

FAKED TRANSPARENCY VS. TRUE VULNERABILITY

<https://fiercemarriage.com/faked-transparency-vs-true-vulnerability>

[00:00:19] **Selena:** Okay. So, today we're going to talk about transparency and the heart! It kind of stems out of our last episode where we talked about communication, and... this is sort of going behind that layer of, okay, the words that we say, how we act, just... the Bible talks about how life flows out of our heart, and so, how we're supposed to guard it. So—

Ryan: And specifically, how we can have kind of the front of transparency—

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: In that we're showing or acting as if we're being transparent, but really, we are obscured in our hearts. Is that what you're getting at?

Selena: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Ryan: Okay. That'll be great! So, we'll see you on the other side.

[00:00:54] <Intro Sequence>

[00:01:23] **Selena:** In the spirit of transparency...

Ryan: Mm-hm!

Selena: You will hear some little grunts as we have little Louisa here with us.

Ryan: Always! She's a...

Selena: We're getting her there!

Ryan: Seven weeks?

Selena: We're getting her to that bottle place; she's doing really well! We just... The timing of...

Ryan: No rush!

Selena: All that stuff.

Ryan: Hey. It's soon enough.

Selena: It's just hard sometimes. [Chuckles]

Ryan: Soon enough she'll be running around—

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: And she'll want nothing to do with us, so let's just enjoy it!

Selena: Yes. When we talk about transparency, it's so easy to talk about addictions, and...

Ryan: Right. It's easy to stay kind of in one spot.

Selena: We fall into... Yes!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And I think that you and I, just in the season that we're in, which we'll talk about, our heart motivations have been really... under fire and in examination, I think.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: And it's been good!

Ryan: Wait, what do you mean by that? Why? Why have our heart motivations been under fire?

Selena: Well, because of having a baby and...

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: All of that that brings.

Ryan: So, you're saying and th—

Selena: I wasn't going to jump into that quite yet.

Ryan: In this season of life—

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: That's what you were articulating beforehand is that we—You kind of feel like it would be really easy for us to kind of fly under the radar...

Selena: Right! And say—

Ryan: Because, just...

Selena: "Oh, we're being honest with each other."

Ryan: There's so much happening!

- Selena:** And... Yeah. And, "I love you," and like, "We're good. We're good! We're good." But then I fell—
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** But then I feel like this prompting of the Holy Spirit that is like, "You need to vocalize and *say* the things that are happening in your heart." You know, good, bad, all of the above.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** So! We'll get into that... in a moment. But I think that you would like to do our little housekeeping... segment.
- Ryan:** Yeah. So, last time we started a new kind of bonus episode each week.
- Selena:** It went over pretty well, I think!
- Ryan:** Yeah! It went over really well.
- Selena:** It's exciting!
- Ryan:** And we didn't do one 'cause last week was Thanksgiving. So, we didn't do one last week, 'cause last Thursday was Thanksgiving. But every Thursday, when we don't have an interview, we'd like to do this extra little seven- or eight-minute segment.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And we had asked you, fair listeners, for... [*Selena laughs*] titling ideas.
- Selena:** [*Chuckling*] Some names...
- Ryan:** [*Both chuckling*] And so, I think... [*Ryan laughs*] the verdict is still out. So, I just want to read some of these.
- Selena:** They're kind of funny.
- Ryan:** So, I had one come in. It says, "Not a question, but an answer to your question, I'd like to suggest the name "Fast and Fierce" for your question/answer segment. God bless."
- Selena:** Which I like a little bit. But you said it's not as *clear*, probably, to people.
- Ryan:** Right. And it also, obviously, like Fast and Furious...
- Selena:** Fast and Fierce [*Ryan snickers*] Q&A.

Ryan: With a little bit of Vin Diesel action there. [*Chuckles*]

Selena: I mean...

Ryan: So, that one, I appreciate.

Selena: I appreciate it.

Ryan: So, kind of the thing when I said it was, “We can use the words quick... You can use the words fierce, use the word,” you know, and a lot of these all have those words in them.

Selena: Which, in our first episode was a little misleading ‘cause it was a sexual question, but they’re not always about sex. They can be on any topic.

Ryan: Yeah, like the one that we’re going to do this week on Thursday isn’t at all about that!

Selena: Ye **Selena:**

Ryan: Well, it is by extension. Okay. Some other ones. Let’s read these really fast. Some of our listeners and patrons said “Fierce Quickies.” [*Selena stifles a giggle*] So there’s... That’s funny, right?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: The only reason I think we’re probably not going to do that is ‘cause we have some friends, Dave and Ashley Willis, they did, “Summer Quickies.”

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: For their little Q&A things.

Selena: Which, check those out! Those are awesome.

Ryan: But their podcast is called Naked Marriage, so it’s a lot more...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Appropriate, I feel like. [*Selena laughs*] “Quickies” obviously kind of a sexual... illusion there.

Selena: Yes, yes.

Ryan: And then the other ones; [*Chuckles*] I love this one. Well, Rachel, no, here’s— Real quick, Rachel said, “Quick Fierce Tidbits.” [*Both chuckle*] And that one made me laugh! I don’t know why...

Selena: Tidbits.

Ryan: But... tidbits is one of those words that makes me laugh. [*Selena chuckles*] Then the first one is, "This is not a question regarding the TBD on your seven-minute segment. After giving this much thought and prayer..." I really appreciate that. I really do. "After giving this much thought and prayer, I've determined that the best, most suiting name would be 'Seven Minutes in Heaven.'" [*Both laughing*] "Since hearing from you both is a divine experience." You're welcome!

Selena: Nice!

Ryan: Ryan G. Ryan G., thank you.

Selena: It's not you, is it?

Ryan: No! [*Laughs*]

Selena: 'Cause that's Ryan Glenn. [*Both laughing*] You write into yourself often?

Ryan: You know, I was just feeling insecure that day. [*Selena laughs*] So, I submitted our question form for...

[00:05:03] **Selena:** That's great.

Ryan: That's "Seven Minutes in Heaven." I thought of the name, "The Afterglow." [*Snickers*]

Selena: You did!

Ryan: But that's another kind of, like...

Selena: Oh, that's funny.

Ryan: That's alluding to something else...

Selena: Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: I think we're just going to stick with "Quick Q&A." I don't know. We'll see!

Selena: We'll see!

Ryan: We reserve the right to change at any point.

