

## TRUTH, LOVE, OR BOTH?

<https://fiercemarriage.com/truth-love-or-both>

- [00:00:00] **Ryan:** A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver, like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reprove to a listening ear.
- Selena:** Mmm...
- Ryan:** So, today we're talking about truth and love. [*Selena chuckles*] What it means to speak in love and with truth, or to speak truth in a loving way.
- Selena:** That's a hard thing!
- Ryan:** It's an *immensely* hard thing, especially in marriage, when you have typically the most casual of casual [*Selena laughs*] conversations. [*Ryan chuckles*] And if we're not careful, we can be very dismissive of one another and how we approach hard conversations.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** All right. So—
- Selena:** Well, usually when it's about each other, like if I have to talk to you about something about you, it's really hard to do sometimes 'cause our walls go up, insecurity sets in, and we get on the—
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Defense before two words are out of our spouse's mouth. Right? [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** Yeah, yeah. So, we're going to spend some time talking about that! We're going to look at Matthew 5! We're going to obviously look at this verse from Proverbs that we just read. It comes from Proverbs 25. And we're going to talk about what it means to be a *peacemaker* and not just a peacekeeper.
- Selena:** Mm!
- Ryan:** And how truth and love play into that. So, thank you for joining us today! And we will see the other side!
- [00:01:10] <Intro Sequence>
- [00:01:43] **Ryan:** Got to speak truth and love, people! [*Selena chuckles*] Truth and love. All right—
- Selena:** It's good times over here. [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** Good times over here. [*Exhales*]

**Selena:** Truth and love, speaking truth and love.

**Ryan:** [Chuckles] Yeah...

**Selena:** I feel like you like to speak a lot of truth, not in love, though. [Laughs]

**Ryan:** I—

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

**Ryan:** Okay... Okay. [Selena cackles] [Ryan inhales]

**Selena:** Maybe it's the other way around.

**Ryan:** One could say...

**Selena:** I really try to love you and speak truth. [Chuckles]

**Ryan:** One could say that—

**Selena:** Just doesn't work. [Laughs]

**Ryan:** The most loving thing you can say to someone is truth.

**Selena:** [Scoffs] One could say that. [Both laugh]

**Ryan:** So, I think it has to do with the *mode* of communication.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** All right. There's the... *things* you're actually saying with the substance of what you're saying, but then there's the *style* of it. [Chuckles]

**Selena:** And then there has to be the whole Proverbs side of the listening ear. Right? [Cackles]

**Ryan:** [Laughing] Yeah.

**Selena:** [Laughing] I think that's, probably the end of that verse, is where most of us struggle the most.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** Like, "Oh, yes! Yes. Wise words are like *gold* in a silver setting. Yes, yes, yes."

**Ryan:** You know, m—

**Selena:** "Listening ears!" What?! [Both laugh]

**Ryan:** Yeah. We asked—

**Selena:** Mine are plugged with... pride, I think. [*Chuckles*]

**Ryan:** Plugged with pride. [*Ryan snickers and Selena laughs*] That sounds like maybe a book idea!

**Selena:** You're welcome!

**Ryan:** A blog post.

**Selena:** It's kind of yucky. [*Both laugh*]

**Ryan:** [*Laughing*] "I'm all plugged up!"

**Selena:** [*Chuckling*] Just waxy! Waxy pride. [*Ryan snickers and Selena laughs*]

**Ryan:** So, actually I posed this question to our readers on Facebook and Instagram. If you follow us there, you probably saw this come through! If you're not following us on Facebook and Instagram and Twitter, find Fierce Marriage!

**Selena:** Hm!

**Ryan:** We do share content daily, almost daily, on Instagram anyway. But he asked this question: "What issues do you feel like cause the most kind of arguments in your marriage?"

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** And we asked fierce husbands on the Fierce Husbands group. We asked fierce wives in the Fierce Wives group. And across the board, it was communication!

**Selena:** [*Snickers*] Yeah.

**Ryan:** It was conveying ideas of substance with each other in a way that was actually beneficial and edifying and didn't create more problems a lot of times. [*Laughs*]

**Selena:** Yeah. 'Cause we're really good at [*Laughs*] having bad tones, having agendas—

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** Having underlying—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** Messages that we are like, "Why doesn't he get this?" [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Or we assume to the nth degree, and they say something...

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** And it triggers all these different... *assumptions* in our own hearts.

**Selena:** It's just hard talk! So, it's hard to talk.

**Ryan:** And we attribute those assumptions to each other. Anyway! It's a felt need.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** So, we're going to dive into that today, and hopefully *add* some biblical insight into our modern issue of communication.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Before we do that, I want to make sure and remind you guys, please do take a few seconds and rate and review this podcast. If you haven't done that yet, a rating just takes a few seconds. If you want to write a little review, *one* sentence will do. Just something so other listeners who are maybe on the fence can know what they're getting into or what they hope to gain by listening to the Fierce Marriage Podcast.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** That is the currency of the podcasting world! So, please do that. Secondly, if you have a question, you can ask that. Go to [fiercemarriage.com/podcast](http://fiercemarriage.com/podcast). There's a button there. There's also a phone number: 971-333-1120. Call or text that number with any questions. We tabulate those. We categorize those. And we keep them, and we try to answer them kind of systematically. So, please, if you don't hear your question answered right away, trust that we didn't miss it. We just have to find a time—

**Selena:** You say we; you're the one that does all the categorizing.

[00:05:01] **Ryan:** I do it all!

**Selena:** [*Giggles*] You do it all!

**Ryan:** I do everything!

**Selena:** Let's just— That's so generous of you to say that. But you really do all of that categorizing. [*Ryan snickers*] I categorize clothes and diapers and food. [*Both snickering*] All those kinds of things!

**Ryan:** Yes! Much harder task, I might add.

**Selena:** Yeah, right.

- Ryan:** Speaking of which, we actually do get help in that kind of stuff! We have Katie who helps us.
- Selena:** Oh, yeah!
- Ryan:** We have Kyla who helps us.
- Selena:** We're going to do a little intro at... some point.
- Ryan:** We have Kerry who helps us.
- Selena:** Yep!
- Ryan:** And *all* of those folks are possible because of our Patreons.
- Selena:** Yes!
- Ryan:** So, their the people that have locked arms with us, have said, "We are passionate about God's vision for marriage! And we want to see that made loud and clear in modern culture."
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And Fierce Marriage is the thing that God has impressed upon your heart to help. So, thank you, Patreons, for all of your amazing support and help! We also do have transcriptions because of that as well!
- Selena:** Hey-ohhh!
- Ryan:** And so, that is a huge blessing. So, if you want to be a part of that army, the small army that is being amassed on the internet, please do pray about that!
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And all we ask is that if you pray about it and God leads you, that you would be in agreement and you would join us. Go to [patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage). P-A-T-R-E-O-N.com/fiercemarriage. You get free books, all the good stuff! But do it because God is *leading* you! [*Inhales deeply*] Ah!
- Selena:** What was that Proverbs, real quick, that you read at the beginning?
- Ryan:** The Proverbs? What was the Proverbs?
- Selena:** Yes...
- Ryan:** It was Proverb 29—
- Selena:** 29.

