we see a number of responses to these audacious claims of Christ as the king.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Okay. Initially, and this is not me; tell me if it's you. [*Both chuckle*] But initially, we see in the triumphal entry—Now, we're not just going to the verses we read, but all the way back to the beginning. [*Inhales*] In the triumphal entry, we see the people that they saw Him, and they quickly believed. Right?
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** So, there's those people. I know that first time someone told me about Jesus, I didn't quickly believe, right? I was skeptical; I didn't immediately just submit to His kingship and His authority. [*Inhales*] Some people do!
- Selena:** I think I did, because it was all I knew, and it was what everybody believed, and it seemed right and the good thing. And that was the culture I grew up in!
- Ryan:** That's awesome!

Selena: So, for me it was—

Ryan: And you had faith like a child. I remember—

Selena: Yep!

Ryan: I remember when we started dating; actually, we weren't dating yet [*Selena laughs*], but I was just watching you from afar, the creeper that I was. [*Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles*] Just heavy mouth breathing. [*Imitates the heavy mouth breathing noise once*]

Selena: [*Laughing*] No.

Ryan: No, I was never that creepy.

Selena: No.

Ryan: But I remember saying, "Man. She loves Jesus so much!" I could never—I remember thinking this; now, don't laugh. Actually, it's okay if you laugh [*Selena laughs*]. But I was like, "[*Ryan uses a sad voice*] She'll never love me more than she loves Jesus." [*Both laughing*] And I was like, "So.."

Selena: [*Laughing*] I remember he said that to me!

Ryan: And I was so—

Selena: Recently! Recently.

Ryan: I was so intimidated by Jesus [*Both chuckle*] ... As you should be!

Selena: [*Selena states at the same time*] As you should be! [*Both laughing*]

Ryan: So, you had a very unique faith in that you've never really *needed* more than just His arrival on the scene.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And that's a beautiful thing! And it's, to me, it's a freeing thing! It's something to be okay with, and proud of in a sense.

Selena: But I also don't want it to be this fairytale thing that is disconnected from the realities of [*Inhales*] our life and culture *today*!

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And, I think, growing up with something, you can very easily [*Pauses*] believe that it's—It work in certain circumstances, but not all, which is where I feel like God has shown Himself to me in *how* He works through every circumstance,

how He really is the *authority*, [*Inhales*] and His way is *the best way* and the highest way, always!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Like—[*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: And that has—

Ryan: That's good!

Selena: [*Inhales*] Been what's been proven *truth* to me in the real life day-to-day. Faith like a child... Yes! [*Quietly inhales*]

Ryan: That's what I *love*—

Selena: As an adult, I feel like it's challenged in so many ways!

Ryan: That's what I love about *our* gospel.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: That's what I love about the God of the Bible, the *true* God, is that He's— Understanding Christ and His kingship is *simple* enough for a small child to understand.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: But it's complex enough to keep even the most inquiring minds busy for their entire lives.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] And the depths—You'll never plum the depths of the gospel.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But you can easily float on top of it! [*Laughs*] Right?

Selena: Ohhh man.

Ryan: And that's the beauty of it! And so, yeah. I think that's good to know. You don't want to have a *blind* faith, because He has given us so much evidence of His authority.

- Selena:** Oh, it just adds to my faith and my understanding of truth, which gives me confidence and assurance
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Even *more* in who He is.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** And His purpose for *our* lives. So...
- Ryan:** [*Smacks lips and inhales*] So, I just want to quickly get through how we can welcome Him as the king that He is, and how we see that in this chapter. And that's the first one, is we see Him as king, and we quickly believe, right?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Those guys, they threw down the palm fronds and the cloaks, and they said, "Ay-up! Hosanna, He's a *king* of kings, is here!" [*Chuckles*]
- Selena:** Right. And kings have authority. Just saying the obvious, but... [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Yeah! And so, they start bowing and worshipping him, and it was this rapturous thing. And again, He bursts on the scene. And then there's other responses, right?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** There are people that came to him in the chapter. [*Inhales*] I don't have it in front of me, but they came to him and they needed *healing*.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** Right? And so, they came to him and responded to that, right?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** So, they welcomed him as the healing king. And there were those who needed forgiveness, right? The prostitutes and the tax collectors. [*Inhales*] And they came to him as those needing forgiveness, and those two were me. Right?
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And then there's the Pharisees! They challenged His authority because of the reasons we talked about; they told him that He didn't measure up to their definition of king.
- Selena:** Mm.

