

## YOUR MARRIAGE IS BIGGER THAN YOU

<https://fiercemarriage.com/your-marriage-is-bigger-than-you>

- [00:00:00] **Selena:** So, today on the podcast we are going to talk about why your marriage is bigger than *you*.
- Ryan:** It's bigger than you!
- Selena:** Bigger than you. And I think this offers a lot of hope, a lot of assurance, but it also challenges us in the decisions that we make.
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** And our understanding of the Bible and the timeline of that and how we all fit into it. I think we can fall into this very, not meaning to be, but narcissistic view of ourselves with the Bible. Right?
- Ryan:** Ooh. [*Chuckling*] Oh, dang.
- Selena:** How does it help us and how does—? But it does help us, and it's there, but we are just kind of these cogs in a very holy and beautiful wheel of time and life. And so, we're going to explore that a little bit.
- Ryan:** Well, I think what you're saying, and I want to clarify, is that we tend to insert ourselves into the narrative Bible [*Selena chuckles*], meaning that it's all about...
- Selena:** I'm a little brash, I guess, in my explanations. [*Laughing*]
- Ryan:** It's about us! It's about me. Every little story is somehow alluding to— It's an analogy for me.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Living my life right now.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** I don't think that's the case, and most theologians would also agree...
- Selena:** Yes, but I think there's purpose *in it* for us.
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** Absolutely.
- Ryan:** So, civically, marriage—

**Selena:** Which God is so good in that, right?

**Ryan:** So, marriage is one of these topics that there are *passages* in the Bible that give us clarity on marriage, but I think we can get even more clarity by looking— I want to use the term! Systematically [*Selena chuckles*] at a few key doctrines, right? Like the doctrine of covenant. What is covenant, and how is God's covenantal character informing our understanding and view of marriage?

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** So, we're going to look at that, 'cause it gives us a bigger view of marriage and gives us this revelation that marriage is not about us.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** It's not about me.

**Selena:** There's a greater purpose. And I think that God is so good in how He creates things; He doesn't create extra pieces.

**Ryan:** Hm.

**Selena:** All the pieces from head to toe are in use and for purpo—

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** They're filled with purpose. So anyways, we're gonna jump into that after... we *jump* to the other side. [*Laughs*]

[00:01:49] <Intro Sequence>

[00:02:19] **Selena:** You love when I say, "Jump." [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** Why you got to go—

**Selena:** I don't mean to say, "Jump."

**Ryan:** We already got a thing. Why you got to make up your own thing?

**Selena:** Jump.

**Ryan:** [*Uses an accent*] "I'm on that like moss on the Mississippi tree stump!" [*Both laugh*]

**Selena:** Jump! [*Both laughing*]

**Ryan:** [*Laughing*] Was the way I said it not good enough? Anyway. Yeah!

**Selena:** Nope.

**Ryan:** It's going to be a good conversation. I got to say... Our little baby is just getting cuter and cuter by the day!

**Selena:** That's what happens with kids...

**Ryan:** That's what happens! [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** Until they're, like... You know...

**Ryan:** [*Laughing*] Until they turn two. And then it's like...

**Selena:** Two's pretty great! It's the threes, people. I think every mom would agree. Sometimes it's— I would say it's the threes where they start...

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Defiantly...

**Ryan:** I think it depends on the kid.

**Selena:** Openly.

**Ryan:** But the picture I have in my head right now is whenever Jack-Jack turns into the little demon monster [*Selena laughs*] ... in *The Incredibles*. [*Ryan chuckles*]

**Selena:** Yes. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** It's like that. It feels like that... at one point.

**Selena:** It's what three feels like. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Yeah. That's what three feels like. Right now, she's just a sweet little nugget. Yeah. So—

**Selena:** For anybody wondering. [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** Quickly! I'm going to do a quick housekeeping, okay? Man! I just got to say, our Patreon patrons have been... Man! You guys are so awesome. We're almost to 250 patrons.

**Selena:** Wow!

**Ryan:** And what that does—And by the way, we have transcriptions happening right now, and it's on my to-do list to figure out a meaningful, easy way to display those and make those available to our listeners. There's a lot of web stuff that has to happen [*Selena chuckles*] to make it sustainable, given that we have 128

episodes on the podcast. So, that's partly possible because of our Patreon patrons, along with a number of other initiatives. And when you get to 250, it's going to trigger a brand-new initiative, which is basically enabling us to really put our hands to the plow. There's the term.

**Selena:** There it is!

**Ryan:** Of getting marriage tools and principles and all the things that we talk about here on Fierce Marriage, equipping local lay ministers and local churches to really have the truths of God, and the resources that we create by His grace, be a catalyst for discipleship and evangelism in their communities.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** So, we're working on that; we're really excited about it. It's going to be a ton of work, so we're kind of waiting 'til we hit a critical mass with our Patreon group. So anyway, if you want to be a part of that vision and making that happen, and so many other things, go to [patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage). You can find us there.

We just ask two things, that you pray about it and pray about it with your spouse. And if God prompts you, the Holy Spirit prompts you, to be a part of it, then just a second thing we ask is that you act on that. So, yeah, this is not very short, is it? So, I'm going to go to the next one.

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** If you have [*Selena chuckles*] any questions, you can go to [fiercemarriage.com/podcast](https://fiercemarriage.com/podcast); you can ask those questions there. There's a button and there's also a number. You can call or text this number, and we're going to start doing a one-off question and responses just as an individual little mini-micro podcast episodes! That way we can actually knock these out a little bit more effectively.

[00:05:10] **Selena:** Well, and there's some good ques—I feel like there's a lot of good questions that we want to start answering, and this— [*Both say together*] Yeah.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Yeah. [*Inaudible*]

**Ryan:** So, you can call this number, call or text this number: 971-333-1120.

And finally, if you haven't yet, please do subscribe, rate, and review this podcast on iTunes or your podcasting app of choice. The subscription is important that we don't miss anything; the ratings and the reviews important because it helps—

**Selena:** Just give it that five-star rating!

**Ryan:** Yeah. Just give it five, you know?

**Selena:** Just give it that five-star rating!

**Ryan:** Just give us a five...

**Selena:** It's really fulfilling to watch that.

**Ryan:** It's so fulfilling! And watch that little star thing come up!

**Selena:** Hittin' that five star. Yeah. This all comes up.

**Ryan:** You know what? You got to try it, listener. [*Selena laughs*] You don't know until you've been there and done that. So, just try it. It's *not* fulfilling on anything less than five!

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** It's terrible.

**Selena:** 'Cause there's more stars that need to be filled.

**Ryan:** Right. Right. It feels like you've *missed* it somehow. Anyway.

**Selena:** It's like Andy when he doesn't get to resolve his songs. [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** [*Laughing*] Yeah. That's how I feel most of my life. [*Selena laughs*]

**Selena:** Alright. So, this discussion about your marriage being bigger than you really came about—We were at home one Sunday morning. [*Gasps*] Gasp!

