

RECLAIMING REAL ROMANCE

<https://fiercemarriage.com/reclaiming-real-romance>

- [00:00:00] **Selena:** Alright. We're talking about reclaiming real romance in your relationship.
- Ryan:** Got a lot of R's. R's the most menacing letter! [*Selena laughs*]
- Selena:** That's why it's murder, not mukdek. [*Both laugh*]
- Ryan:** Yes!
- Selena:** So great!
- Ryan:** It's good. So...
- Selena:** Alright. I feel like that's a good opener. [*Both laugh*]
- Ryan:** Alright. Then we'll see you on the other side!
- [00:00:17] <Intro Sequence>
- [00:00:47] **Selena:** That's so funny! I didn't think that you would go for that, but you know what? I think the title itself gives it a good...
- Ryan:** Reclaiming? Re-clean—What?
- Selena:** Reclaiming real—
- Ryan:** *Reclaiming.* [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Oh, my goodness. Reclaiming real romance.
- Ryan:** I wanted to say “rekindling.”
- Selena:** Rekindling? [*Exhales softly*] I mean, we'll use that word throughout this discussion.
- Ryan:** Alright.
- Selena:** But this is a real tangible episode. We kind of like to throw these in the podcast every once in a while, because we do tend to dive into scripture, which we do have scripture! Don't worry, friends. [*Inhales*] But [*Ryan sniffles*], everything we do is, you know, got this gospel...
- Ryan:** Well, we like to talk about the ideas, the big why reasons.

Selena: I like diving into the whys! I'm not a huge tangible person; I am, but at the right time. You know?

Ryan: Well, part of that is, and there's a reason for that—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Is part of that is we feel like you listeners are wonderful, smart people.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: You can figure this stuff out, like the tangible stuff. I mean you just kind of got to think about it for a few minutes. And it's fun to have ideas and things, but we figure if we can really instill the *big* whys, "Why is God good?" "Why is love what it is?" "Why is covenant what it is?"

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Then you can say, "Okay. This is how I can actually rekindle or reclaim the *real* romance in [Selena laughs] my own marriage!"

Selena: Well, and I think it gives the why behind the what so much more power, right?

Ryan: Yes. Yes!

Selena: Anyways. We'll dive into that. [Inhales] But we are going to talk about some, we're going to do some highs and lows here in a few.

Ryan: [Inhales quietly] We haven't done that in a while.

Selena: [Selena chuckles] And we'll talk about kind of the tangible, how can we—*why* should we rekindle our—Not rekindle. See! Now you got me saying that. [Ryan laughs] Reclaim our romance in our marriage, and why that's important and why we *can* do that, and why our marriage is the place for that.

Ryan: But first, of course we got to do some housekeeping. So, I'm going to try to do it *extra* fast! I tried this one other time.

Selena: You try *every* time [Laughs] to do extra fast. [Laughing]

Ryan: Okay. One! Number one! If you haven't yet, leave a rating and a review on iTunes or whatever podcast app you do use; if you have done that, thank you! You're awesome! You help us out a lot. [Ryan inhales] Is that alright? Okay.

Number two! [Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles] If you want to be a missional partner with us, you can do that via patreon.com/fiercemarriage. That's a place where listeners like *you* can support this content directly. If you notice, we

don't do a lot of ads on here; that's because we believe that the way to fund this is by partnering with *you*!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Our listeners. And so, yeah. Just pray about that; if God leads you to do that, we'd be honored to lock arms with you. Anything helps! \$2 on up per month, whatever works for your family, whatever God leads you to do!

Finally, if you have any questions, go to fiercemarriage.com/podcast, and you can use the button there to ask the question directly, or you can call or text this number: 971-333-1120. Boom!

Selena: Boom!

Ryan: [*Ryan laughing*] And time! [*Selena laughs*] Okay!

Selena: Alright. We're going to do some highs and lows in here, too, because I think this is just a good episode to do that in! 'Cause it's not—

Ryan: So...

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Highs and lows come from... Well, they're not—For us, they're from young life.

Selena: Yes, but they're not new to people, probably.

Ryan: Yes.

Selena: Talking about, you know, what's something that—What's a highlight of your week, or your day? Just a highlight of your life. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: And what's a low point of the week?

Selena: And maybe what's a low point? Yeah. Yeah. So [*Inhales*]...

Ryan: You got to go first.

Selena: Uhm [*Chuckles*]... I think a low point might just be all the things we're trying to do. Summer, where we're at right now, doing this episode; summer's wrapped up, wrapping up, and we are heading into fall, and four to five weeks out from having a baby, finishing up edits on a book... There's just lots of things happening!

Ryan: Well... Okay. Full disclosure, we're actually going to release this episode at some point *after* the baby comes, probably.

Selena: After the baby. So, currently... [Laughing]

Ryan: So, currently, the high will be our *new child!* [Laughs]

Selena: Yes. Yes. [Chuckles]

Ryan: But we're, like Selena said, four or five weeks out from that point.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: Trying to take some time off, but also keep the content coming.

Selena: Prepare. Yes! Yes. [Inhales] So, I'd say that's probably the low point. And then the high point is that it's going to be fall around here, and it's beautiful; so, I'm super excited for that! And we'll have a new baby with us. [Inhales]

Ryan: [Inhales] Well, my low point—That's wonderful. [Both laugh] I didn't mean to gloss over...

Selena: [Laughing] That's fine. I don't think you glossed over at all. I just finished, and now you may start. [Chuckles]

[00:04:55] **Ryan:** My low point is the fact that our car is on the fritz [Ryan pauses and Selena chuckles] at the moment. Not sure what's going on. I think [Ryan takes a deep breath] I don't know. I don't know. I'm just afraid that something big's go— [Ryan pauses and laughs, and Selena laughs with him] Some expensive, big thing has gone wrong with it. [Selena exhales] It's like the engine light came on, but that *could* mean not a big deal, or your engine's dead. [Both laugh]

Selena: It's going to fall *right* out! [Inhales in a chuckle]

Ryan: I don't know! So, anyway. [Inhales] That's my low point right now.

Selena: He doesn't like car troubles.

Ryan: And as far as—

Selena: It's just kind of...

Ryan: Well, I don't like having to spend money we didn't plan on spending. [Selena laughs]

Selena: That's cars in general, though, isn't it?

Ryan: [Ryan exhales] It is... It is. [Selena exhales] So, as far as problems go, it's not that big of a problem.

Selena: Yeah. God's good! He's always providing, causing us to trust Him. What's a high point?!

Ryan: A high point... Uhm...

Selena: [*Laughing*] You look like you were about to just be like, "That's it!" [*Chuckling*]

Ryan: That's it! [*Ryan chuckles*] There is none. [*Both chuckling*] Goodness. A high point is this child that— [*Ryan laughs*] I'm probably holding— [*Ryan continues laughing*]

Selena: You can't take mine! [*Chuckling*] I mean, I guess he or she—*She!* We know it's a she. Sorry! [*Inhales*] She is partly yours as well, of course, but...

Ryan: *Partly* mine?

Selena: [*Laughing*] I'm just kidding.

Ryan: Yeah. I'm glad I could help. [*Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles*] Glad I could be of service in this endeavor!

Yeah! I think that's probably going to be my high.

Selena: Yeah, it's a good high!

Ryan: And, sorry I'm stealing yours, but fall is phenomenal! I like it! It's a good time.

Selena: It really is great around here.

Ryan: It'll be fun!

Selena: So, I think we did that in good timing! That was good!

Ryan: Yeah! Yeah. We're clipping along here.

