

WHAT (LITTLE “G”) GODS ARE YOU WORSHIPPING IN YOUR MARRIAGE?

<https://fiercemarriage.com/what-little-g-gods-are-you-worshipping-in-your-marriage>

[00:00:00] **Selena:** So, we are back.

Ryan: We're back!

Selena: Post baby.

Ryan: [*Laughs*] Sorry, that was a little loud.

Selena: We got— I know you want energy. I was working on it and then you just—

Ryan: I was loud. [*Laughing*]

Selena: Barge right in. [*Both laughing*] Someone's excited. Someone's excited here.

Ryan: It's been a while since we've recorded a--

Selena: Yes! [*Both together*] Podcast episode. [*Selena resumes solo*] About four weeks [*Selena chuckles*] exactly.

Ryan: Yeah. Although listeners may not have known— I'm sure we did mention it as we [*Selena chuckling*] had the back kind of— We recorded extra episodes knowing that the baby was coming.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And I think we mentioned that. But...

Selena: We did! So, we now have a baby.

Ryan: The baby was born!

Selena: Another baby. Louisa Hope Kay Frederick.

Ryan: Yes!

Selena: Was born 11 days early, on October 7th. [*Laughs*] Biggest baby!

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: And she's healthy. We're good. She is actually laying right over here—

Ryan: Oh!

Selena: Next to us. So, we have our one and only fan here. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: We are-- It's November 7th as we're recording this.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: So, she's a month-old today!

Selena: A month old today!

Ryan: Yaaay!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, where's her name come from real quick? [*Baby coos in background*] Oop! There she is.

Selena: And you'll hear her. This is... We're getting real life here a bit people. Her name came from one of my favorite authors, Louisa May Alcott. It may be pronounced "Lou-essa," but we call our daughter "Lou-eesa." She wrote Little Women, Little Men, all of those things.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: So, one of my favorite authors, some of my favorite stories. So!

Ryan: And Hope is just kind of a faith based. Obviously, it's from--

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: Our hope in Christ.

Selena: Yes. 'Cause--

Ryan: And, then...

Selena: All of our girls have [*Baby crying in background*] grace, faith, and then hope. Those are all their middle names.

Ryan: Like, grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Selena: There she is!

Ryan: We couldn't name her Louisa Christ Kay [*Selena laughs*] Frederick. [*Ryan chuckles*] Sorry. Selena's now picking up Louisa. Anyway! So, we do have hope in Christ. So, we're big on by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, being that our hope is in Christ. And then Kay is actually your mother's middle name.

Selena: Yeah, we do have a... family name!

Ryan: And a family name.

Selena: Family name. Sorry.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Away from the mic there.

Ryan: You got to use the microphone that we...

Selena: Family name.

Ryan: We still have to do that. Anyway. Now Louisa's here with us. So, anyway, listener, thank you for your patience! Today we're going to talk about some things we've been learning over the last month, namely, what little "g" gods are you worshiping in your marriage? And this question became painfully clear to us [*Selena laughs*] as we realized... babies have a way of kind of...

Selena: Sanctifying you [*Ryan laughs*], bringing out the little gods in you.

Ryan: They have a way of kind of rocking the boat.

Selena: Yes! In a good way.

Ryan: Shaking things up in a really positive way.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: Anyway. It's great to be back and we can't for— we can't look— we can't— [*Ryan laughs*] It's great!

Selena: Stay with us people! Hang on.

Ryan: Yeah. We will see on the other side.

[00:02:26] <Intro Sequence>

[00:02:58] **Selena:** That was a long frontside.

Ryan: It was a long one!

Selena: [*Laughs*] It's alright, though.

Ryan: Yeah. This episode's going to be a little bit different. So, full disclaimer is, again, we're getting back in the saddle here. [*Selena laughs*] We haven't

recorded for four weeks; that's after having recorded multiple times a week for [*Selena laughs*] the last almost two years.

Selena: Yes. Yes.

Ryan: So, we're a little bit... I don't want to say we're rusty, but we definitely want to, I think, take some time to kind of warm up and catch up, because there's been a lot that's happened in our life. Not only the baby being born, which has been phenomenal.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: She's been just incredible; that's created a whole bunch of new... things to learn, having three daughters now. How do the other two daughters take to her? Which they're incredible.

Selena: Mm-hm. Yeah!

Ryan: They're great big sisters!

Selena: Yeah. They're transitioning. We're seeing some pains kind of here and there.

Ryan: They're finding their place [*Selena laughs*] in the birth order. [*Both laugh*] Our oldest—

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Join in the team here. Yeah.

Ryan: Our oldest is definitely excited to be the oldest, but also feels the pain of being the oldest and kind of being—

Selena: And also brings out the attitude of being the oldest. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: And the attitude, yes. And she's about to be six.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: So, that's a thing.

Selena: So, pray for us. But—

Ryan: But also, we've finished edits.

Selena: Yeah...

Ryan: So, all in that last time.

Selena: All these babies are born. [*Ryan laughs and Selena chuckling*] Being born.

Ryan: My goodness! So, our book that's coming out in May is called See Through Marriage. We had the edits finally submitted to our publisher. They had been so patient and gracious with us as the baby arrived earlier than we had planned. And that's been fun!

Selena: Yeah. If she would have come on our due date, we probably would have been done. 'Cause I'm sure it would have taken 11 days. *[Laughing]*

Ryan: That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Selena: *[Chuckling]* That's my story.

Ryan: And so, we did that. I'm also currently working on finals for seminary, which is amazing and taxing. But I also fell behind on classes and reading and sent— What are they called? The videos!

Selena: Videos...

Ryan: What are those called? I don't know. Lectures! Yeah, there they are.

Selena: *[Laughs]* There's the word.

Ryan: There's the word. So, I've fallen behind, and so I had to catch up. I'm catching up on that, and I have to submit that in the very near future.

Selena: Yep.

Ryan: Also, I've been making a ton of bread.

Selena: Literally.

Ryan: I've, yeah.

Selena: We've been watching The Great British Baking Show. *[Ryan laughs]* Because our kids actually really enjoy watching it.

[00:05:01] **Ryan:** Yeah.

Selena: And we like watching it, and we're learning a lot. So, he's been making bread, literally, for the past month. *[Laughs]*

Ryan: Well, okay. So, I'm not a bandwagon show watcher, right? The thing is, is their—

Selena: It's okay to watch a show and not be *[Inaudible]*.

Ryan: In one of the first episodes-- Well, but I'm not like, "Oh! I'm all into baking!" Honestly, I don't want to say could care less, but I don't care as much about

cupcakes and sponge cakes and [*Selena laughs*] things like that. The thing is, is they had a bread episode.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And one of the guys on the episode said, "Yeah," as he was making it, they were kind of interviewing him and he said, "Yeah, this is just kind of the typical loaf that I'd make for our family, and it's just the one that I always make." And I thought to myself, "We need a Frederick Loaf."

Selena: [*Chuckling*] Frederick family loaf.

Ryan: [*Laughing*] That's—

Selena: It's just great.

Ryan: We've got enough loafers [*Selena laughs*]; I know that! You're a loafer.

Selena: [*Laughing*] Right?

Ryan: And interlopers. [*Ryan snickers*] But we needed a Frederick family loaf. And so, over the last four weeks, I probably made how many loaves? I don't want to exaggerate. I want to say in the teens.

Selena: [*Laughs*] That's probably accurate.

Ryan: Yeah. I want to say in the teens, and you know what? I think I found it! I think I found the Frederick family loaf. It's a five seated— I want to call it the Five Sola bread, 'cause, you know, we're good formed people.