- Ryan:** 11 & 12.
- Selena:** 11. Start there.
- Ryan:** Yeah, I'll read it again! As we dive into this topic.
- Selena:** It's a good one! It's just a good one I wanted to hear again. Can't hear the word of God too much.
- Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Yeah! So, it's, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver," like a—
- Selena:** Proverbs 29:11 & 12?
- Ryan:** 25:11 & 12.
- Selena:** Ugh! [*Gurples the end of the word*]
- Ryan:** "Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reprove to a listening ear." Okay. So... There's a lot to be said about what we say. [*Both laugh*] James warns us. He says be slow to speak, [*Both say in unison*] quick listen, [*Ryan resumes speaking solo*] slow to become angry. We are also warned, in our anger do not sin. We had some of that happening last night on my account! [*Chuckles*] On my part! I had to vacate... the premises because I was so frustrated! [*Selena snickers*] I didn't want to say... Selena was frustrating! Let's be clear about that. She was the frustrating one. [*Chuckles*]
- Selena:** I was just tired... [*Both laugh*] I was like, "I can't do this right now. I'm so tired!"
- Ryan:** And so, there's, "In our anger, do not sin." It says that there's other— Obviously, this Proverb's talking about a word fitly spoken—
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** Is like apples of gold. So, I used to think that it was... I don't know! I think it's apples crafted out of gold, the metal gold, not necessarily like golden delicious apples. [*Ryan cackles and Selena chuckles*]
- Selena:** [*Chuckling*] Did you think it was apples? [*Inhales*]
- Ryan:** Regardless, the setting of silver, the reason why it's saying this is that the setting, it's like a basket sort of thing. And it's meant to reflect the beauty of these golden apples. Right? And so, the setting itself is what is—
- Selena:** Hm...
- Ryan:** Kind of finishing the presentation. Right?

- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** So, words fitly spoken, it's not enough just to say the words, the apples themselves. That's okay. I think they are golden apples, actually. I don't know for sure! But the point is, is that the setting itself is also important. And it's important in reflecting the true beauty of the words that are being spoken. So!
- Selena:** Mm!
- Ryan:** *Fitly* spoken words.
- Selena:** This would've been good to know last night!
- Ryan:** Uhhh, well, I knew it! Did you know it?!
- Selena:** Apparently not! [*Ryan cackles*] Apparently not.
- Ryan:** Yeah, but... how we say things matters!
- Selena:** It still kind of stings. Let's not talk about that. [*Both laugh*] I'm not going to lie.
- Ryan:** I'm getting some re— [*Laughs*] Get some real time—
- Selena:** We got to get to the whole podcast here, so...
- Ryan:** Yeah. It's going down after this. [*Selena snickers*] Newsflash, ladies and gentlemen! Fierce Marriage—
- Selena:** We fight! [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** People are not perfect! [*Fiercely states*] We're fierce! [*Resumes normal tone and both laugh*]
- Selena:** [*Laughing*] PSA, yeah! Sorry...
- Ryan:** Yeah! So, it's not just what you say, but it's how you say them. And a lot of times we hear this phrase: we have to speak the *truth in love*. All right, and that's the same thing. Right?
- Selena:** So, do you speak the truth in love all the time? Or are you just waiting for the right time? 'Cause you were telling me my timing wasn't [*Laughing*] great last night, even though I didn't recognize the time I was in. Or sometimes we see the time differently, right? I see it as, "This is probably a good time to talk about this," and you're like, "This is not a good time to bring this up!" [*Cackles*] There's some—
- Ryan:** It was specifically around... our own children and the timing of disciplining them.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Discipline being talking to them in a way, and not—

**Selena:** Trying to teach them in the moment that they are just melting down. [*Cackles*]

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** [*Laughing*] Which I laugh, 'cause it's just not a good time.

**Ryan:** Yeah! [*Inhales*] Trying to... Yeah, 'cause it was late and they were tired, but I'm like, "Well, if we don't instruct them *now* through—," like we can't just say, "Oh, they're tired. It's okay..."

**Selena:** We're not saying that. I think you can say, "They're tired," and recognize this is a really hard time, and tell them that this is the hard time. And then we talked about it as I was putting them to bed, saying, "Okay. Tomorrow you need to," [*Snickering*], "apologize to daddy because you did not respond when he asked you." [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Or being mouthy... misbehaved little children. [*Both laugh*]

[00:10:00] **Selena:** So, it's calibrating expectations, it's parenting, it's training, it's all the things!

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** But we were trying to... Sometimes, tiredness is just a factor! I mean, we write about this! We talk about this. [*Inhales*]

**Ryan:** But the Bible says—

**Selena:** I know! You can't be *disobedient* when you're tired!

**Ryan:** "Children, obey your parents."

**Selena:** But I don't think—[*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** It says, "Obey your parents when you feel like it." That's what the Bible says.

**Selena:** [*Laughing*] That's not what it says.

**Ryan:** Exactly! It does not say that! It says, "Obey your parents." Period! This is the only commandment with a promise! "It may go well with you." So, the reverse promise follows. [*Selena laughs*] "If you don't obey your parents," [*Ryan states next part with a country accent*], "You gonna get in trouble!" [*Ryan resumes his normal voice and Selena continues laughing*] It's not going to go well with you. Anyway.