Selena: Man...

Ryan: Okay. So, we're talking about reclaiming *real* romance. So...

Selena: Right! [*Inhales*] And I think that it's so easy for romance to get lost! Right? And sometimes I think I can just gloss over romance in our relationship. [*Ryan snickers*] I am *not* that romantic.

Ryan: Oh, I know it!

Selena: And you know this. It kind of feels like too much fluff to me. I'm kind of like, "Let's just get down to business," or [*Selena chuckles*] just business time, right? [*Ryan chuckles*] 'Cause I'm like, "I don't got time for this! We got kids, we got

work, we got schedules!” [Selena inhales] So, then the romance gets lost, right? And there’s this lack of intentional time together, and then I’m like [Selena continues in a whiny voice], “Why aren’t we connecting?! Why aren’t we like—” [Selena chuckles and resumes her normal voice] I blame myself! [Both laugh]

Ryan: No comment! [Selena laughs harder] I tried!

Selena: [Disgruntled funny voice] Try harder! [Resumes normal voice] Just kidding!

Ryan: You’ve always been that way, though. Not just since we’ve had kiddos.

Selena: I think it’s a personality thing in a lot of ways, to be honest.

Ryan: I mean, when we were dating—

Selena: I like your cards; I love your words of affirmation, and in this season of life, I love your acts of service! [Laughs]

Ryan: My cards? The thing with cards is, I feel like—

Selena: You always get funny cards; that’s why they’re great! [Laughing]

Ryan: Well, when I write the card, I always feel like I’m like, “You are the most beautiful wife [Selena laughs] of all the wives!” [Selena laughs harder] “You’re art! [Ryan laughs] This is the most beautiful art!” I feel like I lose all ability to articulate myself [Ryan laughs and Selena still laughing] when I sit down to write you a nice card.

Selena: [Selena inhales] That’s why you get me funny cards! And then you’re just like, “I love you! You’re the best! [Ryan chuckles] And blah-blah-blah,” and it just speaks to my heart, so...

Ryan: Well, that’s funny, ‘cause rekindling—

Selena: It is funny.

Ryan: Romance, I feel like, has so much to do with *laughing* together.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And laughter, what is it if nothing more than just an expression of your friendship in a way?

Selena: Totally. Totally.

Ryan: And your kindredness, the fact that if you’re laughing about the same thing, you’re like *almost* on the same wavelength.

- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** You've taken the same piece of information, whether that's a funny show; we always quote The Office, and Parks and Rec, and Dumb & Dumber [*Selena chuckles*], and anything Jim Carrey [*Selena chuckles again*], like 90s Jim Carrey. [*Both chuckle*] Early 2000s.
- Selena:** Well, and yeah, and romance is like [*Ryan smacks his lips*] that step; there's friendship, and then there's *romance*. Right? It's like that next step that just flows out of it, and I feel like it's very much reserved for... You'd probably argue this. I feel like deep, connecting romance is reserved for husbands and wives.
- Ryan:** Absolutely!
- Selena:** I think that when we're dating, and there's engagement, it's like romance is kind of *expected*, right? [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** I mean you're kind of like, "Okay, well I hope that we're going to make these times special," but when you're married, it's so easy to just fall into these rhythms of just existing together. And *yes*, you love each other, *yes*, you make memories together, but how are you being romantic together? How are you— You know, we talk about Proverbs 5:15-19, but the verse, 15, says, "Drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well." And the word "flowing," again, evokes an active, continual *action*. It's something that is flowing; it's not a hard stop.
- Ryan:** Mm. Yeah.
- Selena:** Right? [*Inhales*] And then—
- Ryan:** Well, the idea of "drinking" is also an action of going to that well and partaking in this supply that is... And that Proverb's talking about sex.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Sexuality and [*Inhales*] the sexual experience, and not allowing it to be contaminated—
- Selena:** [*States in a funny voice*] Which is where romance leads! [*Resumes normal voice*]
- Ryan:** It is! Just got to lap it up. [*Selena laughs*] Nah, I—One thing I wanted to not, first, before you carry on, is that romance is relative in a sense, in that okay, so when we were dating, romance was one thing...
- Selena:** Right.

Ryan: And when we were dating, sex was off-limits.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And so, our romance looked like—Well, we were dating in high school, so I took you to prom, or I would take you out for a—

Selena: [*States in a cute voice*] And hold my hands! [*Resumes normal voice*]

Ryan: Nice seafood dinner. [*Both laugh*]

[00:09:59] **Selena:** Yeah right. [*Both laugh louder*]

Ryan: That's an Anchorman reference. [*Inhales*] So... I'd buy you flowers, or we had some things that were really romantic, but also really fun.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, I want to be clear here. When we're talking about romance, 'cause I tend to think of romance as...

Selena: Pulling out all the stops.

Ryan: [*Smack lips*] Okay. Yeah. Yes. I also think of it as almost just like dating.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Or emotional intimacy, or connection, or building your friendship.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, I guess I want to define it more clearly here. Are we talking about Barry, uh, Jan—Who's the—Barry White! [*Selena laughs*] [*Ryan imitates the singer*] "Let's get it onnn." Are we talking about that kind of romance, or are we talking about—

Selena: I think we're talking about the *scale* of romance here—

Ryan: Intentional?

Selena: Because I think it starts with intentionality.

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: And I think that when we are intentional, and we are authentic and consistent, then it leads to that [*Pauses and continues in a funny voice*] *romance*. [*Laughs and resumes normal speech*] The—

- Ryan:** Okay. Okay. So, but maybe you haven—What about having a *culture* of romance in your marriage, where you are building a culture of thinking of one another—
- Selena:** I think that'd be the goal, because we're talking about reclaiming real romance. So, if you feel like your marriage is not very romantic at times [*Chuckles*], which I think we can all raise our hand to that, right? [*Inhales*] How can we create this culture of romance within the rhythms of our lives, really? How can we mutually enjoy each other, and promote our friendship, promote our connection, rejoice with each other through romance? I think one way—You know, it says, "rejoice in the wife of your youth," verse 19. So, one way we can rejoice in each other is *through* romance, through [*Inhales*], I think, just taking that extra step; in my mind, this was about taking that extra step to make something a little more thoughtful, a little more special, a little more intentional. It's the extraordinary of the week or the day. And like you said, I think if there's like a relative scale; I feel like there's weekly things you can do [*Inhales*], maybe even monthly. And then there's kind of this... Obviously, there's anniversaries and holidays you can do, but maybe there's something every quarter that you just want to make sure that you're doing. We talk about this in our Pursuit books, too.
- Ryan:** Mm. [*Smacks lips*] Yeah. So, extravagance.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Extravagance. Okay, so, what's the starting point for that? Now, it's one thing to say, 'cause we have our weekly dates. When we do the podcast, we get our time together, and then we go and we do our *job*, and then we [*Both laugh*]—Which, this is it.
- Selena:** Get our lunch. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** And then we go out and have lunch, and we talk.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And that's kind of our time to connect.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And it's great! But it's romantic in a sense that I'm with *you*, the one that I love, and I'm having a great time most of the time.
- Selena:** Right. [*Ryan inhales and Selena chuckles*] Most of the time?
- Ryan:** Sometimes I'm just tired, and I [*Both chuckle*] don't. But anyway. But then the romance is this more intense, extravagant experience, where maybe we would ask my parents to watch the kids until *late* into the evening, or overnight!

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: And we would go to a nice restaurant. Okay, so that's the wavelength we're on. So!

Selena: You just wrapping your head around this? [*Laughs*]

Ryan: I'm wrapping my head around it.

