

## OOPS, WE'RE MARRIED!

<https://fiercemarriage.com/oops-were-married>

[00:00:00] **Selena:** “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

**Ryan:** So, this episode is titled, “Oops, We're Married!” [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** Oops! Whoops!

**Ryan:** [*Snickering*] Oops!

**Selena:** Ehh...

**Ryan:** And the reason why we titled it that is because we feel like couples we've talked to in the past, maybe helped through something, it's almost like they don't *realize* what they're getting into, until they're already two, three years into the marriage, realizing, “Wow! This is what it means to be married!”

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** It's like they kind of went through the motions and got into marriage not realizing what exactly they're getting into.

**Selena:** Right, right!

**Ryan:** So, we're going to talk through specifically three misconceptions, or three lies, about marriage that are kind of modern misconceptions, but just lies we tend to believe, and how those flesh themselves out. And then we're going to apply the three big purposes of marriage that we see in that passage that we just read. So, anyway! Thank you so much for joining us, *and* Louisa, here on the Fierce Marriage Podcast. [*Selena laughs*] And we'll see you on the other side!

[00:01:20] <Intro Sequence>

[00:01:50] **Ryan:** Okay, so this conversation is not just for people that are headed into marriage or people that are just *newly* married.

**Selena:** Hm.

- Ryan:** I think it's for anyone who's in marriage and you might be feeling a little bit kind of... baffled [*Selena chuckles*], or maybe even caught on your heels a little bit.
- Selena:** A little bait-and-switch occasionally feeling, huh?
- Ryan:** Well, and if we're honest, I think we're all there at some point. Right? We're wondering, "What did I get myself into?" [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** Well, I haven't wondered that. [*Ryan laughs harder*] Maybe you have. [*Selena giggles*] I'm just kidding!
- Ryan:** So often! No, I haven't, actually. But you know what I mean! It's not like you're regretting your marriage, but you're wondering, "Okay. This is a lot tougher than I think it should be." Maybe—
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Maybe you thought it was going to be tough or maybe you feel like it's tougher than the marriages that you see in your sphere.
- Selena:** Yeah. I think we always underestimate... everything. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Right! And don't get us wrong! Honestly, marriage is *so* beautiful! It's a gracious gift of God, how beautiful it is.
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** The way God designed it. So, I don't in any way want to disparage this thing that God designed. If anything, I just want to align our expectations with the reality of the way...
- Selena:** Yes!
- Ryan:** God designed it, and the reality of who we are as sinners in need of grace.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And why God designed *love*, the way He created love. It's like the laws of love [*Chuckles*] exist outside of us!
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And what it means to actually conform ourselves to God's character of love. Right?
- Selena:** Yeah!

- Ryan:** And so, I want to talk through some of that today.
- Selena:** Sounds good!
- Ryan:** First! [*Selena chuckles*] First, as you know! So, we have a new book coming out in a few months! It's called See Through Marriage.
- Selena:** Woo hoo!
- Ryan:** It's all about transparency in marriage. You can't really live, I think, a truly loving marriage and experience love in its greatest depths without true transparency.
- Selena:** Hm.
- Ryan:** And so, we are right now in the middle of recruiting for our book launch team.
- Selena:** Come on!
- Ryan:** And we would love it if that message resonates with you as you're hearing us say these words, go to SeeThroughBook.com. There's a little form there where you can sign up to be part of the launch team. You get early access to the manuscript. You'll be asked, basically in return, all we ask is a review.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And it helps us get the word out sooner to more people. Go to SeeThroughBook.com to be a part of the See-Through Marriage book launch team. Also, if you haven't yet, please do leave a rating and a review on iTunes! That helps us get the word out. And it means a ton. Just leave an honest review. Click the star rating. Do whatever you do. Just make it do. Make it do what it do!
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And we would be honored. [*Selena giggles*] Finally, if you want to partner with us and Fierce Marriage and all the stuff that God is doing by His grace through this platform, you can do that through the platform called Patreon. So, go to patreon.com/fiercemarriage, and basically you can sign up for any level of monthly giving. Tiers start at \$2. There are some free books in there, free rings and things, for people [*Selena quietly laughs*] who sign up at certain tiers. So, make sure you read through those! But that's not the point. The point is we want to lock arms with you.
- Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** If you've prayed about it and you feel God leading you to do so, we'd be honored to serve you in that way and to partner with you. And in specific, put your resources to good use—

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Through this ministry. All right!

[00:05:02] **Selena:** Good job! I feel like we should start adding these little soundbites of a crowd clapping for you [*Both chuckling*] after you're done.

**Ryan:** That's a little mini marathon there!

**Selena:** Yes! [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Getting to all of that.

**Selena:** You just have little sounds throughout little.... [*Ryan laughs*] Maybe not! Okay.

**Ryan:** [*Laughing*] I don't know.

**Selena:** Takes it down a notch? I get it. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** No, I need to figure out, technically—

**Selena:** I just think it's funny.

**Ryan:** No. Absolutely on board with that! [*Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles*] Just be honest! I've always wanted to be a deejay. I just got to figure out how to *technically* [*Selena laughs*] pull it off. So...

**Selena:** And all the listeners are like [*Does a mimicking whiney voice*], "We don't want funny sounds..." [*Resumes normal voice*]

**Ryan:** [*In a harsh accent*] "Just get to the point!" [*Selena laughs*] [*Resumes a normal voice*] "I'm tired of your fluff!" [*Selena chuckles*] "Get to the point!" [*Selena laughs harder*] "Love the podcast! Just hate the fluff."

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

**Ryan:** Yeah! So, okay.

**Selena:** Nooo. You're funny!

**Ryan:** So, how did that strike you, when I proposed this podcast topic to you? I said, "Here's the title: "Whoops! We're married!"

- Selena:** It was a little confusing to me. *[Both snicker]* Originally, I was like, “It just sounds like it’s something that happened to you, and you just *[Selena snickers]* ... woke up one day and you're realizing, “Oh! We’re married!”
- Ryan:** Well, that's exactly kind of where it came from, because I feel like a lot of the folks that we talked to, and like I said in the intro, is their—
- Selena:** I would have titled it different. That’s all I’m saying.
- Ryan:** Okay. Well... when you start—
- Selena:** Marriage wasn’t—
- Ryan:** Pitching good titles, then I could— *[Laughing]*
- Selena:** It was a good one! *[Ryan laughs a little harder]* It was a good one.
- Ryan:** *[Laughing]* Okay.
- Selena:** It was... “Marriage Is *Not* What I Thought It Was, But It's so much *[Whispers]* better.
- Ryan:** That's way too long! It's way too long.
- Selena:** Okay!
- Ryan:** I've taken a class— No, I haven't. I'm kidding. There's no classes on how to title podcast episodes. *[Laughs]*
- Selena:** It’s called *lying*. *[Chuckles]*
- Ryan:** So, I think the attitude that is the underlying attitude that we really want to address in young married couples, middle-aged married couples, and even older ones, is there's kind of this... when they get married, there's this idea that man, I hope... I'm really believing this is the one! I'm really believing *[Selena chuckles]* that this is going to be the time that it—
- Selena:** Sure hope this *[They say in unison]* works out. *[They resume speaking solo]*
- Ryan:** Sure hope that this is everything that it's supposed to be. And if it doesn't, well, let's not talk about that. Let's just hope this is the right one.
- Selena:** *[Chuckling]* Let’s just ride this wave. Yeah, yeah. It feels good!
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** Seems right.