Selena: Five Sola. [*Laughing*]

Ryan: Sola, you know, the Five Solas.

Selena: Nice.

Ryan: But there's five different seeds in it. It's super seedy and semi-sweet, a lot like my wife. [*Laughs*]

Selena: It's, "Oh, what a treat!".

Ryan: [*Ryan laughs*] It's, "Oh, what a treat." [*Selena laughs*] But it's good! You know what? Write in. Write in if you're a bread fan [*Selena laughs*], and leave a question, and if you feel so inclined maybe put your address and I might send a loaf of bread your way. [*Laughs*]

Selena: Which leads us to our [*Chuckling*] housekeeping.

Ryan: Oh, yeah.

Selena: We might need more patrons to...

Ryan: Patreons.

Selena: Patrons. *[Both laughing]* To help us supply the bread needs here. But...

Ryan: Okay. Yeah. So, I'll make it really fast. By the way, thank you Patreon supporters. You guys have just really been such a blessing. We've shared a lot more, the baby happenings, on our patreon page.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Which is patreon.com/fiercemarriage. And, basically, we just kind of asking for prayer as we went into labor. Also shared pictures *[Chuckles]*, like the day after...

Selena: Not like birth story pictures.

Ryan: Well, of course.

Selena: These are just, like...

Ryan: Videos.

Selena: "Oh, here's a baby!"

Ryan: I was wearing a GoPro. *[Selena chuckles]* And here's what happened.

Selena: *[Both laughing]* No! *[Ryan laughing]* Nope, sorry.

Ryan: "It was a war zone!"

Selena: We are not those people.

Ryan: It was intense. But anyway, I didn't share those pictures. But anyway! A lot of prayers through that. And so, it's been a blessing to us, not just on the financial side, but on the co-traveling side of it.

Selena: Mm-hm. Mm-hm!

Ryan: So, if you want to be a part of that community, and really it is becoming a community and it's on its own.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And be on mission with Fierce Marriage, with Ryan and Selena Frederick, with the people that we've partnered with here.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: In terms of Carrie and all the lovely people that work with us.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Carrie does all the shipping. If you've ever gotten books, Carrie's the one shipping that out.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: She's incredible! You can be a part of that! And the way you do that is you go to patreon.com/fiercemarriage. We just ask two things. The first thing is that we ask that you pray about it. We don't want you just to make a knee-jerk decision or anything that's— We want you to pray about it and be on a mission, heart and soul, husband and wife unified together in that. And if you pray about it and God leads you to it, then we just ask the second thing is that you just act on it, and you can act \$2 a month, \$5 a month on up.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Whatever you can do, it's a blessing. However, God leads you, it's a blessing. Secondly...

Selena: Thank you to all our listeners, our raters and reviewers. If you have not left a rating or review, take a few *seconds* to do that, 'cause it does not take long! And it makes a huge difference, and we appreciate it. And I think—

Ryan: Agreed!

Selena: Potential listeners appreciate it as well!

Ryan: Agreed.

Selena: Also, if you hear anything that prompts a question, please ask. And you can do that by calling or texting 971-333-1120. There's also a form, I believe, on our website: [Fiercemarriage.com/podcasts](https://fiercemarriage.com/podcasts). There's a—

Ryan: There's a button there. Yep!

Selena: A button there to ask a question. So, do that!

Ryan: If you're a button person.

Selena: If you're a button person. [*Both chuckle*] And... Yeah. I guess, thanks to our community for supporting us. We actually got a gift in the mail from some listener's—

- Ryan:** Yeah! Oh, my word.
- Selena:** From the Holvick family. They're from Newberg, Oregon, and *they* gave us— I believe she made these blankets.
- Ryan:** They're phenomenal.
- Selena:** Some beautiful baby blankets. And we love them! They're soft and I like the patterns! It's great! It was so thoughtful! They sent us a card. They're always praying for us. And so, we're super grateful.
- Ryan:** Can I just say, I have felt *more* loved by the body of Christ, our local church body, but also the body *global*...
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** Through this last four or five weeks of our lives. I've never felt more loved, more tangibly loved.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** I've always kind of *known* that we're loved.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Just because by virtue of being brothers and sisters in Christ...
- Selena:** But I think when we stop doing something, we can feel our love...
- Ryan:** Like it wanes. [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Yes! [*Both laughing*] That people that love us might not love us as *much*.
- Ryan:** Out of sight, out of mind.
- Selena:** Right?!
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** 'Cause we had so linked to that *doing* verses being.
- Ryan:** But, like the meal train, right? So, we're members at a church and they sent out a member email. They're like, "Hey! Welcome baby Louisa Frederick into the family. Here's a meal train link if you want to be part of it."
- Selena:** Yeah.

Ryan: We ate *amazing* meals that we didn't have to make.

[00:10:01] **Selena:** Apparently, still there's more coming, so...

Ryan: Yes! [*Selena chuckles*] Alright.

Selena: They were counting on her being a little bit later baby. So, we'll see! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: And you know what? We haven't gotten any spaghetti. [*Both chuckle*]

Selena: Stop.

Ryan: Usually you get so much spaghetti on those things.

Selena: Right. But one friend makes really good spaghetti meatballs, and that's... all I got to say about it. So...

Ryan: Alright. Well...

Selena: Anyways. Moving on!

Ryan: So, today's topic. [*Selena laughs*] Thank you so much already, if you've made it this far. [*Selena laughs*] Thank you, awesome listeners.

Selena: We're excited to be here! I think we're indulging a little bit here. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: We are. We are! We're being selfish.

Selena: But yes!

Ryan: Speaking of being selfish... [*Laughing*] That's what we're talking about today.

Selena: Yes! That's kind of, basically, what we're talking about today. So, we were sitting there talking to each other about what is something that is relevant in our hearts and what's God been teaching us through these last couple weeks. And, basically, we've titled this thing, "What Little Gods Are You Worshipping?" "What Little 'g' Gods Are You Worshipping?"

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: So... I don't think we've, you know, we're not bowing down to comfort and pleasure, but in other ways we functionally are bowing to things. We're giving them power, we're sacrificing for them, we are looking at them and idolizing them versus God and His ways in our lives. So... Yeah.

Ryan: I want to take a moment. And so, this idea of a little "g" god...

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: It has some different contexts for us in our culture versus when we see, “You shall have no other gods before me.”

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: We see that an Exodus, when the Ten Commandments and those sorts of things. And so, we're making a correlation there that I think is, on its surface, it's very obvious, but, I think, *below* the surface it's even *more* deeply [*Baby begins cooing in background*] connected than we often realize. There she is. By the way, she's been really grunty.

Selena: She baby squeaks here. Sorry.

Ryan: She's a squeaker. [*Selena laughs*] So, what do we mean by that, these little “g” gods? So, one story that came to mind as we were thinking through this is in Exodus 32, the golden calf, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: There's something in us, as people, as fallen human beings who have this sense of the divine, this sense that we need God in our lives, that God is alive, that God is real. There's something in us that rails against That, right? So, in Exodus 32, that's where Moses is up on Mount Sinai. He's getting commands from God, and all the Israelites are— Not very long, I don't know how many days exactly, but not very long—

Selena: Mm. Yeah.

Ryan: Went by, not very many days went by, and they were just like, “Oh, no! We need a god to serve,” like, “We need another god!” And so, they all start talking to Aaron, and they're like, “Aaron, we need a god to serve.” He says, “Alright! Well give me all your bracelets and the earrings out of your wives' ears, and...”

Selena: Which, if there's any indicator for us being created to worship, [*Chuckles*] I think that's...