Selena: S'okay.

Ryan: Sorry. I'm just [*Ryan chuckling and Selena laughing*] trying to keep up here! So...

Selena: It's alright. It's good to clarify, good to define.

Ryan: I think a first starting point, a good starting point with that view in mind, is you have to be speaking the same language, right?

Selena: Right. Right!

Ryan: We do talk about Gary Chapman...

Selena: [*Whispers*] I know, it's always Gary. [*Resumes normal volume*]

Ryan: Is it? Gary Thomas and Gary Chapman; they're both awesome! Gary Chapman wrote The Five Love Languages. Dr. Gary Chapman.

Selena: Are you sure?

Ryan: Positive.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: Gary Thomas wrote Sacred Marriage.

Selena: Sacred Marriage, yeah. Both just *pillar* books.

Ryan: Both Christian. The Five Love Languages isn't written *for* Christians, but the author is a pastor.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Anyway! He talks about the five love languages, which if you're unfamiliar with that the first thing you ought to do, buy that book! [*Selena laughs*] The second thing you ought to do is listen to our podcast called The Five Love Languages.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Where we kind of go through what they are. But, essentially, here's what they are. There's physical touch.

Selena: Acts of service.

Ryan: Acts of service.

Selena: Words of affirmation.

Ryan: Gifts.

Selena: *Gifts.*

Ryan: And... Uhm, words of affir—Aw, shoot! What? Quality time! There it is!

Selena: Quality time. I should know this!

Ryan: Yeah, that's your thing!

Selena: It's like my top, my second one.

Ryan: That's kind of your thing.

Selena: Nah, I kind of like acts of service right now. [*Ryan laughs*] We took the test! Sometimes they change, friends.

Ryan: They do change.

Selena: Sometimes they change, depending on the season you're in! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: So, a lot of mistakes husbands will make is they'll be like, "Hey." I think of Roy [*Selena laughs out loud and Ryan chuckles*]. Roy on Valentine's Day, on The Office. Pam's like wanting—This is when they were dating; this is before Jim.

Selena: Before Jim!

Ryan: Jim Halpert! [*Chuckles*] And... [*Chuckles again*]

Selena: PB&J. [*Both chuckle and laugh*]

Ryan: It was yo—[*Laughing*] Yup! So, they were, Roy and Pam were dating, and he was trying to, it was like Valentine's Day or her birthday or something.

Selena: Something like that.

Ryan: It was her birthday, I think.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: And she's like, "What, you didn't—" Oh no! It was Valentine's Day, and Phyllis had been getting all these flowers [*Selena laughs*] from Bob Vance, and she [*Ryan starts chuckling while speaking*] had like this huge teddy bear and all this stuff, and Pam's just like, "Ugh. Wish you would have got me some flowers or whatever," and he's like, "I'm going to give you the best sex of your life." [*Both laugh*]

[00:15:03] **Selena:** He's like, "The day's not over!" [*Laughing*]

Ryan: I know, and she's just like, "Ugh!" [*Ryan chuckles and Selena laughs harder*] Rightfully so!

Selena: That's so right! That's such a—The loss in translation there, right? Like, just...

Ryan: Well [*Sighs*], he's completely thinking about himself, like, "This is what I would love," or whatever.

Selena: Right. Right!

Ryan: And a lot of husbands make that mist—Obviously that's a crude example, but a lot of husbands make that mistake.

Selena: Well, we project our love language, right?

Ryan: We do! Yeah.

Selena: We project what we want to feel and what we think *they* would like because *we* like it so much! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Right!

Selena: And really we've talked about love *so* much on this podcast, the Biblical definition of love is selflessness, it's covenantal, it's intentional, and it's—So, if you're talking about love being selfless, like you've got to *actually* think about the other person [*Chuckles*], which sounds funny because we've all been at fault to think...

Ryan: Right.

Selena: I'm always like, "What would Ryan love the most?" And I'm like, "What do *I* love the most?" [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah. We had some people, I forget who we interviewed, but they were on the podcast, and they were like describing their favorite dates, and they're saying how I set up this romantic date, then [*Selena laughing*] they realized it's all the things that *they* wanted to do... Like, the wife—

Selena: I think it was the Bethke's! [*Laughs*]

- Ryan:** It was the Bethke's, I think. [*Selena laughing*] Like, I think Alyssa was like, "Yeah. We went to the spa. We sat by the pool!"
- Selena:** Totally!
- Ryan:** And Jeff's like, "It-It was okay." [*Selena laughs*]
- Selena:** And Jeff's like, "So, my favorite date was..." [*Chuckling*]
- Ryan:** Yeah, and it was all stuff *he* wanted to do.
- Selena:** It's so funny to laugh at, but it really is, I think, that's kind of where romance can have room to grow, right? When we get married, because we really get to know somebody; we really get to understand their love language and how they receive love, and it's definitely—it's not always the same! It's not... Like, Ryan is very physical touch/words of affirmation. I used to be way more words of affirmation, but in this season of young children, I'm like, "*ACTS OF SERVICE!* Acts of service!" [*Chortles*]
- Ryan:** Mm-hm. Yeah!
- Selena:** And I like gifts! Gifts are pretty cool. Ryan's not a huge gift-giver...
- Ryan:** Yeah. I don't care about gifts.
- Selena:** Or gift-*getter!* Sorry. He doesn't care.
- Ryan:** Yeah. So, I'm going to add something to this conversation, because I feel like, knowing that love language nuance, right?
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** So, I got to speak *your* love language if I really want to connect with your heart and *show* you that I love you, and ideally you would do the same.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Well, I feel like this high-octane romance [*Selena chuckles quietly*] is... It's when you are meeting each other in the middle, and you're *both* doing it. Right?
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** It's one thing for me to say, "Hey, I want to serve you. Here's what we're going to do."
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** "We're going to go do all the things you want to do."

Selena: *[Laughing]* Right.

Ryan: “We’re going to eat all the food you want to eat. And *no* strings attached! We’re just going to go to sleep later. *[Selena still laughing and Ryan laughs]*

Selena: *[Laughing]* Yeah right! *[Laughs harder]* Yeah right!

Ryan: You going to have to put out! *[Chuckling]*

Selena: *[Laughing still]* Never the case! *[Both laughing]* *[Selena does a mimicking voice]* “Oh yeah. You’ll have to put out.” *[Selena resumes normal voice]*

Ryan: Man, we’re—This is an *adult* episode.

Selena: *[Chuckling]* I know. This is just Phyllis—

Ryan: That’s again, Office reference for—So, that’s one thing.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: But I feel like there are those moments, and married couple listening to this, you might have had these; I hope so! Is that you had these moments where you are just like firing on all cylinders, and you guys are feeling it, you’re enjoying each other; I’m not just talking about sex. I’m talking about you’re dancing, or you’re, I think, one of our first dates... Do you remember this? *[Pauses]* I took you to—

Selena: Gas Works?

Ryan: Well, that was our very first date, I think.

Selena: It was.

Ryan: One of our first dates—

Selena: It was a good one.

Ryan: I took you to Four Seasons.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: It was for a prom or something like that.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And we danced, and we didn’t—

Selena: It was like a live jazz band in this really elegant hotel in Seattle.

Ryan: [*Clicks tongue*] Super elegant. Like, slow jazz.

Selena: And we were all like... Yeah. And it was a darker, kind of...

Ryan: Super romantic. Nice food.

Selena: Yes! We went with another, I think, two other couples. And yeah, we just felt like the bee's knees, and we're just like—

Ryan: We took a limo! [*Both laugh*] Of course!