**Ryan:** Last Sunday morning.

**Selena:** Yeah. And we decided to watch...

**Ryan:** Okay. We didn't go to church because the kids were super tired.

**Selena:** We were *all* super tired.

**Ryan:** We also have a five-week-old.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And we were all super waxed from a long Saturday, and we thought, "You know what?"

**Selena:** [*Chuckles*] We're just going to stay home.

**Ryan:** We're not abandoning the local church, but this day we're going to stay home.

**Selena:** No... And I think most people agree. When you have a young baby, it's hard to go there and, you know, it's fun! We go there, but then you're just kind of doing the same thing you do at home. Anyways—

**Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Yeah.

**Selena:** All that to say, we were watching—

**Ryan:** Can't actually go to church because you're making sure the baby's OK the whole time.

**Selena:** Right. Right. Right. So, we were watching an old sermon by the TVC, The Village Church. Matt Chandler was speaking, and he gave a very, very quick [*Chuckles briefly*] brief history, sort of a Christianity over a timeline from, basically, Jesus until the present day, and then being in the church in Texas where they were.

**Ryan:** Well, the context was they were talking about church planting specifically.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** On that Sunday.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** And they had two church planters that were leaving the village church to go.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** And this was back in 2014, 2013.

**Selena:** Yeah. It was a while ago.

**Ryan:** So, it was a long time ago. And so—

**Selena:** Still mind blowing, though, everything they were talking about.

**Ryan:** So, Matt was basically saying, "Hey. We're part of something so much bigger than you."

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** As a church member of that church.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's not just about this moment; it's unfolded, starting back in Acts.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** In the book of Acts, when the first church was formed all the way through. And he basically chronologed all throughout history.

**Selena:** Yes. Yes.

**Ryan:** He mentioned a few things we're learning in school with the girls.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Constantinople, right? Or, no—

**Selena:** Augustine.

**Ryan:** Augus— “Aah-gus-tan.” However you want to say that. Augustine, Augustan.

**Selena:** Augustine, I believe.

**Ryan:** There are two schools of thought around how to pronounce his name [*Selena chuckles*]. But what was the other one? Anyway. Yeah! So, he kind of chronologed through all those things and then ended up getting to kind of, even their local history there in Texas. There it is!

**Selena:** Constantine. Constantine legalizes Christianity.

**Ryan:** There it is. And all the way through to the American Revolution and into Texas and all these different things, because that's where their church is, and drew this line for them. And it was really an elucidating thing to— And it was inspiring. And it really, I don't know, it really enlivened *us* in terms of seeing, 'cause we're part of a fairly young church; I think it's five years old. So, we're actively part of a church plant and beneficiaries of all these years and years of biblical history and mighty men and women who have gone before us, you champions of the faith. You know what I mean? So, it was just very enlivening for us, I feel like.

**Selena:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Ryan:** And by the way, we do have we do have [*Baby grunts in the background*] Luisa here with us.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** So, if you hear little grunts and things, this is just real life, folks. [*Selena laughs*] So, anyway. We looked each other, and we're like, “Wow! That's really, really great, just from a faith and a history standpoint. But let's talk about how your *marriage* is bigger than you.” And the church idea is so much bigger than us, but the marriage idea is so much bigger than us.

**Selena:** And I think what we mean by bigger—What do we mean by bigger? I feel like there's just a lot of purpose to unpack. It's not just you and I living together, having kids and like growing old. Not that that's a bad thing, right? Those are all really big, great things.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** But they're big and great because God makes them big and great.

**Ryan:** Yep!

**Selena:** Without the gospel and without His purpose and mission and the great commission for our lives, then we would just go through the motions, I think.

**Ryan:** Right!

**Selena:** And there'd be a lot of emptiness and loneliness there.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And God's design is for us to experience that at a deep level, and to also experience, and we'll get into it, you know—

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Sanctification. Unity.

**Ryan:** So really what we're talking about is *purpose*.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Is having a deep, ingrained sense of purpose that's welling up from not just our own world view, but our world view based on the history and the word of God.

[00:10:00] **Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Right? The *historical* word of God and how it's unfolded over time, and it's given us kind of this *ownership* and the citizenship *in* the kingdom of God, as a person or man or woman adopted into His family.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Oftentimes we talk about there's three kind of main things; this the framework that we're working through and trying to figure out. But there's *three* main things that every couple needs to feel like and to have a marriage that's flourishing. I feel like they have, and also actually have a marriage that's flourishing, is they need to have *purpose*.



**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** They've got to have context for why they exist as a couple.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And it's got to be bigger than themselves.

**Selena:** Well, and part of that, like you said just quickly earlier, was that having that purpose often helps us combat the fights and the disconnection and all this the stuff that we deal with.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** The problems, you know, the conflicts...

**Ryan:** Yeah! It gives you a context for it.

**Selena:** Having a purpose gives you context, and I feel like it strengthens your bond.

**Ryan:** Right. Alright. And—

**Selena:** When those hard times come.

**Ryan:** Absolutely. And that's a critical piece of these three pieces that we're talking about here. The second one is any connection.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** A husband and a wife, they *need* to feel connected in a meaningful, relational way. They need to be known.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And know each other fully without reservation, without hindrance. They need to *feel* like they are known and still loved.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** That looks like connecting intimately. That looks like connecting through conversation, connecting through shared experience.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** There's a whole litany of things that contribute to connection, and that actually gets to the third part of these; there's three of these things. That gets to the third one, which is you need *tangible* tools.

- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** A lot of times you know your purpose, but you don't have any real tools to actually mine it out and put words to it.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** Or you know you need to connect, but you don't know how to connect. So, you need communication, like actual tools. A lot of times marriage podcasts, marriage blogs, marriage books focus almost exclusively on tools.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** Being like here's five ways to connect. And that's not what we're doing here, is, when we started thinking about this, we're focusing on purpose.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** 'Cause I think we have a lot of stuff on tools. We have a lot of content about how to connect. But, *really*, what is the purpose stuff?
- Selena:** Stuff that wells out of the purpose, right?
- Ryan:** Yes. Yes. So, I'll go back to the bread thing. If you haven't listened to last week's episode [*Selena laughs*], we talked about how I, while Louisa was here and I took about four weeks off, I was making a ton of bread. [*Ryan laughs*]
- Selena:** Just got to go back and listen to it.
- Ryan:** Okay. Just got to go back and listen to it. And I've been on the hunt for teachers, sensei's, bread [*Selena laughs*] sensei's, gurus, guides. I need bread guides to teach me the way of the dough maker. [*Both laugh*] No. But honestly, it's hard because you go online and say, "How do I make good bread?" or, [*Selena briefly laughs*] "How do I make bread lighter?"
- Selena:** "Alexa!" [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** "Alexa!" [*Both laughing*] "Cyrus!" [*Both laugh*]
- Selena:** Oh goodness... I know we should quote that.
- Ryan:** Yeah. We actually turned that off.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** That's a comedy we turned off 'cause it was too crude. But he calls Siri "Cyrus" and it's hilarious.