Ryan: Yeah! And so, he takes all this gold...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And then he crafts this golden calf, and they start worshipping it. And what does it say? [*Laughs quietly*] I had it up; I got to pull it up again. But it's saying, let's see here, Exodus 32... Yeah. So, “When people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain,” so, he delayed, “the people gathered themselves together to Aaron and said to him, ‘Up, make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of

Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” So, they're panicking. Fear has set in!

Selena: Moses didn't text them back. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: Yeah. He left them on red. [*Selena laughs*] And so, Aaron said to them— Like, Aaron, I just think he's [*Ryan chuckles*] just along for the ride at this point, [*Selena chuckles*] which to me is hilarious. But, “So Aaron said to them, ‘Take off the rings of gold that are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.’ So all the people took off the rings of gold that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf.” This is the part that gets me. All right? He said, “And they said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow shall be the feast to the LORD.’” [*Ryan snickers*] I don't know what is going on here! [*Ryan laughs*]

Selena: Well, they're attributing godly actions and worship to gods that they want to make.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: So, they're creating their own worship and giving the attributes, I feel like, to this fake god. But they're giving attributes of the God of Israel to these things!

Ryan: Right. And so, they—

Selena: Which is even more distressing. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: They had a moment of fear and *panic*.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And they needed something to set their fear and panic at ease. And so, they said, “Give us a god who can go before us. Let's craft it with our own hands.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And here, these are the people that have seen, that were literally part of the exodus, right?

Selena: [*Inaudible*]

Ryan: The crossing of the Red Sea, the plagues, all the miracles, you know, the bread, and...

Selena: The pillar of fire.

Ryan: Yeah. And the unleavened bre— or whatever, the manna from Heaven.

Selena: Yeah.

[00:14:40] **Ryan:** Their sandals and all this stuff they hadn't worn out. They *had seen* so many miracles, day in and day out, and here they are... panicking. Right? And so, you got to wonder. What is in us, as people, that would cause us to do this. And I think of Romans. That made me think of Romans 1, right? Where it says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth." And, "What can be known about God is *plain* to them, because God has shown it *to* them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been *clearly* perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made." And get this, "So they are without excuse." So, all that to say is we, as people, have this sense of His reality. So much so Paul says we are without excuse. And so, *but* we have, in our own righteous— We can. This is talking about the wrath on the unrighteous, so unregenerate non-believers. But we have in us this sinful nature that wants to suppress truth and unrighteousness.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: So, any time we talk about a little "g" god, we are effectively, in fear, in anxiety, in pain, in discomfort, turning to anything else that goes against who the one true, real God. Like, why do they not turn away from their golden calf at that moment?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Why did they turn away from the one true God?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And I think sin is the answer.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, we do this in our lives. [Laughs]

Selena: We do this in our lives.

Ryan: So, that's a big—

Selena: And how does this sort of play out in our marriages I think is the biggest thing, because having a baby definitely [Chuckles] causes some fear and discomfort—

Ryan: Thank you. Yes!

Selena: I think, in some ways.

Ryan: Yes.

Selena: And so, you know, we've been, Ryan and I personally, have been confronted with our own desires, right? There's this desire [*Selena chuckles*] for sleep and rest. [*Both chuckle*] And those are not bad things! Are we yelling at kids so that we can sleep? Maybe! Nah, I'm [*Selena chuckles*] kidding.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: But like, you know what I'm saying? There's things that we're compromising sometimes to *get* what we think we need.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And that's where I think it calls to question what are we worshipping, what are we striving for, what do we *want*?

Ryan: And in what are—

Selena: And that we're not having.

Ryan: In whom or in what are we placing our ultimate trust?

Selena: Our trust. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Ryan: And our ultimate affections. And our ultimate *desire*.

Selena: Right. So...

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So, defining some of these things, these areas that we might “worship,” or things, again, that we might sacrifice for, or that we feel like we need instead of God. So, turning to these things. And I think the biggest one, again, that we're starting with, and I think for most people who can identify with, is comfort and pleasure.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: You know, we kind of do whatever it takes to maintain that level of comfort we want. We're not willing to compromise or serve our spouse or our kids or our family if it infringes on our time and energy and resources, right? We *ultimately* want everything for ourselves, and we're going to kind of rely on ourselves *for* that, I think, in a lot of ways.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And I think some examples of this—These are just personals [*Selena laughs*]. So... Here is my life. [*Ryan laughs*] But Bible reading. You know, right now, I don't feel like I have tons of time to *do* that. I mean, yeah, I do it when I'm nursing, but then that's like in the dark at two in the morning, and I feel like not much is being [*Selena laughs*] retained. But not having time or being challenged by the messages we're reading or hearing if there's scripture, that is *uncomfortable* to us. [*Selena chuckles*] It's not always fun to read your Bible, and exciting and wonderful, right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: But it is *necessary*. Watching shows, getting on the screens, you know? [*Laughs*] The screens... [*Laughing*]

Ryan: The screens.

Selena: [*Laughing*] I'm sorry!

Ryan: Well, I think... So, I want to be clear here. There's a time, right, after having Louisa—

Selena: Absolutely!

Ryan: That we were like, "Okay. We just need to hunker down." I love that.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: The visual. Like, we're just hunkered down as a family.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: We're *dead* to the world.

Selena: Right. Not getting up and going, doing the same routine a day later.

Ryan: And that we are just, in our four walls, and only our close friends and family are coming in to visit, and we are just in family recovery mode.

Selena: Just serve and love on us. Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely.

Ryan: And that means a lot of walks around the neighborhood with the girls.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: A lot of playing in their rooms.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: A lot of watching cartoons together. [Selena chuckles] A lot of making bread in the kitchen.

Selena: Playing games.

Ryan: And letting the girls help with that.

Selena: Yes. Yes.

Ryan: And a lot of, and granted, it depends on your own life situation; not every man can take time off. I took some time off from Fierce Marriage and from everything else. Hopefully you can take some time off, 'cause it's such a sweet time!

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: But, so there's that sense of, "Okay. It's okay to watch some things."

Selena: Right! And, but I think...

Ryan: But there's a moment, I think, where we know in our guts that maybe that switching.

Selena: Well, that pattern is becoming too much. And I think one of the indicators is that when we're living our lives just to kind of make it to the next time we get to watch a show, that's, you know, you're just kind of living for the...

Ryan: That's an addiction!

Selena: From the moment—

Ryan: That's *classic* addiction.

Selena: Right. Right. And so, I think we have to be aware of that! And we have to bring people into our circle and say, "Hey, you know, this is what I'm struggling with," or, "This is what I feel like," and I was very transparent with Ryan about some of the feelings I was feeling when people would send me *basic* texts. [Chuckles] And I'd be like, "I can't do this. I don't want that. And I feel really angry." [Laughs briefly] And I'm like, "I'm pretty sure these are all pregnancy hormones, but can you please help me see this more clearly?" You know? And walking through that together.

Ryan: Mm.

[00:19:59] **Selena:** And so, there was a lot of discomfort and things that I didn't like, but was it something that was real or was it something that I was making up, and how was I dealing with it, I guess, was a bigger question?

Ryan: I think what really tangible way that this plays out in a husband's life is *sexually*.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: In terms of comfort and pleasure.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Right? After a woman has a child, you're out of commission... sexually and traditional sexual manners... *[Both laugh]* I'll say that.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: There's some healing that has to hap—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: A lot of healing has to happen. *[Selena chuckles]* And that takes time.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Six weeks is the minimum.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so...

