

## FAITHFULNESS = FRUITFULNESS

<https://fiercemarriage.com/faithfulness-fruitfulness>

- [00:00:00] **Selena:** All right! It's 2020!
- Ryan:** 2020!
- Selena:** It's our first episode of the year of 2020.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** You're welcome! It's exciting.
- Ryan:** And we're off to a great start! We're actually recording this on the Tuesday when it's supposed to release. [*Selena chuckles*] So, yeah. It's pretty much real time. [*Selena laughs*] I'm going to edit this thing [*Chuckling*], and get it [*Inhales*], so that we don't miss the Tuesday. But it'll be—
- Selena:** It's good times!
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** We're trying to be consistent. We're also trying to find new rhythms of things. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Part of the reason we're kind of behind the eight ball on this is 'cause we spent all day yesterday talking through some of our kind of planning for the year and vision what we think God is leading us to do. So, we have some fun stuff to talk about. But—
- Selena:** Yeah, within Fierce Marriage.
- Ryan:** Within Fierce Marriage! And that's also led us to *really* think about this word, "faithfulness," and how really, we're banking on the fact that *faithfulness*, according to the Bible, will lead to *fruitfulness*. And we thought, "Man, this has amazing correlations to marriage!" So, here we are! We're going to talk about faithfulness and fruitfulness, and what they had to do with your marriage. So, thanks for tuning in, and we'll see you on the other side.
- [00:00:55] <Intro Sequence>
- [00:01:25] **Selena:** So, the other side is pretty good. [*Both laugh*] It's nice and warm, I'm imagining. Not cold and dreary.
- Ryan:** Oh, it's been kind of cold and dreary around these parts.
- Selena:** Cold and dreary, *but* it's saying we might get snow this next week, which I am praying for! I was totally one of those kids that prayed for snow.

- Ryan:** Well, it's that it's cold. It's not *dreary*. I'll take cold! But... the whole dreary thing is that's a drag.
- Selena:** It was rai— Do you not remember the [*Snickering*] crazy freezing *tons* of rain the other day? Or two?
- Ryan:** We actually got, I think, record rainfall here in the northwest.
- Selena:** Which is a lot, right? [*Snickers*]
- Ryan:** We as much rain in two days as we typically would get in the entire month of December.
- Selena:** [*Laughing*] Yeah.
- Ryan:** And I feel like that already happened again in January, 'cause we had—
- Selena:** Yes!
- Ryan:** Another storm roll through.
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** Yeah! So...
- Selena:** Good times!
- Ryan:** Good times. [*Clicks tongue*] Yeah. Listener, thank you again for tuning in. We are going to tackle this topic of *faithfulness*!
- Selena:** Mmm.
- Ryan:** And *what* is Biblical faith. It's one of those words that we tend to gloss over. Right? I feel if you've been a Christian for a while and you've read through maybe Galatians 5, which we'll touch on today, you just kind of think, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Faithfulness."
- Selena:** Just keep doing what you're doing, right?
- Ryan:** But. [*Both laugh*] And so, as I was praying over the Christmas break, I was thinking, "God, how do you want my heart to be centered, obviously, on the gospel, on You? But what could be the theme for the year?"
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** And I just felt Him, the Holy Spirit, impress upon me the word "faithfulness" and what that means, and in two distinct ways. We're going to talk about that

and break that down, and you know what? Don't skip past this episode! I think it could be really helpful. It's really foundational. A lot of stuff that we're talking about here is an overflow, and it ends up overflowing. [*Chuckles*]

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It's an overflow from God's work in our hearts but ends up overflowing *again* into our marriage.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Before we get into that, I want to make a quick mention of, we have a new book coming out... in May! [*Selena makes a drum roll noise*] It's a— [*Ryan chuckles*] It's not we've—

**Selena:** Missed the drum roll! Whoops! [*Giggles*]

**Ryan:** We've already announced it! [*Both laughing*] But it's called See Through Marriage, and it's all about kind of the art and science of being transparent with...

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** God, with yourself, with your spouse, and with others. And so, we go to great length talking about what it means to be see through or transparent, so you can be fully known and therefore fully loved.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** If that sounds compelling to you, we're looking for people to join our... What is it?

**Selena:** Book launch team.

**Ryan:** A launch team!

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** And we already have hundreds of people!

**Selena:** Oh, yayyy!

**Ryan:** That have joined this list.

**Selena:** Awesome!

**Ryan:** We're looking for hundreds more! So...

- Selena:** Hundreds? Wow. [*Chuckles quietly*]
- Ryan:** Go to SeeThroughBook.com. There's not really a website there! It's just a little form. And you just give us your name, your e-mail, and, I think, tell us why you're interested.
- Selena:** Your Social Security number.
- Ryan:** [*Laughs*] Yeah! Just pop that in there. [*Selena cackles*] Anyway! You sign up there, and then what happens, I think, I'm having a marketing meeting with our...
- Selena:** Publisher.
- Ryan:** With our publisher, and we're going to talk about how that launch team will be a part of it!
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** And we'll keep you in the loop on that. I think it usually means you get early access to the book digitally and you get some other really fun stuff. So—
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Anyway! SeeThroughBook.com. Join that!
- Selena:** Be looking for that! Yeah!
- Ryan:** Also, I want to do a little teaser for the next couple of months. All right?
- Selena:** Mm!
- Ryan:** So, that book comes out in May. We have some other work that we've been kind of...
- Selena:** Mmm!
- Ryan:** Mulling around in our heads. Now, that's going to be coming out. And we're not going to tell you what it is, but it's probably not what you think! [*Clicks tongue*] And it's going to be coming out sometime February and March. So...
- Selena:** Ooo.
- Ryan:** Stay tuned for that! If you're really, *really* curious, you can go to FierceMarriage.com. There's a way to sign up for an e-mail list there somewhere! Or you go to 5habits.US. You can sign up there, too. We have a lot of websites going these days. [*Selena laughs*] But yeah! If you want to be a part of...

**Selena:** The secret things! [*Chuckles*]

[00:05:00] **Ryan:** A part of the secret things.

**Selena:** Super-secret surprises.

**Ryan:** It's probably not what you think. I'm just going to say that. It's a bit of a zig when you might expect a zag.

**Selena:** [*Excitedly*] Oh?

**Ryan:** Yeah, I like to do those sorts of things anyway. Anyway! Also, finally, there are typical housekeeping. Given everything that's happening around Fierce Marriage, I just want to celebrate with our listeners here. [*Clicks tongue*] We had over two-million downloads—

**Selena:** Wow!

**Ryan:** Last year. That's a 100% increase to the, I think, 16-month, or what is it, the 13-month period *prior* to that.

