

CHORES, ADULTING, AND THE DIVISION OF LABOR

<https://fiercemarriage.com/chores-adulting-and-the-division-of-labor>

- [00:00:00] **Selena:** I wish you would do the dishes!
- Ryan:** [Ryan laughs] That was quite a start! [Selena laughs] I wish you would take out the trash!
- Selena:** Well, I did take it out yesterday. [Ryan scoffs] I actually was like a little bit steamy that you didn't take it out [Ryan laughs] 'cause it was [Selena chuckles] so full and stinky!
- Ryan:** Wait! Steamy? [Snickers]
- Selena:** [Enunciates] Steaming.
- Ryan:** [Laughs] Oh, okay. Yeah. This is one of those topics—
- Selena:** You need to [Ryan laughs] know that your responsibility [Ryan laughs while Selena pauses briefly] shows me your love.
- Ryan:** [Laughing] Okay.
- Selena:** [Laughs] Your lack of responsibility shows me your lack of love! [Laughs]
- Ryan:** Did literally all of our prep for this. Not—
- Selena:** [Inhales] I know!
- Ryan:** Did none of it take root in your heart?
- Selena:** That's why I didn't bring it up! [Ryan cackles] So, now because [Selena laughs] it's a good illustration! [Selena cackles]
- Ryan:** 'Til now! Okay. So, if you haven't noticed, we're talking about shared responsibilities, and that—
- Selena:** [With a funny accent] Shared.
- Ryan:** Could be things, all the way from big things like income in the household—
- Selena:** It's adulting, people!
- Ryan:** Adulting!
- Selena:** [Laughing] It's adulting!
- Ryan:** Yes! There it is. [Selena cackles] So, dealing with—

Selena: All things adulting is shared when you're in marriage!

Ryan: Dealing with the maintenance of life around household, around home, around parenting and around *coexisting* as individuals in a common place.

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: So, believe it or not, we mentioned it in the past. We talked about how we polled all of our listeners, all of our readers. We got thousands of respondents! And we asked them what is the biggest pain point in your marriage? [*Selena chuckles*] And the things that kind of floated to the top, number one: communication. Number two: shared responsibilities. [*Snickers*]

Selena: Oh, *boy!*

Ryan: And arguments around chores, and communication around chores.

Selena: Well, because we all think that, "You should do this, you should do that. He should do this, blah, blah, blah." Right? We all have these *views!*

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And then when we get married and they don't happen... It's really hard to unwind that cord and reel that back in, you know?

Ryan: Yeah! Which is why we're talking about it today!

Selena: Okay!

Ryan: So, it's going to be a good talk! And we will see you on the side!

[00:01:44] <Intro Sequence>

[00:02:17] **Selena:** Here we are on the other side of 28 days of straight rain, people! I'll tell ya that!

Ryan: 28 days of *straight* rain!

Selena: We're looking at *sunshine!* Not a cloud in the sky.

Ryan: Oh, on the other side of that, yes!

Selena: It is—

Ryan: Man!

Selena: Golden, beautiful. These are the days that—Ah! These are just... breath and fresh air.

Ryan: Yeah! Just in time for my allergies to kick in and my face to swell up like a potato. [*Selena giggles and Ryan laughs*] Actually, I don't know what happened! I took the two older daughters on an adventure over this last weekend, and we went for a swim. So, my parents were at the beach and they didn't have room in their place. And so, we got room in another inn! [*Both chuckles*] But this inn had a pool! Well, let's just say it's a beach town, and so, there's not a lot of priority around... this town in general [*Selena snickers*], let alone this hotel, let alone this pool! [*Selena giggles and Ryan inhales*] Anyway! I think something in the pool caused an allergic reaction.

Selena: Yeah. Your face was pretty swollen for the last three days. [*Snickers*]

Ryan: Yeah, yeah. So, either that or spring—

Selena: And we're supposed to record videos for our folks on feeling!

Ryan: Yeah. I think I'm going to have to push it back a little bit, 'cause [*Both snicker and then Ryan laughs*] ...

Selena: You were like a big... cherry-face. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: Yep! Loved that! It's great.

Selena: Hey, I love cherries! So...

Ryan: Mm!

Selena: Quiet!

Ryan: I just want to— Never mind. [*Both laugh*] There's nothing I could say there [*Selena laughs*] that didn't sound overly inuendo.

Selena: Talking about shared responsibilities today. But before we do that, let's definitely dive into... giving thanks. [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: [*Laughing*] To our listeners.