Selena: In other cultures, it's longer. *[Chuckles]*

Ryan: Well, and it might need to be for us, too.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And I think that's something that, you know, we joke. Like, it's been... what? It's been 20... 30 days. 30, 31 days and seven hours *[Selena chuckles and Ryan laughs]* since the last time you and I were able to be intimate in that way, and we joke and be like, "Alright! Well, six weeks is coming up, so I hope you're ready!" You know? But I have to reassure you, like, "Hey, *[Both laugh]* we'll take this step by step. Don't feel expectation."

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: But that's been a great opportunity where, as a husband, to serve you and not pressure you or make you feel guilty or in any way make you *feel* that pain, in a way that is—

Selena: Right.

- Ryan:** That you don't already feel. As my wife, you already take that on.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And there's a sense that we want to connect, and there are other ways to connect *sexually* during this time.
- Selena:** Right. Right.
- Ryan:** And I do mean sexually; it's not like you just all the sudden *ignore* each other.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Physical affection is completely dead for six weeks.
- Selena:** Right. It's not an excuse to just be like, "Well, we're not going to do that!"
[Laughs]
- Ryan:** But if a husband is selfish in this time, it can...
- Selena:** There's ways you can make your wife *pay* for feeling that.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And so, and I just want to bring it back to the whole Aaron thing, the golden calf thing, and the Romans 1 thing, meaning that if I take *my* own desire, my fear of not being fulfilled, my comfort being sacrificed, and I take that and that's the god that I'm serving, that's my golden calf, and I've already forgotten this miracle that is my wife, okay? The miracle that is our new baby, the miracle that it is this life that God has given us, the salvation he's given us in Christ—
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** First and foremost. I forget all that stuff.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** I forget all the things that God has done.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And now, all the sudden, I'm worshipping this small "g" god of my own comfort, my own pleasure.
- Selena:** Right.

- Ryan:** Then there's going to be sacrifices that are going to be made.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And those sacrifices—
- Selena:** Are usually like... [Chuckles]
- Ryan:** Are usually *your wife*.
- Selena:** At the expense of the wife in there.
- Ryan:** Your kids.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** All the sudden, you're now yelling at your kids because *your selfishness* is welling up into bitterness in your own heart.
- Selena:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Ryan:** And anger and impatience, and you're not living by the spirit. In Galatians 5, you're not living by the spirit—
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** You're living by the fruits of the flesh.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** So—
- Selena:** And not to say that you haven't already done this, but bringing in God's word, I think, is really one of the big ways we can combat and the big ways we can be aware, And Hebrews 4:12 is just, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** And then it also says, "And no creature," verse 13, "is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an account."
- Ryan:** Mm...
- Selena:** And reading that verse knowing who our God is—If you don't know who God is, that could be very scary thing, right? But if we *know* who God is, if we *know*

His nature, He's a good God full of mercy and grace, again, we can't always know these things without being in His word, you know? Spurgeon says, "It's good to visit other books, but live in your Bible."

Ryan: Love that.

Selena: And that's been *very* convicting to me, and also very encouraging, right? It's not just, "Oh, you haven't been reading your Bible," but, "Here's the clearway of how you should live."

Ryan: Hm...

Selena: And being in God's word, all our motives are brought to light and challenged. Our hearts are *lovingly* called back to repent, to turn back to God, away from our motivation that might be sinful or selfish. We're given instruction and *hope* on *how* to live in obedience and the benefits of it because of Jesus.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: It's transformational for us to be in God's word; it allows the Holy Spirit to be at work *in* us during these times where we might be struggling with... wanting things that we can't have. And why would we want those things? And God's words like, "Here's why you might want these things, and here's why they might be bad. But look! My word will *help* you through this. I am here with you. I'm not leaving you. I'm giving you instruction. There's hope because of Jesus."

Ryan: I want to pause there a minute, because you hit every main thing that is just like these deep—As I'm going through seminary, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: It's been *incredible* to learn about the doctrine of God's word, the doctrine of scripture, the doctrine of *God*.

Selena: Mm.

[00:24:44] **Ryan:** Theology proper, as they would say [*Selena laughs muffled*], where it's actual study of God. God's word is the Bible. That's what we usually, typically, mean by that. But remember, right, it's John 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was with God." And he sent forth the Word. So, we have the *Word* incarnate, in Jesus, being sent forth. We have God, the God of the Bible, *bending low*, giving us His *special* revelation in His word that we have now. We have access to the thoughts of God, to the commands of God, the way He thinks, the way the way He is. He's given us that access to Him in His word. We see that in the second person of the Trinity, the Son, who is the Word incarnate. But then we also see the ministry

of the Word going forward, and He said this through the Holy Spirit. So, we have not only the revelation of God, we have the power of God.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: And we have the person of God himself in Christ, and so many other different, rich ways to look at the doc— You know, what this word means. But...

Selena: I only write these things and say these things because of our conversations. [Chuckles]

Ryan: Right.

Selena: And listening to you talking about seminary. [Both chuckle] So, it's really helpful that you're going to seminary. But it's not that I just hear that—

Ryan: But these truths are deep.

Selena: They're deep! Yep. And I think they're articulating things that I've always known and believed, but being able to say them clearly in a way that is helpful to us and hopefully our listeners is a whole 'nother ballgame.

Ryan: Well, and so the rubber kind of meets the road or so— Okay. So what?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay. So, the thing is, is we can't discount the fact that we have God's word in our hands.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: We can't discount the fact that we are covered by the blood of Christ.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: God's word incarnate, in a way that actually enables us to live under freedom, and the Holy Spirit illumines it in our hearts and makes it come to life so that we can actually *live* by it. So, we have the instruction, but we also have the fuel by which to live it out!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, when we see these small “g” gods crop up their ugly heads in our lives, we can say to God, “Hey.” We can go to Him by the by the prompting of the Holy Spirit when we're filling convicted.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “God, I have not loved your wor— I have not gotten into Your—I’m not submitting myself to Your word in a way that it's actually transformational in my heart, and it's showing!”

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: “I'm lashing out against my kids. I'm being selfish with my wife. I'm being impatient, I'm being bitter, I'm being all these things. *Help* me desire Your word.”

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And that is an amazing prompting of the Holy Spirit, to pray that. And you know what? Anytime I've prayed for God to make me hungry or thirsty for His word, He fulfills it *almost* instantaneously.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I want to say instantaneously, because it's almost like saying that prayer, in itself, is a *submission*.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And in your own heart, saying, “God, help me love You better!”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “I'm sorry I haven't loved You well.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “You deserve all the love, all the glory, but I've taken love for myself.”

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: “I've taken glory for myself—”

Selena: Well, and, “I'm sorry for not *wanting* those, wanting You.”

Ryan: “In these various ways.”

Selena: You know?

Ryan: Right.

Selena: I'm sorry for wanting— I'm so bent, God, on wanting what I want for myself.