- Selena:** It says we need to speak the truth in love to our children, as much as to—  
[Laughs] as much to our *spouses* and ourselves. Right?
- Ryan:** So, I think that it begs the question—
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** What does it mean to speak the truth in love? Okay. And how does this actually work itself out in the various instances—
- Selena:** Right., and it falls onto—
- Ryan:** That hit a marriage?
- Selena:** Defining love, right? If we define love as just being happy and feelings, then there's probably never a good time to...
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** That those opportunities would be less. But if we subscribe to the biblical application of love, being patient and kind and... What? Love is patient, kind...  
[Ryan cackles and Selena laughs] I'm sorry! Again, a little tired. But if love is that and we're in a covenantal, *loving* relationship, and we're defining these terms according to the Bible, then we can understand that with our truth being spoken, we are going to, first of all, be praying probably about the truth that we need to say to our spouse. You know? Gauging our hearts. Is there something really wrong here or is there just something that is wrong with *me*, or not maybe even wrong, but is there something going on that's just in my heart that does it really need to be talked about or not? You know? Filtering through that. [Inhales] But then, if it is and the Holy Spirit's leading you or you're feeling just this impressing, I need to talk to him, your spouse, about X, Y and Z, then doing it in kindness and with patience, and knowing that it might blow up a little bit! It might blow up. That's just the reality of speaking the truth in love.
- Ryan:** Hm...
- Selena:** It's not this stamp of, "Okay! I'm going to speak it in love! It's going to be *good!* It's going to be *easy!* It's going to be smooth." Nope!
- Ryan:** Mmm!
- Selena:** It's usually *not!* Which I think is why we are instructed to speak it in love, because love is—
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Patient and kind, *long-suffering!* There's another good one. [Laughs]

- Ryan:** Yeah. So, I want to use this John Stott quote, or mention this John Stott quote first, because he was a theologian, I think in the early 20th century, or mid-20th century, and he wrote this! He said, “Our love grows soft if not strengthened by truth, and our truth grows hard if not softened by love.”
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** Okay. So, it's funny you mentioned that whole, “I’m going to speak the truth and it might blow up! I’m going to speak my—” And so, here's the thing!
- Selena:** [*Whispers*] Love is not arrogant.
- Ryan:** Well, love is not arrogant. Also, it's not *your* truth that you're speaking; it's *the* truth that we're speaking.
- Selena:** Mmm!
- Ryan:** And that's, I think—
- Selena:** That’s for that filter. Yep! [*Ryan snickers*]
- Ryan:** So, a lot of times—h Okay. So, I wrote [*Selena laughs*] this thing on it on Instagram.
- Selena:** [*Selena laughs*] Okay! [*Ryan inhales and exhales exaggeratedly*] I see the wheels turning! [*Both laugh*] Literally!
- Ryan:** I wrote this thing on Instagram that’s like communication, it’s not— marriage is not about, and I believe in this, right, it's not about thinking the *same* things, or thinking *alike*! It's about thinking in agreement or agreeing around big things. Right? Or— Let me just read it! I'm butchering it. [*Selena laughs*] It says...
- Selena:** [*Chuckling*] And you wrote it?
- Ryan:** “The goal in marriage is not to think alike, but to think together.” Now, Robert C. Dodds wrote that one.
- Selena:** Ahhh. Yes! Okay.
- Ryan:** And so, but the thing is, is that we can say, “Okay. Well, we're just thinking differently.” We tend to, in postmodern culture, which says that every idea is of equal *merit* and worth, we tend to think it's what *I* think, therefore it's equally valid.
- Selena:** Mm!
- Ryan:** Right? And so, I'm reading another book right now. It's called The Death of Expertise. Amazing book! Also, it's very elucidating for my own heart and mind,

where you start to feel like you're an expert on something. You're not! [*Selena snickers*] Okay! But everybody thinks they're an expert!

**Selena:** This is a truth in love book, huh? [*Cackles*]

**Ryan:** Everybody thinks—

**Selena:** Speaking the truth?

**Ryan:** It is! And the dude is incredibly smart. And he has been a university professor for decades. And he's basically saying this epidemic is sweeping academia, and therefore, it's filtering into society—

**Selena:** Hmm...

**Ryan:** Through social media, through— It's this perfect storm of people feeling like their *opinion* is just valid because it's—

**Selena:** It's their opinion?

**Ryan:** Just intrinsically valid.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And I'm here to say, and he wrote the whole book about no, it's not! So, these students are saying, they're coming against a professor and saying, the professor's giving them all these facts and decades of— and he's not just talking about his own stories, but he's using stories from other professors.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It's not just his own rant. Right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But he's sharing how he gets in an argument with these students, and these students are basically like, "Well, that's your opinion." He's like, "Actually, it's not my opinion. It's fact! You need to accept the fact or be an idiot," basically! And they're saying, "Well, no. That's *your* fact. My fact is different."

[00:15:06] **Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** "I'm an expert on this." And he's saying, "How are you an expert?" He's like, "Well, I feel it!" "I've been studying this for 20 years!"

**Selena:** [*Snickering*] It's very troublesome.

**Ryan:** “I'm an expert! You're not an expert!” [*Chuckling*] So, it's the depth of expertise. I'm trying not to rant and rave a little bit here, but the problem is that in communication, we tend to think just by virtue of me thinking and feeling and saying something, it's just equally valid.

**Selena:** Or that it's truth! Right?

**Ryan:** And—

**Selena:** That its—

**Ryan:** That it's truth, yes!

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** And that's what I mean by truth can be verified, validated as truth.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's valid in the sense that we feel it.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Okay. And feelings are valid because they need to be worked through and talked through. But if we're to be wise people, what does that proverb say? It says, [*Pages are heard flipping and both chuckle*] it says, “Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reprover,” what? [*Ryan enunciates each word*] “To a listening ear.”

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** Somebody who is *listening* for instruction.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** Much of the book of Proverbs is a plea to us as readers to open our ears! Wisdom cries out in the city streets.

**Selena:** Mmm.

**Ryan:** Be wise!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Listen to her!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And I love how wisdom's always a... a woman. [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** Mmm-hmm.

**Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] I love that!

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Because it's—

**Selena:** 'Cause it's true.

**Ryan:** It's just a beautiful picture, because—

**Selena:** It's just truth.

**Ryan:** I think there's a lot—

**Selena:** [*Laughing*] I'm just kidding.

**Ryan:** [*Snickers*] But folly's also a woman. Let's just... [*Both laugh*] In the early parts of Proverbs...

**Selena:** All right! Just ignore that part in the Bible. [*Cackles*]

**Ryan:** [*Laughs*] Yeah... [*Snickers*] Never a good thing to say! [*Selena laughs*] Revision is history here! So anyway, all that to say is when we get in marital arguments...

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** We tend to dig our heels in, and we say, "*I'm speaking my truth.*" And I think we're here to say that, yes, that's a human tendency! We tend to see the world through our own vision of things, and we tend to favor our own opinions and views of things.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** But if we're to be people of God, people of God's word, people of *wisdom*...

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** We need to *learn to hear* the call of wisdom.

**Selena:** And submit to it.

**Ryan:** And He'll— You said it!

**Selena:** That's the hardest part.

**Ryan:** You said the word!

**Selena:** [*Intensely*] SUBMIT! [*Both laugh & Selena continues talking with her normal tone*] I just like what you say there.

**Ryan:** That's what I say to you when you're out of line! [*Both laugh*] Then Selena will say that I do not say that.

**Selena:** I don't listen. I didn't hear that. Obviously! [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** [*Chuckles*] Yeah. If ever I've said that, it's been a joke! But... at the same token, I think we both need to understand the *value* of submitting ourselves to a truth that's outside of us.