Ryan: Alright. They *challenged* His authority. They were caught somewhere between people-pleasing and skepticism, right? They were afraid of the crowds, but they also were skeptical of what He was saying.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, they were caught in between. So, then they said, "I don't know."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And to *those* people, Jesus ends the passage that we read with, He said, "You did not hear John the Baptist proclaim these things and then change your mind and believe him."

[00:40:01] **Selena:** Mm.

Ryan: So, that's, I think, the fourth way we come to recognize him as the king that He is, is we change our minds in that we are convinced.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And to be convinced means we have to what? We have to be humble.

Selena: Mm. And submit.

Ryan: And we have to *submit* to His kingship.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And submission is simply, it's, if you break the word apart, it's, underneath His mission, becoming a part of what He's doing; not trying to be our own kings.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Ruling our own kingdoms, [*Inhales*] establishing our own colonies and our own, you know, whatever.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] We are *submitting* to him. [*Inhales*]

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, again, I just want to repeat those four ways that we welcome him as the king that He is, right? We, as those who quickly believe, those who need healing, those who need forgiveness, and those who are changed, who's minds are changed and believe.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: [Ryan inhales] So, okay. So, let's bring this back to marriage. [Selena chuckles] Okay. [Both laugh] Because it's a marriage podcast, and that what I—I love taking these deep truths and somehow tying lines. [Ryan quietly inhales] Again, this is not a chapter on marriage.

Selena: Drawing lines.

Ryan: This is not a chapter [Selena laughs] about marriage. [Ryan chuckles] Thank you. You can't tie lines, can you?

Selena: Nope!

Ryan: Tying it together! With lines that were drawn... [Laughing]

Selena: Just all my pregnancy, *all* my pregnancy, like...

Ryan: [Laughing] You're mixing idioms.

Selena: [Inhales] Mowing and vacuuming, and all the things. Yes!

Ryan: So, this, again, it's not a chapter about marriage, but there's application that can be had—

Selena: Absolutely!

Ryan: By applying it to our faith, honestly. [Inhales] So, how can this bear weight on our marriage and help us be healthier, more God-honoring, and flourish? [Pauses] What do you think?

Selena: [Selena laughs] I thought you were going into it. I was just— [Both laugh] I'm just along for the ride now! [Selena laughs]

Ryan: No, I want to know what's—

Selena: No, no, no! But wh—

Ryan: What's in your guts.

Selena: Well, when Jesus—I mean, it goes back to everything that we believe. And Jesus changes *everything*. When we understand [Inhales], like, in the Great Commission, Jesus says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Ryan: Hu-mm!

Selena: That's the most obvious verse there, if you want to talk about authority! [Ryan laughs] Jesus came and said to them! Right? And that's what He said. When the one who has all the authority comes to us. [Inhales] It says, "Go therefore, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them [Inhales] in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to *observe all* that I have commanded you."

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: "And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." [Inhales] That changes everything! That changes everything about my marriage, because [Pauses and smacks lips] when we are called to go make disciples—We always talk about this. Who is our first disciple? [Inhales] Each other! I mean—

Ryan: Right!

Selena: Obviously, I need to disciple myself. Is that? No!

Ryan: Well, there's spiritual disciplines, which—

Selena: Yes! The spiritual disciplines.

Ryan: Discipline is part of discipling. Right?

Selena: Right. [Inhales] But then, making disciples begins with our *house*; it begins with our marriage relationship, and then it flows into the lives of our children [Inhales], which then flows out into our community as well!

Ryan: Hm! Interesting. Yeah.

Selena: And so, make disciples of all nations! I mean, you could pretty much almost put where it starts and how it goes.

Ryan: Okay! So, you're saying that this placing our trust in Him as the authority in our lives compels us to live in light of this truth?

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And the truth being that we are commissioned with Him—

Selena: Right!

Ryan: To make disciples of all nations, starting with—

Selena: Right. And discipleship is such a *beautiful* thing, and I think that it can change and transform our relationship in our marriage.

Ryan: Hm.