- Ryan:** Right. And that goes to the next one, which you have listed down as the “God of control.”
- Selena:** Right. So, we have—
- Ryan:** And power. [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Just a quick recap. We have the god of comfort/pleasure, ‘cause we felt like those two go hand in hand. And then the God of control and power. And typically, you know, this comes from a place of fear in us, right? There might be some lies we’re believing, or we’re afraid that something might happen, so this just typically produces a lot of anxiety and frustration. And so, we’re trying to control things so that we can maybe avoid that type of anxiety, avoid that frustration, when sometimes God, you know, doesn't want us to be in [*Chuckling*] control of everything because we just can't handle it. I feel like that, to me, trying to control everything produces *more* [*Chuckles*] anxiety and frustration, than trying to avoid something, which God's worked that in my heart, because now I feel like He's given me more confidence to just face things instead of— It's like your little toddler, right? You want to make everything nice and happy for them so that they're nice and happy, but, literally, you can't control everything. And so, when that object of [*Chuckles*] something comes against them and they don't like it, you either can try to appease them or you can try to teach them and walk them through it, right?
- Ryan:** Or in marriage, when your spouse is not responding in the way that you think they should. Right? You’ve done all—
- Selena:** [*Sighs*] Finally. I’m glad you’re finally hearing this. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** [*Chuckles*] You’ve stepped through the right hoops, right?
- Selena:** Right. You say the right things. Do the—
- Ryan:** You’re like, “I gave you this! I gave you that! We went on a date. What else do you want from me?!” [*Selena laughs*] Like, “Give me what I think I need!”
- Selena:** Yeeeah.
- Ryan:** And now, see, that's the thing is—
- Selena:** Well, it can make marriage feel so lonely. It’s transactional, right? It’s the whole...
- Ryan:** Yeah. Well, and I’m trying to exercise a certain level of control and power...
- Selena:** Absolutely.

Ryan: Over your heart. We talked about this a few episodes back; we talked about what is in the scope of our own...

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: How has God commissioned us? He's commissioned us into sharing the gospel. He's not commissioned us into the business of changing hearts.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He's commissioned us into discipling each other and watching as the Holy Spirit changes hearts. So, when I do that, and I'm upset because you're not transforming in the way that— “Hey! Get over that friendship! We've talked about it. Get over it! Why are you still agonizing over it?”

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Or some spouses, they're upset because their spouse is not responding to the gospel.

[00:30:01] **Selena:** Right.

Ryan: Right? What do I do? We get a lot of messages in that say, “What do I do if I'm a believer, but my spouse is not?”

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: “They don't care about the Bible. They don't care about church. What do I do?”

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: That can kind of well up in us in this way of control and power.

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: Like, really, you want to control the outcome.

Selena: “How do I make them believe in Jesus?” [*Both chuckle*] “How do I make them love God?”

Ryan: But it's a beautiful thing when we have to surrender ourselves to God and say, “God, You are in control. You are powerful. I am not. I can trust You. I can take joy in that. And I can trust that You're going to do what's most *glorious* for You, God.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

- Ryan:** “And I can watch, and I can be a part of it. And I pray, as your child, as your son, as your daughter, I *pray* that You would do X, Y and Z.”
- Selena:** Right. Right!
- Ryan:** As your son.
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** As your daughter.
- Selena:** And another way that, personally, I think control and power plays out as a wife, and this is maybe, again, just me and a personal problem...
- Ryan:** Oh! Yeah.
- Selena:** But how we look. Right? We're obsessing over our appearance, our weight, what we look like, what we're wearing, how are we appearing? Because we're aiming, essentially, to control what people think about us, right? Especially, you see that on social media, and... Yeah! Totally guilty of it. Not trying to be. Sometimes... I have this [*Chuckles*] conviction of, like, “I should just take a video of my whole house right now [*Laughs*] and post it. That would be very humbling for me...”
- Ryan:** Because it's clean?
- Selena:** ‘Cause it's *awfully* dirty! [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Oh...
- Selena:** And show the real-life side of things. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** That could go either way.
- Selena:** [*Laughing*] Sorry!
- Ryan:** I feel like I've lost—
- Selena:** I was getting there! I was getting there.
- Ryan:** I've lost control over my body, given the number [*Selena laughs*] of *bread loaves* I've eaten over the last four weeks. [*Both laughing*] Carbs are real, folks!
- Selena:** They really are.
- Ryan:** Those calories really do pack on fast!

Selena: Right. Right. So, I think that, again, trying to control what people think about us is just a game of *death* [Laughs], really, of your spirit.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Like, we can't control what people think about us, and we don't have to because God is good, and our identity is secure in Him! And *that* is a hard bridge to cross sometimes, I think. And I feel like it's a challenge daily, for at least me as a wife. It's always a question of identity, you know? Am I making the right decision as a mom homeschooling our kids? Am I making the right decision as a woman and a wife?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Am I loving my family well enough by making certain decisions, by not making certain decisions? Those kinds of things... And...

Ryan: Mm...

Selena: It also, I think this control and power— and maybe I talked about this in the beginning, is just this fear of what if this happens or what if that happens? What if my husband doesn't love me anymore because my... body's changed? [Laughs] I haven't actually felt that fear, but I've seen it and heard it in other spaces. But what if he doesn't love me anymore? What if I can't be the wife that I was? What if my sex drive is down because I'm just— Post-pregnancy hormones are just flailing everywhere.

Ryan: Okay. Yeah. I remember having a conversation *before* the baby was born.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Thinking...

Selena: 'Cause I was afraid! I was afraid.

Ryan: Well, and I was afraid!

Selena: The conversation of—

Ryan: I'm like, "What is going to happen to our sex life?" and just being really candid.

Selena: Right. We both were, like...

Ryan: It's like, "When are we going to find time? Are you going to even *want* this?"

Selena: Right.

Ryan: *This*, pointing to— [Both laughing] Say good-bye to *this*.

- Selena:** We are bread-loved body. [*Both laughing*] Just kidding!
- Ryan:** My bread body! [*Both chuckle*]
- Selena:** I like bread.
- Ryan:** [*Inaudible*] a new dieting program.
- Selena:** I love bread!
- Ryan:** Instead of Beachbody, it's going to be Breadbody. [*Both laugh*] And *everyone's* going to get onboard, 'cause you know what? The bar's super low. [*Selena laughs*] It's super easy. You just eat bread whenever you want.
- Selena:** [*Laughing*] And bread is awesome.
- Ryan:** And... the butter bread body! [*Both laugh*]
- Selena:** That's the next level. That's the deluxe package there. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** It's the deluxe pac— You gotta pay; it's \$19.99 a month [*Selena laughs*] for that subscription. Anyway. Don't pay for it. It's not worth it.
- Selena:** We're getting off topic. [*Both laugh*]
- Ryan:** The advice is really clear: eat buttered bread! [*Both laugh*] Anyway! So, yeah! I mean, we had this conversation, like what is going to happen to our sex life, and I really wanted to wrap my arms around it and say, or my *head* around it, and say, "Okay, I need you to—"
- Selena:** "At this point, we'll do this. This is the plan. Blah, blah, blah."
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** And it's like...
- Ryan:** And some of that's, like, you need to talk through it.
- Selena:** Yes!
- Ryan:** You need to have those conversations.
- Selena:** But again, you can't control how you're going to feel after everything.
- Ryan:** Mm. And well, and it's at that moment of *fear* that you can choose to *trust*—
- Selena:** Or build, yeah.

Ryan: That when that moment comes, you'll be able to work it out together because God is in you and God is working through you.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And His desire is for you to flourish!

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And so, instead of crafting a golden calf at that moment and trying to figure it out myself, and saying, "Well, fine! I'm just going to do whatever I want, and I'm going to look online and I'm going to satisfy my sexual needs some other way!" That's crafting a golden calf.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And, basically, taking it into your own hands. Sorry for the pun. [*Laughs*]

Selena: Oh, my.

Ryan: It was taking it— controlling it [*Laughing*] yourself! Argh! I'm just going to stop! [*Selena chuckles*] But the point I'm trying to make is that you have to trust. Instead, you have to trust in this God that has proven Himself faithful.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Time and time again.

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: And that your marriage is not going to fall apart *as you...* as you entrust it into His hands.