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** And that's what we're saying. It's not just speak truth in love, and whatever that truth happens to be, just say in a nice way.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** It's we are called to speak *the* truth *in* love.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** The objective truth in objective love.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And so, that begs the question, what are objective truth and objective love?

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** And of course, those are big topics, but—

**Selena:** *Big* topics.

**Ryan:** And so, all that to say is, yeah, we need to submit ourselves to it and not just think our opinions automatically are truth because they feel true.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** So, yeah!

**Selena:** Feelings are not king.

**Ryan:** Yeah, yeah.

**Selena:** So, talking ab—

**Ryan:** So—

**Selena:** [*Both in unison*] Go ahead.

**Ryan:** Nah, you. [*Selena snickers and Ryan laughs*] We have someone stopping by our house right now. [*Selena laughs*] I feel like we're both really distracted, 'cause... our friend is caring for the children.

**Selena:** It's awesome.

**Ryan:** And our other friend is stopping by, and our friends are talking.

**Selena:** [*Whispers*] Yes. It's good!

**Ryan:** And we can't go down and be friends with them. [*Selena laughs*] 'Cause we're recording the podcast. [*Both laugh*]

**Selena:** It's good! It's good.

**Ryan:** But, yeah!

**Selena:** So, yeah! I think that, yes, we let emotions reign too much. And so, submitting those emotions, taking *hold* of our thoughts, right?

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** And submitting those to God [*Inhales*] is not an easy thing. It's not like, "Oh, I feel all these things, and I'm so angry! So, I'm just going to do this!" But sometimes it is and sometimes it just takes some *grit* and some fierce tenacity of, "Okay! I'm feeling the wrong things right now."

**Ryan:** Hm.

**Selena:** "And I just have to know that and... let it pass!" I've had those moments with our children where I'm like, "I'm *steaming* right now."

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** "You little sanctifiers. So, I'm just going to go. I need to go take a timeout real quick and *calm* down and breathe."

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And I think that we can... [*Clicks tongue*] That's how I feel sometimes with us, when you're trying to speak this truth [*Snickers*] or something. And I'm like, "I

don't have listening ears right now, that my pride is too much. My fear, my insecurities. I can't hear this!"

**Ryan:** Hm.

**Selena:** "I don't *hear* what you're saying right now." [*Selena chuckles*] [*Selena states with exasperation*] "I do not understand the *words* that are coming out of your mouth!" [*Both laugh*] And I think that can be super frustrating for *both* parties. Right?

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** I think when you're trying to say something... about me *to* me—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** I'm just like, "Yeah, but just look at yourself," like, "Don't talk to me!" You know?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** It's very easy to just flip that conversation and be like, "You have *all* these flaws. How dare you bring up this flaw in me!"

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Right? And so—

**Ryan:** That's called the... I don't know if there's a name for that—

**Selena:** Called pride. [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Fallacy in terms of an argument?

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** When we talk about debates and stuff, the fallacy is—

**Selena:** That strawmen, is that what it is?

**Ryan:** No. It's... I want to say it's like fruit of the poison tree.

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** You're like, "*Who* are you as a moral authority?"

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** “Because you're clearly not perfect. Therefore, I shouldn't listen to *any*,” [Selena snickers], “thing that you have to say, whether it's objectively true or not!”

**Selena:** Right. Right. And—

**Ryan:** So, we tend to fall into that trap.

[00:20:00] **Selena:** And it really falls onto the motivation, right? Like, why are you saying this to me?

**Ryan:** Hm.

**Selena:** And if you're saying it, again, speak the truth in *love*. If you are speaking this truth in love to me, you're not coming from a place of being arrogant or rude or boastful or resentful. You are not *rejoicing* in speaking this truth to me, but you're *bearing*... It says love bears all things in I Corinthians 13:7. It, “*believes* all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.” And so, if it's patient and kind of not envying or boasting, then *this* is the place where truth can be spoken.

**Ryan:** Mm! That's good! [*Inhales*]

**Selena:** This is where you can come from. This is the well that the truth can come out of.

**Ryan:** Mm! Yeah!

**Selena:** Otherwise, if it's coming from any other place, they're going to hear it! And it's just going to be frustrating.

**Ryan:** Okay. So, the big question I want to ask next is what truths are truly worth fighting for? Okay. So, we have—

**Selena:** It's good.

**Ryan:** This statement, again, on Instagram. We posted this and it's one of the *captions*. If you don't read those captions, read them. We try to make them kind of a devotional thing for you as you go about your week. But it said, “One cannot truly love without being lovingly truthful.” One cannot *truly love* without being *lovingly* truthful. [Selena exhales a sigh] So, what kind of truth? And let's just talk here, you and I! What kind of truth is worth fighting for?

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay. So, there are ti— We all know marriage takes and requires grace.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It requires kind of keeping one eye shut. And what I mean by that is you realize that you have an imperfect spouse. You're not enabling sin, but you can overlook... things. You can overlook things in love! What is—There's another Proverbs. It says—

**Selena:** What do you mean?

**Ryan:** Overlooking a fence, right? So, a small offense, like maybe you took a tone with me that I found offensive, but then I realized, "Oh! You've had a hard day," or X, Y and Z factors are in play.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** So, I can overlook an offense. I can— What is it?

**Selena:** Overlooking an offense, not a sin.

**Ryan:** Yeah! Or there is a verse that says overlooks, what is it, a multitude of sins? Let me look that up.

**Selena:** [*Quietly*] Love covers multitudes of sins. [*Resumes normal tone*]

**Ryan:** Yeah, love covers a multitude of sin. I think that's actually talking about Jesus's work on the cross. [*Chuckles*] Love covers...

**Selena:** Yeah... Definitely want to have our context there. [*Laughs*] Just kidding.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** You're always really good at context, but—

**Ryan:** I'm sorry, I just didn't pull that up beforehand. But the point I'm trying to make is that we all know that in marriage that it requires amount of grace. So, what battles do we pick in the words?

**Selena:** Mm! Yeah.

**Ryan:** So, I could see a husband or a wife saying, "I have to speak truth in love! And if I'm not true and I don't say truth, then I am compromising and I'm not loving you well."

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** "And so, you just need to *deal* with this!" [*Selena quietly snickers*] Boom! And, "I'm going to drop this bomb and make you deal with it."

**Selena:** Well, that's the thing, too, I think, right? So, if you're going to speak truth, you need to be willing to walk through that truth with your spouse. Right?