Ryan: So, I'm going to go ahead and make this announcement. All right? If you're listening to this, we consider you some of our closest confidants in terms of all things Fierce Marriage.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: I'm going to say it! I'm going to say it.

Selena: Okay.

- Ryan:** I've been holding this back for a year now.
- Selena:** Uh-oh.
- Ryan:** But we are starting... [*Selena gasps*] Fierce Parenting.
- Selena:** [*Selena quietly*] Mm-hm! Pshhh! [*Ryan laughs*] Boom! Mike drop. [*Sound of something hitting the table*]
- Ryan:** Fierce Parenting. [*Selena laughs*] Okay. So, we were married for about nine years before we started Fierce Marriage and the whole attitude is that we're co- traveling. We don't have it figured out, but we're just going to live kind of transparently and out in the open, and just going to show up every day, declare the gospel in these various spaces and try to apply it in very helpful, tangible ways around the various pain points in marriage and in parenting now! So, our oldest is six years old.
- Selena:** So, we got to figure it out, people!
- Ryan:** So, yeah! [*Selena cackles*] Whew, but... But the whole—
- Selena:** [*Laughing*] I'm joking!
- Ryan:** And I *think*—
- Selena:** We don't have it figured out all!
- Ryan:** No, we don't! Yeah. And I think our youngest... [*Exhales*] We don't want to feel peace about having more kids. We also don't feel peace about closing that door completely. [*Inhales*] And so—
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** We're not sure, but—
- Selena:** It's kind of where we're at!
- Ryan:** We're not sure, but we're kind of in a stage in life where we feel like it's a good time to start...
- Selena:** Just sharing.
- Ryan:** Sharing and going through some of these things.
- Selena:** Being more transparent in some of these things. Yeah!
- Ryan:** So, here's the big ask that we have to make of you, our listeners, is we're wondering what is going to be the most useful way— So, two things. What's

the most useful way to communicate to you, whether that's a podcast, through a blog, through just social media, and through whatever the various avenues are?

[00:05:10] **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: What's going to be most beneficial to you? But also, what are the topics that are the most relevant to your life?

Selena: Hot!

Ryan: [*Inhales*] Yeah! So...

Selena: Produce hot topics.

Ryan: So, I have two things to ask of you! The first one is go to fierceparenting.com.

Selena: Ho!

Ryan: There's a form there. The site is still being built! We're making it as we go and as this develops. But I didn't want to do it in a vacuum! So, there's a form there. And on the form, we ask you basically two questions, is what parenting topics matter most to you, and what types of content are most important to your day-to-day life? And it's just a form! You just select all that apply and then submit it! That will be so valuable to us! But it'll also give us an idea of what to talk about, but how to talk about it.

Selena: And where to start, probably.

Ryan: Yeah! And where to start!

Selena: Jimothy Halpert has put his name there.

Ryan: Yep. That's the—[*Laughs*]

Selena: [*Laughing*] Scranton_sales3@dundermifflin.com [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: Yeah. You have to go to fierceparenting.com to see what Selena's talking about.

Selena: [*Exhales slowly*] This is so great!

Ryan: So, please go there! And the second big thing we have to ask of you is find us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. If you're on any of those platforms, please come follow us. Be a part of that conversation. We're starting at *ground zero*, literally ground zero.

Selena: [*Quietly*] Oooh.

- Ryan:** And we would love to just see how many parents we can rally around the gospel, really. And so, the premise for Fierce Parenting is this: kids are blessing—
- Selena:** Oh, yeah!
- Ryan:** Children or blessing, family is God's idea, and parenting *is* discipleship. Those are kind of the *three* core tenants behind Fierce Marriage. We feel like— Fierce Parenting! Excuse me. That's going to be tough!
- Selena:** It's going to be tough!
- Ryan:** Behind Fierce Parenting is any kind of issue that you struggle with as a parent, dealing with kids, dealing with *life* in general, they're all can be kind of distilled down to...
- Selena:** One of those three.
- Ryan:** Being rooted in one of those beliefs that are mistaken.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** So, [*Inhales*] if we don't think kids are actually a blessing, then we're going to think X, Y or Z. If we don't think family is actually God's idea, not our own idea, then we might struggle with...
- Selena:** Hm...
- Ryan:** In terms of making it a priority and those types of things.
- Selena:** Mm!
- Ryan:** Or if we don't see parenting as discipleship, we'll tend to lose patience with our kids, or we'll expect more from them than perhaps we should.
- Selena:** Or we'll just—
- Ryan:** As little sinners needing grace and needing sanctification.
- Selena:** Yeah. Or we just don't deal with them. [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** So, yeah!
- Selena:** That was a whole 'nother podcast, obviously!
- Ryan:** You guys... Yeah.
- Selena:** That's a whole 'nother *realm*, so...