**Selena:** Wow... Praise God!

**Ryan:** 15-month period prior to that! So...

**Selena:** Whew!

**Ryan:** We take the account that we had for 15 months and then compress that into 12 months, and then double it! [*States with an accent*] Whatever your dream is, double it! [*Ends accent and both laugh*] So, two-million downloads. This feels really good to cross that milestone. We're at a total of three million for the life of this podcast.

**Selena:** Wow. Praise God!

**Ryan:** God is working through this! We've also been able to see, I think, about four-million readers a month...

**Selena:** [*Whispers in astonishment*] Wow!

**Ryan:** Through our social media platforms. If you're not following us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, just find Fierce Marriage on those. We share content daily. And I'm just praising God for all He's doing!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And we're going into the future, I think it's just vital to A. keep being faithful with those things, but also asking for other faithful people to join us. So, if you feel like you want to be a part of this movement that is Fierce Marriage and what God is doing in this very kind of small corner of the internet, we would love to partner with you. And the way we do that is you go to [patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage). You can just sign up there, and basically \$2 on up per month. And we're just looking for gospel-centered partners. Pray about it first! Get in agreement with your spouse and then hop on board! We'll share all the earliest fun stuff with ya, and you'll be effectively complicit in everything God does. *[Chuckles]*

**Selena:** *[Chuckling]* Nice!

**Ryan:** You already are if you're part of God's kingdom and all that good stuff *[Selena giggles]*, but... you'd be even more part of it! I'll just say that, maybe. I don't know.

**Selena:** Umm... *[Snickers]*

**Ryan:** Don't theology check that! *[Ryan inhales and Selena laughs]* Yeah! And then the other stuff is just, if you haven't yet, a really easy way to engage in support is to write a rating on iTunes or wherever you get this podcast, a little review goes a *very long way!*

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** If you have a question, we like to do one question a week, on Thursdays, typically. Let's got a [fiercemarriage.com/podcast](https://fiercemarriage.com/podcast). There is a form there you can— or actually, there's a little button you hit to submit it online, or you can ask us via text or voicemail: 971-333-1120. Okay! So, there's a lot of front-end stuff there!

**Selena:** Whew!

**Ryan:** But I think I previewed the faithfulness thing. Hopefully people are still hanging around. So...

**Selena:** I'm sure! Or they just hit the 30-second or 15-second button.

**Ryan:** Hey! You know what? You do you! That's—

**Selena:** You do you.

**Ryan:** That is your right! You know?

**Selena:** It is!

**Ryan:** You can always just speed us up if we're not fast enough. Or you can just write an angry e-mail, which some people decide to do! [Selena giggles] "You talk too much!!"

**Selena:** Nooo.

**Ryan:** It's a podcast! Then fast-forward it if you don't like it.

**Selena:** Oh, goodness.

**Ryan:** Anyway.

**Selena:** Or hit it on double time! [Ryan laughs] We try to talk pretty quickly, though, I feel like for people to listen.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Anyways! And we don't take too many pauses. At least I try not to. Maybe it's you.

**Ryan:** And you know what? We have no commercial breaks.

**Selena:** Wooo!

**Ryan:** No interruptions.

**Selena:** Nice!

**Ryan:** So, yeah.

**Selena:** M'kay! So, let's talk about faithfulness [Ryan laughs] here. Let's just move this right along. [Snicker]

**Ryan:** Yes. Okay.

**Selena:** What is faithfulness? So, what comes to mind, listener, when you're thinking about faithfulness? You don't have to say it out loud. You can—

**Ryan:** No, just shout it in your car!

**Selena:** If you want. [Laughing lightly] Shout it to the world!

**Ryan:** If you're at the gym, shout it out loud. [Selena laughs]

**Selena:** [Inhales] What do you think of when you think of faithfulness and God's word and your marriage? What comes to mind?

**Ryan:** So, I want to preface this one more time with where—

**Selena:** [*Clicks tongue*] All your prefaces!

**Ryan:** Where this came from, though. So, we sat down with our entire team yesterday.

**Selena:** Yeah... Yep.

**Ryan:** And our entire team meeting—

**Selena:** At Fierce Marriage!

**Ryan:** Selena, myself, Katie, who does our care aspect of things on a lot of the online platforms where people write in. Oh! Carrie, who handles all of our shipping and all of our customer service.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Man, she is a rock star! And then Kyla! All of them have “Kh” at the beginning of their names. [*Giggles*]

**Selena:** “Kh.”

**Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Carrie, Katie, and Kyla.

**Selena:** Yep!

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Kyla is kind of our assistant in all things scheduling and logistics.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And she helps with getting the rings that we have made.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Anyway! We had this team, and I just felt like God was saying, “Communicate faithless, and do devotional on faithfulness.”

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** And so, we asked the team, “What... is faithfulness? What comes to mind?” And so, what they said, and I think what you might be saying to yourself, is commitment.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** Right? [*Inhales*]



**Selena:** Yep!

**Ryan:** It's the core of what it means to follow Jesus is what, I think, Carrie said that?

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** What do you think?

**Selena:** Steadfastness...

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Endurance, especially kind of in difficulty...

**Ryan:** Which that always—

**Selena:** I think [*Ryan exhales*]—

**Ryan:** Sorry. Go ahead!

**Selena:** Nope.

**Ryan:** I want to hear your voice. [*Selena laughs*]

**Selena:** I think I said trust. I think there is a big trust aspect to faithfulness... Obviously, you need *faith*! Faith requires, I think, trust, right? And not seeing and not always knowing.

**Ryan:** Right. Well, that's the whole endurance in difficulty, right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** When you can *still* carry on... when you just want to give up.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** You want to bail. This is especially applicable in marriage, right?

**Selena:** Right. And sometimes it's just showing up. Right? Sometimes those first steps are just showing up.

[00:10:02] **Ryan:** Well, showing up, trusting that it's going to be fruitful, it's going to be better.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** And you're trusting that God's way is better...

**Selena:** I guess I'm saying trust is not a *feeling*. So, I'm showing up knowing that I'm checking the boxes off for today, and sometimes it feels really great and holy and awesome! And some days it just feels like I'm just showing up and checking off the box. *But [Inhales]* we're trusting that that showing up, I think, is going to produce fruit, whether we feel it or not, in some ways.