- Ryan:** [Quietly] Mm!
- Selena:** We're not just like, "Okay! You've kind of been like this lately. Can you fix it?"  
[Both laugh] Nope! That's not going to work!
- Ryan:** "I'll be posting your review and your grades later on this week!" [Selena laughs]  
"So... How about you change that behavior?"
- Selena:** Nooo! Definitely! Right? We're supposed to talk with each other. We're supposed to engage with each other. Be transparent.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** Walk through hard things together... It *sucks* to be the one that has to be talked about, right?
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** It's never fun to be like, "Oh, cool. Yep! Here's my shortcomings. Here's the truth that you're saying to me, which tells me that I am all the things I'm not." And this is really crushing, right? And so, if it feels like that, tell that talk. Be willing to *walk* that journey with your spouse. Don't just say it and leave. 'Cause that, I mean, if you do that, it's really not speaking the truth in love. The way of love. Right? In I Corinthians 13, again, we keep coming back to this, the *way* of love. It's not just a one-time thing. It's a *way*. It's a life. It's an active, ongoing, "This is how we love." [Inhales] So...
- Ryan:** Mm! That's good!
- Selena:** Yeah, go ahead.
- Ryan:** [Inhales] That's good. So, I— Okay. So, full disclosure, we had very limited time to prepare for this, so we're kind of flying a little bit.
- Selena:** Yep!
- Ryan:** By the seat of our pants. But it's okay because I wanted to pull together three very *tangible* things for you. 'Kay? As we're talking about truth and love, we can't tell you what to always fight about or what not to fight about, what to let go, what to look over, what to actually... [Selena snickers] what to actually deal with in your marriage!
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** *But* we can't give you kind of these mileposts, I'll say, or these things to look out for. So, there's three kind of truths when we talk about speaking truth in love, that as you're thinking through your own arguments, your tendencies,

your triggers, things within your marriage that would cause you to go off the rails in terms of your harmony and your peace in your household...

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** These are three things to be aware of. Okay. And we'll talk about each one individually briefly here. But first one is, know what truths are worth fighting for. And that's why we started asking, is how do we know what's truth, what's worth fighting for? [*Inhales*] As a rule, okay, what truths are worth fighting for in our household? We know that truths that are worth fighting for are *big* truths that had to do with God's word. Right?

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

[00:24:57] **Ryan:** So, God's word is true. We trust it. Jesus is our King and our Savior, and He's the Lord of our household. That's a big truth, obviously. If there's anything that's Selena's saying or doing, or that I'm saying or doing that is contrary to those big truths, those are worth fighting for. We know that righteousness is an objective standard laid out by the Bible!

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** That we are called to conform ourselves into Christlikeness, into a more holy—

**Selena:** Hm!

**Ryan:** People of God.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Meaning that we're not— So, things that are sinful, those are truths that we're going to combat!

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** That I'm going to go to bat fighting against that truth. Now that truth could be very overt, or that sin could be really overt, I mean. So, like—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** I could be... I'm just thinking of what's like an obvious sin that, obviously like pornography...

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Indulging in pornography and not fighting against lust in that way.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** That's a sinful behavior.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Or over-working, I think, can turn into a sinful behavior.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Any sort of unhealthy addictions.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Right? And it could be, obviously, there's drugs, there's alcohol, anything that's going to be defiling the temple that is our body. So—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Things like tobacco use, I think, and there's a lot of ways that that could be a sinful behavior.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** So, combating in a loving way. It's not just nagging! Okay. So, when I say— Combating's the word I maybe shouldn't use, 'cause to be combative is...

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Is a different connotation. But to go to bat for that truth...

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** I think is something that we would agree on. Those truths are worth fighting for.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** At the end of the day, I think all truth on some level is going to be worth fighting for. The question is, what is the timing going to be for that, in your own marriage?

**Selena:** All biblical truth, yeah.

**Ryan:** Biblical truth is worth— Well, and those truths would go hand-in-hand. Things like raising our kids in the Lord. Right? That's a truth that we're going to fight for.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Or what kind of things we're going to allow our kids to see on the screens, or—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Do you have any other ideas what might be worth fighting for? Wheel's spinning.

**Selena:** Yeah. [*Laughs*] I'm just trying to think of how to speak it all out there, but...

**Ryan:** Just speak your truth, you know?

**Selena:** [*Selena snickers*] Speak your truth. [*Both chuckle and Selena inhales*] No, I think you, honestly, I think you nailed it. I think we are in such agreement on some of the big truths. I think the thing to recognize is that fighting for truth is probably a bit of a journey. It's not just kind of one-and-done conversation. Again, I think, I can't emphasize *that truth* enough because [*Inhales*] we go into it with this expectation of we're going to talk about it, we're going to overcome it! It's going to be good.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** We're just going to get through this, when really in God and His graciousness and His goodness allows us to kind of face things over and over and over again, until... our hearts soften, until our hearts are affected by *His* word and His truth, and then we start living that out. And when we are living that out, that's when we're hit with those opportunities or those things, again, about speaking the truth in love and those hard things—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** They become less hard. We become more confident in His word—

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** And in the life that He's given us, the new life in Christ that He's given us.

**Ryan:** Yeah. And I think it...

**Selena:** I guess I just see this, as a personal example, I see this playing out in our decision to home educate our children. Right? I was very nervous. I had a lot of insecurities.

**Ryan:** Oh, yeah! Yeah.

**Selena:** I mean, and we're only going on our second year, and I was just like, "Ahh. What are people going to think? I don't know if this is right! There's all these things."

**Ryan:** Can we do this? Yeah.

**Selena:** Can I do this?

**Ryan:** [*Quietly*] Yeah.

**Selena:** “Are my kids going to be weird?” All of these voices in my head, and I kept just coming up against just the truth that I was just seeing in the Bible! And you were very convicting about this. And it was just very *clear* to us. But I was like, “Yeah, but how do I make it clear to other people, so they're okay and they think it's cool too?” Right? I just want to blend in. That's just been kind of my personality. I don't want to stand out with things. [*Clears throat*] Excuse me! And then—

**Ryan:** And I had to remind you that—

**Selena:** Yes! And I took—

**Ryan:** The truth that maybe that's not as important as you think it is.

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And there was a lot of submission to God's truth. There was a lot of sanctification in that process. And in our second year of home education, it's become *beautiful*! It becomes like, I don't think we're going to have enough time in the next ten years or whatever of teaching them and showing them and going through all of these things. So, you see this process at the beginning, right? We're starting homeschooling. There's all these insecurities. It's hard. I keep hitting my head against these truths. And it feels hard, and it feels [*Inhales*] like it's crushing me. It's breaking me down. I don't have peace, but I do have peace, like that weird kind of in between. [*Quickly inhales*] And then we step into it and there's still like these judgments and insecurities and anxiety around the whole thing, and then I'm walking in that journey and the confidence and assurance that has come, and the grace that God is like, “This truth hasn't changed for you. Your heart is just softening and coming around to it. And now you're able to walk confidently in it.”