Selena: [*Laughing*] 'Cause that's what you do when you can't drive. [*Chuckles*] No! Just kidding.

Ryan: Like, you blow *all* your savings...

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: On *one* night.

Selena: But it was *so* fun, because *both* of us were enjoying it together to the same extent, I think is what...

Ryan: Yeah. And that's what I'm getting at. It's *super* romantic; clearly, we were in high school and dating. We didn't have—Well, I don't want to be crude about it, but we didn't have sex.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, we definitely kissed, I think, that night.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: But, anyway, the point I'm trying to make is there are those times in a *married* life when *that* is allowed to, that wildfire, is allowed to just *torch* the Earth! [*Ryan laughs out loud and Selena chuckles*]

Selena: Well, I think that's the beauty—

Ryan: Well, you could just carry it through.

Selena: I think that's the gift of God.

Ryan: It's good! Yeah.

Selena: Like, romance really is a gift from God to married couples, because, literally, it keeps the flame alive. If you imagine marriage without romance and friendship,

it just sounds awful. Like, just being roommates, and chained together, and you're in just this contract.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: It's very *cold*. And I think that God gives us this ability to be [*Smacks lips*—I keep saying romantic; I'm trying to define it better. But being able to be *warm* towards each other, to—

Ryan: Display passion.

Selena: Display passion.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And to be able to take it to the Nth degree, because we're in that covenant, right? So, I like that you said that romance is relative, depending on the season that you're in.

[00:20:05] **Ryan:** Right! Right. 'Cause right now, it's, with young kids, it's a little bit different than I'm sure it will be ten years from now, or even 20 years from now, and God willing [*Selena chuckles*], we're still alive!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But, yeah. So, I think I want to nuance that a little bit more.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: Because there are couples that don't necessarily have a *passion*, and I'm picturing, because we've gone and spoken at some conferences, and we've gotten to talk to some real-life couples that they're not going to be... I don't know. It's just they have a different culture in their relationship; I hope that it's healthy! Right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You can only get to know them so well.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But I just want to—It's relative. And that's what I'm saying, is like we're not saying you *have* to do X, Y, and Z, and part of what we're talking about here, and we'll go through some really tangible things, like what it looks to be special, what it looks like to have a special moment together and those sorts of things.

Selena: Right! Right.

Ryan: But it's relative, and I think the point is that you are connecting on the deepest level you can as a married couple.

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: And that you *know*.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And even trying to take that depth a little bit further and experience love in new and *enduring* ways.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That, you know, are mutually enduring, and you know, those sorts of things. So...

Selena: Well, and I feel like this really is *glorifying* to God, right? Because you don't always see a lot of couples *enjoying* time together, and if I *do*, they're usually not married. You know? And when I see rings on fingers, people hanging out looking into each other's eyes, holding hands, *clearly* enjoying each other's company, not distracted, just loving each other, laughing together... That makes my heart just well up! And yeah, I don't know their story; I don't know what happened. I don't know their past, but I do know that they are mutually enjoying each other.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: And that is so beautiful. And I feel like God created us, right? For *some*, not *entirely* for His enjoyment, right? But why were we created? We were created to glorify Him; we were created to worship Him. [*Ryan inhales*] And we were created to enjoy *Him*.

Ryan: Well, I think of...

Selena: And I think He does enjoy us, too, sometimes! [*Chuckling*]

Ryan: What is it? Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Okay. So, one of the first verses in Song of Solomon, which by the, okay, Ecclesiastes—I don't know. The order maybe is [*Selena chuckles*] they're poetical books, right?

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: So, it's funny to contrast. I don't want to read too much into the order of the books.

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: But the contrast from Ecclesiastes, which is Solomon—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] It's like, doom and gloom and like there's no purpose in life.

Selena: The first book of the Bible I ever read as a teenager. I say that every time!

Ryan: Good move.

Selena: Just to you! But now everybody knows.

Ryan: But still. Epic move!

Selena: [*Whispers*] Yes. [*Resumes normal volume*]

Ryan: And I love it! It's an amazing book because you can still see the gospel in it.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: In that, like, there's no meaning in life. All is pointless, but you know God is still good type of thing. And then, Solomon goes to Song of Solomon, and it's just like the *opposite*.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's *total* romance, total...

Selena: Just oneness.

Ryan: This is in God's word, okay?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: These are God's words.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And it's been given to us for a reason, and it's not just to entertain us. It's to give us an example of what this type of rapturous love might look like, okay?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: One of the first parts of it, it says—I don't know. It's one of the first verses in the first chapter. But it's basically, "Draw me after you. Let us run!" Right?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Like, let's go! Let's go get lost together. And I mean you can read it; it's not a very long book.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: But it just speaks to that point that Selena was just making, I love that you brought it up, is that it's *glorifying* to God to go here together.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: To *be* romantic with your spouse.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: [*Sniffs in*] And so...

Selena: To be affectionate, and to be *loving* and kind in a physical way and in the emotional ways, like on all the levels!

Ryan: Uh-huh. And to get lost.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: That's the thing is that we see this word, to be intoxicated, always in her love; that's in Proverbs 5. It's also within Song of Solomon. Being *intoxicated* in the Bible is only ever good when it's talking about this kind of—

Selena: [*Giggles*] Right.

Ryan: Romance.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Okay. So, that's being lost, like losing yourself, in a sense.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Not idolizing each other.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But being carried away in this river of romance.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: There it is! The R's again. [*Selena chuckles*] So, what are some practical aspects of romance that we can talk about and just to get folks tangible things?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, the first one, and I love this one—

Selena: I think we have *three*...

Ryan: Okay. So, there's three.

Selena: Yes. Yes.

Ryan: So, the first one is simply this: special doesn't always mean it has to be expensive.

Selena: So true!

Ryan: So, as a young man—

Selena: Can I have—Okay, go ahead.

Ryan: As a young man...

Selena: [*Laughing*] I have a funny one.

Ryan: I mean, I felt like I had to spend—Like it got so the first—

Selena: \$3! [*Ryan chuckles and Selena laughs out loud*]

[00:24:52] **Ryan:** Like, if it's more than ten bucks, I'm out! [*Selena laughs harder*] No, but I would buy... Remember? I think it was the first month, I guess first few months of our relationship, I'd buy you like a gift every week, or a gift every month. And it would be like to commemorate our dating anniver—I was like, "Leslie, nope. [*Inaudible*]"

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] "This is the first day we ate pancakes together!"

Selena: In the beginning... [*Laughs*] Waffles. You know she doesn't eat pancakes!

Ryan: Anyway! I just always felt like it had to be expensive, otherwise it wasn't meaningful.

Selena: Right. Right!