**Ryan:** Right. Yeah. Faithful with little, faithful with much! Trusting that *[Inhales]* God is using those hard moments to *form* our hearts.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And so, yeah, faithfulness is, I think, at its core, a *trust*...

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** In who God is. So, how does this apply to marriage? So, we're going to go through *[Inhales]* kind of three... It's a bit of a word study, but it's also a topical thing. So, we're looking at three specific kind of attributes that describe faithfulness, or three things that describe faithfulness... rather. The first one, I think—

**Selena:** And I think I said this...

**Ryan:** You did!

**Selena:** I did!

**Ryan:** You did! You—

**Selena:** I'm going to take some credit here.

**RF** *[Sharply inhales]* You must have looked at my notes.

**Selena:** I didn't! *[Ryan laughs]* We didn't even talk about it! So, I was—

**Ryan:** *[Quietly states]* I'm kidding.

**Selena:** I was talking about faithfulness being an attribute of God, and you had me look up Deuteronomy 32. That's hard to say! Deuteronomy 32.

**Ryan:** *[Snickers]* Tongue twister!

**Selena:** Deuteronomy 32:3-4. It says, "For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he."

**Ryan:** Yeah. *[Inhales]* So, it's unequivocally part of who God is. And when we say it's an attribute of God, what we mean by that is that God is unable to be

unfaithful. It is against His very nature to be unfaithful. In other words, He is not going to say one thing and do another.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It is *only* in His nature to be true!

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** He cannot be false. Right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** He is the positive, positive of all positives [*Both snicker*], meaning that whatever He says and is, that's the ultimate of what can and what should be.

**Selena:** Right, right.

**Ryan:** So, it's an attribute of God, and as people made in His image, right, *we're* called...

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** To echo and mirror His attribute of faithfulness.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** So, specifically, I *love* this picture of God's faithfulness because we see it so vividly throughout the life of Israel—

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** In the Old Testament on into the new. I mean, Jesus is the *embodiment*, the literal embodiment [*Chuckles*] of God's... faithfulness!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Right? When God himself took on flesh to fulfill His covenant with His people, to fulfill the promises that He had made to Abraham in the covenant he made with Abraham.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** [*Ryan inhales*] So, in Ezekiel is, I think, the *clearest* vision of this. Okay. So, the whole chapter 16 of Ezekiel is a *bit* of a— What is it? It's an— [*Ryan laughs*] Uses strong language. [*Selena chuckles*] What is it? Ezekiel chapter 16.

**Selena:** Verbose! [*Snickers*]

**Ryan:** Well, okay, so...

**Selena:** Isn't that, what, the right, the word you like to—

**Ryan:** I'll just give you an example. It says, "But I trust—" So, this is chapter 15—Oh, I'm sorry. It's chapter 16, verse 15. He says, "But I trust in you— [*Ryan stutters*]" He's talking to the people of Israel, through Ezekiel. He says, "But you trusted in your beauty and played the whore because of your renown and lavished your whorings [*Chuckles awkwardly*] on any passerby; your beauty became his. You took some of your garments and made for yourself colorful shrines, and on them played the whore." So, [*Chuckling*] there's a lot of this language about Israel being kind of a prostitute.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And a faithless bride. The title of this chapter is "The LORD's Faithless Bride." Okay, so read that if you dare. I actually encourage you to go through and read that because I think it gives us a really strong appreciation for the final section. So, it's 58 verses of that. And then it starts in verse 59, and this is the verse that I think really reveals to us and reminds us of God's faithfulness. It says, "For thus says the Lord GOD: after all the things that you've done, Israel, to be faithless, to whore about—"

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Whorings! And doing all the things that prostitutes do. "For thus says the Lord GOD: I will deal with you as you have done, for you have despised the oath in breaking the covenant, yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and I give them to you as daughters, but not on account of the covenant with you." So, there's a lot of... words there, but the part that we're focusing on is, "establish for you, an everlasting covenant."

**Selena:** Hm.

**Ryan:** He's saying that, "Even though you've turned away from Me, I'm not going to turn away from you."

**Selena:** Oh, boy!

**Ryan:** [*Inhales deeply*] "Even though you've chosen to reject me, I'm not going to reject you. Even though you betrayed Me, I'm not going to betray you."

**Selena:** Hm...

**Ryan:** And... even if it's not a mutual betrayal, He's not just vacating. Right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** 'Cause He could say, "All right, you're out. I'm no longer held by this." That's not what covenant is! That's not what God's covenantal character is.

**Selena:** Right.

[00:15:00] **Ryan:** His covenantal character says, "I will love you and I'll be faithful to you, even when, especially when, you do not show love to Me."

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** "You're not faithful to me."

**Selena:** Wow!

**Ryan:** And so, in marriage, I think clearly that has some applications.

**Selena:** Absolutely. Especially when you just think of the word faithfulness and marriage, I mean, it— the... I don't want to say the opposite, but the antonym, the other side of that, is faithlessness or unfaithfulness. Right?

**Ryan:** Unfaithfulness, yeah!

**Selena:** So, if a spouse is unfaithful, [*Inhales*] do you feel like God's word applies in that situation, in that certain circumstances, is it okay?

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** We start asking those questions, like, "Well, if he or she was unfaithful to me, do I have to *stay* here?" "Do I—"

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** "What would God want for me?" "What is His best for me?" And this is not easy to say or walk through, right? But in Ezekiel, in all through out of God's word, it's this beautiful picture of God being remaining faithful.

**Ryan:** Mm. Yeah.

**Selena:** And how does He show his faithfulness, even gives of Himself in the biggest way that you can possibly give! And that's... death! He came to us. He died for us. [*Inhales*] And He remained faithful in all of that.

**Ryan:** Uh-huh. He continues to give. It's not—

**Selena:** Then, yes! Yes.

**Ryan:** We never exhausted His willingness to be faithful. Right?

**Selena:** Right. Which is such a—

**Ryan:** He just was faithful all the way through the other side. [*Chuckles*]

**Selena:** I can't even understand that, right?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** It's like you don't do the dishes or something, and I'm like, "I feel like you're being unfaithful," [*Selena chuckles*] or something. [*Ryan laughs quickly*] Not unfaithful, but you're not—

**Ryan:** Well, yeah.

**Selena:** It's like, "Well, why aren't you being faithful in the little things and doing these little things?" And you know there's a lot of... stuff to pick at, I think.