[00:34:58] **Selena:** You can't anticipate every moment afterwards, right? And that's my biggest fault. Ryan'll tell you that I try to anticipate way too much *because* I want to control. Why? Because I'm afraid, because I don't want to deal with... the frustration or the anxiety of my kid screaming, or us being disconnected sexually.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: I don't want to deal with that. So, I want to have a plan, I want to get it taken care of. But it comes from this underlying sense, which if I'm reading the Bible, right, and it's looking at my heart, it's helping me discern through things. It's because I'm afraid. It's because I'm afraid of the disconnection, I'm afraid of the arguments, I'm afraid of our relationship being changed and altered. And I don't *want* that. Like, I love what we have, but God's like, "That's great! But I have more for you," right? And the more, it's going to take some stretching.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: It's going to take some discomfort, and it's *good!* It's okay. It's just going against some of your sin nature. And in a sense, there is some stuff that's not of God and He's calling us out of that.

Ryan: Yeah, and that's trust, right? And any time you're heading around a bend where you don't know what's going to be there—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You have to really trust that God *is* guiding you.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And, actually, *is* there. I think one area where control really shows up as a small “g” god is in, like you mentioned earlier, but the order of our house, right?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: With two little ones running around, five and three, they love making messes. They love playing. They don't love picking up messes. They don't love working. [*Selena giggles*] And so, as a dad, I'm like...

Selena: Mm. Just like us, huh? Pleasure and comfort. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: The little hedonists! They just want to do what's fun all the time. They want to eat only things that tastes good all the time.

Selena: Of course. Of course.

Ryan: And of course, that's just sugar, basically. And so, I want to control *them*.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I want to control their hearts. I want to control their behavior.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And what happens if we do that without the gospel at the center?

Selena: Yeah! Our discipline is not...

Ryan: Our discipline is heavy-handed.

Selena: Yeah.

- Ryan:** We rule with an iron fist.
- Selena:** You're not teaching; you're telling.
- Ryan:** We break the spirit.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** We end up being strict and not just loving.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Lovingly correcting them, but just being strict. And so, we're getting outside of the purview of marriage here, but I'm just saying as a couple dealing with that has really exposed in us this desire for control and for power...
- Selena:** Because we want things to be a certain way.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Yeah! I agree. So!
- Ryan:** Alright. There's a good verse that you brought up.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Was Psalm 147.
- Selena:** Yeah. Psalm 147 is just, "His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man, but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love." And I feel like that just brings some assurance.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** You know? He's not impressed by what we can do, but He really takes pleasure in those that fear Him, so, that acknowledge *who* He is, that are in wonder, not afraid of God, but this respect! This awe of who He is, and they hope in His love, His *steadfast* love.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** This love that never gets tired of our questions, of our own hedonism, of our own failure to realize *who* He is and what He wants for us.

- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** But He delights in those who fear Him.
- Ryan:** This reminded me of a verse that I have on the wall here.
- Selena:** Don't take control.
- Ryan:** Sorry. Did I just take control?
- Selena:** Sorry. It's ok. No. [*Both chuckle*] Go for it!
- Ryan:** I thought you were saying *I took control*, and you're—
- Selena:** No. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** [*Laughing*] And you were calling me out. Jeremiah 9:23, 24. "Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches.'" I wanted to boast in all three of those things [*Selena laughs*], by the way! I'm just going to say it.
- Selena:** Thanks. I'm glad you're saying that.
- Ryan:** My own brain, my own brawn, and my own bank account. [*Both laugh*] I wanted to!
- Selena:** Your bread brawn? [*Both laugh*]
- Ryan:** My bready body, people! [*Selena laughing*] Go breadbody.com! [*Ryan laughs briefly*] But, "'Let not the rich man boast in his riches, but,'" here's the "but" statement, okay? "'But let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who prac—'" And that "LORD" is the Tetragrammaton, which is the *YHWH*—
- Selena:** Hello!
- Ryan:** Which is His *actual* name. Right?
- Selena:** Tip: the capital, all caps LORD.
- Ryan:** Which is His *most proper* name. Right?
- Selena:** L-O-R-D, capital L-O-R-D.
- Ryan:** Yeah. "'Who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.'" So, let us boast in knowing Him!

Selena: That would have been a good one, because the next God is the God of pride and status. So...

Ryan: Hilarious. *[Exhales]*

Selena: Both seen, there it is. That was a good transition, babe. Way to go!

Ryan: You know what?

Selena: Way to go! *[Laughs]*

Ryan: I'm very wise. *[Ryan chuckles and Selena laughs]* I'm very wise.

Selena: Annnd...

Ryan: Oh, shoot! *[Laughs]*

Selena: Just boasting! That was...

Ryan: *[Laughing]* Just kidding.

Selena: Yes. But the god of status/pride, we feel like there's a lot of overlap, and it's an easy progression from control, right, to pride? We got the right house, we got the right car, we got our kids in the right school, or we're doing the right thing home-schooling, whatever; there can be a lot of pride in all of those areas. It really is just questioning our identity. Like, where—?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: What are we putting our identity in? *Who* are we putting it in?

Ryan: *When* are we putting it in? Because—

Selena: *[Chuckles]* Exactly! There it is.

Ryan: It's here and now is what we want—

Selena: There it is!

Ryan: We want to see it play out here and now.

Selena: Mm-hm.

[00:39:55] **Ryan:** I want to see the status here and now, when our status when we're not primarily American citizens, we're not primarily Australian citizens, we're not a citizen of some worldly power.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: We're citizens of a heavenly kingdom.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And so, if our status is in *that*, and our identity is *heavenly* kingdom citizens.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Of people adopted into God's family, that's a there and then thing.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That's a, "Already, but not yet."

Selena: Yep.

Ryan: Well, I had this come up in my own heart today as I was thinking through some of the family stuff we're going through. We haven't shared that, but there's some family stuff going on; we had a meeting earlier this week that was to that end. And I got to thinking... It *made* me really realize that I can't *want* things to be resolved in a way that gives me benefits here and now; I need to be thinking about there and then in terms of already, but not yet.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: God's plan, God's goodness and His name.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And let us boast in this! Right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That same thing that...

Selena: Jeremiah [*Inaudible*]. Yeah.

Ryan: That we understand and know God.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, we— Sorry. I want to flesh this out a little bit more, that we understand that we have been made privy to the person of God, and what He wills here on earth. That's an amazing thing! He loves with steadfast love and wisdom and all these things. But we understand Him, but we also *know* Him in that we just don't know Him in our heads, but we know Him *personally*.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: There is, in the Spanish language, there's two verbs for "to know." There's "saber" and "conocer," I think.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Sorry! I'm not trying to be like Beto, whatever, but that guy who would speak in Spanish in the debates. But one is to know a fact; the other is to know relationally a person.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: And I feel like that's a distinction that can be made here.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: That I know God in my head, I know His ways, but I also know Him personally. Let us boast in that and let the status and all those things that we want, let those fall at the feet of knowing God.

Selena: Right. And how does this area affect our marriage? Because I feel like He can very much be—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Just a status and pride, like a personal thing. Which it can be!

Ryan: Good question.

Selena: And it can definitely clash within our marriage, if we *want* different things and we *desire*, and we want to take pride in having certain things, you know? If a wife wants a— [*Exhales*] Argh. I hate to bash wives. We're not going to—But if you have this high—

Ryan: Just put "husband" in there. [*Both chuckle*]

Selena: If you have a high standard of—Not high. If you want things that are out of your price range—

Ryan: If you want a bread body. Oh, sorry! [*Both laugh*]

Selena: No, I'm just saying, if we're wanting things for the wrong reasons, it's going to create a lot of tension within our marriage, because I feel like you're good at that. Early on in our marriage, I'd be like, "Wow!" Oh, here's a perfect example. When I was a young life leader in California, and we got back from camp, and I was leading campaigners for the first time, I was like, "Ryan, we've got to have a bigger house. I've got 12 girls. We are in a two-bedroom apartment. Half of these girls live in humongous houses in gated communities, like *super* wealthy area of the desert, and we have this little apartment,"

which and it was a great apartment. And I'm like, "It's just not big enough! We need to start looking at houses. We need to..." Like, *all* this fear, all of this, you know, discomfort of what these high school girls [*Giggles*] were going to think about *my* apartment as an adult, right, just came into play. And it was because I felt like it was a reflection of my identity, right? We can't afford...