**Selena:** His dad does.

**Ryan:** His dad does. That part's hilarious, I'll say. But anyway, I was trying to find places to go learn this craft, and the thing is there's recipes everywhere! Everybody's got their recipe. Everybody's got their five steps to great bread.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Here's the one thing that you got to do, and you'll get the outcome that you want. And then I found it! [*Baby coos in background*] There she is. [*Selena pigeon laughs*] I found the perfect guru online. [*Selena pigeon laughs again*] His name is Jack. He's British. He does this YouTube channel called "Bake with Jack." It's phenomenal.

**Selena:** [*Chuckling*] That's awesome!

**Ryan:** He just talks about bread making. And his whole thing is, I quote, he says, "I don't care about recipes. I'm teaching you principles. Because if you know the principles of bread making when it goes wrong, you'll know exactly why it went wrong. When you want to tweak something, you know exactly why you need to tweak something to get the output that you want."

**Selena:** Wow.

**Ryan:** Yeah! it's amazing! And I made bread last night. Isn't that the best bread that I've made so far? White bread, anyway.

**Selena:** Best bread ever. [*Ryan laughs*]

**Ryan:** I made a really bad loaf that was burned.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And then I had to redeem myself. And I like the thing that I did. It turned out pretty nice. But—

**Selena:** It was great.

**Ryan:** His whole thing is, yeah, if you don't know the principles, when the something goes wrong in the end product, you're not going to ever know where to hunt down or where to troubleshoot. You're just going to look for another recipe.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And a lot of couples do that in their marriage. Their communication falters, or their financial life is a mess, or intimately they're not connecting like they want to.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And they don't have any principles to go back to and say, "Where are we going wrong?"

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Instead, they start saying, "Well, we need to have sex more often." And they start just prescribing these things based on the end of the chain.

**Selena:** Right. Right.

**Ryan:** When they need to go all the way back to the root...

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And that's what we're talking about here today, is it's so much bigger than yourself, not because we're saying so. And that's what part I want to be really clear about. Your marriage is so much bigger than you, not because Fierce Marriage says so, Ryan and Selena said so. It's because God's word has shown us the depth of His character.

[00:15:03] **Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And He's called us to participate and be people made in His image that reflect His character in these ways, namely in the areas of covenant and love. Right?

**Selena:** Absolutely. Absolutely.

**Ryan:** And selflessness.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** So, [Ryan chuckles] when we're looking for verses [Selena laughs] ... I'm talking a lot 'cause you're helping the baby.

**Selena:** The *whoole* Bible. [Chuckles]

**Ryan:** Yes. Selena's like, "Well, what verse are we going to—" [Selena chuckles] You know?

**Selena:** Not what verse! Makes me sound like a...

**Ryan:** You're eisegeting and trying to make it fit!

**Selena:** [*Selena laughs*] Yes! I'm like, "Where in the Bible is this theme kind of prevalent in exposing, and where's the light shining here?" And you... said what? [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** Well...

**Selena:** Go!

**Ryan:** Well, being that we're in the marriage space, it's one of these really bittersweet things, because there are few—Since the beginning, there are few passages that speak very clearly to the nature and God's design for marriage. But there's nothing in the Bible that says, "Hey, when you're married, communicate in this way when this problem comes up." We have to apply a lot of wisdom.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** You have to synthesize and use our own minds to apply the wisdom and synthesize conclusions that are faithful to God's word but may not be explicitly stated in God's word. And this is a small version of a very big idea that contributed to doctrines like the Trinity.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Okay, so, the Trinity's never said in the Bible. But God's triune nature is *clear* in the Bible.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** The word trinity's never used, but we use it all the time.

**Selena:** Interesting. I don't think I knew that.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** I don't want to sound dumb, but I don't think I knew that.

**Ryan:** Well, not a lot of people knew that.

**Selena:** I think I just assumed that.

**Ryan:** Well, 'cause we use it so commonly.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right?

**Selena:** Wow...

- Ryan:** And so, it's one of these things, like, if you start digging into marriage and saying, "Well, you know, marriage is X, Y and Z," a lot of that stuff that stuff, the X, Y and Z, is going to be synthesized based on the *whole* of God's word.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And so, I said we have to kind of approach this thing... It's not like we're just going to go through a passage and kind of digest the passage, which we do like to do. But when we talk about the purposes of marriage, we have to have a *systematic* theology approach.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Where we are looking at the whole of the Bible and looking at the character of God based on the whole of scripture, the Old Testament, New Testament, and say, "Okay, God is covenantal."
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** "He has called us into a covenantal marriage." Okay, so based on God's character, based on what we see Him doing and saying about covenant in the Bible, how are we then to reflect that as those made in His image called into that characteristic ourselves?
- Selena:** Right. Right.
- Ryan:** And so, yeah.
- Selena:** And that's just some of the bigger reasons. We're talking about how your marriage is bigger than you, we're talking about *purpose*. So, the purposes of marriage, the bigger reasons are obviously for God's glory, and for our good and sanctification. But also, like you're talking about, just to know Him. The more we know Him, the more we understand more of how He desires us to live.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** And the motivations of our hearts. And by the power of the Holy Spirit at work in us, over time, we can become more aligned with His desires.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** And we, by knowing Him, are able to make Him known, which is a large part of what marriage is all about, right, is knowing God and making Him known? I don't know. Some of my biggest lessons in marriage have [*Chuckling*] been through knowing God. Like, knowing His characteristics. Right? And knowing that He's good even when things are hard, and knowing that His word can be trusted, even though I don't see the clarity around it all the time. And I need to

just kind of dig or sit or just absorb what His word is saying and how it speaks to the situation.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Or conflict that we're dealing with, letting *it* bear weight and not my own thoughts.

**Ryan:** Right. So, what we're looking at here, and this is what you're saying, is we're looking at *how* marriage is bigger than us.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And later we're going to look at *why* it's bigger than us. What are the purposes for which marriage is created the way it is? But how is it bigger than us is, like you just said— Okay. What was it, probably like six months ago, right? I was feeling convicted. There was something, *long* time ago when I was a kid, and probably like in my early teens, where I had done some things that I was really ashamed of. And I'd felt really convicted 'cause I had never shared those things with Selena. But I was, over a week's time, I started feeling the Holy Spirit prompting me, and it was one of these ideas that, like, if you're not 100 percent known, you won't ever feel 100 percent loved. And that was the case!

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Selena had not known this little .001 percent of my life, and I felt like if she knew that she might not love me. I honestly thought that! And here we're going on 15 years married [*Chuckles*], 16 years married at the time.

**Selena:** We're only human.

**Ryan:** And so, I just kept kind of pushing it down, pushing it down, thinking it'll just go away if I can just forget it. It's silly. It's so far gone in the past that it's not who I am.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** I've since been sanctified, and God is good, and He's saved me, and all these things. But still, there's this *nagging* thing.

**Selena:** Yeah.

[00:19:59] **Ryan:** And so, it kept happening 'til one morning at church, our pastor was preaching as he does, and did it so well, and just pointed me to the gospel. And I said, "You know, I need to make this area known to Selena."

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And I just have to trust that our covenant... She believes in our covenant, and she understands God's love enough to turn around love me even though I show her this ugly part of my life.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And so, what happened? Do you remember that?

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** I'll let you tell the story. What happened?