**Ryan:** [*Chuckles*] Well... I was going to say, I think you hit on the kind of the big one, like if you're unfaithful in your marriage. Right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** That usually means that you've had an emotional or physical affair.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** But I think unfaithfulness plays out in other much smaller ways—

**Selena:** Absolutely!

**Ryan:** Like you just said.

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** In that I am going to basically emotionally abandon you. Not forever, but for tonight I am.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** [*Laughs*] I'm going to just— I'm mad at you, so I'm going to emotionally abandon you.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I'm not going to be generous towards you because you haven't given me what's mine!

**Selena:** Hm...

**Ryan:** You haven't served me in a way that I feel like I should be served or loved me in the way that I feel like I should be loved. Therefore, I'm going to withhold love from you.

**Selena:** Right. And that can even be a fear thing, too, of fear of some sort of, I don't know, abandonment or fear of giving too much of yourself because you've been hurt so much by people that are close to you in the past.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** And so, faithfulness is not something that you... necessarily want to strive for [Snicker] because you're like, "Well, the more I'm faithful, the more I give myself, the more potential there is for me to be hurt and broken."

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** You know what I mean?

**Ryan:** [Softly inhales] Yeah, or we could use this as an excuse to be manipulative.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** [Enunciates] Manipulative! Excuse me.

**Selena:** Right. Absolutely!

**Ryan:** So, God's never manipulative with His love. He's never like, "All right... All right. Well, I might... I don't know. I might love you later." [Selena laughs] "Show Me that you love Me first."

**Selena:** Uh! Yeah.

**Ryan:** He doesn't play those games, or He's not—

**Selena:** He just came out!

**Ryan:** He's not generous, saying, "All right, if you're not—"

**Selena:** Super strong, yeah.

**Ryan:** "Remember this later when you..."

**Selena:** Yeah...

- Ryan:** He does say remember a lot, but it's not in a manipulative way. [*Inhales*] He says it in a way, that like, "Recall how good I've been to you."
- Selena:** Right!
- Ryan:** "And remember how good I still am to you and will be to you."
- Selena:** Yes, yes.
- Ryan:** And so, I think faithfulness starts— Again, we're looking at this idea of faithfulness. It starts by recognizing that it is an attribute [*Inhales*] of God, and therefore, it's something that we are meant to echo for the glory of God. Okay?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** The second thing about faithfulness is...
- Selena:** An outcome of obedience, trust and "fear of the Lord." So...
- Ryan:** Yeah. So, it's an attribute of God, and it's also an outcome of obedience.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And/or trust and fear of the Lord. So, what do we mean by that?
- Selena:** So, in Romans 4:1-3, it says, "What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather, according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him his righteousness."
- Ryan:** I find that interesting. I didn't realize this yesterday, but we're talking about the Abrahamic covenant, right?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** In Deuteronomy...
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And here it is—
- Selena:** In Romans.
- Ryan:** Paul's referring back to it.
- Selena:** Right.



**Ryan:** And not saying Abraham was perfect. He's saying he believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** He was faithful to God.

**Selena:** Well, and something you said yesterday, written in the devotions, was that Abraham did not have the... knowledge or understanding or the *Bible* like we do. Right? He didn't have the prophecy of the Lord in terms of— We get to look back and see the Abrahamic covenant, how it was worked out. We get to see things of the past. Abraham was living it, and there was no... Bible. [Laughs]

**Ryan:** No, there wa—

**Selena:** To read—

**Ryan:** Moses wrote the Pentateuch.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** And he who came generations later...

**Selena:** Right, right.

**Ryan:** *Many* generations later. And so, yeah. You don't have *any* texts!

**Selena:** So, for them to say, "he believed that those words," like he believed, and it was credited to him. I feel like it *weighs* more when you understand the context of it.

[00:20:00] **Ryan:** Mm...

**Selena:** Because we can belie— It's not necessarily, I guess, *easier* to believe. But I think we have more *evidence* to lead us to believing. Right?

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** There's more evidence of the word, and we see God's faithfulness and His character through the church body and through how we go about discipling each other. And he'd I don't necessarily think had that. I know he didn't have the Bible, obviously. But, so—

**Ryan:** So, what he did have— I'm jumping in—

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** 'Cause what he did have was a relationship with the living God.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Right? And so, he had his starting point was the very person and nature of God.

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** That has he had experienced Him.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And so, *from* that starting point, when *we* see the nature and person of God as faithful, we can hopefully, by God's grace, do what Abraham did! Is we can believe and trust!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** We can trust that God is God; I am not. Proverbs 9:10 said, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight." What that is, is seeing God for who God is and seeing myself in light of who God is.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Therefore, I'm going to start gaining a heart of wisdom, which means I'm trusting God even when I feel like the circumstances shouldn't allow me to trust God.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And that is what Abraham was doing! He believed, and it was credited to him as righteousness.

**Selena:** Mm. Right.

**Ryan:** He believed, what? Sarah conceived when she was...

**Selena:** 99 years old. [*Both chuckle and laugh*]

**Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Yeah! Way too old to conceive!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And that was God's grace, in that they believed that He was going to do that.

**Selena:** Yep.

**Ryan:** He's going to fulfill the covenant, that they were going to be a nation! Right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** So, that he was believing, that's credited to him as righteousness. So! Faithfulness that we see in Abraham is an outcome. That's, again, the second point. It's an *outcome* of trust—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And fearing in the Lord and having a heart of wisdom.

**Selena:** Absolutely, absolutely.

**Ryan:** Let's recap! The first one is faithfulness is an attribute of God. The second one is faithfulness is an outcome of *trusting* God. And the third one is faithfulness is a constant state of a heart who trusts in God. Okay, so what do we mean by that? When *we* are in Christ, we have placed our ultimate, eternal trust in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. I cannot be in right standing with the God of heaven. I need help.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** So, I am placing my trust in Jesus. Now, Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** To enliven our hearts, to help us believe His words, to help us change.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** The Holy Spirit is our helper! And then we have the Apostle Paul writing in Galatians all about the fruit of the spirit—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Being kind of a natural outpouring of a heart that's in constant... a place of trusting—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** The work of Jesus. So, why don't you read Galatians 5?