Ryan: Interesting.

Selena: Or we can't have the right thing. And when in all reality, when we had campaigners and we ate dinner together, and we talked, and I made them all put their phones face down in front of us so that nobody had their phones on them. That relationship, those conversations, that community was what God used to really fulfill them, and for us to know who He was together. It wasn't *about* my house. We could have met at, which we did even sometimes, like at Starbucks, or we met at—

Ryan: They don't care.

Selena: They don't care!

Ryan: They don't care...

Selena: Yeah. And even if—

Ryan: Only you cared. [*Chuckles*] Only we cared.

Selena: Well, only I cared, but they do care at some level outside of Christ. Like, they were caring about the wrong things.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: And I felt like God was like, "Hey, let me use this area of your life to show them that those things don't matter as much as I want their hearts, I want their lives, I want to be in relationship with them, and that is the important thing here." It's not about what they have, although it's okay to have things, but it's not about what you have, it's about who you are. Right?

Ryan: Yeah. Actually, I was just reading. I'm not going to be able to find it, but I was just reading an article. Gospel Coalition does these series. It's called Thorn and Thistle, I think?

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: And they asked a question. I meant to share it with you. I apologize. But they ask the question, and it's like should I move closer to the church, or is it okay to move further away from the church if it means I can have a bigger house?

Selena: Right. Geographically. Yeah.

Ryan: Yeah. And they use an example of somebody who, you know, they had this kind of dilemma in that they would move away, across the freeway, but it was basically a world apart because of the way the geography worked.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And the questions they were asking were really positive, and they're saying basically re-evaluate your definition of hospitality.

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: And recalibrate it with the Bible's definition of hospitality. Because we often think some, like what you said, is, "Well, we can't have ministry happen until we have this perfect arena for which the hospitality can finally blossom into everything it should be." No! And he's basically saying you don't *need*—First off, he said Americans, second to Australians, have more square footage per home than anyone else in the world.

[00:45:08] **Selena:** Right.

Ryan: So, having a big house in the US is like a mansion by *every* other standard.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Whereas you might feel like it's average.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, it's basically recalibrating that expectation of what it means to love people and to—I want to get back to the point, status and pride, is it comes back around to something that's not rooted in what you think it's rooted in.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You think, "Oh, we need this thing so that we can have our identity."

Selena: Well, and basically *hide*, I think, was some of it.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: I wanted to hide our financial status.

Ryan: Sure.

Selena: Right?

Ryan: Which I kid you not, we had literally *hundreds* [*Selena chuckles*], maybe even dozens of dollars [*Selena laughs*] saved in the bank at any moment!

Selena: Right. Which is why transparency is a huge thing, and we talk a lot about that *all the time* [Ryan laughs], on the Fierce Marriage podcast. [Both chuckling] We are very transparent.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: But I think that is a way to combat and to live in the light, right? God calls us to live in the light. Why? Because then it's not about us, it's all about Him. And it's all about who He is in our lives and not what we've built. Right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: So, one of the verses that has been—One of our mentor's kind of sent us this and was just like congratulating us on having a baby. It was Psalm 127. [Clears throat] Excuse me. And in particular it was the one about children are our heritage, they're a blessing. But if you read Psalm 127, which I encourage everyone, it's *five* verses, it's very reassuring to me as a wife, as someone who doesn't have to have it all together, who doesn't have to have the right house, the right everything, but is really like learning; I really feel like I'm sitting at the feet of God constantly failing and learning who God is and what He's at work doing. And I'll just read the verses. "Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep. Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate." So, there's a lot there.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Talking about children and being a heritage and blessings. And I guess the first couple verses are really what have spoken to my heart in this time of kind of feeling like our world's being shaken in a lot of ways.

Ryan: Oh, yeah.

Selena: Just with a new baby, and finishing a book, and all of these things in our home, I guess, for me. God's just reminding me unless He's building this house, we're doing stuff in vain. Unless He is the one that we are— Not even we! It's all about Him, right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So, unless He's watching over the city, we stay awake in vain. If I stay up late and I wake up early to try to do all these things, if it's not, you know, sort of God leading this, and He's not the head of this household, then it's all in vain. It's all about—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Me and my status and my pride and the things that I want versus, you know, this verse is saying *God's* in control. *He* is at work.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Sleep. Rest. Enjoy your children. Teach them.

Ryan: Yeah. And that, I think, comes down to boasting in our own kind of wisdom.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: As that Jeremiah passage says. Like, we think that we can just somehow craft the house and have the house stand on its own because we are without need of God himself.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And this verse is basically saying no! Like, you can do whatever, you can build a house, you can—It's not a verse about architecture. [*Chuckles*]

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's a verse about trusting that God is the reason that *anything* is sustained.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And acknowledging that humbly.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, how does this work in marri—Again, bringing it back around to marriage. We talked about sex a little bit. We talked about finance a little bit. Talking about communication.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: A lot of times in our relationship early on, I would talk down to you in a way that I'm very ashamed of, I think now, and I think I've learned to not do it as often.

Selena: Learning. [*Both laugh*] Just a bit.

Ryan: So, but like—

Selena: Just kidding. That—[*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Talking down, and being dismissive of each other, or...

Selena: Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: And what is that, if not boasting in your own wisdom?

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: What is that, if you're thinking that if I can just use the right words, or I'm so smart that I don't have to really, like...

Selena: I'm better arguing, and I can...

Ryan: Yeah. And so, I think trusting in the Lord is really humbling and puts you in a place of, like, the priority is to *love* my wife *well*, not to be *right* in this conversation.

Selena: Mm...

Ryan: Or to listen well—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And not get to a solution.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or to make sure she *feels* loved—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And not just give her action steps.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: Right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Those are the roots of communication. Or flip it on the other end.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Transparency in communication.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: That, in my grand wisdom, I won't tell you this because I'm afraid it'll hurt you.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Right? Every TV show you've ever watched always has a, "I didn't tell you 'cause I wanted to protect you."

Selena: Right.

[00:49:56] **Ryan:** Like how B.S. is that? [*Both chuckles*] Because it's like, you think that you can just... You know better, so why not just come out with it? Well, of course, that would mean there's no drama in the TV show. [*Both chuckle*] But it also creates more drama in your life. If you think, "I'm not going to tell you about my addiction because, in my wisdom, I think it'll hurt you and it'll hurt our marriage. And I'm ashamed, also."

Selena: Right. And God's saying, "Live in the light!"

Ryan: Because He is God and I am not I can live humbly before Him. And if He is the goal...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: If He is my affection, that I want to get closer to Him, then that sin is getting in the way.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I need to get it out of my life.

Selena: Woah.

Ryan: Which means, confess to Him, confess to each other. Repent.

Selena: And it's this whole idea of trust, right? So, we're talking about how can we really worship God in our marriage. How can we tangibly worship God in our marriage?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And you've heard these three things, they've just been threaded through our conversation, is true repentance, and submission and surrender, and then trust. Right? So, we're trusting who God is *beyond* what we think.

Ryan: That's good.