- Ryan:** And so, a lot of couples enter into it not realizing what all they're buying into. The analogy that comes to mind is it's like you're buying a nice, new house that you *really* wanted.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And you saw the pictures and it all looked great. And you got a—
- Selena:** And you've never bought a house before.
- Ryan:** You've never bought a house before, and it's a *great* looking house! You got a *great* screaming deal! You sign the mortgage. Boom!
- Selena:** Screaming deal? What is that supposed to mean? [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Let's get a screaming deal!
- Selena:** [*Laughing*] Okay.
- Ryan:** Boom! You're in the house, and then all of the sudden you're like, "Oh, no. I have to pay *taxes* on this house," [*Selena snickers*] or, "I have to *maintain* this house."
- Selena:** You go to the light switch, and the lights don't work! [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Oh, no! The lights. Yeah, the lights don't work! The roof needs to be replaced.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** I can't afford this! I got a good deal on it. It was easy to get into the house.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** But *owning* the house is a *totally* different story.
- Selena:** Sure!
- Ryan:** We saw that. I mean, that's an analogy, but it's also very true for the real estate bubble that popped back in 2009! [*Both chuckle*] Where everybody was *so* easy to get into these houses that were *clearly* out of people's financial—
- Selena:** Yes!
- Ryan:** What they could handle! And so, you have people foreclosing on their houses.
- Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** They didn't try to manage it. [*Selena snickers*] They just said, "Bank, you can have it back."

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** "I'm done with it."

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And so, people, I think *that* attitude...

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Is how people approach marriage!

**Selena:** Right. And it's not saying that we can go into marriage and just be like, "Okay, I know *all* the things."

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** "I know this is a big commitment."

**Ryan:** Hm!

**Selena:** "I know this..." There's a lot of things you can *know*, but until you actually walk through it and experience it...

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** It's hard to really *know*, I think.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** And so, I guess... and you and I were talking about this before we started recording, of just... how I think the messages that we've been taught about marriage, and through Sundays at church, what's being preached from the *platform, generally speaking*, I think, overall...

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** Has kind of drifted a bit from...

**Ryan:** Yeah, well—

**Selena:** Could Christianity and the gospel and orthodoxy and...

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** It's kind of shifted some stuff, which you have some stats that kind of back this up a little bit, of...

**Ryan:** Yes. So—

**Selena:** What... I don't know! I don't want to make some big assumptions. I'm trying not to do my big leaps that you *love* [Ryan chuckles] in my— [Selena chuckles]

**Ryan:** Well, you have leaps because I think you are really in tune with the feeling that that coincides this type of these trends that happen.

**Selena:** Sure.

**Ryan:** And so, some of the trends, like maybe marriage was over-romanticized, meaning that—

**Selena:** Sure.

**Ryan:** “Hey, it's all about love! It's going to be *great!* Loves great! God is love.”

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** “And you want love, right? So, get married ‘cause marriage is where love happens.”

**Selena:** [Chuckles] Right.

**Ryan:** And then you get into and you're like, “Oh, wow! This is great, but there's parts of it that take a lot of *work!*” Or you have just a bad understanding of, like we talked about, what covenant is or—

**Selena:** Sure!

**Ryan:** You never really were *taught.*

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** What love *truly* is, or maybe you've been taught, but you never listened. [Snickers]

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** [Chuckling] That's the hard truth!

**Selena:** And sometimes our hearts just don't hear—

**Ryan:** Yeah!



**Selena:** Or our souls just don't hear it and absorb it! We're just...

**Ryan:** Yeah! Or you're just too immature to really hear it in a way that's transformational.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** You can kind of know somewhere in your head that love is an action and not an emotion primarily.

[00:10:02] **Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But in your guts, you still believe, "I should feel love for love to be real," right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Another one is maybe it was just never modeled in a healthy way.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And so, you have this picture of marriage and you come from maybe a divorced home, a broken home, or maybe people that were never even married!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And you've just kind of observed marriage through the media or through friends, and you've just not had a good model for what marriage is. But I do want to take a look. So, and we're not just talking about the world at large. Okay?

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** We're talking about Christians.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** We're talking about people who profess faith in Christ first and foremost.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And by virtue of that, they profess that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant and authoritative word of God. It's the authority in my life. It's the thing that tells me how to live my life.

**Selena:** Mm-hm, mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Right? I don't tell it how to be read! It tells me, and it reads me.

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** It tells *me* how to live. Okay. So, given that big presupposition, like this is who we're talking about. Just as a quick glimpse at how Christians view cohabitation and marriage. It says reason— So, I looked at a Barna study. Right? So, they were studying just trends in love and marriage and singleness and divorce and cohabitation, right? So, they did this. There's one table, it says reasons for not living with one significant other before getting married. Okay. So, there's 34% of those people cite religious reasons for not living together before marriage.

**Selena:** Hm!

**Ryan:** Kay? Another 28% will cite they don't believe that people should have sex before getting married. So, that again could be attributed to a biblical worldview.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** 'Cause that is part of the biblical worldview. And then another 12% said there's a family tradition, my parents would kill me, that sort of thing.

**Selena:** Got'cha.

**Ryan:** Right? Okay! Now take that 34%. Okay. So, 34% of people who said we're not going to live together because of religious reasons. So, take that group of people, and *now* it says what percent of *those* people agree it's a good idea to live with one significant other before getting married. Okay. So, they may have cited a reason for *not* living together, but they still think it's a good idea!

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** So, they're not doing it, or they think they're not supposed to do it, but they still think it's a good idea. Okay. 35% of those people were born again Christians, 35% of those people who agreed it's a good idea to live... together before they get married.

**Selena:** Oh!

**Ryan:** So, and then 41% of those people are practicing Christians. Okay. So...

**Selena:** Wow.

**Ryan:** That's huge! So—

**Selena:** That's a big number!

**Ryan:** 41% of people who think you shouldn't live together before getting married, 41% of those people still think it's a good idea to do so. Okay. So, all that's a

little bit confusing, because you're kind of breaking it down into segments and then segments of segments.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But the implications of that are pretty *staggering*.