- Ryan:** And we're saying that that's not the case.
- Selena:** Right! [*Inhales*] No, I just... [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** Yeah, [*Inaudible*].
- Selena:** I think of [*Selena laughs*] ... I just think of Dwight when he's asking Pam advice on what gifts to buy. [*Ryan chuckles*] And she's like, "You know, it's not always what the gift is, but what the gift means," basically. And [*Ryan chuckles quietly*] he's like, "Oh yeah. Okay. Shut up." [*Both laugh*] And like walks away.
- Ryan:** "Okay, yeah. Whatever. Shut up, Pam." [*Selena laughing & Ryan chuckling*]
- Selena:** But it's true! She's exactly right. It's not always about what the gift is, but what the meaning is behind it. And I think that's—
- Ryan:** Yeah, and it's the thought that counts. [*Selena laughs*] That's the whole adage.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And it's very true.
- Selena:** But you don't need to break the bank to express your love, right? Extraordinarily. You could just set some time aside; think and reflect about how your spouse receives love. What speaks to them? What makes their heart flutter? What are they passionate about? What's their *personality*? What are their desires? How did you show love in the early years? You know? We look at our dating life and [*Inhales*], I mean, we were really young, so, [*Chuckling*] maybe... I don't know.
- Ryan:** So, the key with this is it takes practice, and it does get easier to think through those creative things. Like right now, being that we have young kids at home, we've not done a lot of hyper-romantic things.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Recently, I'd be hard pressed to think of something; I'd have to stop and write a few things down. [*Chuckles*]
- Selena:** Well, on thing—Yeah. [*Chuckles*] One thing... [*Chuckling*]
- Ryan:** And get through it! [*Selena chuckling*]
- Selena:** One thing, though, that is under this is maybe recreate your first date together, depending on how [*Chuckles*] expensive your first date was. Our's was not that expensive. [*Inhales*]
- Ryan:** Yeah.

Selena: But... Recreating your first date together, or the first-time you guys held hands, or, you know, think back to those memories. Look back on your phone, the pictures; I'm kidding. *[Both laugh]* We didn't have phone pictures then!

Ryan: No. I had a pager though!

Selena: Oh, you did have a pager! *[Chuckles]*

Ryan: Our first date, we almost got beat up by motorcyclists. *[Selena laughs]* Do you remember that?

Selena: You did.

Ryan: I almost got punched in the face.

Selena: I was like, "Ahhhh..." *[Chuckles]*

Ryan: Yeah. That's another story.

Selena: Good thing you took off fast enough! *[Ryan chuckles sharply]* Anyways. A little thoughtfulness will definitely go a long ways towards showing them that they're treasured. And just take some time to think about what makes them feel special, and it does not have to break the bank, for sure!

Ryan: Yeah! I mean some of our best memories—

Selena: I mean, unless you're high maintenance... *[Both chuckle]* I'm just kidding. *[Selena laughs]*

Ryan: Hey, don't break the bank. *[Selena laughs]* Talk about that. If that's what you feel like you have to do, talk about it.

Selena: *[Chuckling]* Talk about it before you spend any money.

Ryan: So, I don't know. Some of our favorite times together were very off-the-cuff kind of spur of the moment little adventures.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, in our part of the country, we live in the northwest, and we love going to little beaches around the Puget Sound where we live, and so... Or even just to the coast, and it's usually within two hours' drive.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And we'll just, say, it's like a Friday night, and we'll just go!

Selena: Mm-hm.

- Ryan:** Right? And this was, obviously again, before kids; we have to have more forethought now.
- Selena:** Got to plan a *little* bit, I guess. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** But we'll just go! And we'll eat—
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** On the road [*Selena chuckles*], and we'll find the little mom-and-pop shop, and we would just find even a hotel; just didn't matter.
- Selena:** Yeah. We were just together. That's what mattered.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** You're just together; you're making memories. You're—
- Ryan:** But you could do that and add an intentional thing. So, one of the things we never did is, for instance, you could find a clear night and say, "We're going to go stargazing tonight."
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And take a bottle of champagne and a few candles, and just be intentional with a few things.
- Selena:** Easy-peasy.
- Ryan:** What's a bottle of champagne cost these days?
- Selena:** Like, \$70. [*Both snicker and laugh*] \$20? No, and then I think another one is, I wish that we di—
- Ryan:** Like, \$15, for the record. [*Selena chuckles*]
- Selena:** Right? [*Both chuckle*] I'm kidding. That I kind of wish we did was, like, keep a journal in the car and just say where we went on an adventure and a memory from there. So, like a log. Your dad has a log of things.
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** That neither of us [*Chuckling*] likes to write in, but we're always grateful we did!
- Ryan:** I wonder if anyone [*Selena laughing*] will ever read that. But, okay.

Selena: I'm sure we'll read them one day. [*Inhales*] But anyways. Journals are not that expensive, notebooks, just, you know, keep something in there to make a memory and remind yourself of it!

Ryan: Here's a fun one! Just this last week when we went to the beach with the kiddos, obviously with the kids different... [*Inhales*] But we got caught in the rain on the beach.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And that was... so fun!

Selena: [*Smacks lips*] Yeah! The girls were troopers.

Ryan: Not that you can plan on getting caught in the rain.

Selena: Right. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: That's the whole point, is getting *caught* in the rain. [*Both laugh*] But, one example of that, or something like that, might be if you live near a pond, like, figure out how to get a rowboat. You know? They can't be that [*Selena chuckles*] expensive. Like, borrow one or rent one.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Go out and row...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And, who cares about the weather? Like, if it's going to rain, like, just go!

Selena: It's really about making the memories.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And being together. So, again, the first point: special doesn't mean expensive. [*Inhales*]

Ryan: Yep.

Selena: They're not synonymous. BUT, number two: any extravagance *is* well spent. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: We are not advocates for consumerism. We're pretty simple people. We try to keep things *special*.

Ryan: Yep.

[00:29:59] **Selena:** [*Inhales*] And not too expensive, *but*, and don't be maxing out credit cards for things; that's not wise.

Ryan: [*Smacks lips*] Right. Right.

Selena: But being sacrificial, again, reading Song of Solomon, the writer's talking—He really uses extravagant language here as they express—

Ryan: [*Smacks lips*] Well, and... *And* there's material extravagance...

Selena: Right!

Ryan: Because as they're lavishing gifts on each other...

Selena: Like, they're expensive gifts.

Ryan: Right!

Selena: They're valuable!

Ryan: [*Chuckles*] Yeah. Valuable is probably a better word. [*Both laugh*] You're instilling value in each other.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: It's not bad to be extravagant gift-wise with each other. I don't think you're being unfaithful. You have to discern; I'm not going to say, "Up to a dollar amount is okay." I'm not going to say that.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But we had a moment, a date; we were living in California still.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: We had just—We were celebrating something; I can't remember what it was.

Selena: [*Smacks lips*] I think it—

Ryan: And we went to that nicer restaurant.

Selena: Oh, that's for number three. You're not supposed to get there yet!

Ryan: Oh. Oh, well, do I bring up that example? Okay.

Selena: You do!

- Ryan:** Anyway. [*Selena laughs*] Thanks. Whoops! So, anyway. The point is that there are, I think, moments when you can really pull out the stops.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And *spend* a little extra time, energy and money.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And it's not bad stewardship.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Is what we're saying.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Well, and I think that, yeah, I wouldn't want you to be like, "[*Inaudible*]. [*In an excited voice*] I just maxed out a credit card so you could have this!"
- Ryan:** [*Mimics her excitement*] "I hope you feel loved!"
- Selena:** It's like, that does *not* make me feel—That stresses me out more than anything probably. [*Chuckling*]
- Ryan:** And then, like, you fight over it over the next few weeks.
- Selena:** Right, right, right.
- Ryan:** 'Cause, yeah.
- Selena:** I think the things about being extravagant, again like you said, is just filling those slots, right? It's something that you *know* you're going to enjoy; it's not going to break the bank, but it is sacrificial, maybe, in some ways.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** You're giving up some other things to be able to purchase or do this. [*Inhales*] And it really just hits a home run basically for you and your relationship with each other. So, the *last* one [*Clears throat*] ...
- Ryan:** Brush up!
- Selena:** I mean, if you wanted to—