Ryan: Yeah! So, I made that announcement!

Selena: Get on board!

Ryan: We didn't actually talk about that.

Selena: Nope!

Ryan: I meant to make it last week, but I'm behind the eight ball in making that site happen.

Selena: That's cool. Just go ahead!

Ryan: [*Inhales*] So, here we go, you guys! So, please find fierceparenting.com. Find Fierce Parenting at Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. We hope to grow alongside you there. Okay! And then our normal housekeeping. Make—

Selena: Stop using that word! You don't want to use that word.

Ryan: Okay. I'm sorry. It's chauvinist! [*Selena laughs*] It's chauvinist word! [*Both laugh*]

Selena: [*Laughing*] It's not... You're the one—

Ryan: We're talking about housekeeping today!

Selena: You're the one that said don't use it, so I was trying to help you. But that was not helpful.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Anyways! Thanks to all our listeners, raters, reviewers. *Please*, if you have not rated or reviewed, left a review, please do that! The short—

Ryan: Boom!

Selena: *Short* reviews are great! Short, right to the punch. [*Ryan snickers loudly*] That was just— Nailed that!

Ryan: Nailed it!

Selena: Nailed it! [*Both laughing*]

Ryan: [*Laughing*] The second one: if you have a question, go to fiercemarriage.com/podcast. Ask it there. There's a phone number there: 971-333-1120. If you want to be a supporter of Fierce Marriage, everything that all the supporters on Patreon contribute to keeping this ad-free and having transcriptions made, and—

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: Eventually, we're going to be doing events. It'll help build the infrastructure for all that. So really, you are on mission. Go to patreon.com/fiercemarriage. There's links everywhere where links can be had.

Selena: Also, if you want to join the launch team...

Ryan: Man! There's a lot today. Yeah! Go to seethroughbook.com.

Selena: New book coming out!

Ryan: New book coming out, and you can be part of the insider launch team.

Selena: Hey-ohhh!

Ryan: *[Takes on a special announcer voice]* Insider Access, exclusive content!

Selena: *[Giggles]* You're funny.

Ryan: *[Continuing in special voice]* Free giveaways!

Selena: Oh, my.

Ryan: *[Resumes normal voice]* Yeah. We'll see what happens. *[Both laugh]* But it's going to be a lot of fun!

Selena: It is going to be cool! We're really excited about this, but—

Ryan: It's all about transparency.

Selena: And I'm transparently speaking. I'm very excited about this book. *[Ryan laughs]* Is that right? *[Selena laughs]*

Ryan: *[Laughing]* That's so good!

Selena: Still a gratuitous? *[Laughs]*

Ryan: So, that'll come out in May! And so, if you want to be part of that launch team, please go to that URL! [Seethroughbook.com](https://seethroughbook.com)!

Selena: All right! So, today we're talking about shared responsibility in marriage.

Ryan: Mm!

Selena: What does that mean? What is "shared responsibility," Ryan?

Ryan: Yeah! Okay. I mentioned in the last episode, I think, that we did a poll a while back—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: With all our readers and our listeners, and they came back with some of the biggest issues that they deal with, 'cause the question was, "What are the biggest—"

Selena: Tensions.

Ryan: "Reasons for—" Yeah! "What are the *biggest* pain points—"

Selena: Oh, yes.

Ryan: "In your marriage?" And they came back and said, "Communication's number one." And the second one was arguments around shared responsibilities.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Or chores or just ongoing upkeep of life.

Selena: [*Snickering*] Adulting together.

Ryan: Adulting, yes! So, what does—

Selena: How do we adult together? [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: According to scripture?

[00:10:00] **Ryan:** Yeah. How do we— [*Chuckles*]

Selena: So—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Yeah. Talking about— So, today what we're going to talk about or we're going to kind of share a little bit of our story, before we got married and all of that. [*Inhales*] We're going to share what—

Ryan: Our expectations coming into the marriage.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: [*Quietly*] Yeah.

Selena: We're going to share where God has brought us to today, bringing scripture into this and examining *Jesus*, obviously.

Ryan: John 13!

Selena: John 13. And then, talking about how our hearts tend to respond contractually with each other in this versus covenantally. We're going to blow that out.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And then, how can we get in agreement around some of these shared responsibilities?