**Selena:** Yeah! Well, and they're ask— It begs a *lot* of questions.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** It begs a lot of questions about what we're being taught, what we're hearing, how we're receiving what we're being taught, and what our responses are to faith on a Sunday morning and to being—

**Ryan:** Hm.

**Selena:** Taught the word. There's so many different messages [*Chuckles*]—

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Out there! It's like different versions of the Bible! In my opinion [*Chuckles*], some are more true to the text than others! And I think that's—

**Ryan:** That's not just your opinion! I think that's definitely true.

**Selena:** I think that's definitely true. Yeah. And I think it's important for us to be accurate in what we believe and why and understand it and *know* it because we will act on that understanding!

**Ryan:** Yeah! So, this study was carried out in 2016. So, theoretically you have this group of people who almost half said it was a good idea to cohabitate.

**Selena:** That are Christians, practicing Christians.

**Ryan:** Almost half of practicing *Christians* say it's a good idea to cohabitate before marriage. They're now in marriage!

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Or they're headed into marriage.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** If that's you, you're part of that statistic, whether you thought against or for—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Cohabitation at that point. So, the question that it bears for me is what assumptions is that generation, or that group people— and this is not just isolated to 2016. Right? There's a whole range.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's the last 30 years! So, people are married that have thought this.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** And so, we're carrying those assumptions and all the baggage that flies on the curtails of those assumptions—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** *Into* our marriage covenant. And it's *affecting* our marriage.

**Selena:** Right, right!

**Ryan:** In very negative ways.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** So, the goal with this episode is to bring to light that marriage is so much *more* than just what you said earlier is just the next step!

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Just the next thing to do in my life progression, because I'm mid- to late 20-year-old person.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And I'm dating someone else.

**Selena:** And I've been with this person for a while.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** I guess it's the right thing! I mean, we get along pretty well, so that's good!  
[Laughs]

[00:15:00] **Ryan:** Yeah! So, the big question we're asking with that goal in mind is... how is my view of marriage inhibiting my belief about truth and or the Bible, or how is it view inhibiting how I believe my marriage should work, should function?

**Selena:** Yeah, yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay. So, "Oops! We're married!" [*Selena chuckles*] You're in this. You're realizing there's something... about this that you maybe didn't realize before.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** You're thinking, "Oh. I'm in over my head! These vows really should mean something, but they—"

**Selena:** Which I think we should just pause there for a moment and encourage a listener who may be having [*Both chuckle*] these feelings that they're not alone.

**Ryan:** Okay, okay, okay. Yes!

**Selena:** That they're very normal, I think, to start living life alongside someone.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** Or to be living alongside someone, and then reconnecting and then going through some deeper trials. Right? So, again, we're not trying to limit this to just being newly married.

**Ryan:** Hm.

**Selena:** But I mean, I think you and I have walked through things where we've been like, "Oh! Whoops. We're supposed to *talk* to each other about these things," or, "We're supposed to pray together about these things," or, you know?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And I think that it happens— I mean, I think the layers just kind of get pulled back at different seasons, different times and different things that you experience. So, all that to say, rest assured, friend. You're not alone. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Yeah. And here's a big...

**Selena:** And God's word is big and covers this all.

**Ryan:** Here's a big whammy to that one, is that... growing up, my dad was very principled. He still is. But one of the big things that he *seared* into my young soul [*Selena giggles*] was marriage is for life.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** He said once you marry a girl, that's for life. Okay! When we got married, it was like total, complete cut of the umbilical cord!

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It was like you're off, you're on your own. My parents, they weren't *extremely* wealthy, but they were, I'd say, upper-middle class. Right? So, they had resources. Well, that was not accessible to us! [*Both laugh*] And so, I remember I was a dishwasher. I was a janitor.

**Selena:** Until you got your good job of being a janitor.

**Ryan:** [*Snickering*] Yeah. Now I got the good job. [*Both laugh*] It's true though!

**Selena:** Got a place to live! [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** I was a janitor. We went to college full-time.

**Selena:** [*Chuckling*] Yeah.

**Ryan:** And so, all that to say is just to illustrate he meant what he said, and he said what he meant. *And* okay, so that's why I say it's a whammy, is because [*Selena chuckles briefly*], *still*, even with that ingrained and seared into my soul, there's still been those times when I'm like, "Oh my word. This is too hard! Will we survive this?" Granted, I feel like we've probably had *less* of that than we would have had otherwise.

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

**Ryan:** But still, just to illustrate your point, is that you're totally normal in having those thoughts and feelings.

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** I think were you're *not* normal is, if you're listening to this, is you are Christian! Ideally, you've professed faith in Christ. You are *filled* with the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is working in you to *fight* your flesh.

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** Okay. So—

**Selena:** Which could look like fighting for your marriage.

**Ryan:** Which, *absolutely* looks like fighting—

**Selena:** And not fighting against—

**Ryan:** Yes!

**Selena:** And saying, "You know what? I don't think this is going to work."

**Ryan:** Yes, yes.

**Selena:** And where does that come from?

**Ryan:** So, you might be feeling those feelings, but we're here to tell you that you don't have to act on them.

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** That you can respond and walk in the spirit and not according to the flesh. That you have been given a helper!

**Selena:** Yep!

**Ryan:** His name is the Holy Spirit.

**Selena:** Well, and exercising the fruits of the spirit of self-control is saying...

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** No to one thing, but it's walking in the spirit, essentially, right?

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Saying yes to—

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** To God's way, God's purpose for marriage.

**Ryan:** Yeah! So, given all that. Okay. So, we're 18 minutes into this thing. [*Ryan inhales and Selena chuckles*] Given all of that, there are some misconceptions that we believe that kind of are the outworking of this big underlying “Oops” in our lives. [*Both laugh*] Okay. So, the first misconception, and we talked about earlier, is this—

**Selena:** Is marriage is not an, “Oops,” first of all! [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** Is that this, kind of this, idea that, “I hope it works out—”

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Or, as opposed to, “This is until *death*.”

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay?

**Selena:** Yeah.

- Ryan:** So again, “I’m really believing this is going to work out! I love this girl. We're engaged.” I'm picturing a young groom the night before his wedding like, “I *really* believe our love is going to last.”
- Selena:** Just the fact of this is going to work and it's going to last. Like, work and last, those kind of... [Ryan laughs] words just trigger. I'm like, “Oh, no!” [Selena laughs]
- Ryan:** Right! This is going to work out, as if—
- Selena:** You’re on the wrong foundation!
- Ryan:** As if *this* is something other than you and your wife—
- Selena:** Right! This is—
- Ryan:** Figuring it out! [Laughs]
- Selena:** This is the wrong foundation. We are already starting wrong! [Laughs]
- Ryan:** It's like you're not betting on a sports team here.
- Selena:** Yeah, yes!
- Ryan:** Or you're not doing a science experiment, right? [Selena exhales] You're *choosing*—
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** To *enter* into a covenant with another human being!
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** That has to also *choose* to enter in and uphold that same covenant alongside you.
- Selena:** Whew!
- Ryan:** And so, I think the misconception—
- Selena:** It’s a big deal!
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** My stomach's still [Ryan laughs] kind of like, I'm like, “Whoa! That's right!”
- Ryan:** [Laughing] Yeah!