- Ryan:** I'm going to say this one. So, men *and* women, but men specifically [*Selena sniffles*], brush up on your charm!
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** Alright? So, that sounds silly, and we very rarely get this granular [*Selena sniffles*] with this kind of stuff.
- Selena:** [*Selena smacks her lips*] I love when you're dressed up so handsome and nice! [*Selena clicks her tongue*] And you smell good! [*Ryan laughs*] And like, you shave. [*Selena laughs out loud*]
- Ryan:** You make it sound like it's so rare. It is rare, though!
- Selena:** [*Chuckling*] It is rare! 'Cause we don't get dressed—I mean we shower! We're clean people. We're not like [*Both laughing*] ... But I love even when you put— You got a new suit 'cause you wanted to put [*Selena snickers*—You spent a lot of money on it. But we got a new—You got a new suit! [*Inhales*]
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** So that you could take Dela and Emmy out on daddy-daughter dates, like on *real special ones*!
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Like, brushing up on your charm! I mean—
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Practicing with these girls. [*Inhales*] And you put it on to try it on, and I was just like, “[*Smacks lips*] Ughh! Just so hot...” You know? [*Ryan laughs out loud*]
- Ryan:** I think the funny thing is it's a three-piece suit—
- Selena:** So, if you want to get—
- Ryan:** And I didn't have a shirt on or anything [*Selena laughs*]. It was just a vest and [*Ryan laughs*] a sport coat, and Selena's like, “Oh, wow!” [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** So... [*Both laughing*] I knew that a shirt was coming, but I was just like, “Oh baby!”
- Ryan:** It was unnecessary though. [*Chuckles*] The shirt was unnecessary.
- Selena:** So, if you want to get... “*busy*.” [*Both laugh*] I'm just kidding!
- Ryan:** Okay, so...

Selena: Brush up on your charm! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: And what I mean by this is a little bit of decorum goes a long way. Okay?

Selena: Yes. Yes.

Ryan: So, things like opening doors for—car doors, and opening restaurant doors...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And, ladies, get the nicer dress and, I know, like when Selena—

Selena: Shave your arm— [*Both chuckle*] Just kidding! [*Selena laughs*]

Ryan: When Selena, when you wear heels—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Which they're not comfortable for you, but when you wear them...

Selena: Well, there's comfortable ones, but yeah!

Ryan: Okay. But when you wear them, I'm just like... "Wow!"

Selena: It's a special occasion. Yeah.

Ryan: It *feels* different. It feels like we are...

Selena: Grown-ups!

Ryan: Yeah! We're grown-ups, and we're brushing up on our charm.

Selena: We are! We are!

Ryan: And when your hair is not just the easy way, but it's the prettier way, right? Which I know is not—

Selena: Is the harder way...

Ryan: You're pretty all the time. Alright?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: I'm just going to put that out there! [*Both chuckle*]

Selena: Mm-hm. Mm-hm!

Ryan: But when it's down—

Selena: *[Mimics the sound of hitting and chuckles]* Ryan just got hit in the face! *[Both laughing]* Nah, I'm just kidding.

Ryan: You know what—

Selena: Yes. When we, yeah! It's fun to dress up. It's fun to spend a little bit of time on yourself, because *[Inhales]* it doesn't happen that often *[Chuckling]* for us. We're pretty simple, straight-forward people. So...

Ryan: I'm guessing most couples are the same way...

Selena: Yeah! You're busy!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: You've got things to do. And... Sometimes it's just really fun to dress up and... *[Both snicker]* look nice. But you didn't—

Ryan: Not in a costume. *[Both laughing]*

Selena: *[Takes a deep breath in sharply]* That's good to clarify. I mean it is fun to dress up in costumes, but *only* when it's appropriate around Halloween! *[Inhales]*

Ryan: I don't like costumes, but whatever.

Selena: *[Exhales]* You don't. *[Both chuckle]*

Ryan: I like being the real me all the time!

Selena: Laundry mat. *[Laughs]*

Ryan: This is me, people! *[Chuckles]*

Selena: You like being yourself?

Ryan: I like being myself. *[Both chuckling]*

Selena: So, the example that you were going to bring up was that after Dela, our first one was born—

Ryan: Ah, okay. Yeah.

Selena: We did go out—You actually planned this!

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: And it was kind of a surprise to me, and I was like *"[States in pitiful voice]* Okay *[Resumes normal speech]*," as like a new mom of a two-month-old, right?

Ryan: Was that our first night out [*Selena clears her throat*] after she was born? I think it might have been.

Selena: Yeah! She wasn't that old. It was like a month or two, our first night out alone. Yeah, newborns, you can just carry them in car seats. They go everywhere! [*Inhales*] But I was the first-time mom, didn't know anything. [*Smacks lips*] And so, someone had given us a gift card, and you were like, "Hey. I've called our friend Shannon, and she's going to hang out with Dela for two hours. You can nurse her, leave a bottle, and we'll just see how it goes! [*Inhales*] But I want you to get dressed up, and I'm going to get dressed up, and we're going to have as much dinner as we can [*Chuckles*] at a restaurant. [*Inhales again*] And try to dessert and coffee or whatever, and then we'll come home! But I just want you to be able to get out and get dressed up, do your hair and your make-up." You got a haircut; you always get haircuts before we go out.

[00:35:19] **Ryan:** Yeah! Yeah.

Selena: [*Clears throat*] And it was—

Ryan: About once a year.

Selena: Yeah. [*Ryan laughs*] It was—

Ryan: That hair cut! [*Laughing*]

Selena: No, it's not. [*Inhales*]

Ryan: No.

Selena: But it's very vivid, I think, in both of our minds because that was the first time that we went out together that *you* kind of extended this, "Hey," ... You kind of had to coax me a little bit, I think. And that was okay, and that was good.

Ryan: Yeah. And I remember having this sense of, "Hey!" I wanted to just show you and I wanted to serve you and show you how much I cared about you.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And how thankful I was for you!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: But I also remember being on the receiving end of that, and it wasn't necessarily something that you had intended, but I was just like, "This is the *woman* that I [*Pauses*] love with all my heart, that I have spent the"— You know, at that point, we had been married ten years.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Right, it was ten years? [*Inhales*] And so, I was like, “This is the wife of my youth; this is the wife of my old age!”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And this is the *one* woman that I’m going to *lavish* with all my affection; I’m going to dote on her, I’m going to give her what I have to give! For better or worse [*Selena chuckles*], I’m going to give it to you. And I just remember feeling this, I think it was a healthy sense of pride.

Selena: Totally.

Ryan: Is that I’m loving my wife right now.

Selena: Well, and I feel like the wife of a husband who’s proud and confident, because of his wife, you know?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Like, in a lot of ways [*Inhales*]...

Ryan: I think we got to be careful [*Selena clears her throat*] because sometimes we can try to buy that feeling again.

Selena: [*Smacks lips*] Right.

Ryan: Right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And say that if we just go spend enough money, we’ll get that same feeling.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And I think that was a special moment, because we had just had our first *daughter*.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And it was our first time out *without* our daughter—So, it was almost like, in a sense, we had *grown up* another level.

Selena: In some ways, yeah. Yeah.

Ryan: And so, those moments do come, even now.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: As our daughters hit their different...

Selena: Stages.

Ryan: Stages, yeah!

Selena: I think that there's a lot of opportunity for romance, kind of what you're saying. [*Smacks lips*] Around celebratory times, like...

Ryan: Mm. Yeah!

Selena: Hitting those milestones, and, "Okay, what can we do that's romantic, that's really celebrating our lives and what God's done *in* our life and *in* our marriage covenant?"