Selena: Right. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Bit of a diversion there. Anyway! For our housekeeping, thank you so much to all you patrons, for those who have jumped on board with us! That just means the world to us.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And it's helping us keep this podcast ad free and keeping us moving forward. If you want to learn more about that, go to fiercemarriage.com/patreon, or go to [Chuckles] patreon.com/fiercemarriage! [Laughs]

Selena: There it is!

Ryan: I think either one of those would work. [Selena laughs] And the second thing is, if you haven't yet, please do leave a rating and a review! That means a ton to us. It helps *more* than you realize! Takes you 30 seconds.

Selena: A little bit goes a long ways!

Ryan: You can just tap the rating button!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: You don't even have to leave a review! Just do the rating.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And if you feel compelled, do leave a review. That helps others find this podcast.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: And know what they're getting into, and in turn, champion the gospel in the lives of married people.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: And then finally, if you have a question, like we talked about, we're doing these question segments. This is where we get those questions. Go to fiercemarriage.com/podcast. There's a button there where you can submit the question online, or you can call or text this number: 971-333-1120.

Okay, so let's get into this topic today. Selena, you called it "transparency and the heart." I think I might go with kind of the idea of lying while not lying, or telling the truth while actually lying...

Selena: [Giggles] Yes!

Ryan: Something to that, that's kind of what's going through my head—

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: As we're talking through this.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: So, what does that look like, and—

Selena: Well, yeah, because we can say the truth without really saying the truth, right? Which is a lie.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And we can be... We're kind of asking the question of how can we be more transparent with each other about our heart motivations, and *why* is that *important* in our marriage?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: You know, I think one of the major ways, again, that we believe spouses can embrace transparency is through obedience to God's word and God, in Proverbs 4:23, He says to guard our hearts above *all* else, because out of it flows life.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And as we're studying around what is the heart, like defining these terms. Right? Our hearts! Obviously, we're not talking about the physical organ of the heart, just to be clear. We're talking about our hearts in the spiritual sense. Our heart is the core of our being. I was on gotquestions.org, which is an awesome, awesome website.

Ryan: We go there often!

Selena: [*Smacks lips and chuckles*] We go there often. And he said the heart is that spiritual part of us where our emotions and desires dwell. The Bible mentions that *almost* a thousand times, and we have a heart because *God* does. And I know that sounds so simple, but I was like, "Oh! I *forget* that God..." I just think of Him as this being, right? And in my limited... knowledge [*Chuckles*] and understanding...

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Not that He... And the heart aspect of Him is... *so personal!* And sometimes I... disconnect Him, and that's my own journey of faith here.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: [*Clears her throat*] Excuse me. But there's scripture to back that up, like David having a heart after God... So anyways! The understanding that in Genesis 3, when sin happened, sin came into the world, the fall tainted kind of the

deepest parts of us, which includes our hearts. And... all too often we're *blind* to that sin and we're blind to the depth of how sinful our hearts are.

Ryan: Hm!

Selena: And it's hard for us to *know* our own hearts... But we can trust that God does, and there's scripture that backs that up as well. Psalm 44:21, I Corinthians 14:25. [*Inhales deeply*] You know, without Jesus, our hearts really are treacherous and evil, and they're deceitful!

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: We see that, Jeremiah 17:9. [*Chuckling*] Probably see this in our marriage, too! Through line manipulation, hurtful words. And so, the problem, again, that we see brought up is that it's not what's happening on the outside, right? Because we can tell the truth, we can be "honest" without actually *being* honest.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: And Jesus points this out in Mark 7, also in Matthew 15, when the Pharisees are talking about, you know, "you're eating unclean food," and he's like, "It's not what goes into the body, but what comes out of the body."

Ryan: Right.

Selena: That we really are seeing, again, the heart as being this important... part, if not the main hub for the overflow of our life, right?

Ryan: Right. Absolutely! Absolutely.

Selena: Okay. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah! Well—

Selena: I didn't know if you wanted to jump in... if you have some—I mean thoughts.

Ryan: Well, I mean, something struck me. Okay, so... You said basically, telling the truth without actually *telling* the truth.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Is something that I heard you say...

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: And... The things that keep swirling around in my head around this, and they're all around, obviously, the idea of transparency, because we've been writing our book, *See Through Marriage*.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And so, that's obviously there, too. [*Inhales*] But, so doublespeak, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, I just finished 1984, George Orwell.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: I think it's the second or third time I've read it. And I like to revisit it, especially now, though. There's so much happening... in our culture...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: That makes this book so harrowing, so... hard to read...

[00:10:04] **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: It without just *automatically* seeing the parallels, in particular, around the idea of doublespeak, the idea that you can like— Okay. So, we're not going to get political. We're going to stay in our lane here.

Selena: Use an example of doublespeak.

Ryan: Well, an example would be...

Selena: Or just saying what it is. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Well, it's basically like saying... It's setting out to say something that seems true but is clearly to deceive. Right? So...

Selena: Right. It's very misleading!

Ryan: To deceive. Yeah! So, the word, here's a very... clear example right now. The word "racism," right? It's so hard to decipher what someone actually means when they're saying that—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: 'Cause it's throwing around... so, I think, flippantly nowadays.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: There's, you know, any other kind of like trigger-woke word that you're going to listen to, it's going to have kind of that aspect of doublespeak. They're *redefining*... things.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Okay. So, we watched the little video about William Lutz, who I think is a scholar from the 80s.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And he's talking about doublespeak. He's kind of the ex— where he wrote a book called *Doublespeak*, and he's saying that in advertising, right, they can use the term "sugar free" ...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: In advertising and how it's not sugar free. All that that term means... Okay, so the term means something different than, "it is free of sugars."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It means that there are no added *types* of sugar; no table sugar, no cane sugar were added.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: It can still have—

Selena: Fructose.

Ryan: Fructose—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And sucrose, and even corn syrup.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Those are sugars! Right?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, he used the example that if you're a diabetic and you're saying, "Oh, I can only eat sugar free food." Well, that would kill you. That level of doublespeak is *that* devastating...

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: In that you say, "No, it's sugar free." Well, it's not sugar free.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But you can somehow get away with saying this. So, we can do— Okay. Bringing around to marriage...