**Selena:** “Whoops! We’re married!”

**Ryan:** You're still good, right? [*Selena laughs*] You’re still upholding that? Just double-checking here! [*Selena cackles as Ryan snickers*] “Ehh. Getting a little warm!” [*Both laugh*] So, but that's the misconception, is that, “Oh, I hope it works out,” as if it's somehow... outside of my control.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And I think the second misconception that that one kind of springs out of is the idea that there is “the one.”

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Right? There is the one and—

**Selena:** That kind of soulmate, like, “I've got...”

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

**Selena:** It's, “You're the one!” And then we get in and we're like...

**Ryan:** “Oop! Not the one!” [*Both laugh*]

**Selena:** [*Laughing*] “Maybe you're *not* the one!” [*Ryan laughs louder*] This is really hard with you! This is not—

**Ryan:** Right!

**Selena:** As easy as I thought. This is not making me as happy as I thought.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** And...

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** You don't want sex as much as I want it.

**Ryan:** That's one— Yeah. And so... [*Ryan laughs*] Sorry! You just derailed me [*Selena cackles*] with that last one there. But that’s one of the ways it works out. It's you're not the one, and we somehow missed it! And so, it's not going to work out. Right? [*Selena snickers*] Or we're not compatible...

**Selena:** Mmm!

**Ryan:** Is a big one we hear.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** Is, "Well, I just got into the marriage, and he changed!"

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Or, "She changed."

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And... that's true! I think people do change. But, you know, in small ways. But I think in big ways, people don't really change.

**Selena:** Right... And we're—

**Ryan:** I think you might see *more* of who they really were.

**Selena:** Right. And we want to be careful. Of course, there's caveats to this, as—

**Ryan:** Always, always.

**Selena:** You know, abusive relationships. And we're not saying, "Okay, go ahead and get a divorce because you're in an abusive relationship." No! There are counselors, there are pastors, there are people that you need to walk through something like this with, and not listen to a podcast and say, "Yep! Okay. They're saying what I want to hear, and let's go do this."

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

**Selena:** So, make sure you're *dealing* with stuff in real time with *real* people. I think that would be my encouragement here. And to not feel like, "Why are they saying I need to stay in this, and I feel like I'm scared for my life," or something. Or there's just...

**Ryan:** Yeah! There's—

**Selena:** There's a lot you have to sort through there is what I'm saying.

**Ryan:** So, yeah. What I'm trying to dispel is not—

**Selena:** With real people.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So, the thought that I have missed the one, or maybe that we're incompatible.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** What that does... is it shifts the blame. Okay.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It doesn't mean that you're always to blame, but it means that it shifts the responsibility, I should say.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** In that it's not my responsibility to outwork love. That's beyond me! Because love has passed me over.

**Selena:** Right, right!

**Ryan:** Because I've missed it because—

**Selena:** It says if love is something out of your control...

**Ryan:** Right. Or my husband has changed, or my wife has changed, and that's true... It's still up to you and your husband or your wife to work it out, to work out, with fear and trembling, to an extent your faith. And your faith in the sense that I believe that this is what love is.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** This is who we are called to be as a married couple.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** And with your caveats in mind, that's not to say that you enable...

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** Abuse!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** That's not what we're trying to say.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** But it also is not to say, okay, and this, I know it's going to ruffle some feathers, but it's not to say that an abusive marriage is *automatically*, like, go get a divorce. I don't want to put that out there.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I want to say... there are caveats within scripture, but that is not something that we just want to broadcast through a podcast. [Chuckles]

**Selena:** So good!

**Ryan:** We want you to talk to a pastor. We want to talk to a counselor. There are ways to go about working through abusive situa—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And we've *seen* abusive marriages turn into a *beautiful* picture of Christ-like love.

**Selena:** Right, right, right.

**Ryan:** And but the—

**Selena:** *Real* people, real time.

**Ryan:** There just can't be any blanket statements here is what I'm trying to say.

**Selena:** Yes, yes. You got to—

**Ryan:** You need pastoral care! [*Light chuckle*]

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** You need spiritual care, and it does not come through the Fierce Marriage Podcast. [*Chuckles*]

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

**Ryan:** Okay? We're here to encourage and exhort and *remind*—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** You of the gospel as it applies to your marriage. Anyway. So, those are all big caveats. I just don't want to gloss over—

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Anyone's situation, 'cause it's really easy to do that. So, I thank you for bringing that up.

**Selena:** You're welcome.

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] So... [*Exhales*]

**Selena:** So, that first misconception about how I hope it works out as opposed to this is until death do us part—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** That was... where we were.

**Ryan:** Yep! And the—

**Selena:** Chattin'!

**Ryan:** And then second one is there is the one and I haven't found them. *[Both laugh]*  
That's another misconception! Okay. And we're here to say that the one that you're married to is the one God has called you to be married to.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** All that depends, in large part, on your view of God's sovereignty and His power, as well as... Okay, not to get *too* philosophical, theological, freewill!  
*[Snickers]*

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** So, how do you view freewill, God's sovereignty, God's power? We are in the camp that says that God is sovereign over everything.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** And really, anything we do is by His grace and it's all a gift, that it's all undeserved! And it's by His grace that we've experienced that.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** He's graciously allowed us to participate. I think there's somewhere in between—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Where we are allowed to... exercise will—

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** In a way within God's decree and His sovereignty. We're not going to get into that any further, but the idea that you've missed the one? Let me just dispel that! That's not the case.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Okay. Whoever you're married to, that's who you are called to.

**Selena:** They are the one! *[Snickers]*

**Ryan:** That's— Yeah.

**Selena:** And they always will be!

**Ryan:** Not that you couldn't have married someone else in a *theoretical* alternate reality! That's not the reali—

**Selena:** It's called fantasizing, people!

**Ryan:** That's called fantasy! [*Both laugh*] Okay, okay! Let's get back down to earth here. [*Selena chuckles*] The third one, the third misconception, is that, and this is a big one! It's probably the biggest of them all! [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** Well, I think it's the one that most people... see and are vocal about.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** In terms of problems—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And conflicts they deal with.

[00:25:00] **Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Is...