- Selena:** Because if we are [*Inhales*] cold and distant, not engaging, and kind of just roommates instead of *spouses* [*Inhales*], I think that... understanding Christ's authority and His commission on our lives, if we believe in that authority, and we recognize and submit to that authority, [*Quickly inhales*] we are going to respond! Right?
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** And when we respond, it's going to challenge how we're living. No longer can I really live [*Inhales*] disengaged and cold and unfilling towards you.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** Because at that point, I'm not submitting to Christ in this area! I'm not submitting to His authority [*Inhales*] in how I'm—I'm not loving you! Right? I'm not actively loving you. I'm not actively extending grace to you, or I'm not actively forgiving you. I'm just kind of staying over here in my corner.
- Ryan:** Mm. [*Both inhale*]
- Selena:** And doing what I feel is, I don't know, self-preservation, or [*Pauses*] just not dealing with things. I mean, call it whatever.
- Ryan:** That's good!
- Selena:** Whatever you want.
- Ryan:** That's good! So, [*Inhales deeply*] you're looking at the missional picture, but also day-to-day.
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Which is how do I love your husband well?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Me! [*Both laugh*]
- Selena:** Your husband! [*Laughing*]
- Ryan:** If anyone's wondering, that's me. [*Selena laughs*] I'm the husband. [*Ryan laughs*]
- Selena:** That was great. [*Both continue laughing*] Just like three steps to the one.
- Ryan:** Super effective communication. [*Selena laughs harder*] Yeah! I mean, as a husband, how do I—Okay. So, if I'm submitting to Christ's authority... And I'm called to love my wife as Christ has loved the church...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] Then what did Christ do? He died for her.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He [*Chuckles briefly*] served her. He washed her feet!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He had compassion. And I think in a future episode we're going to talk about 1 Corinthian love! Love— The 1 Corinthian 13s—

Selena: 1 Corinthians 13.

Ryan: And what Paul lays out for the—

[00:44:59] **Selena:** [*Chuckling*] For 13s?

Ryan: Thir— [*Both laugh*] Just doing great today. [*Selena continues laughing and Ryan inhales*] But what He lays out in that love chapter—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And how Christ is the fulfillment of all that.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And the exemplar of all those.

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: And so, we'll get into that. But I don't know—

Selena: Well, and this whole—

Ryan: I just, real tangibly speaking, I want to—

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: So, listening. Okay?

Selena: Kay.

Ryan: If I'm submitting to Christ's lordship, I can stop for five minutes and listen to my wife without feeling angsty about it.

Selena: That's right! Yes! You can!

- Ryan:** Ah. Nevermind. [*Selena laughs*] I can't. [*Both laughing*]
- Selena:** No, but I'm just—Sorry. It just hit me, the whole idea of authority and submission, and headship and submission, and how [*Inhales*] Christ has all the authority, right? And you are to love your wife as Christ loved the church, [*Inhales*] and gave Himself up for her, and how are wives supposed to respond, the submission aspect. Again, this is not a rolls conversation.
- Ryan:** Well, but is. [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Entirely. But it is! [*Both laugh*] There's a lot of things we're talking about.
- Ryan:** Yeah. I'm not even going to joke here because it's so sensitive, but this idea of being the head of the house verses being a wife who's *not* the head.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Kay? It's very subversive culturally.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And the reason it's subversive is because we see distortions of those roles.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** And that's the only view of it that we have!
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Meaning that I have a view of a head who is either domineering or too passive, or a view of submission as being too passive.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Sins of passivity. You're being walked all over.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Or subversive, in that you are usurping, you know? [*Selena faintly chuckles*] So, you have this idea—So, it's [*Pauses*—We have to align ourselves with the authority of scripture in these ways.
- Selena:** Right. Right!
- Ryan:** Specifically—
- Selena:** Submitting—Yeah. Go ahead.

Ryan: What it means to be under Christ's authority *as* the one He's called to be the head of our little home!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But that's not a king—It's an upside-down kingdom, 'member?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He came not to be served but to serve. So, as the head, I'm actually, like—

Selena: You serve *me*!

Ryan: Serving you! [*Selena laughs*] Well, we've talked about anytime there's an impasse, or we can't reach an agreement, I always urge husbands, like, *give*. Whenever possible, give.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: If you can't decide where to eat, go where your wife wants. If you *really* want to have pizza and she really wants to have not pizza [*Selena chuckles*], have not pizza! [*Selena laughs*] Okay? [*Ryan chuckles and inhales*] Because that's the savior that we serve. And so, again, I want to get really practical here. Communication: I can take time to listen.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: I can take time to be empathetic and not just try to be *right*. Jesus was not—He could have proved Himself right *every* single time, but He didn't. He listened, He loved, He taught, He—

Selena: Showed.

Ryan: Lov—Yeah. He showed!

Selena: Verses just *telling* all the time.