**Ryan:** Hm.

**Selena:** So, I guess just reminding ourselves that the journey is not a weekly conversation, it's not just a one-time thing, that it's probably going to be over a long period of time, and that's good!

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

**Selena:** Because that's where our hearts get soft and tender towards...

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** The Lord and the life that He has for us.

**Ryan:** So, maybe a better way to look at this, instead of saying what *truths* are worth fighting for, and knowing what truths are worth fighting for, I think the answer to that is every truth is worth fighting for! The question is better phrased like what category of truth [*Chuckles*] should we fight for in this moment? Right?

**Selena:** Sure!

**Ryan:** So, there's big, broad categories like who we are in Christ, right?

**Selena:** Mm.

**Ryan:** Our faith, the faith foundation of our lives, those truths are truths that always need to be fought for. But then there's other truths, like categories of truth, like this decision that we've made and standing by that. I want to read this verse from Ephesians 4, where the phrase, "truth in love" comes from. And I'm going to go back to verse four, verse eleven, and I'm going to read about five or six versus here, so bear with me! But I think it does shed even more light, of course, as God's word does, it sheds more light on this conversation today. So, "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love." Hear that rather to pivot?

**Selena:** [*Quietly*] Mm.

**Ryan:** "Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Okay. So, He's talking to the Ephesian church.

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** And He's saying to the measure and stature, the fullness of Christ, that we may *no longer* be children, no longer thinking like children—

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Requiring *milk*, but instead being weaned off of the milk of soft truths and onto the meat of hard—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Of *sustaining* truths.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Being children tossed to and fro, back and forth, by waves carried about by every wind of doctrine and by human cunning, and by craftiness of deceitful schemes. [*Inhales*] So, I mean, think about how this might be applying in our own lives, right? Or in your life, listener. Human cunning, right? Could that be culture?

**Selena:** Hm.

**Ryan:** Could that be different winds of the doctrines of culture? Obviously, there's wind of doctrine in the church. It's the letter *to* the church, so, there's winds of doctrine and being able to discern doctrines that are of God and doctrines that are not truths, lies that are masquerading as truths.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** But being able to fight for those big truths as a couple together. So, the whole point of speaking truth in love is to *combat* that tendency.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** So that we can do what? So that we can grow into maturity as the body of Christ!

**Selena:** [*Quietly*] That's good.

**Ryan:** So, we have this call onto our lives to *not* acquiesce, to not let lies reign, not let lies masquerade as truth, but to speak the truth, in what? In love! Okay, so we've talked about what truths are worth fighting for. Now, this is a second reminder, know that love without truth isn't actually love.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** A lot of times we default toward doing what's easy and less confrontational because we feel like that's the more loving thing to do. If I don't rock this boat, no one's going to fall out, and its people are going to feel loved. [*Selena quietly snickers*] But if I rock the boat, it might create some problems...

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right! The way we talk about that is it's peacekeeping versus peacemaking.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** Peacekeeping is an enabling behavior.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Peacemaking is a—5

**Selena:** Is an active—

**Ryan:** Is an active...

**Selena:** Submissive to God's word, like—

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** Way of living and walking out that truth.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So, love without truth isn't actually love, but *rather* it's a mixture of insecurity—

**Selena:** [*Softly*] Yeah.

**Ryan:** Selfishness and fear.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** Love without truth isn't *love*! It's a mixture of insecurity, selfishness and fear.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** It's insecurity, meaning that I don't really trust that I can stand on this. I'm not secure in it.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Or I'm being selfish in that I'd rather not deal with this confrontation; it's easier for me not to do this.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** So, I'm going to respond to that selfishness and that fear by not dealing with it.

**Selena:** Mm! It's hard! Well, it's hard and it's easy, because you can distract yourself out of anything. Right?

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** And you can just find that next thing, and just kind of ignore stuff. But again, those decisions today of ignoring things—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** Will blow up tomorrow. [*Chuckles*] Eventually! I mean, believe it or not, there's going to be some loss created—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

[00:34:54] **Selena:** If we aren't, again, hanging onto that truth and fighting for it! Knowing what truth is to fight for, and then knowing that [*Inhales*] we have to *love* through this truth. And if we haven't experienced that love or we don't know it, we are going to have to walk through some of that—

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** To really understand that. And God is good to teach us and show us His love through Christ, which I feel like is the way we really are— I mean, Jesus didn't want to go to the cro— [*Snickers*] And I don't want to get too theologically deep, but He obviously had some anxiety about it. Right? [*Inhales*]

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** But He... didn't sit—

**Ryan:** He said, “Father, take this cup from me.”

**Selena:** Right! I know. I'm trying to go slow because I don't want to misspeak here.

**Ryan:** There's a lot of debate on theological fronts around, “Well, would Jesus really *not* want the perfect will of the Father?”

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And there's a lot of debate—

**Selena:** Right. There's a lot about that, but the—

**Ryan:** Around whether or not He *wanted* to. But—

**Selena:** Yeah! The thing is, is that He took up His cross, really. Right? And He said, “I'm going to—”

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** “I'm going to go there because I love—”

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** He loves us! He wants to bridge that gap. He wanted righteousness and redemption for us.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** So, He rocked the boat, essentially.

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** And again, He's a perfect example of love! And we can only love because He first loved us. So, when we look at Jesus and we look what He did for us, why can we not have this conversation that we're fearful about? What's holding us back?

**Ryan:** [*Exhales*] Yeah!

**Selena:** There shouldn't be, right?

**Ryan:** So, I'm thinking of a tangible way that this could play out for a couple. I think a lot of times you have a husband or a wife who feels like they need to bring something up, *or* okay, so, say you identify a behavior in me.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** A *pattern* in me that you see as destructive—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Or sinful or headed in the wrong direction. You are debating in your heart whether you should bring that up. *Or* say you identify a pattern in your own heart—

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Or in your own life, your own behavior. My own heart, my own life behavior.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And I don't want to bring that up, because I'm afraid that if I tell that truth, if I speak in that truthful way...

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** That you won't feel loved.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** So... And that's what we're saying, is know that love without truth, without—"The heart cannot love what the mind does not know," as Jen Wilkin says.  
[*Chuckles*]

**Selena:** Right. Yeah. [*Quietly*] Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** And so, if I'm not allowing myself to be known by you, then I'm not actually affording you the opportunity to love *me*—

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** In a fuller way, nor am I loving you in the fullest way.

**Selena:** Right. Fear definitely cheats us out of those—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** Those moments of being able to be vulnerable and be transparent and allow love to—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** To fill in those gaps. Right? And allow love to [*Inhales*] really... be what it is, and to grow deep roots. So! Is that the second one? This is—

**Ryan:** That was the second one. Yeah. So, just to recap here, we're talking about speaking truth in love or love and truth. Okay, so know what truths are worth fighting for.