**Ryan:** And the third misconception is this, marriage or love is all about me!

**Selena:** Right. We don't say that! Some people do—

**Ryan:** We don't—

**Selena:** Some people do! You say that. [*Ryan laughs*] Too much.

**Ryan:** Do I say that?

**Selena:** No! [*Chuckles*] I'm kidding!

**Ryan:** I don't say that. Sorry!

**Selena:** But we function like that, thinking that it's really not about us. But if you boil down some decisions about how you're going to communicate or how you're going to... sex. I mean, just take sex, for example. Right? It can *easily* fall into the camp of, "It's all about me. And love is all about me. And so, if it's all about me, it's all about how I feel and how you make me happy and how—"

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** “You're supposed to do all these things and you're not! So, therefore, I now have a ticket to...”

**Ryan:** Right!

**Selena:** “To maybe wander off or get out of this thing.”

**Ryan:** Or at a very minimum, just be very miserable and make you miserable alongside me.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right. This attitude... when it's pervasive, it basically, it means that your spouse is a means to your end.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** They are not the end in themselves.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** You are a means to my happiness. As soon as you *cease* being a means to my happiness—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Then you cease being my spouse.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right? In the way that I think you should be.

**Selena:** Right. And this is where the issues of understanding covenant and contractual love, right?

**Ryan:** Covenant versus contractual love.

**Selena:** I'm sorry! Yep! There's the words. *[Laughs]*

**Ryan:** Yeah. Yeah! And we'll get into it— So, don't fret, listener. We're going to talk about the big purposes of marriage. There's three of them that we've identified. But that part will come out of our book—

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Entitled Fierce Marriage. So, there's a lot of research that went into those. It's not just something we threw together for this podcast. But we've found them to be, I think, really effective in dispelling these misconceptions.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** So, yeah! Like I said, the third one, marriage or love is all about me. That is not the case. Marriage is about something so much bigger than you. It's even bigger than your marriage itself.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Your marriage is designed by God for His purposes, for His glory! And there is so much peace in that! When you can sit in your marriage and say, "It's not about us!" So, we can be unhappy, and you know that we can *trust* that God's purposes remain!

**Selena:** Well, and if you look at the example, or in the gospel, we're going through Philippians, right, at church?

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** And you were there last week! I wasn't there. And you said that—

**Ryan:** You were sick!

**Selena:** There were times—[*Giggles*] Yes.

**Ryan:** Yep. Just to be clear! [*Laughs*]

**Selena:** They were talking about to live is Christ and to die is gain. And I think that the calling of the gospel, one of the big things, is we're constantly dying to ourselves! Right? We're dying to our flesh.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And we're dying to our desires that might be birthed from our flesh!

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** As selfish desires, things that are self-serving and not saying that you can't have some "me time." That's not what we're saying. It's saying all of these things should work *unto* me and make *me* happy when...

**Ryan:** Mm...

**Selena:** The Holy Spirit and the calling of, I feel like, the work of the Holy Spirit is producing patience and kindness and to think of others, right? And we talked about this last week, about *knowing* what's going on with others. It's like don't be concerned. What is the verse? I can't think of it. Don't be concerned with only your needs, but also the needs of others.



- Ryan:** Mm!
- Selena:** And so, there's, again, we're seeing there's a constant theme in the Bible of just dying to yourself, dying to—
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** All of my desires, all of the things I want. And you see that, and a marriage is just another, I think, table that we die on. Right? *[Laughs]* And just as parenting is too!
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** There's this constant, "I want to respond this way to you out of my flesh because I feel these things," and the Holy Spirit saying, "No. I am calling you to respond *this* way. Not the way you feel, maybe, but the way that I'm instructing."
- Ryan:** Mm-hm!
- Selena:** And you're like, "But that doesn't make sense! He doesn't deserve me to respond that way." "Well..." *[Ryan chuckles]*, "I'm still calling you to it." And there's things at work that—
- Ryan:** Did Christ deserve to die? *[Laughs]*
- Selena:** Right! I mean...
- Ryan:** For us? I mean, if we're called the love as Christ loved the church, and that's exactly how we are called in marriage to love.
- Selena:** And love is— Yeah!
- Ryan:** Husbands are called to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her!
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** Yeah. *[Laughs]*
- Selena:** No. Are you listening? *[Ryan laughs and Selena chuckles briefly]*
- Ryan:** I'm listening to myself. But you bring up a really poignant and relevant example in Philippians, 'cause it says, in Philippians 2 it says, "So if there's any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of one mind, having the same love," okay, "Being full accord of all one mind." He's talking to a church. He's not talking to a married couple.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Okay. Let's just be honest. *[Laughs]*

**Selena:** Got to put context here. Yeah.

**Ryan:** But He says, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus." So, I mean, Kyle did an excellent job of preaching on this—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

[00:30:00] **Ryan:** This last weekend. But the idea that knowing who Christ is leads us to humility, which leads us to unity.

**Selena:** Mmm. Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And it's so, ironic, right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's so ironic that Philippians 4:13 is the verse of that is so often proof-texted as a way of self-aggrandization, right? And what is it? Philippians 4:13—

**Selena:** "I can do all—"

**Ryan:** Is "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." That passage is not about triumph!

**Selena:** Right. Paul's sitting in prison.

**Ryan:** It's about survival!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** It's about sitting in prison and saying despite all of this...

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I can still obey.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** I can still be a servant of God.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I can still be used for His glory. And I can *endure* all these things...

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Through Christ, who gives me strength. So, it's not a triumphant...

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Verse!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's something— So, it's so ironic that we use that verse oftentimes in Christian mainstream culture, that people get it tattooed on their arm saying, “I can do all things! It's all about me. It's all about my ambitions, my goals, and God is right there alongside me. He's my cheerleader.” That's not what that verse is saying, and that's not what marriage is!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** So, a lot of times you get into a marriage saying, “It's about me. It's all about *my* marriage being great because I want a great marriage,” and just like this verse gets taken out of context, we forget that marriage is not about you! It's about something so much *bigger* than you.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** It's about more than your immediate happiness, enjoyment. That is part of it.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But it's about—

**Selena:** But the greater purpose is so eternal. Right?

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** It's for our sanctification. It's to reflect and give Him glory in our continual dying to ourselves.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** It's this arena, again. We call a covenant kind of like an arena of... neither of us is leaving here! We're going to duke it out and figure it out until we get to the truth that we need to find—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** In the word. And until we can create—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** And figure out the peace that we need to have, and that *always* requires us, one of us or both of us, usually you.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Being humble [*Ryan snickers*] and... [*Selena laughs*]

**Ryan:** You just keep talking. Everyone knows what the answer really is.

**Selena:** No. And then I was reading today about peace and how [*Exhales*] my brain, my brain is so fried!

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** But about peace and how through the blood of Christ, He made peace, right, with us and God.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And how peace requires, I felt like what I was reading was like, peace requires sacrifice. The peace of Christ—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** That He leaves with us did not come for free like that. It came at a price. And so, if we want things like peace in our marriage, and we want things like unity in our marriage...

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** It's going to require humility. It's going to require probably some death of pride. It's going to require death—

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** To our own desires of what I want my schedule to look like and the things that I want to do.