**Selena:** Yeah. You shared it—

**Ryan:** No, no! Like, you got to paint the picture. [*Selena laughs*] We were driving home [*Ryan laughs*]—

**Selena:** [*Laughing*] Sorry! Yeah...

**Ryan:** “Yeah, you shared with me! It was great.” [*Laughs*]

**Selena:** I'm not all business, people. [*Ryan laughing*] It's all business! I don't got time for the fluff... No. Yeah, we were driving home and I could tell you needed to share something, and so we just started talking and I just kind of listened and let you share. And I think I was like, “Well, it was a long time ago,” and I'm sure everybody's like, “What was it?” But it's not going to be shared here, people. Don't... [*Ryan laughs*]

**Ryan:** Well, it's irrelevant.

**Selena:** It's irrelevant. The fact was that he shared something that he thought would taint my view of him, and I feel like it kind of built up my admiration and trust, I think, in you because you were being so transparent and sharing, and I felt like it was a way that I could love you and, I don't know, just be that covering for you. And I don't feel like I always get those opportunities... I don't know. It was very...

**Ryan:** I think you're hitting about half of it right now.

**Selena:** Okay. Well, go for it. [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** I want to say, “Michael Scott, you are remembering it wrong.”

**Selena:** I'm remembering it wrong? [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** Well, yes, everything you said happened, but what also happen is you said— Actually, I have a few things that I want to share.



**Selena:** Oh, yeah.

**Ryan:** [*Laughs*] That's a big part of it! Because you then felt the open door...

**Selena:** This was a long time ago.

**Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] It was like five months ago! It wasn't that long ago.

**Selena:** Okay, well, I had a baby six weeks ago, so, anything before that I'm a little... foggy on. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Yeah. Before child.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** "B.C." [*Both laugh*] And so, I shared this with you. You said, "First off, it changes nothing about how I love you."

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** "It changes zero things." [*Both chuckle*] "But also, I have something that I've always kind of been ashamed of," this is you talking. You had always felt kind of ashamed in almost a silly sort of bashful sense, but in your heart, it had been this barrier to feeling fully loved in a sense.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And so, anyway. What I'm saying is that in that moment, I got to see God's covenantal love in a way that I had *never* seen it before.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And it was *through* the venue of covenantal marriage, of seeing my wife who had covenanted with me, and with God to love me for richer, for poorer, for better or worse, in sickness and in health, and I got to see that firsthand when, frankly, I felt unlovable.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And so, then I could turn around and give praise to God for this woman that He'd given me, but I could also give praise to God for the character that He already has.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And He has already loved me in that way, regardless of how lovable I feel.

**Selena:** Right. Right.

**Ryan:** Because He already knows the ins and outs.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** And He has already decided— So...

**Selena:** He demonstrates His own love for us.

**Ryan:** [*Lightly laughs*] In this.

**Selena:** Uh-huh.

**Ryan:** In that while we were still sinners, Christ *died* for us.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And so, it was in the middle of our folly that Christ died for us. And it's in the middle of my folly that my wife loves me.

**Selena:** So good!

**Ryan:** And it's in the middle of my folly that I feel loved.

**Selena:** It's not when we're doing good, right? [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** And not on the top, the mountain top. It's not when He's like, "Okay. Now I'll die for you. You're good enough. I think that passes the test."

**Ryan:** So, to go all way back to what you [*Selena laughs*] said about how the bigger reasons is to know Him, it's ultimately for His glory. Why? Because we can know Him as we experience traits that are His!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Right? So, from just a meta—I don't want to use this word, but I'm going to say it, metaphilosophical or metaphysical sort of sense, there's this *bigger* idea of what are these ideas of love?

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Okay?

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** What is an idea of goodness? What is the idea of evil? What is the idea of trust and faithfulness and these *big* things that we take for granted?

**Selena:** Yeah...

**Ryan:** Well, until we understand and know that those things are God's trait, not evil, but [*Both quickly chuckle*] goodness and—

**Selena:** Woah!

**Ryan:** Holiness and love and faithfulness and gentle—All these things that we want to attri—They have kind of these intrinsic value to us in our human condition.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** If we don't know they come from God, our purpose is going to be completely centered and terminating on ourselves. Right?

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** And that is not the bigger picture of marriage!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And that's the problem with modern marriage!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Is a lot of times it's all centering on me. Do I feel loved?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Do you give me what I think I deserve?

**Selena:** You make me happy, 'cause if you don't...

**Ryan:** Yes.

**Selena:** Buh-bye!

**Ryan:** If you don't, buh-bye! [*Both laugh*] And that's the problem, is that the people who are so quick to jump to that, and frankly, statistics show that a lot of people are quick to jump to that conclusion.

**Selena:** Yeah. Well, it's a misunderstanding of love. It's a misunderstanding of covenant, right? We're interacting in a contractual basis.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** And our marriage covenant is where we sort of our able to practice and put into action these attributes of God.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** [*Baby noises in background*] And these... Sorry she's moving. [*Both laugh quickly*] I feel like our marriage covenant is the proving ground. It's like the practice area, the practice field, of practicing love, biblical love.

[00:25:06] **Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** It's practicing *trust*, how do we trust each other. It is practicing repentance and apologizing. And we did a whole podcast on how to apol—

**Ryan:** Oh! That was a good one, too!

**Selena:** What was it called? How to apologize?

**Ryan:** Like, *The Art of Apologizing*.

**Selena:** *The Art of—* There it is!

**Ryan:** I think it's, like, seven weeks back.

**Selena:** Yeah. And in our marriage covenant, we can practice how to communicate well and in love, and the truth in love, speaking the truth in love. I don't want to practice that with other people until [*Laughing*] I practice it with my spouse, because...

**Ryan:** Right?

**Selena:** He can lovingly give me feedback on, like, "That was not very loving, how you said this, and you kind of ignored *all* of these other things," which we had a fight about that this week.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** And, yeah, are we able to have hard conversations in a healthy way?

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** And then, talking about sex and intimacy is obviously more than a purely physical act. It's spiritual, emotional, and it illustrates the unity and oneness, and it allows us to engage in procreation. So, there's all these big reasons—

**Ryan:** Sorry. I want to hover there for a minute—

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** Because I would say that it's not just *more* than purely physical, I think it... I'm going to say this. I know there's probably nuances, but I feel like if it's just purely physical, it's probably closer to sin than it is to intimacy.

**Selena:** Hmm...

**Ryan:** If it's completely void of a spiritual and emotional bond that goes along with it.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And I mean *completely* void. I get that, in marriage, there are times when sex is more *functional*.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But that doesn't mean I'm completely detached from who you are spiritually.

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** And as my wife—

**Selena:** I think it's that spiritual attachment that allows for some of the functionality to happen without the hurt. Right?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And without the... not hurt, I guess.