Selena: And the heart. [*Chuckles lightly*]

Ryan: And the heart. Is we can ten—We can do the same thing!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And we can say things that, they have the appearance of being true, but they are meant specifically to obscure the truth.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I think that's what doublespeak is.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Meaning that if somebody says, “How you doing?” Again, go back to the same example of integrity.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Come back to me and say, “Hey, how have you been doing with your sexual integrity, and your eyes?” And I could say, “Oh! ...It's been easy,” right? “It's been fine. I haven't done anything.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But in my head, I'm convincing myself that by saying, “I haven't done anything,” meaning that it's a certain... bar that I haven't...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Certain line I haven't crossed.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But maybe I've pushed it.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Maybe my integrity's not intact, and this has happened in the past, right? You can kind of like obscure. It's sugarcoating!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: To use the same word, sugar. *[Both laugh]* Maybe that's where that *came* from!

Selena: *[Chuckling]* Maybe!

Ryan: *[Chuckling]* No, it's not. *[Laughs]* But... You know? Or, "Hey, how's our budget doing this this month?"

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And I could ask you that or you could ask me that. Say, "Oh! Our budget's fine." But you *know* that you've spent money you shouldn't have spent.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You're not exposing that information right out the gate.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Instead, you're saying, "Hey, we're *within* our budget."

Selena: And this was a problem early on in our marriage. Like, we definitely dealt with that a lot!

Ryan: Right! Well, I mean I think...

Selena: And I think we still continue to deal with those issues in that sense...

Ryan: Well, it's manipulation, and it's...

Selena: At its core, yeah.

Ryan: Manipulation. Using words to manipulate is what doublespeak— And so, all that comes back around to this: Okay, how is our heart in forming this?

Selena: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

Ryan: How is our heart *driving* and *motivating* this behavior, that's clearly not healthy, it's not biblical, it's not truthful...

Selena: Well, it...

Ryan: And is it a trend in our marriage?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And if it is, how can we address it?

Selena: Well, how do we recognize it, too? Because it ultimately, like the desires that are in our hearts, if they... aren't placed there by God or if the Holy Spirit is not at work in us, those desires are going to be *evil* or treacherous or deceitful.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And those *seem* like big words! But that's what the Bible uses for what is in our hearts, if we have not been saved by God's grace and, ideally, when you're saved, the Holy Spirit, right?

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Empowers you and comes into you, and you're having that *counselor* alongside of you and working in you and producing fruit.

Ryan: Mm-hm!

Selena: So, if you're not— I don't know. Sometimes that gets mixed up, I think. We tend to say, “Oh, I'm saved!” But then there's *no fruit* bearing there.

Ryan: Mm...

Selena: And so, I think when we're saved and the Holy Spirit's at work, that our desires are changed. Right? God is *renewing* our hearts. When you talk about our relationship with God in our hearts, you know, He *knows* our hearts... *best* and He loves us the most, which is so cool. But only He can judge our hearts, because He is righteous, and He is in the business of examining our hearts and transforming our hearts and giving us *new* hearts—

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And instruction on how to operate and guard our hearts, and *why* that's important. So, with that comes, you know, He fills our hearts with new desires, new wisdom, new ideas. There's... a transformation that happens when we're saved and when the Holy Spirit comes into our lives. And I think the problem comes when we get too familiar or we get... when we get apathetic about God's word, about being transparent with each other.

[00:15:05] **Ryan:** Mm-hm. Yeah.

Selena: Because I feel like we can play the transparency game, right? We can pull that card, you and I. But unless I'm really sharing what's happening in my heart, then I'm not *really* being transparent.

Ryan: Well, if we have the illusion of transparency, well, all we do is we learn how to navigate the maze of legalism in a different way.

Selena: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Ryan: That's all that fake transparency gives us.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Is just a way to navigate that maze so that we won't get in trouble.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So that we won't have to deal with the actual ramifications of the heart issues that are there.

Selena: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

Ryan: Andy Crouch wrote a book, *Strong and Weak*, and in it he talks about the concept of meaningful risk. You've probably heard us mention this.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: But meaningful risk, I'm just going to read it 'cause he defined it so well. It says, let's see here. Well, I'm going to use this quote. He says, "To be vulnerable," so, meaningful risk is basically... It's taking risks that actually expose you; it's being honest and vulnerable in a way that actually...

Selena: Costs you something.

Ryan: Costs you something.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: There it is! Thank you! He says, "To be vulnerable is to be exposed to the possibility of loss." Okay. Think about that for a second.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, if I share this part of myself with you, there is a risk, the possibility that I could *lose*... something that I deeply care about, deeply desire.

Selena: Right! A heart desire.

Ryan: And that's either your respect, your affection.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Our relationship, or even my own identity. That's what he says!

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: It says, “To be vulnerable is to be exposed to the possibility of loss – and not just loss of things or possessions, but loss of our own sense of self.”

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Vulnerable at root means woundable, okay?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Woundable. [*Selena chuckles*] That's trust!

Selena: I feel like— Yeah. Go ahead! Sorry.

Ryan: So, I'm basically exposing myself to you in a way that says, “I am without armor.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “I am without defense. I am vulnerable in that *you could* fire an arrow and wound me right now.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And that's, a lot of times in marriage, is that's the problem, is—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: We are very good at *wounding* each other because there's a vulnerability that's inherent to marriage. And what happens is you start to develop scar tissue; you start to learn how to wear your armor more often. [*Light chuckle*]

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: That's when you say your heart has been hardened or cauterized to each other. And that's why it takes years to unravel sometimes.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Long term hurts and things. So, anyway. That, the idea of being meaningfully... vulnerable with you...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I think is one of the quickest ways to get down to the heart issue of this, 'cause the heart is always the thing that is driving the behavior.

Selena: Everything! Yeah.

Ryan: And, like we said at the outset, the veneer, having a veneer of transparency without actual transparency, actual vulnerability—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Just gives us a new set of tools by which to... navigate the maze of legalism.