**Ryan:** In other words, you're saying it's going to cost us something... [*Chuckles*]

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** It's going to be bought with a price!

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** And it's not going to be cheap and it's not going to come quick.

**Selena:** But it's going to be so good!

**Ryan:** But it's going to be *so good!*

**Selena:** And everything that we want and more deep down, like this—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** We want *peace*, but we need peace of Christ. We want things that we see, but Jesus is like—

**Ryan:** [*Quietly*] Mm-hm.

**Selena:** “I know this is what you want, but *what* I have is *so* much better!”

**Ryan:** So, just to add a little bit more texture and perspective to this, we haven't been married forever, but we have been married over 16 years, and we did date four years before that. So, we've seen—

**Selena:** Sooo... [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** I'm saying that from this—

**Selena:** [*Laughing*] No. I know!

**Ryan:** Vantage point, we've seen how this has worked itself out...

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** When we kind of stuck to our guns.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Not that we have done it perfectly. But I can see kind of with a hindsight saying, “This is true, guys!”

**Selena:** Well, we've done it both ways, I think! We've—

**Ryan:** We've done it both ways! [*Quickly chuckles*]

**Selena:** We've tried it our own way—

**Ryan:** It's true both ways, yeah.

**Selena:** And then we've tried God's way! [*Laughs*] God's way's always better!

**Ryan:** And it's born such a beautiful, delicious fruit. [*Laughs*]

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** [*Both laughing*] If I could use that analogy, it's—

**Selena:** Well, and then in coming around to some of it, usually the fruit becomes— it starts... *producing* because—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** We've decided to step out in faith in the way that God is asking us and not in the way we *feel*, or even things that we might see in front of us!

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** But we say, "This is what God's word is saying. This is where I feel like the Holy Spirit is affirming us. We need to step out there." And God is like, "Yes! I will make the path to rise to your feet."

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** And He is there producing more fruit, which then you just get deeper and the good things of God just become richer and more...

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Alive in your life and your marriage, I guess! Is that—?

**Ryan:** Yes! So, I'm sure that—

**Selena:** Clear? [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** I think, yeah! And I know, even though I said looking back, I can also say looking forward—

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** That we can trust that truth.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** And *hopefully*, when it gets hard again, 'cause we, ladies and gentlemen, we're not perfect! [*Selena laughs*] We have fights!

**Selena:** There are cycles.

**Ryan:** And they're shouting fights, and we say things we shouldn't say.

**Selena:** And there are tears! Christmas Eve, my friends! Christmas Eve. [*Ryan snickers*]

**Ryan:** Yeah. Go ahead and have a huge marital fight on Christmas Eve.

**Selena:** I was crying... *I was crying!* [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** And then come talk to us. [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** And then you have to go to a family thing. It's all good!

**Ryan:** Yeah, it's all good! [*Selena laughs*] Yeah. Well, here we are! We're still recording the podcast. [*Selena snickers*]

**Selena:** I love you!

**Ryan:** But when that happens again, then I like to think and I hope by God's grace, we will cling to this truth even then!

[00:35:04] **Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And see the fruit born even after then.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** So, the fourth one, this is a bit of a tangent, but I feel like it's important enough to mention: misconceptions, again.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Misconceptions about marriage, and I'll say *modern* misconceptions about marriage, and this is the fourth one is that there's *marriage*, and then there's sex.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And what I mean by that is we have, as a culture, we've *separated*—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** The two. They're independent! They co-exist, but only by coincidence.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And that, emphatically, is not the model for intimacy, the model for sex, the model for procreation, that we see in God's word! And so... I think we can carry in those assumptions, that marriage is separate from sex, into our marriage

and it has vast implications, meaning that they're not somehow co-linked in a way that they need to grow together, but if we get married and our marriage is young and our marriage is immature, but if our sex life in any way reflects that, then I'm going to be discontent in that.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And that if we see sex as a means to closer intimacy with this person you're in covenantal bond with...

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Ideally, not statistically, but ideally you would wait until you get married. Most couples don't! That's just the statistics. But when you, basically, you consummate your marriage on your wedding night, that's your first time together! And now you have your whole lives to figure this thing out. [*Inhales*] And it can be a beautiful thing! But unfortunately, when we separate, when we *remove*—

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** The connection between marriage and sex, it can *skew* our view, and then it can overemphasize that sex, the latter, over the former.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** We can say, "This part of my life, even though it's a small sliver of our existence as a married couple—"

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** "If it's not right, then our whole marriage is wrong." And... that's an overblown view.

**Selena:** Well, there's a reason *why* God— Yeah! There's a reason why God created sex for the marriage bed, right? And I think— And that was like the second thing your dad told you, right? He was like, "Marriage is for life and sex is for marriage. And if you don't—" [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** "Keep those two, then..." Yeah.

**Ryan:** He was very, very—

**Selena:** "You're dead to me." Not really. [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** He's *very*, very clear with his language. [*Chuckles*]



**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** And a lot of threatening that went along with that. But it was what my young adolescent ears needed to hear.

**Selena:** Yes, yes.

**Ryan:** But basically, if we deny the truth that sex and marriage are intricately and intrinsically intertwined, then we basically risk losing all of the—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** The perspective around these big touchy topics.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay. So, if you're not experiencing sex as you'd *hoped* within marriage, okay, this is hope for you!

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** Trust that! Okay. And here's a little rebuke. Trust that marriage is the place to figure out how to either, A, be less selfish.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** B, this is going to apply to anything, by the way.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** B, serve each other well or better, or C, recalibrate your expectation of what that thing, sex, can, should, or was designed to be! So, if something in your marriage— And this applies, again, to everything, if something in your marriage doesn't feel right, see your marriage as the place where that's worked out!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Instead of a place for you to g— You don't go outside... to try and figure that out. You stay!

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** And you let the covenant do what the covenant was designed to do, and that's to disciple your heart alongside your spouse.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And to sanctify you. So, I just want to revisit. So, we're going to dive into the three purposes of marriage now, in light of all these misconceptions. Before I do that, I'll recap here. So, misconceptions about marriage: 1. I hope it works out, and that attitude that you hope it works out without understanding covenant. 2 is that there is the one and you have missed him or her. 3, a marriage and love is all about me! Fourth, again, a little tangent, but there is marriage and then there's sex. In other words, separating the two and not recognizing the intrinsic intertwining of marriage and sex according to God's word, according to human flourishing. So, now we're going to go into the three purposes of marriage. And when we started this episode, we read from Genesis 1, verses 26 through 28. But Selena, if you could, let's just reread verse 28 here again. This is the, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and it goes on and on, and then read the last verse there.