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: Get very tangible of who does what and why kind of thing.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: [*Inhales*] So...

Ryan: Love it.

Selena: But— Go ahead!

Ryan: So, do we start with scripture then? So... Right?

Selena: [*Scoffs*] Duh!

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] Duh. We got to start there!

Selena: [*Chuckling*] We *always* start with scripture!

Ryan: And the reason being is that it's really easy to kind of form opinions around this. But—

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: I think, let's anchor ourselves in one specific *idea* of scripture. And—

Selena: Let's let the *authority* of scripture, right?

Ryan: Yeah. And namely—

Selena: "Authorize" us.

Ryan: Servanthood [*Selena chuckles*], as displayed in the person of Christ.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And the person and *work* of Christ.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: *Then* we can start talking about how this might apply in the various ways. Okay?

Selena: Yes! Perfect.

Ryan: So, Selena, I want to read. It's a longer passage.

Selena: We have 17 verses.

Ryan: But they're so good!

Selena: M'kay!

Ryan: But they're so good!

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: So, listener, if you're working out or in your car—

Selena: Here's your scripture for today.

Ryan: Or if you're... watering your azaleas.

Selena: [*Giggling*] John 13. "Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet. Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, do you wash my feet?' Jesus answered him, 'What I am doing, you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, 'The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.' For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'" Verse 12, "When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, 'Do you

understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

Ryan: Wow. Yeah.

Selena: I think this is interesting, too, because we're talking about... Okay, I want to be careful! It's just kind of a very basic illustration of cleaning, right? It's a literal and physical, but also... metaphorical and spiritual meaning of washing and cleaning. But it's just so powerful for this point.

Ryan: Well a point it that it's a very *lowly* task. Right? It's a *servant* task—

Selena: Right!

Ryan: That He's taking on, not because he's being subjugated by them, but instead he is *choosing* to—

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: Serve out of love!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Because He's wanting to model to them...

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: This is how you love one another—

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Is you *serve* one another. So, yeah, it's a very literal cleaning.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And, not that you were doing this, but it's not to say, “Oh! Then we should be *cleaning* a lot more in our lives!” [*Selena laughs*] Right? The point is, we should be *servicing*!

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And a lot of times, service looks like these types of acts.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: But it looks like a lot of different types of acts, too.

Selena: Right, right!

Ryan: But yeah, so that's, I mean—

Selena: Well, and we see Jesus. He came not to serve, but, I mean, sorry! He came not to be served, but to serve.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Right? And so, I think that's...

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: The one person who is King, right? And has every authority, all of heaven and earth have been given to Him, like an authority. And *He* is the one who could be like, "*You* should be washing my feet!"

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And He could be completely... right about that.

Ryan: That's verse 14. He says, "'If I then, your Lord and Teacher.'" Those are both capitalized, okay? So, they're *proper* descriptors. "'Have washed your feet.'" "'If I've washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet, for I have given you, as an example—'"

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: "'That you also should do as I have done to you.'"

Selena: Right!

Ryan: "'Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master.'"

Selena: And Matthew 20:28 is, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." And Mark—

[00:15:00] **Ryan:** Mm.

Selena: I think we found this in every gospel, except for Luke. So, three. And Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man came *not* to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So...

Ryan: I mean, this has huge implications because, I mean, we could talk about the foundational marriage passages, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Like Ephesians 5, "A husband shall love his wife—"

Selena: "As Christ loved the church."

Ryan: "As Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That's massive, right? A lot of time people read that verse, and we can even tend to read that verse and kind of gloss over that part, and then just get stuck on the part where it's like, "Wives, submit to your husbands." [*Chuckles*]

Selena: Right. But if you overlay these two scriptures, right, like you have John 13, you have Mark— What did we just read? Matthew and Mark, where Jesus came not to be served, but to serve.

Ryan: Mm-hm!

Selena: And then you have... Ephesians—or Galatians. Is it Galatians 5? Ephesians 5, where it's, "Christ loved the church." So, in *servicing*, He is *loving*, right?

Ryan: Mm! Well, it's funny you mention Galatians 5, 'cause I think that's talking about basically—

Selena: Fruits of the Spirit.

Ryan: Being many parts of one body.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And the fruits of the spirit, and how we all have our different kind of roles to play!

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And it's all kind of in a mutual selflessness.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And serving the greater...