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Those are always good, I think, ways to calibrate and find opportunities of being able to celebrate. 'Cause otherwise, I kind of just like, like you said—I said, at the beginning, I'll just gloss over things and be like, "Oh yeah! We pro— Maybe we should celebrate that?" I don't know. [*Both chuckle*] Do you want, like...?

Ryan: It's like when our daughter's—

Selena: You're really good at it, I think! [*Clears throat*]

Ryan: Our daughter turned three, Clementine. And you were like, [*Imitates girl voice*] "She doesn't need anything," [*Resumes normal voice*] and I'm like, "She's—It's her birthday, and she's [*Selena laughs*] three years old! I want to *celebrate* my daughter! I *love* her, and I—"

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: "Want her to feel loved—"

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: "And I want her—," and so, how do we...

Selena: I wasn't going to *not* give her *anything*.

Ryan: But you're more of a utilitarian when it comes to those sorts of things.

Selena: I am, so yes.

Ryan: And so, I think what you're saying, and I love it and I totally agree, is that it's good to celebrate every opportunity you can.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Now, rites of passage particularly around parenting, so rhythms and rites...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, a rite of passage being, "Oh, you just got baptized," or you have... [*Smacks lips*] I don't know. You've accepted the gospel, you've heard the gospel and you've responded to it, and God's got a hold of your heart, you know?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] And so, these different rites of passage, like, celebrate *all* of those!

Selena: [*Smacks lips*] Yeah.

Ryan: Now, in terms of your marriage... Maybe you've gone through something and this is the year anniversary of your reconciliation.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Or two years, or three years, or whatever that is.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Like, *mark* that—

Selena: When you've come out of something...

Ryan: Ground, and put that flag in the sand—

Selena: And celebrate... Absolutely.

Ryan: And say, "This is where our God was victorious!"

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "In our lives, and we're going to celebrate that as the couple that He has kept us as."

Selena: Mm. So good!

Ryan: Other things, anniversaries obviously—Some things feel a little bit [*Selena clears her throat*] overdone, like you feel like you *have* to do.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Like, we just had an anniversary and...

Selena: Right. I think there's ways, again, even if something happens in your career, like, *celebrate that together*.

Ryan: Yes! Yeah.

Selena: If we try to—I was like, “Are we going to have another *book launch* party?” [Chuckles] And you're like, “Yes!” You know? Like, just celebrating those things, 'cause I feel, as I reflect on my utilitarian [Chuckles] self, it can be very much a check list. And I think God has more enjoyment for *both* of us, and for those around us. But speaking of marriage specifically, I feel like there's a deeper, more experiential joy that we can share together, because we're married, because we've walked this course *together*, and because we've been hand-in-hand through it all. You know? And so, yeah, I love that you said that about if you're coming up on an anniversary of, like, overcoming an addiction or there was an affair, or—

Ryan: Or a reconciliation of a big fight, or—

Selena: A reconci—Right.

Ryan: Something that was otherwise *dooming* your relationship, but God has redeemed it.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Redeemed? Use that—

Selena: Reconcile and redeemed.

Ryan: Use that moment to redeem you. [Inhales]

Selena: Absolutely. That's a real, like, reclaiming, right?!

Ryan: Yes!

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And so, that's why I like that word, reclaimed. There's rekindling, which is like you need to kind of start the fire small and get it to be a roaring bonfire.

[00:40:00] **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: But then there's reclaim. He's like, “This is *ours* to have!”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “And we're going to *make* it ours because God has said it's ours, and we're going to reign over it.”

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: “We’re going to have *dominion* over it!”

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: I want to say a quick thing about—

Selena: Please.

Ryan: A Jewish culture. [*Selena clears her throat*] Okay, so, this idea of celebrating? Jewish culture, we see all throughout the Bible they had rhythms of celebration, rhythms of *rest* that were based on *God’s* provision, not the rhythms of their work life, but the rhythms of how God said, “You need to be reminded constantly.”

Selena: So good!

Ryan: This is what Sabbath is all about.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Things like [*Selena clears her throat*] this Year of Jubilee. You had— I mean, I can’t go through all of them right now, because I don’t have them on top of my head [*Selena chuckles*], but this idea of remembering is a *huge* thing in our heritage as Christian people.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: As the people of God. Okay, you may not be Jewish, but you’re Christian. Right? You have been grafted in, that’s what that means, as a Gentile or whatever, *grafted* into the family of God.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Now it’s your inheritance, it’s your heritage, to celebrate these things, to celebrate how God’s people celebrated. [*Inhales and snuffles*] And so, when we do that in our marriage, I think we’re putting, like I said earlier, putting a stake in the sand.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Drawing a line in the sand, saying, “*This* is where our God *was* our God.”

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: “And this our reminder.” It’s *so* easy to forget!

Selena: Totally.

Ryan: That's why in Habakkuk, He talks about writing it down. Why? So, you can run with the vision quickly; you can remember *quickly*.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: *Because* we have a propensity to forget. [*Inhales*] Actually, I saw a study; someone tweeted it out. They said there was a documentary about *memory*, and how people who suffer from chronic memory loss have a hard time envisioning the future.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: They have a hard time planning for the future, have a hard time thinking through future scenarios. And what the person who tweeted was—I think it was Jackie Hill Perry. She was talking about there's a connection between our ability to remember what God has done and our future hope. Right?

Selena: Mm... [*Smacks lips*] Wow.

Ryan: And so, how well we're able to remember things can actually determine how well we can have future hope for things. So, like, if—

Selena: So true! So true.

Ryan: You forget all that God has done in your marriage [*Chuckles*]...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: If you forget [*Selena clears her throat*] that stuff and you hit a hard spot, you're going to—

Selena: That's really good.

Ryan: You're going to forget that you have hope! That you have a redeemer and you have a rescuer. You have somebody who's already come through; His name is Jesus Christ [*Chuckles*].

Selena: [*States softly*] Really good.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] He's already come through! God has already delivered you.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: On a deeper level, if we forget the work of Christ on the cross...

Selena: Right.

- Ryan:** If we forget that, the magnitude of that, the magnitude of our *need* and our need met
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** In that, then we will forget the hope that we have in our future in Him.
- Selena:** So good!
- Ryan:** Our future as we're coheirs with Him and raised with Him. [*Ryan inhales*] There's a lot there, so [*Selena chuckles*], let's re-cap real quickly [*Ryan chuckles quickly*], and we're supposed to get practical!
- Selena:** [*Laughs*] We're not good at being practical all the time, *but* it all stems from a place of Jesus and the gospel.
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** And reclaiming, and I think for those that maybe are like, "I don't know how to reclaim any sort of a semblance of romance; I feel like we are just two strangers living in a house," or, [*Inhales*] "There's been a breach of trust." Again, I think that our hope can come from Jesus and the example that He gives, and from there we are able to extend grace that He's given to us. I was reading, I told you, New Morning Mercies. I've been trying to read that every day or so, and [*Inhales*] we're just talking about the *grace* of God in our relationship, and the *grace* that we can *have* with each other, [*Inhales*] and the level of grace that we can have with each other.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** We can love and we can forgive, and we can confront because God has given us the grace to be able to do all of that. And so, I guess I just want to empower that couple, or encourage that couple, to understand, to lean into God's grace, to know that it's there, to know that there's peace also available that is not hinging on the circumstance of your marriage, so you can have peace where you're at, knowing Jesus.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** And also hope that romance can be reclaimed in your marriage as well.
- Ryan:** Well, I'm going to try something here.
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** I feel like drawing a line between how you are loved in Christ and how you can love each other in this way. Okay?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, think about, listener, think about how Christ wooed you, and how He romanced you and He won your heart. Okay?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: So, I had a lot of pride; I had a lot of, you know, I thought I'd be able to think and figure it out, and that's not what faith is.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Something through my life, I had a lot of sin, a lot of rebellion, a lot of heart disorientation, and God *lovingly* put me in the right place at the right time to hear the little seeds. Not here and there, not at one big momentous occasion, but it was an on-going pursuit.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: We talk about pursuit all the time. We are *pursued* by Christ. What is that if it's not winning over someone's heart?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And so, if Christ has won over our heart, now, I can, even though I feel like I've lost a hold of your heart, I can have hope that just as Christ has won me over I can love you in a way that, by God's grace, might win you back!