Ryan: Yes.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And I'm learning as I'm saying this [*Chuckles*], so this is good.

Selena: [*Ryan chuckling*] No, you're good! You're good.

Ryan: I think, in our intimate life...

Selena: Yeah.

- Ryan:** Right? I can go into our intimate life, into the bedroom...
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** To have sex; I'm just going to say it! [Selena chuckles] And... [Ryan chuckles]
- Selena:** [Chuckling] "What are you doing over there?" "Changing clothes!" [Laughs loudly]
- Ryan:** [Ryan chuckling] "I'm just gonna just *do stuff*." [Selena chuckling] But I can go in there with a *selfless* desire to *love* you, and try to, and ask God to give me a selfless desire to serve you, even in that capacity.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And not just try to get from you what I want, [Inhales] but to give to you in a way.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** In our finances, this trickles down into every way. I don't think we need to get through *everything*, but...
- Selena:** Well, and I think wives could do that in a somewhat similar way, right?
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** We constantly are wanting to—
- Ryan:** It's definitely too... Takes two. Yeah.
- Selena:** Yeah, but I guess I'm just looking at the submission aspect of it. Like, how is that different than [Inhales] the authority in the service aspect of it? [Pauses briefly] You know?
- Ryan:** Well, I love this analogy, because if a child's trying to fix his bike on the side of the road and somebody stops by to help him fix the bike, is the helper the stronger one or the weaker one? [Inhales] The adult? The helper's the stronger one.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** So, like, wives are helpers. [Both chuckle] I feel like it's because you have the bigger picture many times, and it's not a derogatory or pejorative term to call somebody a helper.
- Selena:** Right.

Ryan: And so, I think how you do that is helping with a pure heart, not helping with a condescending heart or a codling heart.

Selena: Like, any other motives, or, yeah...

Ryan: For almost being overly motherly—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: But really helping as a supporter and saying, “I have skin in this game of helping you become the man that you’ve been called to become.” As a husband, I have the same skin in the game, and trying to help you become the *woman* that God is calling you to be. [*Both inhale*]

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And I think that’s how we can help each other, but specifically maybe—

Selena: So good!

Ryan: From a wife’s si—

Selena: No. I think you clarified that very well. And I—Yeah. Good job!

Ryan: So, Jesus—

Selena: Go, you! [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: Thank you. So, Jesus closes the chapter. Honestly, it’s a harrowing line, okay? And He says this; He says, “Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.”

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: [*Inhales quietly*] He’s talking to the Pharisees.

Selena: Yep.

Ryan: Okay? And He says, “And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces,” and He’s referring to Himself as the stone, the cornerstone. He had just been talking about that in a previous passage. “And when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.” Okay. I love Ellicott’s commentary on this, so I’m just going to read it!

Selena: Okay.

[00:49:53] **Ryan:** Instead of trying to act like I made it up. [*Selena laughs*] ‘Cause it’s really great! He said, “In the immediate application of the words, those who ‘fell’ were

those who were ‘offended’ at the outward lowliness of Him who came as the carpenter’s son, and died a malefactor’s death.” Right? A common criminal’s death.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “That ‘fail’ brought with it pain and humiliation. High hopes had to be given up, and the proud heart to be bruised and broken. But there, the fail was not irretrievable.” So, he’s talking about what Jesus says, “And the one who falls on this stone.” Right?

Selena: Yeah. The *fall* is not irretrievable.

Ryan: Even we fall on Christ in our brokenness, we fall, and we are broken to pieces in that all of our perceptions about life are *shattered*.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: We’re bruised, our egos are bruised. We want to be the authority but we’re *not*.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] But here, Ellicott’s saying is that it’s not irretrievable! The *bruise* might be healed; it was the work of the Christ to *heal* it! That’s the business He’s in!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: “But when it fell on him,” when the *stone* “fell on him who was thus offended [*Inhales*] (here there’s rapid transition the imagery...),” and this is, Ellicott’s talking about this, and he’s comparing it to Daniel. [*Inhales*] He says, “When that *stone* falls, verses being fallen on...” Okay, the stone is now falling *on* the offended one. [*Inhales*] “When Christ, or that church which He identifies with Himself, shall come into collision with the powers that oppose Him, [*Inhales briefly*] then it shall be *ground* to a powder!” [*Chuckles*] [*Inaudible*] “It shall ‘grind them to a *powder*.’”