Selena: Right. And, unfortunately, I think that with all of the sexual misconduct that we've seen in ministry and in leadership, just in our society today, I think that this has played a major part in it. I think this is the game that sometimes we engage in, in our minds and in our hearts, and we play and then we get caught for what we've really been doing. Right? And so, I guess my take on it is I don't want my kids, at the end of my life, to find out some dark secret or some aspect of me that I never shared with them, and that to just ruin their image of me.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: I don't want my image of me to be perfect in their eyes, of course! But I want them to understand and know, okay, this was my mom, this was who she was, this is what she stood for, and this is what she said. So, again, all of this, I think I said in the beginning, I didn't get to share kind of where this was coming from, especially just in my heart. Before we had our third baby, I was kind of struggling with— I feel like you and I were... just on the same page. We were just in-step. Everything was *in sync*. [*Selena chuckles*] Dare I say it? [*Ryan snickers*] And obviously, having a new baby just kind of shakes things up! A new person in this house, a young baby, very dependent. And I *knew* what was coming. This is our third child. I knew the emotional toll that it was going to take.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: I knew that my heart was going to be battling some things. I knew the *timing* of when some of those battles are going to happen. Some of them have yet to come! But my goal with this pregnancy and post baby was that I didn't want to have kind of the same arguments and fights that we would have, typically, right after a baby. I *really* wanted to— This sounds like me *trying* so hard, but I really was asking God, “How can we avoid some of these?” Because I know that we don't have to walk through these again. I *know* that we've gotten past these, and I don't want to revisit them. But, obviously, if God's like, “You're going to walk through a fire and test,” it's okay because He's refining parts of my heart that I can't see that I'm blind to. You know?

[00:20:08] **Ryan:** Well, part of that's sanctification, too. I just want to jump in because we've learned...

Selena: Well, yeah, that's what I'm trying to say.

Ryan: We've been through that. And those arguments weren't necessarily God imposing—

Selena: No!

Ryan: A refining fire upon us. It was our sin nature was causing us to have conflict with each other.

Selena: Thank you. Thank you.

Ryan: And having been sanctified by God's grace in some of those areas, you're now looking back saying—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “Hey, that behavior wasn't okay.”

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: “And so, what can we do to avoid that this time through?”

Selena: Yeah, what's our plan this time around? And so, honestly, for me it just came down to verbalizing what was happening in my heart and in my head and my feelings and emotions, and *all* the ugly! Like, you know, people would say something. An example, people would text and be like, “Oh, can't wait to see the baby,” or something, and I would feel so just bound up by that, and I feel a lot of pressure from other people. I think I'm that overly sensitive person or something on some levels. [*Ryan laughs*] Highly sensitive person, that's what it is.

Ryan: So, why would you feel pressure? ‘Cause it sounds fairly innocuous for someone to say, “Oh, I want to come see the baby.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And the pressure comes from... Well, we were hunkered down. We were just figuring out life...

Selena: It was a very quick request right afterwards. And I think most people know...

Ryan: And there were a lot of demands to a lot of different people...

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Well-meaning, but still, you can start to feel almost bitter toward...

Selena: Right!

- Ryan:** The people who mean well.
- Selena:** They're excited with you, right? They're so excited! But the first week of having a baby home, anybody knows, is just kind of *survival*, you know? It's day and night just sort of happen, but you're just trying to keep up with sleeping, feeding the baby...
- Ryan:** Mm-hm! Sweet survival.
- Selena:** Yes! It's beautiful!
- Ryan:** 'Cause it is very sweet to...
- Selena:** And wonderful.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** But again, my plan and my whole approach to post-baby was I want to maintain... not sexual intimacy, but just emotional intimacy and spiritual intimacy *with* my husband. I *want* us to continue to be on the same page. And when I am struggling, when people are texting me saying, "Oh, I can't wait to see the baby," what did I do right then when I felt all those feelings, when all these things were starting to stir in my heart, and all these desires of, "Why is this person saying this? I don't like them, blah-la." You know, all these just ugly, ugly... sin, just rising up in my heart. I went to my husband, and I said, "This is what this feels like to me. I know it's probably all the hormones." [*Chuckling*] "I know that I'm not right, and this is blowing up right now."
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** "Please help me. Talk me off this ledge," basically. "Show me the truth and the perspective that I *should* have, because I don't have it right now! And I can't find it right now!"
- Ryan:** Hm.
- Selena:** "Can you help me?" And he did! He did. He always does. He's always very clear minded about things.
- Ryan:** Well...
- Selena:** For the most part.
- Ryan:** Well, that's again, sanctification. [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Right, right!
- Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Hasn't always been the case!

Selena: No.

Ryan: And so, *part* of those conversations, you have to be able to... We talked about this beforehand!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: It's...

Selena: Admitting a lot of things! [*Snickers*]

Ryan: It *all* comes down to this heart issues and pride, is that really at the root of this?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Pride...

Selena: Pride and fear.

Ryan: And thinking... Well, on every level, though, pri— Yeah. Pride and fear. But fear, in itself, is really just another form of pride.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: Not trusting God.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Not trusting His sovereignty.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Not trusting... and not trusting that He is enough.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: That He is good. That in the end it will all work out, right? [*Both chuckle*]

Selena: That He knows the depths of our heart, right?

Ryan: And so, on every level, pride is at play.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: And the way that typically plays itself out in the marriage relationship, and in marriage conversations, and the topic of being transparent, especially transparent on the heart level...

Selena: Mm...

Ryan: Is we *either*, okay, so we're either—we lack humility in the sense that, “I don't actually need your help.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “I can handle this on my own.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “I don't *need* to be meaningfully vulnerable with you because I got this right.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And that's basically the garden, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: In the garden. Eve ate of the tree. Adam ate of the tree. Because they basically didn't believe that God was who He said He was!

Selena: Right. And that they were who He said He was.

Ryan: Right! And so, their pride said, “I know more than you, God.”

Selena: They were who He said—

Ryan: “I got this!”

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: “I'm going to take matters into my own hands.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, we do that on every level, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: In relationships in particular, because of sin has marred everything. So, I can be prideful when I come to you.

Selena: Yep.

Ryan: Meaning that I actually don't need you're... So, when you're *giving* me feedback, whether it's solicited or not...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: I can either take that and let it affect me and change me and be a force for sanctification in my life, or I can assume that you don't actually know me. [Selena quietly snickers] You don't actually know what you're talking about.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You don't actually *understand* the situation. And you can do this too. Okay, so that's one side of it!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That's the... "I'm the one needing help." As the one helping, okay, then we can be one who, maybe the way pride works out, is we don't listen with generosity or with charity toward each other.

Selena: Mm! Mm-mm. Mm-hm!

Ryan: Meaning that I only hear the things that set me off [Selena laughs] and I let those things set me off. And so, a lot of times when emotions are high after a pregnancy, after any sort of life event, at night when you're tired, in the morning when you're not quite on your game yet, you can say things that you don't mean to be a certain way.

[00:25:08] **Selena:** Right.