**Selena:** Mm-hm.

**Ryan:** I wanted to add one to that! That's the first one. So, talk about big faith truths, but also the truth that your marriage is a gift from God—

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** And it's something that's worth fighting for.

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** So, a lot of times... [*Inhales*] we can forget the truth that we are called to be married to the one we're married to.

**Selena:** Yeah!

- Ryan:** And we can start to believe that I've fallen out of love, or that our marriage is lost!
- Selena:** Or missed the one! [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** Or I've missed it somehow, or we just are irreconcilable, or our differences are too great!
- Selena:** Mm...
- Ryan:** And so, I just want to say that the truth on top of that lie is that your marriage is a covenant! It is the best thing for you to fight for.
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** There's nuances to that in terms of safety and abuse and stuff like that. You want to make sure that you're in a safe place, but at the end of the day, reconciliation is always going to be the *ideal*.
- Selena:** [*Quietly*] Right.
- Ryan:** Right? And that you make sure and get help if you need it! But reconciliation is the ideal! Not that that's *always* possible. Anyway! I could go down that rabbit hole pretty fast, but—
- Selena:** Oh! And those— Yeah.
- Ryan:** So, know what truths are worth fighting for and fight for them! But then know this, the second one is, know that love without truth isn't actually love.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** So, don't hedge your bets around truth. Instead, focus on the delivery and the loving way to speak that particular true thing.
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** [*Inhales*] Okay. So, and that's the third one, is know that truth without love— So, we've talked about love without truth, but truth without love isn't necessarily the fullest truth. And what I mean by that, and again, we're not trying to be relativistic! There is absolute truth, and it's God's word, it's God's decree! There are things that are just true. Now when we talk about something being the *fullest* truth, we're saying that if you're not speaking truth *with love*, you're not giving someone... How do I say this? If I come to you and say a hard thing in a very unloving way—
- Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** I'm not actually saying it in a way that is conducive to your heart hearing the truth.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Instead, you're hearing all the stuff that's wrapped around the delivery of the truth.

**Selena:** Right, right.

**Ryan:** And so, if I come to you in a loving way, if I genuinely want you to hear something... If I say, "Selena... I love you. I want you to hear this because I'm saying this not just to throw it in your face, but because I'm here as your husband!"

[00:40:07] **Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** "And here as somebody who wants to lead you to a closer relationship with Jesus; I would ask you do the same to me. Here's this hard truth."

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Are you more likely to hear that, as opposed to, or if I just said, "Hey! You suck in this way." [*Both laugh*]

**Selena:** *Definitely* not that!

**Ryan:** Or this hard thing is I'm going to throw in your face!

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** What are you more likely to hear? And so, when you say that speaking truth, or saying truth without love, isn't necessarily the fullest truth, what we mean is it's not delivering the fullness of that truth.

**Selena:** Right! You can't just say it how it is, right?

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** Like, this is just how it is! And this is how I say things, and nan-nan-nan. It's not going to go over well and it's not going to be *heard*, for one thing. But it's also not going to build, I think—

**Ryan:** Hm!

**Selena:** The unity and the love that you're *longing* for in your marriage!

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** It's just going to cut it off.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Whatever was there, it's done now! [*Laughs*]

**Ryan:** Well, I mean, usually when I hear a husband say, "Well, I'm just going to say it how it is!" It's usually just an excuse to justify what's—

**Selena:** Sure...

**Ryan:** Actually unloving, impatient, disingenuous and unempathetic communication!

**Selena:** Yeah! [*Ryan laughs*] For sure!

**Ryan:** It's lazy communication!

**Selena:** It is.

**Ryan:** When I say, "I'm just going to say it how it is, 'cause I love you!" And that's what—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Well, okay. Okay. You're *saying* you love them, but you're not showing it, right?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It's a lot of words, and so, there's—

**Selena:** Well, and Jesus, I mean, look at Him.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** He always told the truth, even when it was hard! And He did so in ways that were just infused with love and compassion!

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** And I'm not saying, obviously, that we have to [*Snickers*] be Jesus, but we're—

**Ryan:** Well, we're called to be like Christ.

**Selena:** We're called to be like Christ.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And the Holy Spirit can *lead* us and teach us and show us. And there's, I mean, obviously *dwell* in God's word, be in His word.

**Ryan:** Mm.

**Selena:** But sometimes we need— not need. There are books out there that can help us with *tools*, just tangible tools—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Of *how* to talk to each other and how to communicate in a loving way, the way Christ would want us to communicate to each other. Because, for me, I'm very blind to those things sometimes.

**Ryan:** Mm!

**Selena:** I don't mean to say it how it is, but I'm very... bad and I lack kind of loving communication, [*Laughs*] I think sometimes.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** I try really hard! I really do.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** So, yeah.

**Ryan:** There's a book! [*Sounds distant*] I'm trying to find it here. I think it's called “We Can Work It Out,” I think is the name of the ti—

**Selena:** [*Clicks tongue*] Oh, yeah.

**Ryan:** I don't think it's a Christian book, but it's all about having hard conversations.

**Selena:** So good.

**Ryan:** And there's another one called “Crucial Conversation.” That's more around business. But it's how to... breach these topics—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** In a way that is actually advocating for the resolution, not just saying something but actually going somewhere. That's the thing, is when we speak truth in love, when Paul was talking to the Ephesians, he wasn't just saying, “Speak the truth in love, because the truth is just worth saying!”

**Selena:** Right. [*Snickers*]

**Ryan:** He was saying speak the truth in love *so that* you may mature.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** As a people!

**Selena:** Which maturity takes a journey. It's a process. It's—

**Ryan:** So, it's a means to an end!

**Selena:** Over time, yeah.

**Ryan:** Speaking truth in love—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** We treat it as an end in itself, but it's a *means* to an end. It's a means to growth! It's a means to a closer connection.

**Selena:** Right!

**Ryan:** And so, often we wield this bludgeoning truth sword, and we don't realize that it takes finesse to actually—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Have the sword accomplish what it's meant to accomplish, not just chop your head off, but to actually—

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Maybe—

**Selena:** There's an art to it. There's a—

**Ryan:** It's the wound that's for healing!

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right?

**Selena:** Right. That surgery there.

**Ryan:** Proverbs talks about that.

**Selena:** Yep!

**Ryan:** Yeah! So, I want to revisit that John Stott quote, and then we'll recap these three things that we are saying. But I think this is so good! It says, "Our love grows soft if not strengthened by truth, and our truth grows hard if not softened by love."