Selena: Wow.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] And so, there’s this sense of if we don’t... If we don’t submit to this authority willingly, here and now, and deal with the bruising that happens because the bruising to our egos, the bruising to our [*Inhales*] sinful flesh...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Then essentially, our only other option is to be crushed by it. There is healing in the bruising; there’s no retrieving the crushed powder. Right?

Selena: Wow.

Ryan: And so, that's a harrowing passage! He says, "And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, [*Inhales*] it will crush him."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Okay. So, He is giving us a decision point. Is that who are we going to grant authority in our lives? [*Inhales briefly*] And just as we saw at the very beginning of this passage, He is the only option for us! It's either Him or be crushed!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And now He is not a God who *threatens* us into heaven! [*Chuckles*] He is a God who has *loved* us. [*Inhales*] And here we are, the King coming to us, *servicing* us, compelling us, *winning* us...

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: *Paying* the price for our sin, living the life we should have lived and dying the death we should have died. [*Inhales*] So that we can be alive in Him.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] And so, honestly, I think this is just our—Right now I just feel like I want to encourage you, married couple!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: If Christ is not the authority in your marriage, in that He is not [*Inhales*] governing your decisions in that you are not aligning yourselves with His word, He's not governing how you communicate, how you love, [*Inhales*] how you...

Selena: Make decisions. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah! And how you raise your children.

Selena: How you live your life.

Ryan: How you do your career.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Even things like how you buy your house, or things—*Hand it* over to Him! *Trust* Him with that.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: [*Softly inhales*] Have your mind changed.

Selena: Yeah! Yeah.

Ryan: Because we can either rebel or repent.

Selena: So good!

Ryan: And there's so much beauty into this side of repentance [*Inhales*] in that there is, and the only prayer that we can really say at this point is, "Help me! Help me in my unbelief."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "I'm repenting."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "Help me believe that You are the good King that You are; help me to *throw away* everything—" What does Paul say, in Colossians 3, is if any have been raised with Christ, focus your mind therefore on where Christ is in Heaven on the throne, not here on earthly things.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Set your mind on heavenly things, where Christ is. [*Inhales*] And so, "God, help me! Help me set my mind on heavenly things. When I wake up in the morning, help me want *You*. Help me want Your will for my kids. Help me want *Your* will [*Chuckling*] for my marriage."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And, I think, honestly, *watch* as the servant King transforms everything from the inside out.

Selena: Right. So good.

Ryan: And brings the healing that He promised to bring.

Selena: So good.

Ryan: Brings the health, brings the forgiveness...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And the grace to live day by day. So...

Selena: Yeah. I think that's good! I think it's a good stopping point!

- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** Gives us some good things to think about.
- Ryan:** Alright.
- Selena:** And to talk to our spouse about [*Inhales*]... Yeah!
- Ryan:** So, I guess [*Selena laughs*] here's the question I want—Take these questions to your husband or your wife. And here they are! It says, “Just simply ask this: how do we welcome Jesus as the King that He is in our household?”
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** “How do we welcome Jesus as the King that He is?” [*Smacks lips*] Another way to phrase that is, “What do we do when confronted with the authority of Christ?” What's our tendency? Okay. In other words, what do we do when something that we want goes against what we know to be good and true Biblically?
- Selena:** Yeah. How do we respond? Yeah.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** [*Inhales*] And then just talk through that! Pray about it!
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And if you're looking for more info on that, you guys, if you're looking for more of the foundational stuff, check out our book we have. It's called *Fierce Marriage*. [*Laughs*] Imagine that!
- Selena:** What?!
- Ryan:** But we talk about all this kind of stuff, specifically around covenant and love and the gospel, and then we get into how that works itself out. [*Sniffs quickly*] And you can just find that on Amazon; it's just called *Fierce Marriage*. You can also find it at *any* book—anywhere you find books, really. [*Selena snickers and Ryan inhales*]
- Selena:** This is true!
- Ryan:** But that's if you want to go deeper in that, and I definitely encourage you not to stop. It's funny how people want, in every aspect of like, we expect to put in the work to get the growth, except for in our marriage. [*Laughs*]

[00:55:05] **Selena:** Yeah. Oh man!

Ryan: It's like, "I want to lose 30 pounds!" "Well, you got to go to the gym." "Nah! I'm good." [*Selena laughs*] "I'm good. I don't need that. I'm going to eat whatever I want."

Selena: "Our marriage is fine. It's fine."