Ryan: You mean to say... And so, charity in listening is saying, "I hear what you're trying to say, even though the way you're saying it really irks me." [Selena laughs] That's what charity is in marriage! That's generosity!

Selena: That's a lesson we are, I feel like, in the prime season sometimes. And then I—

Ryan: Yeah! And again, the intimacy piece... Okay. So, "I hear," [Selena lightly chuckles], "that you love me, and you desire me, even though I don't feel it."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "I hear and I trust." I'm being generous to you. I'm extending charity to use. And that's how you, online, if you can listen and respond to somebody with charity, it means that you're basically reading between the lines, giving the person the benefit of the doubt.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: We talked about this last week. I Corinthians 13, "Love hopes all things."

Selena: Mm!

- Ryan:** It wants the best. It hopes for the very best! It hopes that God is at work in you're spou—
- Selena:** Right.
- Selena:** And you're trusting that God is at work!
- Selena:** Well, and that takes—
- Ryan:** That's what charity is.
- Selena:** That takes a position of humility, that you have to have humility in that conversation, in that moment. Because when I come to you, I'm not in the right, and I *know* that!
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** And *that's* the hardest part, I think, about *being* transparent with heart motivations, is that I *know* that these things are *not right*. And I need you to help me, as my spouse, see God, see the gospel in this, see God's word and His perspective on this.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Because, again, we're blind to the evil in our hearts. *Only* God knows the depth of the sin that is in our hearts.
- Ryan:** Mm!
- Selena:** And only He can judge it righteously! But the *beautiful* news is that He is in the business of not only just examining our hearts but transforming our hearts and giving us those soft hearts of flesh and replacing those hearts of stone with hearts of flesh. And this gives me hope! This gives me... inspiration and encouragement to *come* to you and say, "Here is all the ugly in my heart right now. Can you help me?" And this is not just worked out with our spouse! Although, I do think some of the deeper parts are worked out with each other.
- Ryan:** Hm!
- Selena:** And maybe a few close friends, but also in our gospel community. Right? Our Christian community. Are we again having that meaningful risk aspect? Are we being... honest with them? Because I feel like the more we allow our hearts to be known, the more we can know our hearts. Right?
- Ryan:** Right!
- Selena:** And we can *know* what's happening and why it's happening, and we can start discerning those lies that the enemy might be serving up to us!

Ryan: So, can we take a moment real fast and just recap where we've been?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: 'Cause we're talking about transparency on the heart level.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: 'Cause, again, it's easy to have the façade of being vulnerable and transparent, but all the while not actually exposing yourself to meaningful risk.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: With the gospel at the center of it, right? We don't do this just because. We do this because it's our call to walk in the light.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And live as the light. So, we've talked about that *lie* that that's okay.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And then we talked about, this is where we're at now, is where does that even come from? It comes from our hearts! Right? And Jesus says it over and over again, that the heart is the wellspring of life!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: There's all these different...

Selena: Out of the heart.

Ryan: What comes from inside—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: A person defiles them.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Not what enters in from the outside. That's from Mark 7. And it's coming out of the heart, again. So, we talked about that. So, how does, and you have this in the outline, but how does God—You said God sanctifies our hearts.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: So, for a married couple... one of the ways that God sanctifies our hearts is obviously through each other, through His word, through *mutual* discipleship...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: In the marriage. So, specifically, can we talk specifics? Meaning how, if a couple's... I'm just kind of freewheeling here a little bit. [*Selena chuckles*] But if a couple is struggling with finding their place in this transparency spectrum—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: How do we actually— “I *feel* like I can't trust him.” “I feel like I can't trust her.”

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: “I feel like she's *lying* to me.” “I feel like if I bring my truth to her, this truth to her,” not my truth. We don't say that. [*Selena laughs*] “If I bring this part of myself to her that's true, and I make it known to her, I'm afraid that she won't love me.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Okay. So, how can we start addressing kind of those lies and making them obedient to God's word?

Selena: Right. And I think, like you said, first of all, just identifying those points of tension are the good place to start. [*Baby cries out in background*]

Ryan: There she is!

Selena: And there she is! [*Chuckles*] And... by identifying those points of tension, I think what we value and kind of the desires of our hearts are really kind of revealed, right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: ‘Cause those tension points come from, “Okay. This is not matching up with what I want.” So, that really reveals a lot when we say, “Okay, this is where we're having trouble. This is where *I feel* like we're having trouble, at least. Maybe you're not thinking that.” [*Selena laughs*] Which is a whole ‘nother... can of worms there.

Ryan: Yep.

Selena: And then, I think we always say it's good to not just *talk* about those right in the moment. When you're feeling it, don't just go and talk about it immediately, because that, at least for me in my experience, that has never gone well [*Stifled chuckle*] for me. Because—

[00:30:11] **Ryan:** Mm-hm.

Selena: A. My emotions are too high. B. I make a lot of assumptions in those moments.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: And I make big leaps, which are your favorite things when I do that. [*Ryan stifles a chuckle*]

Ryan: Logical leaps... [*Laughs quietly*]

Selena: A lot of assumptions, a lot of logical leaps, a lot of... There's no charity in the listening or scene of what you've done in the past weeks or whatever. It's just, "No, I'm thinking these things. I'm *feeling* these things. So, therefore, these things are true." [*Laughs*] Which is never good, right?

Ryan: Mm-mm.

Selena: So, in those moments, stop! Just say, "Hey, let's always set aside some time to talk about these hard points of tension."

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: "Because obviously there's something going on in *your* heart, or there's something going on in *my* heart, and... I can't really identify it. Or maybe I can, and we need to talk about this, 'cause this is *ruining* our marriage!"

Ryan: So, if you can't... identify or articulate that point of tension, what should the husband or wife... How can they move forward, even if they feel like there's tension, but they can't identify what it is or where it's coming from?

Selena: I would... Well, first of all, I would say pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to really [*Baby noises in background*] reveal some of those aspects of our hearts. [*Both chuckle*] She's very grunty.

Ryan: Yeah, Loui—

Selena: Louisa's very grunty. [*Both chuckle*] Our grunty [*Baby noise in the background*] baby.

The second thing I would say is to get other people involved, maybe another couple that knows you and that advocates for your marriage.

Ryan: Okay! Yeah.