**Ryan:** No, you're right!

**Selena:** Taken advantage of.

**Ryan:** Right. You can still feel loved, even though it's not this rapturous affair.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And that's the bad word to use [*Laughing*] right there. It's not this rapturous event is what I meant to say.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** So, you can still feel loved in that. But how's this go back to your marriage being bigger than yourself? Okay. And I want to keep going back to that, because this is one of those areas, some of the main things that cause a marriage to go sideways are usually going to be around sex and intimacy.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Whether it's a bitterness that's welled up or an infidelity or sin or a habit of sorts that is causing one person to feel completely rejected and unloved. That's a big area! And if couples lose sight of the bigness of their own marriage, they will lose sight of their need for purity in this area and their need to actually utilize this area of their marriage for not just their own pleasure, but for the glory of God.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And so, your sex life is bigger than you. [*Selena chuckles*] It is!

**Selena:** It is.

**Ryan:** Because, there's so many reasons, but there's—

**Selena:** God designed it that way.

**Ryan:** He designed it to be a glimpse of the gospel.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Meaning that you were fully naked and still fully loved.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Exposed, naked, complet— I mean that literally.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** But also, emotionally.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Spiritually exposed. And still, you're engaging in this act of love. And here's the thing! What happens in that engaged act of love? That's the venue through which new life is created!

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** That's [*Baby whines in the background*]— Speaking of new life. [*Both chuckle*]

**Selena:** Right on cue!

**Ryan:** That's a venue that God has allowed us to participate in the creation of life.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay, you're spiritually made one flesh, but you're *literally* made one flesh.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** This little baby you're holding is 50% Selena, 50% Ryan.

**Selena:** 90% me. [*Ryan laughs*]

**Ryan:** She is. She resembles you! [*Laughing*]

**Selena:** 5% you...

**Ryan:** Okay! [*Both laugh*]

**Selena:** Just kidding.

**Ryan:** Hey! You know what? I'm happy to play my part. [*Both laugh*] But I'm thinking, you know, genetically [*Both chuckle*] ... Not the amount of effort that went into actually creating the child.

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

**Ryan:** But the point is, is that that act is so much bigger than just your sexual pleasure!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And the same goes across the board.

**Selena:** Well, and I think God viv—

**Ryan:** But that's the most vivid example, I think.

**Selena:** Well, and how I feel like God brings us... If you just look— Yeah. If you look at how it's emotionally impacting, and how it requires selflessness on levels, and how it also builds you up, and how you feel more... [*Selena chuckles*] I mean, physically, you feel probably more relaxed afterwards. [*Ryan snickers*] But there's more... I just feel like—

**Ryan:** [*In an accent*] I'm quite sleepy. [*Ryan laughs and Selena chuckles*]

**Selena:** I feel like our bond is strengthened. So, it's like you put sex and intimacy, right, in the middle of a circle, and how many other things come to light because because of just that one act in those moments?

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** And there's so much that God has just purposed within that and designed and created within that. And we see that on the flip side with all the, like you said, if

there's an emotional affair, or if there's other affairs and just physical stuff happening *outside* of marriage, then you see the opposite effect of that.

**Ryan:** Mmm...

**Selena:** You see the brokenness. And in God designing and putting parameters around it for our flourishing and for His glory.

**Ryan:** And we've seen it! And honestly, we get the messages from the—

**Selena:** Daily.

**Ryan:** From the husband daily. Husbands and wives at their wits end because there's been brokenness in this area.

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** They have lacked *big* vision.

[00:30:00] **Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And the big—I'm not saying that they don't have a vision for... I'm saying that they don't see things from this “bigger than you” perspective.

**Selena:** Well, yeah. And... Go [*Inaudible*].

**Ryan:** And it's created brokenness in this area. So, a husband or a wife will go off and have an affair because they've completely lost sight of the bigger picture.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** That that moment of lapse in their judgment, that moment of pleasure, whether it's feeling like they've somehow fulfilled an emotional need through the physical act or the physical act itself... It completely shatters their marriage— They've lost sight of the big picture and they've lost sight of, and this is why we say, husband, wife, if you're if you're addicted to pornography, it's not just about, “Hey, don't watch that. It's bad.”

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's about that is *poison* and it's killing you.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** You need to understand that it is going to kill your marriage from the inside out. It's going to kill your heart! Because it's an active sin against God, it's going to separate... There's a doctrine, “The Union with Christ,” okay? So, we have we



have communion with God, but we also have unity in Christ, right? We're in union with Christ.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** So, when I say there's a separation, it's we lose communion with God because we're in disobedience with Him.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** We're not as close to Him as we could be. It doesn't mean your salvation is at risk; I just want to be clear about that. But you have to have a bigger picture of these things, so you know it's worth fighting for.

**Selena:** Yeah. It goes all the way back to Genesis 3, right? They see the apple. They see the tree. They don't see—

**Ryan:** Not an apple. Not an apple.

**Selena:** Okay. They see the *fruit*. [Ryan chuckles] They see a tree. And they lack the vision of all of Eden that God has given them.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** Right? They're seeing just this one tree, this one piece of the whole picture that God has given— He's given *perfection!*

**Ryan:** Well, He said, "You can eat of *every* tree in the garden."

**Selena:** *Everything.*

**Ryan:** Everything is for your flourishing.

**Selena:** And isn't that what we do in our marriage, and even in loving each other, in understanding the gospel? We make it about our *lack*, and it's all about His sufficiency, right?

**Ryan:** Mm. That was the the crux of our argument over the last day and a half.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Was the seeing and not displaying gratitude in a very obvious way.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** In a way that was felt on both sides.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And that's because we were focusing on...

**Selena:** You were focusing on you.

**Ryan:** And you were focusing on [*Selena laughs*] ...

**Selena:** You!

**Ryan:** You meant you. [*Both laugh*]

**Selena:** [*Inaudible*] [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** But it's that same— Yeah, it's that mentality. And that's just human— I mean, that's—

**Selena:** That's our tendency in sin, yeah.

**Ryan:** From the very first couple.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Here to this day, 2019, this is what we struggle with.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Is focusing on our lack, forgetting the big vision.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Forgetting what's at stake, and it's our communion with God, but also our communion each other.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** *And* these big reasons *why* marriage is bigger than us. So, up to this point, we talked about *how* it's bigger than you. You can take these principles of covenant, you guys, and by the way, in our book *Fierce Marriage*, we talk through the biblical covenants in an appendix. I got really excited and wrote a whole thing about, like [*Selena chuckles*], it's basically a survey of the biblical covenants and how each one can point to the covenant of marriage.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And how we can kind of see it in light of marriage as a topic. So, if you haven't picked up *Fierce Marriage*, the book, definitely go to Amazon. I think they have it for just, I think, ten or twelve bucks. But we go into a lot more depth on this. And that's why you don't have scripture today, because there's scripture all

throughout the Bible that we could quote, but when you have a big view of covenant, I forget what I was saying, but— *[Both laugh]*

**Selena:** It happens, it happens.

**Ryan:** You going to help me out?

**Selena:** Sorry.

**Ryan:** You're not going to help me out at all. *[Laughing]*

**Selena:** Well, I didn't know where you're going *[Laughs]* exactly. I follow you blindly.

**Ryan:** *[Both laugh]* Follow me blindly. Okay. Okay, that's what the saying *[Selena laughs]*, is that we've talked about the house. I was saying follow your follow your husband blindly. *[Both laugh]*