Ryan: Or, "I want to save. I want to have \$10,000 saved." "Well, you got to put some money in there." "Mm-yeah. Uh, that's what you think!" [*Both laugh*] "Agree to disagree!" [*Ryan snickers and Selena inhales*] And so, but in marriage, the tendency is we say, "Oh, I want a healthy marriage; I want a thriving marriage. I want to connect with my spouse. *But* I'm not going work on it."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "I'm not going to invest time to read a book." [*Chuckles*]

Selena: I think even just...

Ryan: "I'm not going to invest time to do devotions together."

Selena: Just keeping the maintenance level...

Ryan: Yes!

Selena: Requires [*Laughing*] something!

Ryan: Oh, yes!

Selena: It's just like a weeded gar—a garden with weeds, right?

Ryan: They will grow!

Selena: *They will grow* if you do not—

Ryan: Something will thrive in that garden!

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: Depending on how you cultivate it. [*Laughs*]

Selena: Yes! Yes.

Ryan: It's weeds or fruit bearing plants. [*Inhales*] So anyway, I'm getting the finger right now, the spiny finger. "Wrap it up Freddie!" [*Laughs*]

Selena: The "wrap it up Freddie." [*Ryan laughing*] This is not the Ryan Fredrick show.

Ryan: Okay. [*Inhales*] Well, you know what?

Selena: It was kind of today!

Ryan: You got to have passion once in a while!

Selena: You had— [*Both laughing*] [*Selena inhales*] Alright. Well—

Ryan: Just, I wish you cared about something. [*Snickers quietly*]

Selena: Just remember who's the authority here. [*Chuckles quietly*] Jesus. So, [*Ryan laughing*] thank you so much for listening!

Ryan: Are you going to pray?

Selena: If you have questions—

Ryan: You heathen.

Selena: I will pray!

Ryan: [*Laughing*] Okay.

Selena: Just waiting for you to say, "This episode."

Ryan: We got to pray first! Go ahead. [*Selena snickers*]

Selena: [*Selena chuckling*] God, I pray that you would continue [*Ryan snickers*] to be the authority in our lives and in our hearts, [*Inhales*] and let that bear weight in our marriage and the relationships with our children. [*Inhales*] God, we pray that You would be recognized as the authority. That as we respond to people, to [*Ryan sniffles*] events, to things that happen in our life and around us, [*Inhales*] God, that Your authority in our lives would *evidence* to those around us.

We love you God! [*Inhales*] Thank You for my husband, thank You for Your word, thank You for just the clarity that it brings to our marriage and the authority that it gives u—it...

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Not gives us, I guess gives us, but [*Inhales*] also just the freedom it brings because of being submitted to You, God. We love you.

In Your name,
Amen.

Ryan: Amen. [*Inhales*] Awesome! Thank you so much for listening, Fierce Marriage listeners.

This episode is!

Selena: In the can.

Ryan: Alright. As usual, we'll see you in about seven days, and until then...

Selena: Oh. Stay fierce! [*Both chuckles*] I sat back. [*Both laugh*]

[00:57:20] <Ending sequence>

[00:57:59] *Podcast ends.*

PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:15:09]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Ephesians 5:22, 25, taken in part & paraphrased
- **[00:25:02]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Matthew 21:23-27, *ESV*
 - Matthew 21:28-32, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **[00:30:01]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Matthew 21:5, in part with added emphasis, *ESV*
 - Part was stated as being taken from Isaiah; Zechariah 9:9 is the correct Old Testament reference for this verse.
 - Luke 7:47, taken from, not in direct quotation, *ESV*
- **[00:40:01]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Matthew 28:18, in part, *ESV*
 - Matthew 28:19-20, paraphrase, *ESV & NASB*
- **[00:44:59]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Matthew 21:43, *ESV*
 - Matthew 21:44, *ESV*
- **[00:49:53]**
 - Ellicott's Commentary online:
 - <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ellicott/matthew/21.htm>
 - Taken from the paragraph under the Matthew 21:44 sub-header.
 - Ellicott's Commentary online:
 - <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ellicott/matthew/21.htm>
 - Taken from the paragraph under the Matthew 21:44 sub-header, paraphrased.
 - Correction: word "fail," used twice, should be "fall," according to the commentary.
 - Ellicott's Commentary online:
 - <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ellicott/matthew/21.htm>
 - Taken from the paragraph under the Matthew 21:44 sub-header, paraphrased.
 - Scripture references:
 - Matthew 21:44, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Matthew 21:24, *ESV*
 - Colossians 3:1-2, *ESV*

(Continued on next page.)

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>