Selena: And I would say, "Hey, we're kind of feeling some tension around these areas, but we can't really define them. We can't vocalize them. I don't know how to— We're feeling these things," and just having other people that love you, that advocate for your marriage, kind of sit in and look in and say, "Yes! Okay, this is what I'm seeing. This is what I'm hearing." And having somebody else articulate

it back to you is always very clarifying in the moment. And having people pray with you or pray for you and understa— Sometimes it's just kind of those moment, those things that, for me, it's like things that embarrass me or things that make me have to be humble, things that I have to admit my humanity in some things. [*Lightly chuckles*]

Ryan: Or some things that poke at your insecurities.

Selena: Yes! Yes.

Ryan: Areas that you kind of tend to be insecure anyway.

Selena: Right. I feel like everybody can find a point of tension. I mean, if you can't, I—

Ryan: Well, okay. So—

Selena: Good on you! But... [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Well, what'll happen for me is a lot of times I'll feel a low-grade sense of tension.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And it's, when I say low grade, I mean, it's almost like a hum in the background of my heart.

Selena: [*Giggles*] Right.

Ryan: It's a hum in the background of my mind.

Selena: Mm...

Ryan: And I don't know. If I don't stop and think about it, I just feel it, I don't identify it. I just *feel* irritated.

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: I just *feel* tense.

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: I just feel angry, or whatever that emotion is, I just feel it and I'm not making it obedient to the Holy Spirit.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I'm just letting it *be* there. I'm not setting it in line. And so, a lot of times, what I'll do there is I'll say, "Okay. What is actually bothering me? Is it this? No. Is it

this?” Oh, and I can get down to it and say, “Oh, it's... this thing that happened today while I was working.”

Selena: Mm. Mm-hm!

Ryan: “It's really got me kind of in knots. Either I'm frustrated, I'm worried, and that frustration is rooted in something else, that worry is rooted in so— And I can say, “Okay, with that worry, God, I'm going to trust You.” It doesn't mean the emotion goes away. It just means that I've identified that that tension is there!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That low-grade point of tension. And so, in marriage, that will work itself out because I'll come downstairs and you'll be like, “What is going on?!”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “Why are you acting this way?”

Selena: [*Chuckles softly*] Why are you?

Ryan: And I'll be like, “I'm acting fine! I'm fine!!” [*Selena chuckles*] And we'll start getting bickery at each other.

Selena: Uh-huh.

Ryan: And you realize it's actually not fine.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I'm not actually being known by you in that moment.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I need to mine—I need to know myself enough!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Well enough to actually be able to *mine* my own heart, by the grace of God, and make wrong, heart believes wrong, or heart orientations. Make those obedient to God's word, which comes around... to, I think, what is even on the deeper level. Okay, we're talking about heart deep levels, all this kind of stuff. We talked about pride early on.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: We talked about Genesis 3, the fall and how pride was the ultimate sin, and it's kind of at the root of every rebellion from God. [*Inhales*] We need to bring this

back to the surface here, is that the authority of God, that He *is* the authority!
His word is authoritative.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: His word, and being that the word of the Bible, scripture, the word of the person of Christ who was with God before creation, who, part of the triune God.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: The son, and also the ministry of the word, the Holy Spirit, who illumines our hearts to the authority of God's word. So, we *have to* submit ourselves to the authority of God if we're ever going to have some *real* progress in these areas, especially around these points of tension. Right?

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: 'Cause you're going to identify a point of tension and be known in that way, but finding a way forward...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: We're kind of helpless. We *need* God's word.

Selena: Yes.

[00:35:00] **Ryan:** We need the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts.

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: We need the love of Christ to display that and experience that through one another and through Christ himself.

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: So, I guess just reiterate, just—

Selena: Go ahead!

Ryan: *Firmly* stand yourself. Stake your claim in the authority of God and the authority of God's word, and then start from there, I think is what I'm trying to say.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: We're going a little bit backwards! [*Selena chuckles*] But... that's kind of how we do—As with the baby and stuff! [*Both laugh*] That's how we've kind of had to do this. [*Ryan inhales*] Anyway. You were going to say something?

Selena: Right. No. Proverbs 16:5 says, “Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the LORD; be assured, he will not go unpunished.” And, I don't know about you, but that... [*Chuckles*] makes me want to say, “God, open my heart,” you know? “Know what's going on. I know that You do, and I trust that You do, so, I'm going to walk through fire. I'm going to ask these hard questions because of trust that, A, You're in control. B, that You love me!” Right? And that there's things that I don't have to fear. And so, I'm going to do what Paul says right in Philippians. I'm going to think about and live on, set my mind on things that are true, that's noble, that's right and pure.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And what's admirable! We're going to think about these things and *know* the character of God. I *know* that He loves me.

Ryan: Mm...

Selena: I know that He's transforming my heart. He's not just frivolously asking me to walk through hard times and be humble and say, “I'm struggling,” or, “These are some spots that I feel like I'm at a dead end within my spiritual walk. Help me!” God is bringing us to the end of ourselves, right, so that He can really show us who He is in those instances.

Ryan: Hm! Yeah! And that's a resignation of our self-sufficiency, right? And that resigning our self-sufficiency is another way of recognizing God's... complete authority.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, again, recognizing and resigning from our self-sufficiency, is a way of recognizing and re-instating God's complete authority in our lives.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So! Yeah, so, I don't know! This verse keeps cropping up in my heart, is the Jeremiah 9:23-24.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “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, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.’”

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: On some level, every point of tension, every place where our transparency fails, every place where I am giving you the facade of transparency without the actual substance of it...

Selena: Mm...

Ryan: It's usually rooted in some level of boasting in my own wisdom, boasting in my own might. Right? Not just my physical strength, but my ability to figure it out myself, my own acumen, my own resourcefulness.

Selena: Right. Right!

Ryan: Or I'm boasting in my own riches. In other words, I've... maybe the tension for me, a lot of times I'll get really tense around finances because we're self-employed and we a lot of times are living month-to-month. That's not so frequent anymore! It was really frequent [*Ryan chuckles*] early on! [*Selena chuckles*] And so, I'd get kind of in knots, and I was boasting in my own riches because I was putting my confidence in them, putting my identity in them!

Selena: And your ability. Yeah.

Ryan: And not that I was trying to be flashy and drive this car, wear these clothes— anything like that, but really just my confidence in my self-security was in that. And so, I would come home with a really low-grade sort of irritation, and I wouldn't even recognize that because I thought it was right and good and didn't realize that I was boasting in something other than *knowing* and experiencing God.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And delighting in the things that He delights in, love, justice, righteousness.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So anyway.