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

Ryan: It might rekindle or reclaim that romance that we once had, and we now feel is lost.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And so, that's what you were talking about, 'cause we have this hope in Christ because now He's shown us what pursuit looks like.

Selena: Yes. Absolutely.

Ryan: So, [*Inhales*] with that said, I think it makes sense to at least talk about and mention these resources [*Both chuckle*]: The 31 Day Pursuit Challenge.

Selena: Yes. Yep. [*Smacks lips as she inhales*]

Ryan: Tens of thousands of couples have gone through this thing.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: The reviews are phenomenal. We just love that it's helping people, but it's called The 31 Day Pursuit Challenge. You can go to 31daypursuit.com, and it's basically two books, and it's 31 days. And it's Husband in Pursuit, and Wife in Pursuit; those are the names of the two books.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And they're designed to go side-by-side, even though you don't *have* to do it. It can be one-sided.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Fully! Because it's still about pursuing...

Selena: Right. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Like, without strings.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: [*Sniffles*] And so, the point of it is there's a devotional, we go through scripture, and then it says, "Here's how you can put this love into action as Christ has pursued you."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: It's things like having honest conversations, leaving a loving note.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Buying a small gift.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Or planning a date.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And one of them is reenacting your first date. [*Selena chuckles and Ryan sniffs in*] And it really does kind of get you out of those rhythms, those ruts that you get stuck in.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: [*Inhales*] And it makes you think in terms of how to really celebrate in light of what Christ has done.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, 31daypursuit.com. I just want to put that out there, 'cause it is a really, I think, helpful tool.

Selena: Uh, yeah!

Ryan: [*Smacks lips*] And they're not super expensive. I think the books are \$14, or something like that, a piece. So... Or less actually.

Selena: Yeah! [*Ryan inhales*] I think that'd be a good challenge.

Ryan: Anyway.

Selena: [*States in a funny voice*] Go get them books! [*Resumes normal voice*]

Ryan: Alright! So, let's recap [*Selena chuckles*] real fast.

Selena: Kay!

Ryan: Just the three really tangible things is the three tangible ways to reclaim real romance.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: The first one is just to remember special doesn't mean expensive!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Alright? Think about how to love your spouse, and a really easy, tangible thing is to relive your first date, [*Inhales*] maybe plan—What is it? Take them to a special place where you maybe had a first, whether it's a kiss, holding hands or whatever.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: [*Slowly inhales*] Just whatever that memory is for you. That's an easy trigger.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Otherwise, just remember that it can be special in how they want to be loved.

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: Second one is, with that said [*Selena laughs*], extravagance is well spent.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, if you feel like pulling out all the stops, that's a good thing.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Remember that's a good thing. And then, in that same sense, the third one is brush up on your charm!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Get that decorum out [*Clicks the "t" and quickly inhales*] [*Selena chuckles*] Remember your P's.

Selena: Brush it off! The cobwebs. [*Laughing*]

Ryan: Remember your Ps and your Qs and... Get a haircut, and just, I don't know! We've just found that to be a really refreshing experience.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: It's something that's out of the norm. Don't feel like you have to do that every week—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: 'Cause that's—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That seems to be unrealistic.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But something that's out of the norm for you guys. So, is there a couple's conversation challenge? Do we have one?

Selena: I was just—Yeah. I was saying get a date on the calendar... Within maybe the next seven days and do something romantic for your spouse.

Ryan: Good one! Okay.

Selena: I think obviously buying the books is great, but [*Sniffles*] get something on the calendar. Be ac—Be active? [*Laughs*] Be intentional about it! That's the word!

Ryan: Yeah. Okay.

Selena: And make it happen! Again, keeping these three things in mind, maybe if you're going to pull out all the stops, look at the calendar. Is there any reason to *really* celebrate? And maybe write a note or write something [*Inhales*] about how this is reclaiming or it's monumental for your relationship. I feel like putting those takes in the ground really does something to your heart and your soul, and it just reminds you, again, of *who* God is, what He's done in your life.

Find those things! Celebrate those things. Bring the romance around those things; that's good!

Ryan: [*Smacks lips*] Yeah!

Selena: And so, do that. At least plan something in the next seven days!

Ryan: And I want to give an option to kick it up a notch for that!

Selena: [*Says in a funny voice*] Ohhh boy!

Ryan: When you get that date on the calendar, I would say both of you bring to the table a written letter to each other, and you read it to each other. So...

Selena: Yeah. I like that.

Ryan: And have it include, just as an idea, don't get bogged down by this [*Selena chuckles*], but three to five things. "Here's why I love you..." "Here's why I—"

Selena: "I'm thankful for you."

Ryan: "Continue and thankful for you."

Selena: [*Says quietly*] Yeah.

Ryan: And, "Here's what I see in you." And I feel like those moments are really good, when you not only say, "I love that you're X, Y, and Z," but, "Here's what I see in you."

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: "I see God doing this in you," "I see this and how you're either my wife or you're the mother of our children or you're at your job or whatever God is using you to do!"

Selena: So good!

Ryan: Spend time articulating those things. And just read it to each other quietly at the table.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Or wherever you go. So.

Selena: Yeah. So good! So good.

Ryan: Selena.

Selena: Alright.

Ryan: Do you mind praying us out?

Selena: Okie dokie! [*Chuckles*]

God, thank you so much for this idea and this ability to be romantic with each other. God, to have a friendship that we can rekindle and share memories with only that person. And I pray that you would continue to help us to reclaim the romance in our marriage, that we can experience this relationship just set on fire, and that it would be *glorifying* to You, God. That it would speak to who You are and what You've done, from the smallest things in our marriage to the biggest things.

We are so grateful. Thank you for each and every listener! We pray that marriages would be reclaimed, and romance would be rekindled for Your glory.

In Your name,

Amen.

[00:50:16] **Ryan:** Amen. Alright! This episode is!

Selena: In the can!

Ryan: Ladies and gentlemen, as always, thank you so much for listening to the Fierce Marriage podcast, and we will see you in about seven days! Until then... Stay fierce!

[00:50:33] <Ending Sequence>

[00:51:12] *Podcast ends.*

PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:04:55]**
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 5:15, *ESV*
- **[00:09:59]**
 - Scripture reference: Proverbs 5:19, *wrong Bible reference*
 - Correct Bible reference: Proverbs 5:18, *ESV*
 - Podcast reference: The 5 Love Languages (Podcast)
 - <https://fiercemarriage.com/the-5-love-languages-podcast>
 - TV Show reference: The Office – Valentine’s Day
 - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0763221/>
- **[00:15:03]**
 - Podcast reference: Becoming a “Family Team” (Jefferson and Alyssa Bethke)
 - <https://fiercemarriage.com/becoming-a-family-team-jefferson-and-alyssa-bethke>
- **[00:45:01]**
 - 31 Day Pursuit Challenge:
 - <http://www.31daypursuit.com>

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