**Selena:** *[Laughing]* There it is! *[Both laughing]*

**Ryan:** When you have that big idea of covenant—

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** Engrained into your guts, it's in your heart, it's in your head, you understand it, coming to apologize is easy. Communicating in a way that's—

**Selena:** I don't say it's always *easy*.

**Ryan:** It's not easy, but the ideas of it are there.

**Selena:** But the purpose drives you to want to do it.

**Ryan:** Right. I'm sorry.

**Selena:** It's a loving prod, I feel like. It's a prod and a pull—

**Ryan:** Yup.

**Selena:** To make you want to...

**Ryan:** Your communication has context now, 'cause now it's not just about being right. It's about loving you well.

**Selena:** It's *always* about being right.

**Ryan:** Of course, it is!

**Selena:** *[Laughing]* Always about me.

**Ryan:** It's about loving you well! I'm going to say these two words, but these are like saying swearwords.

**Selena:** Eee!

**Ryan:** Submission and authority.

**Selena:** I know.

**Ryan:** Which are in the Bible, people! We didn't write the Bible! [*Chuckles*]

**Selena:** Don't kill the messengers.

**Ryan:** But those words are there! Okay. So, loving authority and loving submission.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Those things *are* good topics that have been bent out of shape. They've been twisted and distorted.

**Selena:** Yeah...

**Ryan:** By losing the vision of what *our* purposes is as individuals, but also our purpose of our union.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Purpose of our marriage. And any topic—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Can, in marriage, can, like, all of the practical tools that we talked about can be worked out kind of with your own heads and hearts if you just have the purpose and the principles in mind.

[00:34:59] **Selena:** Absolutely. Absolutely. And I think, you know, just speaking to the submission and authority briefly—

**Ryan:** Uh-oh! [*Selena snickers*] Okay.

**Selena:** Well, I think understanding it, again, I feel like our marriage covenant is where we can practice and understand the *roles* that God has given us and the purposes within those roles, and how I'm better than you. [*Ryan snickers*] Just kidding. But—

**Ryan:** I'm not going to— I'm not arguing. So [*Selena laughs*], go ahead. Carry on!

- Selena:** [*Laughing*] But I think when we understand and we're able to practice and live under that authority as a couple, under the authority of our church or are living under the authority of our [*Laughs*] country in a lot of ways, like, how we're responding to that is an indicator of our understanding, I think, of the gospel at work in our hearts. And again, practicing [*Baby coos loudly*] this, knowing that there's more purpose—
- Ryan:** That was an amen.
- Selena:** Beyond just going through the acts and just checking off the boxes. And I think that's where, because when we start falling into that, we're going to get burnt out. We're not going to want to do it anymore. It's no longer motivating because we have *no* purpose. We have no greater vision. We have nothing that is telling us, "This is bigger than you, so you need to stick with this. If you don't understand it or if you're believing lies, you need to stick with it. Let's keep going for it."
- Ryan:** Well, because there is a certain gladness that comes along with obeying from the heart—
- Selena:** Yes!
- Ryan:** And not just obeying from your head or your hands.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** But actually saying, "I believe and trust, God, that You are A—"
- Selena:** So good!
- Ryan:** Looking out for my best.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** "And in that, I can submit to Your authority with *gladness*."
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** "Not just with a grudging—" I used to think that if you did it with gladness in your heart, then you are somehow doing it selfishly. Well, yeah! Absolutely. [*Selena laughs*] Because God wants you to delight in Him!
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And when you delight in Him, His precepts are delighting.
- Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** They're delightful.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And you want to fall in line in that regard.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** We do have a podcast episode, I think it's called, "Who's the Authority in Your Marriage?"

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** And we went a lot deeper into that.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And we talked about biblical authority. Go back and check that out if you missed it. But that goes into that that principle a lot more in depth.

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** So, we've talked about the how.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Now, let's all about why is your marriage bigger than you?

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** Why has God created marriage the way He has, from a missional standpoint?

**Selena:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Ryan:** What say you?

**Selena:** Oh! *[Laughs]* I say that the biggest purpose, underlying for His glory, is to be able to share Him with the world because there is nothing that speaks to me greater than seeing God at work within other people.

**Ryan:** Mm...

**Selena:** Aside from His word, of course. But when I see Him at work in couples, when I see miracles happen, couples staying together through things they shouldn't by the world's standards, should not—

**Ryan:** Yeah. By worldly wisdom and convention—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** They should not still be married. But...

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Somehow, they are, and it's obvious that they love each other. [*Chuckles*]

**Selena:** Right. It's an obvious thing that they're understanding God's character. They're understanding His desires for their life, and they're treasuring those and they're living under the authority of Him and His ways versus their own feelings, emotions, or what other voices in their heads are saying. Right? There's submitting.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** There's this understanding of Him, and I think that shares the purpose that is greater than just them. Right? Because if it's just about them and their problems, it's going to fall apart. There's no purpose in that. But if we understand that God has a greater purpose for some of the hard times and the struggles that we are dealing with, and, honestly, I think the struggles are just our stories that we get to *share* with each other. God brings people into our lives that need to hear our stories, and we get to own them and get to glorify Him *in* those.

**Ryan:** Yeah. I think of Chris and Stephanie Teague, right?

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Out of the Dust.

**Selena:** Yeah, the band.

**Ryan:** That was another...

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** We interviewed them. It's called Out of the Dust. They have an incredible story. They should not be—

**Selena:** Mm-mm.

**Ryan:** Married right now. They should not be together!

**Selena:** Mm-mm.

**Ryan:** By worldly standards. But we have a God who has— His wisdom is otherworldly.

**Selena:** His purpose.

**Ryan:** His purpose is His own.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** And here they are! They're not only glorifying God, but they're doing so *loudly!*

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** As musicians, and they're touring and telling their story! Their testimony is glorifying God.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** So, that gets to the big, big why.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Which is... We must have a big view of marriage, it's bigger than us, because of God's glory.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And that's what you just said. It's the stories that come through, like what have we been through, how these big concepts of covenant and love...

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** The God that we serve, equipping and empowering us through the Holy Spirit to live out covenantal love, how has that giving God glory?

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** But also, think of a couple that you really look up to and chances are they've probably married for a long, long time.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And they'll be the first ones to tell you that it hasn't been easy, that God has been good, He's been faithful, and that's giving glory. So, there's this sense of kind of defying the worldly odds.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** But also seeing a couple flourishing, right?