**Selena:** Galatians 5:22-24. It's listing the fruits of the spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires"

- Ryan:** Hm.
- Selena:** So, obviously we probably all want a little bit more of *this* in our marriage, right?
- Ryan:** [*Laughing softly*] Yeah.
- Selena:** Love! We want more *love* in it! We want more joy and peace! We want patience *with* it.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** Kindness, goodness and faithfulness, gentleness. So, these are fruits of the spirit, things that are being produced *in* us. I feel like it always starts small, right? [*Laughs*] Like we're always confronted. If you take marriage, and you take some sort of... [*Clicks tongue*] I don't know. Think of something that's the opposite of joy. [*Laughs again*] Agitation, maybe. [*Laughing*] I don't know.
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** You take that—
- Ryan:** Depression. Yeah.
- Selena:** Yeah! Or just lack of peace, right? Or [*Inhales*] you're not kind to each other. So, just take the flip side of all of the fruits of the spirit and think about those hot moments in your marriage. Not hot, as in sexy-hot.
- Ryan:** [*Snickering*] Not steamy-hot.
- Selena:** Nope! As in angry-hot! [*Both chuckle*]
- Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Chili-hot!
- Selena:** And, yes! And you think about those moments when you're being confronted, right, with either your sin—
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Or your spouse's sin. Sin is being confronted in your marriage. [*Inhales*] And I feel like that's where God— Right? That's when we're weak, He's strong.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** That's where those little fruits start to bud inside.
- Ryan:** So—

**Selena:** Fruit doesn't just appear on a tree; an apple doesn't just *burst* out onto the tree; it grows slowly over time. See these little blooms that go through different seasons, and then they start growing bigger and bigger and bigger, right? So, the fruit of faithfulness often, I think, is produced when we are—

**Ryan:** Wow.

**Selena:** Going through some of those hard trials and those hard seasons of even dealing with the unfaithfulness. Right?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Of a spouse, or the unkindness of a spouse.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Or the lack of peace within our home and our marriage. Maybe there's just external... things that are happening around us, and it's really affecting our marriage and how we deal with our spouse.

**Ryan:** Yeah! I mean, so the Psalmist writes, “Blessed is—” Psalm 1. “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.” This part, what you're talking about fruit being born over time.

[00:25:04] **Selena:** Right. Verse 3.

**Ryan:** Verse 3, “He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season.”

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** Not all the time! M'kay?

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** So, not all the time.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** But in its season, there's a growth that happens. There's a welling up that happens from being planted by the source of life, the stream of water.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And his leaf, it yields fruit in its season, “and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.”

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** So, there are a few themes in the Bible I love, and this theme of... trees, seeds, growth [*Selena laughs lightly*], harvest.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** I mean, botany [*Ryan chuckles*], botanical themes. [*Both chuckle*] Or maybe they're agriculture. I don't know. But I think you're hitting the nail on the head, that if we're not seeing these things in our marriage. Okay—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** So, this passage is descriptive. The apostle Paul is saying, “This is what the fruit of the spirit looks like.”

**Selena:** Right. This is wha—

**Ryan:** “I'm *describing* it to you.”

**Selena:** This is what happens when the Holy Spirit is actively at work.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** In your heart, in your life.

**Ryan:** Right. And if these things aren't there, you *know* something is wrong. So, but the fruit of the spirit is love. If you're not expressing and feeling love toward each other...

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Maybe you're not trusting Jesus.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Maybe you're not living by the spirit. You're living by the flesh.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** You're not in a constant state of trusting God. I know when anytime my joy is gone, it's because—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** I've stopped trusting God in some way.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Because I have an everlasting joy! If my peace, my *deep* peace is ever gone, I know that I've not trusted God. [*Inhales*]

**Selena:** Right...

**Ryan:** And so, faithfulness is *in* this group of things. [*Snicker*]

**Selena:** Right! Well, if it—Yeah! If it— faithful— I'm sorry. I don't mean to jump in, but—

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Faithfulness is req— absolutely requires trust! And go back to Genesis 3, right?

**Ryan:** Right!

**Selena:** [*Inhales*] God was faithful. He was faithful, faithful, faithful.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** Adam and Eve were in a place of faith and relationship with God. There was nothing that they had to worry about or fear. But they started to not *trust*. The enemy was picking away at the trust.

**Ryan:** This way, they're trusting lies. Yeah.

**Selena:** Of who God was! Started picking away at His character in the minds of Adam and Eve. And so, we see distrust being planted in there. We see pride being planted—

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** Into their hearts. And these are not things that are listed under the fruit of the Spirit, obviously.

**Ryan:** And we'll get into contrasting those, 'cause I do want to look more closely at—

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Some of these lies we believe. [*Inhales*] But at first, how does being in constant state of trusting God... work in our marriage? Okay.

**Selena:** Hm!

**Ryan:** So, we talked about this a little bit beforehand. If all this is working itself out in my heart, right?

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** I'm going to have faithfulness as a fruit of the spirit. Faithfulness, in terms of being faithful to you, doesn't just end with me not cheating on you.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It means that I am faithful to the extent that I am *believing* everything Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 13. Love *hopes* all things.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** I'm hoping— Even if you're completely *stonewalling* me.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** You're completely ice-cold to me. I roll over in bed and you're just not in any way interested in talking or anything like that. Even if that's the case, or we haven't talked deeply about things in however long—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** [*Quickly inhales*] I can still be faithful to you in hoping that, in love, hoping for all things, that God'll work out—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Whatever's going on in our covenant, because *He* has, again, I'm trusting Him!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** He has said that covenant marriage is for life!

**Selena:** [*Quietly whispers*] Right.

**Ryan:** So, I think living by the spirit, right? If you're in a tough point in your marriage, right, I want to encourage you! I don't know if it's a stern encourage— I think it's just a bold encouragement.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Place your trust *in* God, in His character.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.



**Ryan:** In the fact that He is always faithful!

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** Place your trust in Him...

**Selena:** Ask the Holy Spirits to come in and *help* you.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Ask the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God! Remember? We can't [Ryan exhales] forget He is, as Francis Chan's wrote a whole book about the forgotten God, right?

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** And it's the Holy Spirit.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** And He is able to counsel us and discern and help us to understand things that maybe we don't understand in the moment. [Inhales] And it's not like it's always this audible voice or anything, right, that like, "Oh, here. This is how you can be faithful," or blah-blah-blah. It's more of a prompting and encouragement. [Inhales]

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** And I think that if we are in the word and we are seeking out God's truths in the midst of heartache, we're remaining faithful to His word, knowing that it's living, knowing that it's active.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** And it's sharpening us. It's cutting between our motives and helps us examine the deepest parts of ourselves.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** [Inhales] He leads us in that! And it's not us just looking at ourselves and diagnosing ourselves. It's us going to God, going to the Holy Spirit, asking Him to help us to remain faithful to our spouse.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** Because we don't feel like being faithful right now. I don't want to be faithful.

**Ryan:** And ask the Holy Spirit to continue producing those fruits in our hearts...

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** The joy and the peace and everything that we're missing, right?