Selena: Right. And in James 1:14-16, it talks about how we are all tempted and dragged away by our own evil desires and ones that are conceived in our hearts, essentially! And those desires give birth to sin, and they said when sin is full-grown, then it gives birth to death. So, I think knowing that in Proverbs, like we said, that the heart is the wellspring of life, God calls us to guard it! And how can we guard it?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: We can guard it through being transparent with each other! We can guard it by *truly* being honest. I love what you said, like not just the act, but the substance of—

Ryan: Yeah, the façade.

Selena: Not the facade.

Ryan: Yeah, or the shell of transparency [*Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles as he speaks*], but substances as well. Yeah.

Selena: But the substance of it, because it really is a type of posturing that I think... our hearts should be convicted about. And if we're really serious about [*Quick chuckle*] following the Lord, again, this has been my own sweet conviction, is, you know, I was just telling you yesterday, I want to live... on purpose and I want to live not out of running away from something or not trying to be like something, but to live on God's word and live for His purposes, making decisions because *He's* called me to that and because He's put those desires in my heart. And for me, those desires have been kind of muddled out by fears or insecurities or pride, you know?

[00:40:14] **Ryan:** Mm...

Selena: And so, I'm really [*Snicker*] kind of, I feel like I'm just under the microscope with God in some ways, and I'm so grateful for it. [*Lightly laughs*] You know, dealing with some of these desires that are rooted in pride, they're rooted in in deceitfulness and bitterness and anger.

Ryan: I just want to re-read that quote from Andy Crouch, 'cause I find it so... helpful at this juncture, is to be vulnerable is, "to be exposed to the possibility of loss—and not just loss of things or possessions, but loss of our own sense of self." And if we're honest, we're vulnerable like that to God, whether we acknowledge it or not. It's pride, is what keeps us from acknowledging that level of vulnerability, and therefore, our sense of self is *always* at risk when it's not rooted in Christ.

Selena: Yeah... Yeah.

Ryan: It is *always* hanging over the precipice. [*Both chuckle*] It is always *dangling* over death when it's not rooted in Christ. As soon as we root our identity in Christ, our sense of self in Christ, we *humble* ourselves...

Selena: Hmm...

Ryan: Right? We *humble* ourselves to Him, we say, "You are the king; I am not."

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: “You are my savior; I am not. You are God! I am not. You are all knowing; I am not!”

Selena: So good.

Ryan: So, our culture is the *opposite* of that!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I can know all, I can do all, if I just decide or I choose, I can know or do whatever I want to do. That is a prideful [*Snicker*]—

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: False... lie!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And by basically humbling ourselves and saying, “God, You are God; I am not,” we root our identities in Him. [*Inhales*] The very outcome of our lives... it becomes clear. It crystallizes.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And it meaning that our *purpose* is no longer just to get as much as we can out of this life. Our purpose is to glorify and know Him.

Selena: Mmm... So good! So—

Ryan: And so, that's at the root of *all* of this, is I can't truly be known, I can't truly expose those parts, like you were saying, you're exposing those parts of your heart.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: You can't do that if you're afraid your own sense of self is at risk.

Selena: Right. Right! I want to jump into a Couple's Conversation Challenge. I know this is a little bit sooner than maybe we'd like to do, but I think that's fine 'cause we always [*Chuckles*] go long on our episodes...

Ryan: That's fine! Yeah.

Selena: I think, as a couple, you guys should take some time to read Proverbs 4, “A Father's Wise Instruction.” So, this is where the verse is found, “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: He talks about ways to do that, putting away crooked speech, have your eyes directly forward. But I think the thing here that I really— it's just like what you said, it's *submitting* to the instruction and authority of God. And Proverbs 4 is a father's wise instruction. That is the title of it.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And so, I would encourage you as a couple to read it, to chew on it for some time, and to really talk about it. How are we not guarding our hearts? Where is the well-being polluted, I guess?

Ryan: Mm!

Selena: Would be a question that I would ask.

Ryan: So, I would encourage you to tackle that from two different angles, from the angle of abstinence, meaning what am I abstaining from in order to keep my well from being polluted, but also, what am I putting into it in order to keep it... clean? So, for instance, like Game of Thrones, right?

Selena: [*Light chuckle*] Oh man!

Ryan: We never watch that show.

Selena: Mm-mm.

Ryan: Because it became painfully clear that it was not the type of show that was going to not contaminate our hearts!

Selena: It was going to contaminate. Yep!

Ryan: It was going to contaminate our hearts. And so, that's one of those things, and that's just one really *blaring* example of maybe something you abstain from for the sake of keeping your heart pure.

Selena: Mmm... Right!

Ryan: And keeping and guarding it!

Selena: Your marriage, especially!

Ryan: Yeah! And, obviously there's—

Selena: From what we hear! [*Briefly laughs*]

Ryan: There's all kinds of sex in that, and there's all kinds of really graphic stuff that we've heard about. Like I've said, we never watched a single episode! But it's also a lot of violence there.

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: And so, we, again, be aware of those... What are those cracks in your walls where things creep in?

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Alright? Whether it's the relationships you have at work...

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Or maybe from relationships at church that are just toxic relationships. Maybe you can't in good faith keep those relationships at their current *state* without not guarding your heart. Does that make sense?

Selena: Mm. Yep. Yep!

Ryan: So, that's the abstaining side of it.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Then there's the what are you putting into... your guts?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Obviously, we have to be people of God's word. We have to be people that not just go to His word but *love* His word!

Selena: Yeah...

Ryan: Not just read it but *devour* it!

Selena: Live it! Yeah—

Ryan: And live in it! What was the Spurgeon quote you used [*Selena chuckles*]— the other day?

Selena: “Visit many good books, but always live in the Bible.”

Ryan: But live, yeah! *Live* in the Bible! So, there's that part of it. But I've been feeling super conflicted about not just reading, 'cause I've talked about three different ways of consuming scripture.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Right? There's reading for volume, just to get the stories *in* you.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Where you're reading multiple chapters at a time. Then there's *studying*, where you're actually just taking up a passage, whether it's two verses or ten verses, and you're actually *getting* into the text.

[00:45:07] **Selena:** Right.

Ryan: Looking at the context, looking even at some of—

Selena: [*Chuckles softly*] The Greek. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: The Greek and the Hebrew. We have the tools online—

Selena: The commentary.

Ryan: To do that.

Selena: Yep!