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

**Ryan:** [*Inhales*] So, I think—

**Selena:** I think the Couple's Conversation Challenge *should be* these three things, these three...

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Reminders, I guess, that you're talking about. And the first one of, "Know *what* truths are worth fighting for."

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Again, not trying to be relativistic. We're fighting for the truth under the biblical truth that is God's word—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** That who God is—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm.

**Selena:** Fighting for, against the lies that our marriage is wrong or it's not what it should be, or there's someone else out there!

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** That we can't get through this. So, fighting against those lies and knowing the truth that God has purposed your marriage for *you*, for His glory, for your goodness.

**Ryan:** So, I guess the challenge is to identify those as a couple.

**Selena:** Yes!

**Ryan:** In a time when you're both in a good place. [*Snickers*]

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And write down what are those truths that you're going to fight for as a couple.

**Selena:** And again, talking about setting—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Time for that. Obviously, I feel like that—

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Can kind of prepare our hearts and our minds for that instead of just being like, “Okay. Hey, we need to talk *now!*”

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** That usually is never a great time. So, the second one is, “Know that love without truth isn't actually love.”

**Ryan:** Yeah, love without truth isn't actually love. So, I think that kind of go— I mean, that goes without saying. And we've already explained what that means, but that's the second point. And the third one is, “Know that truth without love, it isn't necessarily the fullest delivery of that truth.”

[00:45:01] **Selena:** So good, so good.

**Ryan:** So...

**Selena:** So, go through those—

**Ryan:** Yeah, talk through those.

**Selena:** With your spouse. Yeah. And try to identify maybe some areas in your own heart of, “How've I tried to speak truth and it's just not,” [*Chuckles*], “Come across lovingly?” Or maybe how your spouse has, and why you haven't been able to hear it, whether it's fear or pride or insecurities. And you just don't know how to communicate well against that.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** And if you do, bring other people from your community into your group. You know? Marriage mentors, and say, “I feel like we can't talk about these hard things because he's like this or she's like this,” and yada-yada.

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** Sometimes it just—

**Ryan:** There's a lot of couples that write in—

**Selena:** You need to have dinner with a friend, [*Snickers*] some friends.

**Ryan:** You guys... Sorry. I'm interrupting a little bit, but—

**Selena:** You're good.

**Ryan:** Husband, wife, whoever's listening to this, if you're thinking, "Man, I just cannot seem to get my spouse on the same page with these truths!"

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** Okay. First off, you're not alone.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I'm not surprised that people aren't always in unity. We get a lot of couples that write in that are not experiencing unity on these big truths. But I am a little bit— I'm hoping that we can help dispel that.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And spouse, husband or wife, if you're listening to this, know that you could be a catalyst that God is using in your spouse's heart! You likely are that catalyst He's going to use—

**Selena:** [*Quietly*] Mm.

**Ryan:** To begin to get them thinking about these big truths that Selena and I are talking about!

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** And so, if you feel like you can't get on the same page and they won't engage in this activity with you, or you feel like it'll just end in a fight, I would say start by writing this stuff down for yourself—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** And maybe in a note, and then deliver it in a handwritten note or something.

**Selena:** Yeah!

**Ryan:** That could be a tangible way to start bridging that gap—

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Between your shared belief, that maybe you don't— And finding a shared belief around—

**Selena:** Right. And if you're like me, that you can't always think on the spot of the words to say, it's a good way to just kind of—

**Ryan:** Mm-hm!

**Selena:** Process through it and write down your own thoughts and not feel threatened by, "I have to *defend* myself here, and then fight here!" [*Chuckles*] You're not on the defense and the offense at the same time!

**Ryan:** Yeah!

**Selena:** So, I think that's a *super* tangible way to start that. So...

**Ryan:** Yeah. With that said, the exhortation that I want to leave you with is this: let your love be strengthened by truth—

**Selena:** Mmm...

**Ryan:** And let your truth be tempered with love. But wield both truth and love together! And in doing so, get about the true work of actually loving each other well. [*Chuckles lightly*]

**Selena:** So good.

**Ryan:** And so, it's true work to love each other well! It takes work! And it takes a *clinging* to God's truth, trusting that when you do the actions of love, the feelings of love will follow. And the unity that it begets will actually follow. So, with that, let me pray us out and then we'll call it an episode!

Lord, I thank You for Your word once again, shedding light on these issues that we face as married people!

**Selena:** Mm-hm!

**Ryan:** As people married to the glory, to Your glory. I pray that You would help us to be people of truth, but also people that speak truth in love, and people of love, of Your brand of love.

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

**Ryan:** Not our version of love, not our version of truth, but God help us cling to *Your* version of truth, Your truth, cling to *Your* love.

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

**Ryan:** And to live those out as faithful followers, faithful disciples, of Your son, Jesus. Father, You are so good to us! I pray for couples that are struggling right now, for the husband, the wife, who feels maybe hopeless or they're on the brink, or feels like there's a fracture that is irreparable in their marriage.

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

**Ryan:** I pray that You would *infuse* them with hope, infuse their hearts with peace. Spirit, reign in their life! I pray that You would well up a worship for You in their hearts that is inexplicable!

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

**Ryan:** A peace that is otherworldly! And in that, You would be glorified, God, and that You'd be their sustaining hope, their sustaining love, their sustaining peace through this season in their marriage.

**Selena:** Mm!

**Ryan:** Lord, we pray all this in Your precious name. [*Clicks tongue*] Amen.

**Selena:** Amen!

**Ryan:** All right, ladies and gentlemen! Thank you once again for joining us for the Fierce Marriage Podcast. This episode is!

**Selena:** In the can!

**Ryan:** As usual, we will see you in about seven days, and until next time...

**Selena:** Stay *fierce*!

[00:48:53] <Ending Sequence>

[00:49:12] *Podcast ends.*

## PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:10:00]**
  - John Stott quote correction:
    - “Our love grows soft if it is not strengthened by truth, and our truth grows hard if it is not softened by love.”
- **[00:15:06]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Proverbs 25:12, *ESV*
- **[00:20:00]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - I Corinthians 13:7-8a, added emphasis, *ESV*
- **[00:30:01]**
  - Scripture reference:
    - Ephesians 4:11-16, *ESV*

## FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

**Main Site:** <https://fiercemarriage.com/>

**Shop:** <https://shop.fiercemarriage.com/>

**Patreon:** <https://www.patreon.com/fiercemarriage>

**Podcast:** <https://fiercemarriage.com/podcast>

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/fiercemarriage>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/fiercemarriage>

**Instagram:** <https://instagram.com/fiercemarriage>

**Facebook:** <https://facebook.com/fiercemarriage>

**Pinterest:** <https://pinterest.com/fiercemarriage>

**Ask Us Anything:** <https://fiercemarriage.com/ask>