**Selena:** Yeah.



- [00:39:59] **Ryan:** And the thing is, is couples will find a purpose to stay together, but if it's not rooted in Christ, it's just a matter of time until that purpose starts to erode. Okay?
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** So, you hear about all the couple, like empty nesters, who finally get a divorce. Well, their purpose was... the kids.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And now that the kids are out the house...
- Selena:** Or that next step! I would argue, it's just kind of been that next step, when we get... [Ryan chuckles] anxious to move on to the next step of, "Okay. We got married; now we got to have kids, or we buy a house, we have kids, we have this," and then it's like, "Well, what do we do now?" or "We've done all those things."
- Ryan:** "We have no next step! We've checked all the boxes."
- Selena:** Right!
- Ryan:** "Now, why are we still together?" [Laughs]
- Selena:** Yeah, which is such a sad thing.
- Ryan:** And here we've given a lot of reasons why.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And it's an amazing thing! Like to me, that's...
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** At that point in life, it's going to be like, "Well, now it's just all about, like, as quickly and ridiculously, how much can we tell people about Jesus?" [Snickers]
- Selena:** Serving and loving... Yeah. No. Yeah, and it's so good! And I think, so, just getting tangible, I think a little bit on, you know, you hear us talk about family vision.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** And this is under that greater purpose of marriage, and having marriage, our covenant, being kind of that ground where we can practice, where we can practice sowing seed into each other, and sowing the Word, learning the Word,

training up little disciples. It's having our family vision, of knowing ours is basically knowing God and making Him known.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** That's kind of where we sort of fall.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And to be wrung out for the gospel, that's kind of our M.O. here. But I think if we don't have a family vision, that's really steered the ship on a lot of decisions we've made.

**Ryan:** Ground level decisions.

**Selena:** It's... *every...* granular. Yeah. From up 50,000 feet to the granular ones. And it's been very assuring, very relieving. I think you have a form on our website that you can get.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** The family vision.

**Ryan:** Yep.

**Selena:** Just search "family vision."

**Ryan:** Go to our website; search for it. I just to be very tangible, because... So, this has played in to how we've focused on Fierce Marriage.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Why we decided to go the Patreon route to actually fund it, so that it actually feels more like we're going the biblical route...

**Selena:** Right. All of these decisions [*Chuckles*] come back!

**Ryan:** To now, we don't have new cell phones.

**Selena:** [*Chuckling*] Right?

**Ryan:** My phone is cracked. Is your is your phone currently cracked?

**Selena:** Nooo! [*Ryan snickers*]

**Ryan:** That's because we, like, buying new phones is really tempting, but two things, it's really expensive, and it just means you're throwing another piece of technology away and it's going to landfill somewhere.

- Selena:** That's why all my pictures are little grainy people! [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** And so, we've made a decision—
- Selena:** I don't got a portrait mode on mine. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** And I'm not saying that this is something that everyone needs to do.
- Selena:** No. But we just...
- Ryan:** But for us, we said, "You know what? It feels like it's better stewardship if we just pay the \$80 to get our screens replaced instead of paying the *thousand* dollars or whatever [*Selena laughs*] to get the latest iPhone.
- Selena:** Yeah. Sorry. I don't mean to laugh. That's just a lot of money for me.
- Ryan:** Well, it's so much money!
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** I mean, they're amazing devices. I get it. If that's your thing, whatever. It's— I'm, like—
- Selena:** You've got to talk about it. It's fine! [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** Yeah. For us, the family vision has honestly informed those types of decisions.
- Selena:** Absolutely. Absolutely.
- Ryan:** And so, it's been so critical, and we're in agreement about that, which I think is... a miracle! [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Right. Right. Yeah. No, and family vision, you know, it really is, again, making all the decisions, 50,000-foot view down to the granular day to day ones. But all of that helping us to live on mission, right? God's given us the Great Commission. We're living out of the mission that He's given us. And that's to go and make disciples, right? And preach to all nations.
- Ryan:** Hm!
- Selena:** And, for us, preaching to all nation— I mean, I guess we are sort of. But it starts in our home. If we're— I think Jackie Hill Perry posted something about her daughters, and she was like, "I think if my daughters grow up, the thing that would bless her heart the most is that if her daughters grew up and said, "My mom was the same on stage as she was in our house." Like, that would be... She could die happy or something! [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** Wow!

**Selena:** And I was like, “That's so true!”

**Ryan:** So, preaching's in the house.

**Selena:** It's *so* true.

**Ryan:** And it's not just something that you want to stage. It's...

**Selena:** Well, it's an overflow of— Yes! And I think that's why we've chosen to homeschool and go do Classical Conversations, because it is echoing everything that we believe and want our children to know, and it's offered as a framework to be able to branch out of, again, their whole thing is to know God and make Him known. And it's hard to beat. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Hm. Well, I think that's a clear example of how family vision informed that decision.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Because that was scary!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** It was very scary to do that because there's a lot of criticism around it.

**Selena:** It's still scary.

**Ryan:** It's still scary. But also, it's like *you* felt it a lot. You feel like you're taking your child's education into your own hands.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Can you, should you do that? And the family vision part of it, and our conversations *around* the family vision said, “This is something we feel led to, and even though it's scary, we're going to go in with open eyes, open hands and trust! Trust that the vision that God's given us.

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** Is going to prove fruitful!

[00:44:40] **Selena:** He causes the ground to just rise to your feet. You know, you're just like, “I don't see where this path is going.” And God's like, “Just step. Just step and the ground is, you know, rising to your feet, basically. And I think it also is a good example... [*Chuckles*] I don't know, maybe I shouldn't say this, but C.C. is known to be very memory driven. There's a lot of facts and things that can feel on the day to day, like a grind. But when you, again, have this bigger picture of what they're learning and why kids aren't knowing. My five-year-old does not

understand the why behind Constantine legalising Christianity. She knows it goes to a song, and she knows it's in a timeline. When she is 8, will she understand more of the context of that? Yeah. Because that will be filed away, and she, already we are listening to that message that we we're talking about earlier. They sat there for 20 minutes, the girls, our five and three-year-old listening to the message. They didn't last the whole time, obviously, but they heard Constantine. They heard things that they know, and they were picking them out of the sermon, and that's where we're at!

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** We're picking out verbs and words, but the bigger picture for them hasn't yet been fulfilled but it's on its way, like, we're putting those building blocks into place.

**Ryan:** That's good! But the vision is what got us to that place.

**Selena:** That applies to marriage. Absolutely!

**Ryan:** So...

**Selena:** Well, but it's a big—And again, I'm illustration of...

**Ryan:** 'Cause we were really skeptical of that.

**Selena:** The daily grind versus purpose, and—

**Ryan:** Right. 'Cause it's easy to lose sight of the forest for the trees. Is that the phrase? I don't know.

**Selena:** Sounds good.

**Ryan:** But the daily grind can be so hard to remember that this is bigger than me.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Especially in marriage!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** When you're frustrated, when you're angry, when you wanted to lash out at each other, it's so easy to just do whatever feels good in that moment...

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** But a lot of times it will lead us down a path of destruction.