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

**Ryan:** If you feel like that's gone. And even in *greater* measure. Right?

**Selena:** Right. And praying for that for our spouse as well.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** Asking God for their heart to be softened if it's a heart of stone [*Chuckle*]. For them to find peace! Maybe there's just a lot of turmoil in their hearts and their minds, their souls, and they deal with a lot.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Asking for peace, asking those things *faithfully*. Coming to God, bringing them *faithfully* to...

**Ryan:** Mm...

**Selena:** To His throne, and saying, "God, I trust you! I know that you're powerful!" Leaving room for the Holy Spirit, knowing that we can't control everything. We can't produce these things—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Inside of our spouse or inside of ourselves. It's God that is at work in us.

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Yeah! I love it. That's all good. So, let's recap here. So, what is faithfulness? Okay, first and foremost, this is where we start. It's an attribute of God.

**Selena:** M'kay.

**Ryan:** God is forever faithful. Secondly, it's an outcome of our trust in Him.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** When we trust God, faithfulness becomes the M.O. by which we operate.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** All right. The third one is it's a *constant* state of a heart who trusts God, and it bears fruit in our lives.

**Selena:** So good. So good.

**Ryan:** So, I want to spend a moment contrasting here. So, we've talked about *faithfulness*, but what is *unfaithfulness*, right? So, [*Inhales*] what does it mean to be, I'm going to use the word from Galatians 5, what is "fleshfulness"? So, Galatians 5 talks about fruits of the spirit. It also talks about... fruits of the flesh!

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** So, I'm going to read Galatians 5:16-21, [*Inhales*] and as you hear this and as we read it, we're going to be kind of internalizing and thinking. But how have we lived by the flesh in these ways? Now there's some strong language here, but we'll go through and kind of dissect what they mean. It says, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh." They're diametrically opposed. Okay.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] "For these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do," as you live by the spirit, and I'm adding some commentary as we go. "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness," [*Chuckling*], "orgies, and things like these."

**Selena:** Wow...

**Ryan:** "I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." So again, he's describing what it means to live by the flesh, and he's saying that if you are living by the flesh, you are not filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** If you're not filled with the Holy Spirit... [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** Well, and I think it's *so* hard to *not* live by the flesh, right? Because we *feel* it, and our feelings lead a lot. Our emotions and our feelings—

**Ryan:** Hm...

**Selena:** [*Inhales*] If we look at culture today, those are a lot of the things that we're told to follow. Right? We're told to let them—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Let your feelings lead you. However you feel, what's right for you is right for you. Those kinds of [*Inhales*] transient type things. And it's like, "No! We are waging war against the flesh."

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And I don't think we see it! I think I see it more in our kids so blatantly. Right? And you're like, "They are little human beings. They're little sinners, just like me! Oh, look, she wants to eat food all the time. She wants to do this, or he wants to do that." [*Inhales*]

**Ryan:** They're just little hed—

**Selena:** Little hedonists!

**Ryan:** [*Snickering*] Hedonists.

**Selena:** But that's exactly what we are! [*Ryan laughs and Selena chuckles*] Just we're better able to hide it.

**Ryan:** Yes.

**Selena:** And we're more appropriate about how [*Ryan laughs*] we go about it.

**Ryan:** [*Laughing*] Yeah.

**Selena:** [*Chuckling*] We don't just walk into a room and be like, [*Angsty little kid voice*] "Mom, I'm hungry!" [*Resumes normal voice*] You know?

**Ryan:** Yeah. "I want candy!"

**Selena:** Uh-huh.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** We do the same thing. And so, we are waging *war* against the flesh. And so, the things that God is calling us to, in terms of the Holy Spirit producing in us love, joy, peace, patience. What are the things that are on the opposite end of the spectrum of those? Joy would be... a *lack* of joy. I don't even say it's unhappiness, because I think joy is so much deeper than happiness. And so—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** A *lack* of joy would be more accurate to *me*. Peace, not having peace, and...

**Ryan:** It's like generalized anxiety, right? And there *are* some aspects—

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** Of anxiety that are physiological. Medicine is a good grace of God—

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** To deal with the physiological aspects of that. But there are parts of our hearts that will be anxious because we're not trusting God.

**Selena:** Sure!

**Ryan:** And it's regardless of a diagnosis.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I think that's just our kind of natural state, is to worry and to not... The Bible talks about God gives the righteous sleep.

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** And gives them rest. He lets them all sleep easy and sleep well because it's like their hearts are trusting Him.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** We're placing our ultimate value in Him and not in our circumstances. Some of these words here. So, in Galatians 5, it says sexual immorality is a fruit of the flesh, the work of the flesh.

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** Things like pornography, you guys. If that's an ongoing struggle and a sin, or even in some cases, we have people write in saying, "And no one gets hurt, right? It's fine. I shouldn't have to worry about that." Lustfulness. We're saying that, no, that's wrong. You're wrong in that; we're lovingly correcting you—

[00:35:00] **Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** In that you need to repent and turn away from it, and turn toward purity, sexual purity. Sensuality is one of these words. What does he mean by sensuality? [*Selena snickers*] So, I actually looked it up, 'cause I wanted to make sure that we said it correctly, but it actually means licentiousness or a wantonness, an *outrageous* conduct. Okay. Conduct *shocking* to public

decency. Idolatry is the next one on that list. And that's... I mean, idolatry is putting anything in a place where only God should occupy, right?

**Selena:** Right, right.

**Ryan:** Your affections of your heart, where you placing your identity, your security.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** We tend to do that. A few of these are more common than not. Sorcery, right? That's... I won't get into it. It's not as common in the sense that he's using it here.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But I think there are ways that we can, I think, give—

**Selena:** Subscribe to mysticism in some ways.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Some subtle, subtle ways.

**Ryan:** We give credence to spiritual powers that should not be spiritual powers. And we should not be dealing with them in that way.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Enmity, strife, jealousy is another big one.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions [*Selena chuckles*], *envy*.

**Selena:** Sure!

**Ryan:** Drunkenness. I mean, orgies. [*Chuckling*] We can go on basically... Things that are all about satisfying desires of the flesh—

**Selena:** Wow!

**Ryan:** At whatever cost. Regardless of outcome, regardless of what God's law says.

**Selena:** Mmm... Right.

**Ryan:** That's living by the flesh!

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** All right. So, faithfulness...

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** Says that we're going to trust God and His law. We're going to trust that His law is good! It's not just a set of rules! It is set up for our flourishing, because we flourish as we are most satisfied in Him.