Ryan: Bible Hub is my favorite website. You can go there, and all the resources are free! They're there for you.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: But actually taking time and *studying* God's word, to *know* Him better. That's the second way. And the third way is to memorize God's word.

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: Take a verse and memorize it! Commit it to your heart!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Commit it to memory, so that you don't *need* the book to know God's word!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, I've been feeling convicted around, yes, putting those things into my head, but getting them into my guts, and actually, you can see how it starts with your head—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: With the reading for volume, goes a little bit deeper by studying, and then when you get it in to memory, it's in your guts!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's in your heart.

- Selena:** And to get it into your memory requires repetition!
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** And I think that's a *big* part of coming out of this. It's become *easier* for me to be honest, like brutally transparent with you, I think, because we have to keep doing it! We have to keep doing it!
- Ryan:** Well, and I—
- Selena:** And the more you do it—
- Ryan:** And I expect it now.
- Selena:** Right!
- Ryan:** When we expect it from each other.
- Selena:** And it's a *good* expectation! It's a grace filled, a loving expectation. And I feel all the freedom in the world to come to you and not cower away in my shame or fear. I can say, "These are the things that I'm dealing; it hurts! I don't like it. It feels gross. There's things that are just *contaminating* me right now, and I need your help on how to... get these desires out or give me God's word! Show me, tell me, *remind* me! And this is a repetitive cycle that is good!
- Ryan:** And we're 16 years—
- Selena:** Repetition is good!
- Ryan:** And we're 16 years into marriage, and 20 years toget— So, it's taken time to get there.
- Selena:** Absolutely!
- Ryan:** If you're listening to this thinking, "Oh, man, that sounds like I want that. But how do I get there?" We're just saying, start with this. And that's—
- Selena:** Repetition, repetition. [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** So, let's—Speaking of repetition. [*Both chuckle*] Let's repeat the Couple's Conversation Challenge. Can you reiterate that one more time? 'Cause I...
- Selena:** As a couple, take some time to read Proverbs 4.
- Ryan:** Mm!
- Selena:** And go through it from two sides. Go through it. How are you abstaining from some things?

- Ryan:** And then what are you putting into your heart?
- Selena:** And then what are you putting into your heart? So, this whole question of guarding our hearts, how are we guarding our hearts through abstinence of certain things and through the pouring in of certain things?
- Ryan:** I think there's another pas—another translation that doesn't say, “guard your heart,” is says, “Keep your heart,” right?
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** “With all vigilance.” Not just guard your heart with all—
- Selena:** [*Smacks lips*] Right!
- Ryan:** But keep your heart with all vigilance.
- Selena:** The ESV version says, “Keep your heart with all vigilance.”
- Ryan:** So, what is *keeping*? It's like a cultivating. It's not just guarding things, but actually feeding your heart what it needs to flourish.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** So, we talked about God's word, but also church community.
- Selena:** Yep.
- Ryan:** You said this earlier on in this episode, bringing people in from the outside.
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Reading a good book. Doesn't have to be a spiritual book, but a *good* book that's good for your heart! Listening to podcasts like this one. [*Light chuckle*] Good job! There's other podcasts. Some of my favorites are, I love the Knowing Faith podcast. I love anything The Village Church does. You just know it's going to be really solid, really good teaching.
- Selena:** Yeah. Even Tim Keller. They just take his old—
- Ryan:** Tim Keller's stuff.
- Selena:** Sermons and cycle through them.
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** But they're... *always* mind-blowing, so...

- Ryan:** Yeah. [*Inhales*]
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Yeah! So, hopefully that's helpful, you guys. Again, thank you for listening. And I say that because with Louisa here [*Selena chuckles*] and with our... I feel like I have pregnancy brain. [*Ryan laughs*]
- Selena:** It's a little more raw! It's a little more raw right now—
- Ryan:** It's more raw!
- Selena:** For all of us. So, we're just, in the spirit of transparency... this is this is us. This is our lives.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** And... we're not trying to hide it! [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** So, we're trusting that God's going to use our efforts for His glory, and for our good.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** So [*Inhales*]... Anyway! Let me pray for us [*Baby grunts in the background*] while the little baby is starting to wake up.

Lord, I thank you for this time. I pray for these couples listening to this. I pray that You would just illumine in their hearts Your word... God, I pray that first and foremost, You would give us a divine, just a *deep* sense of Your authority. Give us a deep sense of the treasure of Your word. And I pray that we would submit ourselves... to Your authority and submit ourselves to the authority of Your word *for* our good and for Your glory, Jesus. And then from there, I pray that you'd teach us how to guard our hearts, how to *keep* our hearts diligently. I pray for the husband and the wife whom might be struggling, the transparency. I pray that You would give them just a sweet sense of conviction and hope after listening to this, and that hope would turn into action on their part, action that is rooted in faith and rooted in trust and *rooted* in really humbling themselves before You, trusting that walking in the light as You are in the light *is* for their flourishing and for Your glory.

So, Lord, again, thank You for this time. Thank You that we can spend this time together with our listeners!

In Your precious name,

Amen.

Alright, ladies and gentlemen, thanks again!

Selena: Amen!

Ryan: This episode is!

Selena: [*Chuckling*] In the can!

Ryan: Alright. And we will join you again in about seven days. Oh, yeah! Don't forget to tune in on Thursday. We got a fun question. It's a question that I think a lot of people wonder about and I think are afraid to ask. And the answer is not maybe what you would expect. So, I'm just going to leave it there! A little cliffhanger.

[00:50:02] **Selena:** Yeah!

Ryan: And we will see you in about seven days. And until then, stay fierce!

[00:50:13] <Ending Sequence>

[00:50:31] *Podcast ends.*

PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:05:03]**
 - 1984, by George Orwell.
 - <https://www.amazon.com/1984-Signet-Classics-George-Orwell/dp/0451524934>
 - Scripture references:
 - Psalm 44:21
 - I Corinthians 14:25
 - Jeremiah 17:9
 - Mark 7
 - Matthew 15
- **[00:15:05]**
 - Andy Crouch:
 - Official website: <http://andy-crouch.com/>
 - Book order: <https://www.amazon.com/Strong-Weak-Embracing-Life-Flourishing/dp/0830844430/>
- **[00:25:08]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - I Corinthians 13
- **[00:35:00]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Proverbs 16:5, *ESV*
 - Jeremiah 9:23-24, *ESV*
 - James 1:14-16, paraphrase
- **[00:40:14]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Proverbs 4

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