**Selena:** It says, "And God bless them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Yeah! So, when we were going through this, we're thinking, okay, so this is immediately after God had... created them.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Right? And He had blessed them, and He said to them and He *commissioned* them. Right? [*Selena breathes a chuckle*] And He's basically saying, "Go. Okay, now you exist! Go and do these things! You exist as people, but also as a married couple." This is their first command, and it parallels the second chapter of Genesis. It's the first command as a couple. [*Baby Louisa begins whining in the background*] And He's saying to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it." Speaking of being fruitful, there's Louisa right there. [*Chuckles*] There's our little—[*Chuckling*]

[00:40:01] **Selena:** [*Comments while in the background tending to Louisa*] Our little fruit!

**Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Our little fruit! And so, you act quickly! If you want to really see the full unpacking of this verse, definitely check out *Fierce Marriage*, the book, on Amazon or wherever you buy books. But basically, I'm just going to go through these quickly, 'cause I don't want to— I think we've talked about this in a past episode too, but the first purpose of the marriage covenant that we see as God is commissioning Adam and Eve in the garden is to go be fruitful and multiply. So, in other words, there's three H's here. So, there's the holiness, there's your household, and then there's God's handiwork. All right? Your holiness, your household, and God's handiwork. So, when we read that verse and it says be *fruitful*, I just think fruit has a— I don't think it, but I know fruit has a very overt meaning when you see it read in scripture. Now, granted, there is some good pushback that that can be had on this. We don't want to read it in a way that the early Israelites wouldn't have read it or understood it. So, as I kind of put— I don't want to superimpose New Testament words on top of this. Right?

Because I just don't want to do that. However, I do think that's a faithful reading of it to kind of apply and look at how the New Testament words hover over this and kind of give us a little bit more texture on it. And I hope that doesn't sound too foofy or flaky.

**Selena:** [*Quietly*] Sounds good.

**Ryan:** But being fruitful in this context is important!

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** In the garden—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It was perfect! Everything— Picture it. I mean, there's flute music playing in the background. [*Both chuckle*] There's butterflies flying around! There's pollen floating, and the sunbeams [*Selena laughs*] are illumi— I'm picturing like a fairy tale.

**Selena:** A utopia, yeah.

**Ryan:** A utopia! But it's totally perfect, and it's totally as things were created to be. And here God is giving them this command, "Be fruitful."

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Okay. So, you think about a tree. What does a tree exist to do? Bear fruit. What does a vegetable plant exist to do? Bear fruit. A berry bush to bear fruit in the form of berries; not technically fruit. Or it is fruit, but it's not—

**Selena:** Well, some veggies. [*They say in unison*] Yeah. [*Resume speaking solo*]

**Ryan:** But so, yeah. In other words, God is saying to them, do what you were designed to do.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Go forth. It's a pre-fall world. You as a human being, He's saying He created man in His own image. In the image of God, He created him, male and female, He created them. He's saying, "Go! Do the thing that I designed you to do—"

**Selena:** Hm...

**Ryan:** "To bare my image!"

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** “To bear *fruit* in a way that is reflecting My image.”

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** So, as we think about that in a context and in the marriage covenant, we think about holiness! Okay, where else do we see fruit in the Bible? Yeah, and I don't want to read into this, but I think it's interesting. Okay?

**Selena:** Mm! This theme of fruit.

**Ryan:** In Galatians 5.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** The Fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, in contrast to the fruits of living by the flesh! So, the flesh-spirit divide occurred at the fall!

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And so, when they're called to bear fruit, we're being called to bear fruit of God's image or bearing His image and His likeness. I think it's safe to say that His likeness looks like fruits of the Holy Spirit, who is God Himself! So! [*Laughs*]

**Selena:** Right, right!

**Ryan:** I think that's a safe parallel to make.

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** And so, when we talk about the big purposes of covenant and what He means, or perhaps one meaning of that, the word, “Be fruitful,” is to be made more holy. And that happens specifically through discipleship in the household.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Sharpening each other. Sanctifying each other. Being honest and transparent about our sins and our shortcomings and our shame and our— every part of us that is infected by sin!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** With the goal of it being kind of sanctified...

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** In and out of us.

- Selena:** So, the whole, “Whoops! I’m married!” shouldn’t— I mean, it’s okay to have those moments, but I think in those moments we need to realize this is where God wants to produce fruit in us. These are the moments that God wants to multiply—
- Ryan:** Mm-hm! Yeah!
- Selena:** His goodness through us. This is where He’s teaching us how to be missional, right?
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** And how to subdue the earth. And within our own marriage, our own relationship of—
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** I can’t love you better or deeper. [*Chuckling*] Deeper. [*Both chuckle*] Unless God is at work in my heart, showing me how I’m *not* doing those things, you know?
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** And showing me the better way of sacrificing, again, my desires. Sacrificing the words I *want* to say to you—
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Because I feel these things so strongly. But laying them down on the altar of humility, and saying, “Okay. This is not going to be *fruitful!*”
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** “This is not going to bear the fruit that God is calling me to bear in our marriage. So, I’m going to lay that down.”
- Ryan:** That’s good!
- Selena:** “And I’m going to come back.” [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** So, what you’re saying is these, “Whoops!” moments are kind of—They’re—
- Selena:** Should be reminders of the purposes of marriage.
- Ryan:** They’re red flags. Yeah!
- Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Yeah, I like that better! [*Selena laughs*] They're reminders to look to these purposes.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** That's so good! So... amazing. So, the second reminder. So, read the passage again. He says, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it." So, multiply and fill the earth. Okay. That's the second H, your household! Multiply. Very, very *tangibly* speaking. That's... Family and marriage is the context that God designed for kids to be brought forth, right?

[00:45:18] **Selena:** Mm. Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** With a male influence, a female influence, and a solid covenantal base to rear and raise that child in the ways of God.

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** Okay. So, that is if you have that big purpose in mind, when you have those, "Whoops!" moments, you realize this is bigger than me.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It's about my own holiness for God's glory, not just for me, my glory, but for God's glory, *and* the *household* that He's given me to love those He's entrusted into my care.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Well!

**Selena:** And to remember that each of them are made in *His* image, right? We're all image bearers.

**Ryan:** They're little image bearers. Yeah.

**Selena:** And that should dictate how we treat one another.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** And how we respond to one another.

**Ryan:** But even beyond that, you can look here and now, but you can also look into the future in a generational flourishing. Right? You see—

**Selena:** [*Comments from the background*] Yeah.

**Ryan:** There's generational implications all throughout scripture, in particular through the Old Testament because it was the Israelite nation was formed through family, *formed* through—

**Selena:** Mm...

**Ryan:** Generational covenants. Right? Generational promises.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And so, to see family as a chief venue through which God works in the lives of young people—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And specifically, through His church in light of the New Testament... That's pretty phenomenal! Right?

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** And we think, okay, so, first big purpose of marriage is holiness. The second big purpose is household. And the third one is handiwork. So, the final part of that passage is... be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth. So, subdue the earth.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And have dominion. That's very *missional* language.