Selena: How much the bomb is going to drop, and how big the blast is going to be, right? We're trusting Him.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Knowing that these things are going to happen, but *trusting* that He is the God of hearts and He's—not God of hearts. He is the God of *our* hearts.

Ryan: That changes hearts.

Selena: Changes hearts. He's one that we can trust. It's the true repentance of coming to God, saying, "I'm sorry for not wanting You! I'm so prone to wanting other things. Help me God! I believe You're good and merciful. Help my unbelief." It's repenting to our spouse.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: It's going to our community, saying, "Help me, help us, in worshipping these little gods. I need your help to destroy them. I need your help to not allow them to come back into my life." It's submission! Surrendering to God in those instances, saying, "God, I want Your way. I don't know..."

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: "I don't know what You think about this. I need to read my Bible more," like...

Ryan: Eww. [*Selena laughs*] Well, you're surrendering yourself, saying, "I can't figure this out."

Selena: To know His will.

Ryan: "I'm not going to boast of my wisdom. I'm going to boast in knowing You."

Selena: Yeah! Know Him.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And then you know where He stands on things like your pleasure, like your riches, like your status, like your identity. He roots those all in His word.

Ryan: And here's the thing is word! God wants to give you *more* pleasure than you could ever imagine, and in Him.

Selena: Right. Mm-hm.

Ryan: He wants to give you more status than you could ever earn on your own *in Him*.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: He wants to give you more riches than you could ever earn on your own *in Him*.

- Selena:** Right. Right.
- Ryan:** And this is not a prosperity thing. This is, in Him, there is all these things—
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** That everything else pales in comparison. He's giving you Himself.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And that comes from a place of submitting and surrendering.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Which is why you see so many [*Chuckling*] submitted, surrendered, like people in the church are not people that have it together.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** They're people that oftentimes, they've just for whatever reason they're in a weaker status in a lot of cases.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** I don't want to get into the nuances of that. But anyway, we need to surrender our hearts, all that kind of stuff.
- Selena:** Right. And we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us. He is there! He's our counselor to help lead us, to help us submit, to help us know how to walk humbly in the things of God. And then trusting him, trusting God, trusting our Father, the Holy Spirit, trusting what Jesus did on the cross, trusting God's way is the better. It is the *best* way to live. Again, when and if bombs need to be dropped, we're going to trust that after the blast, God is going to help us through those messes, through that hurt and pain.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** He is the god of he—
- Ryan:** And then you're talking through if there's a confession or something. Yeah.
- Selena:** Right! Right.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Or anything that you're confronting, like with your pri— All of these little gods, they come with these blugga—baggage. [*Chuckles*] I'm trying to think of the word! They come with baggage! They come with things that need to *be*

broken and destroyed. And when those things are broken and destroyed, no doubt, there's going to be some aftermath. It may be big or small, but it's requiring confrontation with things that you don't want to be confronted with, I feel like, and God says *don't* fear. Confidently, and with your trust in Me, go face those things. Let's face them together."

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: "Don't be afraid."

Ryan: So, speaking of facing those things. Couple's conversation challenge.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Okay. So, these— Well, I'm going to recap these three, I think, categories of gods that we've talked about, these small "g" gods in our lives.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Okay. We're using that term in an analogous sort of way, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: They're not literal deities, small "d" deities, but they are things that we tend to worship. So, talk about each one of these areas. This is the conversation challenge! Talk about each one of these areas together. Maybe just write them down!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: As I recap here, and then you can talk about how maybe repentance needs to play a role.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And how surrender and trust need to play roles.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: In each area in your lives. Okay? And just be honest with each other. Okay. So, the first category is comfort and pleasure, the god of comfort and pleasure. The second one is the god of control and power. And the third one is the god of status or pride. Okay. So, talk through each one of those—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: With your husband, with your wife. Maybe write down a few things and how can maybe you can ask God to bring you around to a more sanctified posture in those areas.

Selena: Right. Right.

Ryan: And where you're trusting him more often.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: So, talk about repentance, talk about surrender, talk about trust.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Sound good?

Selena: Sounds good!

Ryan: All right. Little Louisa's doing pretty well!

Selena: Yeah! She just starting to wriggle a little bit, so...

[00:55:00] **Ryan:** Okay!

Selena: We got to wrap this up!

Ryan: Why don't you go grab her? Is she wiggling? Do you want to grab her?

Selena: No, she's good.

Ryan: Okay. Well...

Selena: I always want to grab her! I love my baby.

Ryan: So, I want to plug this real fast, again. Patreon. If you feel called to be a partner with us and with our family and the people that we work alongside, we'd be honored for you to pray over that. Pray for that together with your spouse, and if you feel led, go to patreon.com/fiercemarriage. Thank you for all of you who are current patrons!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: It means the world. Thank you if you're just even praying about it. Don't feel bad or guilty! Just know that we're thankful for you, listener, in general. [Selena chuckles] And if you feel called, we're still thankful for you in these ways.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And then, if you're looking for resources, we do have a bunch of books. If you're new to the Fierce Marriage podcast, go to shop.fiercemarriage.com; there's a ton of resources there.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Well, not a ton. There's, I think, six different books, there's one e-course, there's some fierce rings!

Selena: Feels like a ton! *[Both laugh]* Lots of writing!

Ryan: It feels like it's taken a lot of work to get there! *[Selena laughs]* Anyway! Let me say a prayer for us. And then we'll go on. What's anyway?

Selena: Nothing. I'll tell you later.

Ryan: *[Laughing]* Okay.

Selena: Okay.

[00:56:05] **Ryan:** I don't know. When you laugh, it makes me uneasy. *[Both laugh]*

Lord, I thank You for just the gift that it is to know You and to *boast* in knowing You, and to *boast* in understanding You, Lord. I pray that You would just make Your word come to life in our hearts and in our minds and in our lives. God, may it affect our hearts, change our minds, and be implemented faithfully in our lives.

God, I pray for the fierce husbands and the fierce wives listening to this. I pray that if You've stirred something in them, I pray right now You would stir in them hope in Your gospel, hope in the fact that You love him or her, hope in the fact that You have not abandoned him or her. And I pray that You'd help them with wisdom and with wise counsel and through Your word, help them move forward. Holy Spirit, just comfort them and guide those fierce couples, Lord.

In Jesus name, and I thank You for the ability to talk about You here on this podcast. I thank You for the new baby in the Frederick household. Thank You that she's healthy and strong. And anyway! God, thank You so much just for Your Grace.

In Jesus name, amen!

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: All right! This, ladies and gentlemen, this has been a lot of fun. This episode is!

Selena: In the can!

Ryan: And we will see you in about seven days! Until then...

Selena: Stay fierce!

[00:57:25] <Ending Sequence>

[00:57:44] *Podcast ends.*

PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:10:01]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Exodus 20:3, *ESV*
 - Exodus 32:1, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Exodus 32:2-5, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **[00:14:40]**
 - Scripture reference: Romans 1:18-20, paraphrase with added emphasis, *ESV*
- **[00:19:59]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Hebrews 4:12, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Hebrews 4:13, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Information on Charles Haddon Spurgeon:
 - <https://www.spurgeon.org/>
- **[00:24:44]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - John 1:1, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **[00:34:58]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Psalm 147:10-11, *ESV*
 - Jeremiah 9:23-24, *ESV*
- **[00:39:55]**
 - Gospel Coalition Article:
 - Should I Buy a House Near My Church?
 - DiMarcangelo, A. (2019, November 4). Should I Buy a House Near My Church? Retrieved from <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/buy-house-near-church/>
- **[00:45:08]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Psalm 127:1-5, *ESV*

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