**Selena:** Mm! So good!

**Ryan:** We flourish as we are planted by Him! Only He is the living water that will help us to flourish.

**Selena:** Yeah. And it's such a humbling place to be. I mean... being planted by the stream, right? Being... with Go— I'm constantly... blown away at how... much I feel like a failure in a lot of ways. [*Chuckles*] And in a good way, like I'm failing at satisfying the flesh in some ways. Like I'm failing at—

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** Maybe keeping...

**Ryan:** Wow! Yeah.

**Selena:** Everything in order in our house. What are those priorities? Are they bad priorities? No! But when I feel like I'm constantly failing—

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** [*Inhales*] Am I letting that affect the fruit that's being produced in me, or am I taking those failings and saying, "Okay, here's another opportunity God's given me to respond according to how He's called me to respond, to respond in faithfulness, to respond in love, to respond in patience and peace, and respond in joy when there are situations that don't easily elicit that inside of me. [*Snickers quickly*] They actually bring out the opposite of that. And I think I told you about I was having a really difficult morning with the girls, and I told them, "Well, Mommy's about to get really angry right now." [*Selena laughs lightly*] "I really need you to listen, please, 'cause I'm *really* having a hard time," [*Ryan giggles*] and I need to ask the Lord to help me and all these things." [*Selena inhales*] And I was feeling the emotions, like some of us feel it physically. Some of us can kind of ride it out or whatever, but I was like, "Okay," [*Inhales*], "I have an opportunity. I can either unleash and get really frustrated or I can just say this, have peace, trust God's faithfulness, trust it more than what I'm feeling right now, and just let the feelings slide away." About ten, fifteen minutes later, I felt back to normal. I wasn't breathing hard; I wasn't having to count to ten and take a time out for myself. It was, "Okay. These are emotions. These are feelings that past. And God, He's constantly good at giving me those

hard situations, that time, that pressure, because it's in that that we're being refined, that that fruit is able to be produced inside of us because...

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Because of that!

**Ryan:** Yeah, and that's good.

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

**Ryan:** I just wanted to jump in because—

**Selena:** I saw the finger up! That means I want to talk. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Well, I was trying, yeah, give you a cue. So, fits of anger, right? So, anger is one of [*Selena chuckles*] these things that you struggle with.

**Selena:** Yes, I do! Inside my heart, it makes me frustrated inside of myself. Yeah.

**Ryan:** Did you know that science says [*Both cackle*] ... That sounds really sophisticated, Ryan. Good job.

**Selena:** It's a good qualifier. [*Giggles*]

**Ryan:** I know. I read a article about a study that revealed, they found that basically anger comes from the same pleasure centers of the brain where you're getting dopamine and all these addictive sorts of things.

**Selena:** Okay. Yeah!

**Ryan:** Especially! Okay. So, it feels good to be angry. It feels good to *express* that anger. But here's the kicker, is they said it feels *especially* good to express righteous anger.

**Selena:** Yeah...

**Ryan:** When you feel like you were [*Enunciates*] right and someone else is wrong. [*Selena inhales sharply and chuckles lightly*] You've been wronged, and you are correct in correcting them in an angry way!

**Selena:** Yep.

**Ryan:** That feels good! So—

**Selena:** That very easily happens in parenting. [*Laughs*]



**Ryan:** In a lot of ways, we don't always see this, but expressing anger in ways that are physiological pleasing, whether we realize that or not, is a way of living by the flesh and to satisfy the appetites of the flesh.

**Selena:** Mmm.

**Ryan:** Saying that I have to satisfy this little thing in my head!

**Selena:** I have to blow up and feel better!

**Ryan:** I have to. Otherwise I'm not going to feel like I got justice in this situation.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And that's a *lie*!

**Ryan:** That's living by the flesh.

**Selena:** And living by the flesh.

**Ryan:** Living by the spirit says that patience, *trusting* that that feeling will go away.

**Selena:** Mmm.

**Ryan:** Trusting if I stop riding those neuropathways, they'll stop being as easy to ride. *[Both laugh]* Does that makes sense?

[00:40:05] **Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** Trusting that that part of my mind can heal, and I can trust God more fully every day as I give that over to Him.

**Selena:** Right! And it's such a prideful position for me, 'cause I'm thinking, "Well, if I respond how I feel like responding, then I will feel better. It's the better way to go." *[Inhales]* And it's like God saying, "No. Be patient. No. Be kind. No. Be loving and—"

**Ryan:** Wow.

**Selena:** "Let my spirit produce this in you! Just try to take it once!" I feel like His voice is like, "Come on! Come on! Just walk down this path one time!"

**Ryan:** Well, the other part of it for you is you feel like you're compromising if you're not being honest. You're being dishonest—

**Selena:** *[Snicker]* Right.

**Ryan:** If you're not expressing how you feel exactly. And I think—

**Selena:** [*Inhales*] Yeah...

**Ryan:** The premise there is that how you feel is always legitimate. Not that it's illegitimate, but it doesn't always need to be expressed in that exact way.

**Selena:** This is me, people. This is me. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** But that goes for any kind of emotion—

**Selena:** For sure!

**Ryan:** That we would ride, right?

**Selena:** Absolutely!

**Ryan:** So, for me, it's really easy for me to compare and to get envious about not things, but really more like effectiveness. And people that—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Social media is a toxic place for me because it's like the highlights of humanity!

**Selena:** Yeah. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** And it always brings out the worst in my heart.

**Selena:** It's the highlights of humanity proclaiming to be real life. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Yes, yes! And so, that's why first thing in the morning, it's so critical that I do not *start* my very first interaction with anything in the day is social media. [*Laughs*] That's got to be God's word!

**Selena:** Cannot be scrolling.

**Ryan:** It's got to be—

**Selena:** Yep!

**Ryan:** Looking to His identity and my identity in Him, and not everybody else's fake identities online. [*Both snicker*] So, quickly, two ways to kind of apply this, right?

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** So, we're talking about faithfulness as a fruit of the spirit, as an attribute of God, as something that is a result of trusting. But how does this actually affect

how we live our lives? In two very tangible ways, just quickly. Two tangible ways. Tending to our land with endurance and diligence.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Okay. So, our land, picture that in quotes. What is your land? I want to read this verse, Proverbs 28:19, "Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty. A faithful man will abound with blessings, but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished."

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** So, it's very easy to spend our time on worthless pursuits in this area.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** So, working our land, being that working our relationship, our marriage, not looking elsewhere, saying, "That land is better! I want to start working that land or cultivating that la—"

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** No! That's a worthless pursuit. It will lead to poverty, not material poverty.