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** And what I mean by missional is not missional in the sense you're a missionary! [*Ryan laughs and Selena giggles*] But in the sense that you were on a mission.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** He had given them a mission. He said, "Now you're being fruitful! You're as you were created to be. You're multiplying."

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** You're going to grow in numbers. Now, on that foundation, go and do the things I've told you to do! *Be* who I've called you to be. Go about it the way I've called you to go about it. But *do* the things I've also called you to do!

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Do the mission!

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** So, what does that look like for us as New Testament Christian, “true Christians.” People, followers of Christ—

**Selena:** Hm!

**Ryan:** Who have seen the Messiah come, and we’ll see Him come again at some point. That looks like... responding to the mission of Jesus!

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Right? So, the missional work that happens within and without a marriage. In other words, we’re discipling each other. What’s Jesus’—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** What’s the great commission? Go forth, make disciples to the ends of the earth, basically.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Baptizing them in the name of the—

**Selena:** In the name of the—Yeah.

**Ryan:** Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. [*Inhales*] So, making disciples. Starting—And we always like to say it starts basically whoever’s in closest proximity and radiates outward. So, it’s your spouse, your kids, and then... whoever’s in close proximity, whether that’s geographically, being your neighbors.

**Selena:** Hm.

**Ryan:** Or just relationally, or in terms of how you spend your life, right? At your church community, hobby’s, people you share your life with, you start discipling and sharing the gospel with those people.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Okay. So! That’s a lot! That’s a lot!

**Selena:** That’s a lot!

**Ryan:** So, the three purposes recap is your holiness, your household and God’s handiwork. And those are, again, in direct contrast to the four kind of modern misconceptions about marriage.



**Selena:** Right, right.

**Ryan:** Anyway! Our hope through this is that we've kind of enlivened your heart to the truths of the depth of the purpose that God has for your marriage. It's not about you, and that's a beautiful thing!

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It's not about your happiness, and that's a beautiful thing! And so, with that in mind, I think we have some good Couples' Conversation Challenge questions for you.

**Selena:** Yeah, yeah. I think the first one is, "Do you believe that God's design for covenantal marriage is the best route for human flourishing?"

**Ryan:** That's a good question!

**Selena:** It's something you should talk about with your spouse! Are we on the same page? You know you always hear us talking about beliefs and understanding covenant. Look up those words! Talk about them. Define them.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** Find out what they mean and how it all applies to your marriage.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** Or how your marriage should work within those, I guess.

**Ryan:** So, and as a follow up, I want to restate that question that you just said. And it's, "Do you believe that God's design for covenantal marriage is the best route for human flourishing?" The follow-up questions to that is, given the three purposes we've talked about, is there a particular purpose that you struggle with?

**Selena:** Hmm...

**Ryan:** Okay. So, if you really struggle with understanding that marriage is about your holiness, or understanding that it's about your family and household, or is about God's handiwork, and why do you struggle with understanding that? Meaning that maybe you don't—

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Know what your mission is as a family.

**Selena:** Hm!

**Ryan:** Maybe you don't *know* what a healthy household looks like, or what healthy generations could look like. Why is that a struggling point for you? And talk through that, and just see where the conversation goes.

[00:50:05] **Selena:** Mmm!

**Ryan:** Just be honest. Anyway! I think that's an episode!

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** I want to make one more plug. So, if you're interested in being part of the book launch for See Through Marriage, which again, it's all about transparency, please do go to SeeThroughBook.com. You are wanted and needed there! Just enter in your email and your name, and then we'll be in touch in the next month or so about how to go about fulfilling your launch team responsibilities. [*Selena giggles*] And then other than that, I think maybe let's pray. Yeah! You want to pray, or should I pray?

**Selena:** I'll pray.

**Ryan:** Okay!

**Selena:** You were talking.

**Ryan:** I was, 'cause you were helping the baby a lot.

**Selena:** It's good!

**Ryan:** Which—

**Selena:** Where it's a team effort!

**Ryan:** Hats off to you, Selena! 'Cause...

**Selena:** It's a team effort.

**Ryan:** Maybe our listeners know, maybe they don't, but Selena's constantly managing the baby in the background. [*Both laugh*] In nursing and picking her up off the couch, and [*Selena laughs*] ... putting her down on the couch [*Both laugh*] while we're recording and managing. So, thank you for doing that!

**Selena:** We're getting there!

**Ryan:** You're awesome!

**Selena:** We're getting there! We're working on stuff, so... All right. God, thank you so much for... helping us, for giving us purpose! God, you didn't have to, but you brought us together with our spouse. And I pray that no man would separate

us, God. And I pray that Your purposes would reign true in our hearts, that we would... be adventurous in seeking out what it means to be holy, what it means to have a household that multiplies the things of you, God. And what it means to subdue the earth, to live on mission that You've given us. God, help us to know these things inside and out! Help us to teach them to our children. Thank you for the marriages that are asking questions right now, that may be believing some lies and some things that they thought were true about marriage, that You're dispelling those, but not just to break it down, but to renew and restore.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** We love you, God! Thank You for Your word. In Your name, Amen.

**Ryan:** All right! Man. Selena, you are great! I love you! Good prayer! [*Selena giggles*]  
Good prayer!

**Selena:** Check!

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

**Selena:** In the can.

**Ryan:** And once again, we'll see you in about seven days on the Fierce Marriage Podcast. Maybe sooner if we're able to answer a question, but given the baby...

**Selena:** You're very ambitious.

**Ryan:** The baby things going on this week, *probably* not.

**Selena:** Very ambitious.

**Ryan:** We'll see. [*Selena laughs*] It's just having three kids is— We're learning. We're learning how that all works.

**Selena:** It's big thing!

**Ryan:** So...

**Selena:** It's lots— Blessings are work, friends. And it's good work!

**Ryan:** All right.

**Selena:** It's eternal work.

**Ryan:** So, with that said, might be seven days, might be sooner. We'll see you when we see ya! [*Selena laughs*] And thank you so much for tuning in! Until next time!

**Selena:** Stay fierce!

[00:52:35] <Ending Sequence>

[00:52:53] *Podcast ends.*

## PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:00:00]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Genesis 1:26-28, added emphasis, *ESV*
- **[00:10:02]**
  - Barna Study: Majority of Americans Now Believe in Cohabitation
    - <https://www.barna.com/research/majority-of-americans-now-believe-in-cohabitation/>
- **[00:25:00]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Philippians 2:1-2, paraphrase, *ESV*
    - Philippians 2:3-5, *ESV*
- **[00:30:00]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Philippians 4:13, *ESV*
- **[00:35:04]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Genesis 1:28, paraphrase, *ESV*
- **[00:50:05]**
  - See-Through Marriage launch team interest form:
    - <https://seethroughbook.com/>

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