**Selena:** Right...

- Ryan:** But we have to have this *clear* grasp, and it doesn't mean you're perfect, but it means that everything you do and say *in marriage* has a context that is bigger than you! It's bigger than us.
- Selena:** Which is one reason why I think community is such a big point of encouragement and a big point of keeping the vision and the mission *in sight*, right?
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Because we are so... again, lost within the trees, and we need our community to come around us and say, "Come. Rise above this for a minute. Let me show you why you shouldn't talk to your husband like that, why you shouldn't make those purchases, why you shouldn't—"
- Ryan:** 'Cause they can help you elevate your vision.
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** You guys are struggling. We see something. Can we ask some questions here?
- Ryan:** And they've done that to us!
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** We're not like these gurus.
- Selena:** Oh! No, no! I wasn't saying us.
- Ryan:** We don't even lead it. But yeah...
- Selena:** I was just saying, like, in general. No, we definitely get questioned, and that's the whole purpose of community, right?
- Ryan:** But we did have, and I won't use names, but we've had... I mean, this has happened to every couple in our group at some point.
- Selena:** It's a cycle, right?
- Ryan:** It's a cycle. And there's...
- Selena:** Whoever's in the hot seat.
- Ryan:** And it's almost like if the couple's going through this, I said this to one of the guys, they're going through a hard thing, and again, we don't lead it or anything, but I was just texting and I said, "Hey, how you doing?" And he came

back and said, "We're still working through stuff." And I said, "Hey, well, you're both smart, spirit-filled people."

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** "I trust that you'll get to the end. If you need any advice, I'm happy to apply and give you advice, tangible advice. But honestly, I can see that's probably not going to help right now. You just need to work through this together."

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** "And you need to work through with the power of the Holy Spirit." And they're doing that.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And it doesn't mean it's resolved instantaneously. But that's because I know that they have a big view of God, have a big view of marriage.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's bigger than them.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And they'll get through it!

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** And that's the anchor that we have.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** That's based in God's word and based in His character. So, how can we get tangible for the Couples Conversation Challenge around this? I'm just going to propose a few things, is that look at these, maybe, I don't know... Think back to things that we've said in the past, is look at how can you have a bigger view of your marriage?

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** How can your marriage be made bigger than yourself?

**Selena:** Right, which is kind of ironic, right? Because you have to look at your marriage to, like, you're looking inward to look upward, but look upward and then come back, I guess.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And look outward. And what are some ways, maybe, that your marriage has, I want to say not like but lived on purpose, but like, what are the purposes of your marriage and [Ryan laughs and Selena chuckles] how would you identify those, I guess? I'm just...

**Ryan:** Like, family vision wise, you mean?

**Selena:** Yeah, yeah. What's your mission and vision?

**Ryan:** I was going to get way more tangible than that, but that's good.

**Selena:** Way more tangible? It's like writing it down. What else?

**Ryan:** I was going to say, think about an area where you've forgotten the bigness of your marriage.

**Selena:** Oh! Do that, people. Do that.

**Ryan:** So, like, you [Inaudible]. It's communication, finances, sex life.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** In-laws, whatever the tension point is.

**Selena:** Pick one! [Laughs]

**Ryan:** Okay. Here it is!

**Selena:** There it is!

**Ryan:** Okay. We got to it! [Selena laughs] Whatever the tension point in your marriage is, how can you lift your vision of your context and see God's purpose in how you live out tangibly in that area?

**Selena:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Ryan:** So, find the tension point, and then how can you look to Jesus together?

**Selena:** Yeah, for purpose.

**Ryan:** To have context for how you deal with that in a healthy way.

**Selena:** Yeah. That's good!

**Ryan:** Yeah! So...

**Selena:** Thanks for hanging with us through those conversations.



**Ryan:** Yeah, we didn't write it down this week, so...

**Selena:** You're just hearing our conversations. Yes! Sometimes we forget to write the Couples Conversation Challenge because [Ryan snickers and Selena smacks her lips] you know, it just kind of flows sometimes. [Selena laughs]

**Ryan:** Well, and also, baby, and we only have so much *time* to plan for these things.

**Selena:** Yes. Yes!

**Ryan:** So. Yeah! Anyway, thanks for joining us. I think after this, we're going to do a quick, I think I mentioned early on, we're going to do a quick Q&A. Just one question! I think we're going to do that once a week or twice a month. We'll figure that out. But the question we're going to talk through is if both a husband and a wife, we got this question, by the way. Selena, I'm telling *you* this—

[00:50:06] **Selena:** I should hope so! [Laughs]

**Ryan:** Both the husband and a wife, they said they enjoy pornography.

**Selena:** Oh, man.

**Ryan:** And they enjoy watching it and talking through it together. Is it still a sin for them? So, we're going to talk through that. We're going to answer that question in the next episode; I don't know when it's going to go live, but just look [Selena snickers] for it on your feed there.

**Selena:** Just... [Laughs] Just givin' em a hook, and then nothing else. [Both laugh]

**Ryan:** A hook with no bait. Is that how that works?

**Selena:** It'll come. It'll come soon.

**Ryan:** Alright. You want to pray? I prayed last time. So, why don't you pray this time?

**Selena:** Oh. [Laughs] Can only pray every other episode.

**Ryan:** I met my quota, so... [Selena chuckles]

**Selena:** God, thank You so much for giving us Your purpose. Thank You, that You allow us to engage in marriage, to have children, whatever that looks like, Father, that You allow us to engage in Your work and be a part of what You're doing, Father. And ministering to each other and ministering to those around us. God, teaching us about how to love and how to forgive and how to be unified through intimacy and how to be an agreement on large decisions. God, it's *all* for Your glory! I pray that if there's any tension points, if there's any darkness or fog around some of these areas in our marriage, that You would shine Your

bright light of purpose in those areas. Father, we are so grateful for Your message, for who You are. God, help our hearts to recognize that who You are is enough for us, Father. We love You so much.

In Jesus' name,  
Amen.

**Ryan:** Amen! Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us once again for the Fierce Marriage podcast. This episode is!

**Selena:** In the caaan!

**Ryan:** Alright! [*Selena laughs*] We will see you... [*Both laugh*] Was that a Mona-Lisa thing?

**Selena:** Maybe!

**Ryan:** Mona-Lisa Saperstein. Is that her name? [*Selena laughs*] I don't remember her name. Anyway, we will see you in about seven days. It's been a joy! And until then...

**Selena:** Stay fierce!

[00:51:51] <Ending Sequence>

[00:52:10] Podcast ends.

## PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:05:10]**
  - The Village Church:
    - <https://www.thevillagechurch.net/>
    - Resource link:
      - <https://www.tvresources.net/resource-library>
- **[00:10:00]**
  - Bake with Jack YouTube:
    - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTVR5DSxWPPpAVI8TzaaXRqQ>
- **[00:25:06]**
  - Podcast reference: The Art of (Actually) Apologizing
    - <https://fiercemarriage.com/the-art-of-actually-apologizing>
- **[00:34:59]**
  - Podcast reference: Who Is the Authority in Your Marriage?
    - <https://fiercemarriage.com/who-is-the-authority-in-your-marriage>
  - Podcast reference: Out of the Dust (Chris and Stephanie Teague)
    - <https://fiercemarriage.com/out-of-the-dust-chris-and-stephanie-teague>
- **[00:39:59]**
  - Classical Conversations, official website:
    - <https://www.classicalconversations.com/>
- **[00:50:06]**
  - Mona-Lisa Saperstein, character from Parks and Recreation show:
    - [https://parksandrecreation.fandom.com/wiki/Mona-Lisa\\_Saperstein](https://parksandrecreation.fandom.com/wiki/Mona-Lisa_Saperstein)

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