**Selena:** What do you mean? Sorry, just want to back up. What are you saying? That what land is ours? Are you saying our marriage is our land, or our...?

**Ryan:** Yeah. Our relationship.

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** Our household, our life. I think it's easy to fantasize about escaping.

**Selena:** Someone else's life! [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** Or, you see, you know—

**Selena:** Or someone else's job, or someone else's—

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Well, the example we always use is you're at the gym and you catch someone kind of checking you out. Right? If you—

**Selena:** [*Clicks tongue*] I haven't been to the gym in months, so I don't even know.  
[*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** If you fa— Yeah. Me too.

**Selena:** [*Laughing*] Just kidding!

**Ryan:** So, it doesn't happen. [*Selena laughs harder*] But if you follow that, right, I think—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** There's something in us that's like, "Oh, I still got it," right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Someone finds me attractive or someone finds me intriguing in some way.

**Selena:** Someone thinks I'm [*Exaggerates word*] strong! [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** And so, if you actually think about that—

**Selena:** [*Whispers*] Yes!

**Ryan:** That person's got beliefs; they're probably weird. [*Selena laughs*] They've got worldview issues. They've got family issues. They've got every bit of baggage that any person will ever have. [*Inhales quietly*]

**Selena:** That any human being will have. Yes.

**Ryan:** And it's a complete, utter, meaningless, worthless pursuit—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** To not just carry on with your life [*Cackles*] and work your own land!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And so, I think that's a very clear example. But we do that in subtle ways.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** When we fantasize or daydream online in terms of—

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** "Oh! What if I did that career? What if we bought that house? Or what if we—"

**Selena:** Right...

**Ryan:** There's a time and place for those things, but—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I think really working our land, discipling each other daily, learning to love each other daily.

**Selena:** Well, and we did a podcast, I think it was the last one. It was First Things and Next Things.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** So, talking about those first things first. And kind of the revelation that came to me in our meeting yesterday during this time was talking about how we're trying to figure outgrowth with Fierce Marriage and how to manage and lead and add some structure to the growth, that organic growth that's happening.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** [*Inhales*] And I think that's what this is saying. Whoever works his land, not saying, "Oh, yay! We've worked our land, but they'll have plenty of bread." So, then it's like, okay, what do we do with that bread? We've got to start figuring out how to be faithful with these *blessings* that are truly abounding! The growth is blessing and it's a bounding. And blessing is not just a path of ease. I'm—

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** More and more convinced, and I probably just need to look up the Hebrew definition and all of that, that blessings require work! They require *more* of you.

**Ryan:** Oh, for sure!

**Selena:** But they're good thing!

**Ryan:** Kids are a blessing! [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** Yeah! [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** They're not easy!

**Selena:** Children are a blessing! The Bible proclaims that!

**Ryan:** Blessing equals responsibility, and responsibility's good. I think oftentimes we equate blessing with ease—

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** With leisure. That's not what blessing is. A blessing is—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Is the hand of God working in some way that only He can work. So, that's the first way that we apply it, is we tend to our own land with faithfulness and with endurance, with diligence.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** That's key! Okay. If you haven't gone on a date in a while, like diligently plan a date. [*Chuckles*]

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

**Ryan:** If you haven't learned your spouse's love language, diligently learn a little bit more about your spouse.

**Selena:** [*Chuckles*] Yes, yes!

**Ryan:** Okay. If you haven't learned how to speak kindly, think about how to speak kindly. The second one! We'll go through these quickly. Walking in a way that proves we trust God. So, what I mean by that is being faith-filled. Okay. So, being faithful in terms of being diligent and enduring...

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** But also walking in a way that says, "God, we're trusting You in this big way. How are you going to move? How are you going to be God, and how are we going to be your people?"

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Faith-filled—

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** Having *big* eyes, big vision, not just for the sake of growth, but for the sake of seeing God be God.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** All right. So, that's the second way we apply this. Okay. So, the big takeaway here is faithfulness always leads to fruitfulness.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And faithfulness is day in and day out, diligence, endurance, steadfastness, *standing* at your post.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Staying in your lane, doing the thing that God has called you to do, trusting that He is the king!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** He is the point. He is good, and His ways—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Are our *worth*.

**Selena:** He produces *in* us, and He transforms us moment by moment.

**Ryan:** Right. Yeah.

**Selena:** It really is in the steadfastness of that.

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Right. So, hopefully you're encouraged today to apply the idea of faithfulness, and hopefully you see the fruits of faithfulness in your life.

Let's pray and then we'll call it a day, all right?

**Selena:** All right!

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Lord, I thank you for Your word! I thank You that You *are* faithful. I thank You, that even when we're faithless, when we turn our back on You, You *don't* turn Your back on us!

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** You are faithful to us. You've proven it time and time again. I pray for the couples listening to this, that You would show them Your faithfulness, and from them the realization of how faithful You are, that You would *help them* to understand and apply the principle of faithfulness in their own life.

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** I pray that their marriage would *flourish* as a result. They would be fruitful, that they would experience love and joy and peace and patience and everything else you're calling them into as your children walking by your spirit. So, Holy Spirit, help us. We *need* Your help.

In Your name,

[*Clicks tongue*] Amen.

**Selena:** Amen!

**Ryan:** All right! Ladies and gentlemen, this episode is!

**Selena:** In the can!

**Ryan:** We hope you have an incredible *year*, and we will see you once again in about seven days! And until next time!

**Selena:** Stay fierce!

[00:47:13]        <Ending Sequence>

[00:47:32]        *Podcast ends.*



## PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:01:25]**
  - See-Through Marriage Interest Form:
    - <https://seethroughbook.com/>
  - E-mail List Link:
    - <https://fiercemarriage.com/list-2>
    - Also noted here:
      - <https://5habits.us/>
- **[00:10:02]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Deuteronomy 32:3-4, *ESV*
    - Ezekiel 16:15-16a, *ESV*
    - Ezekiel 16:59-61, *ESV*
- **[00:15:00]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Romans 4:1-3, *ESV*
- **[00:20:00]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Proverbs 9:10, *ESV*
    - Galatians 5:22-24, *ESV*
    - Psalm 1:1-2, *ESV*
- **[00:25:04]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Psalm 1:3a, *ESV*
    - Psalm 1:3b-4, *ESV*
- **[00:30:01]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Galatians 5:16-17a
    - Galatians 5:17b-21a
- **[00:40:05]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Proverbs 28:19-20, *ESV*

## FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

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