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: And the greater being, in this case, our marriage, our spouse, the union God's given us.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And so, okay! That's our foundational scripture looking at this, because it does paint, obviously, a very good picture of servanthood! This passage is not really about marriage. It's about service.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, when we talk about— [*Selena chuckles*] So, I...

Selena: It's about *Jesus* and marriage, which...

Ryan: Well—

Selena: Jesus, again, is...

Ryan: It's about Jesus in service.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And therefore, it's—

Selena: Sorry!

Ryan: We're applying it to this—

Selena: Specific event.

Ryan: Specific context of marriage. And so, *how* are we, then, going to serve each other within our marriage? Right? So, we are—

Selena: Right!

Ryan: We are wanting to build— Okay. You're listening to the Fierce Marriage Podcast 'cause you care about your marriage. You're hoping to find some help. But probably more than that, you want to obey God, and you want to honor Him with your marriage!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And so, this is maybe one avenue that you go about doing that! So, here we're going to talk about what it means to be a Christ-like servant.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: In the context of marriage.

Selena: Right. And rewind like a few years ago. Well—

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: Like 15 years ago. [*Selena snickers*] We're going on like 70 years of marriage...

Ryan: Yeah! So, how have we been?

Selena: So—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Before we got married, we had kind of some of these ideals of how our normal day-to-day *married* life would look. I think the biggest things we were excited about were sleeping in the same bed together and going home from church together, because those were two things that we didn't *do* while we were dating or engaged.

Ryan: Right.

Selena: So, there was kind of this big exciting part of marriage, right? The honeymoon phase, they say. And then kind of a day-to-day life starts happening. So, the first couple years of our marriage were, *by all standards*, I guess, *by all worldly standards*, they seemed like *great* and successful. We had a house, we had good jobs. We had—

Ryan: [*Laughs*] I don't know that we would have said—

Selena: Paid our bills... But we didn't have a lot of time at home! We weren't connecting. We weren't growing in the things of God, I felt like.

Ryan: You... Okay.

Selena: Am I jumping?

Ryan: You jumped! Because we were—

Selena: I jump a lot.

Ryan: [*Scoffs*] We didn't have a house until—

Selena: Just try to keep up.

Ryan: Our *third* year of marriage.

Selena: Okay!

Ryan: And that was hard fought!

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: And we rented, and I was a janitor. So, let's do this. Okay. I want to kind of contrast, okay? And we're just going to use ourselves as a little isolated little case study.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Let's contrast our expectations headed into marriage from engaged into the first year or two of marriage.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: And what our expectations and how that affected our view of God, our view of each other. And then, let's look at maybe our view now! Which, of course, is not perfect, but I think we've grown in these ways. So, with that said, I just want to ask Selena, a young Selena, 21-year-old Selena, [*Selena chuckles*] drop-dead beautiful and the love of my life. You're headed into marriage...

Selena: Only 21-year-old Selena is that?

Ryan: [*Ryan scoffs*] No, you *are*! You got more beautiful every day. [*Selena laughs*] So... Husband points! [*Selena laughs harder*] Got to say that, guys! You got to say it—

Selena: Husband saving his bacon right there, is what that is! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: But you know what? It's true. It's true, because I look at you and I just see—

Selena: You're sweet.

Ryan: I see my bride, but I also see the mother of my children.

Selena: You're sweet.

Ryan: And a thousand other things. So—

Selena: Or like wine, man. We just get better with time. [*Inhales*] So—

Ryan: Or bitter!

Selena: 21-year-old— [*Ryan laughs*]

Ryan: [*Ryan laughing and Selena chuckles*] I'm just kidding.

Selena: All right!

Ryan: Okay, so—

Selena: We're done!

Ryan: What were you expecting?

Selena: I was expecting...

Ryan: As a young wife.

Selena: You to *provide*... all my needs! [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: Really?! I mean, I feel—

Selena: Well, I think I just looked—

Ryan: You're saying that jokingly.

Selena: No! But I knew that you would provide for me, but I felt like it was a team effort, like we'd both have jobs in terms of income. You provide *emotionally* for me, spiritually for me. We would be best friends and live together and have sex and do all that, and that would be great! That's what marriage is, right? You just get to live [*Ryan scoffs*] with your best friend, and you go grocery shopping together. [*Ryan chuckles*] It's so much fun all the time! [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: It's just having a date all this time!

Selena: Uh-huh. All the time.

Ryan: It's a date! Yeah. Okay!

Selena: And it never gets old. Right? That's my idealistic 21-year-old Selena—

Ryan: [*Exhales*] Did you have expectations?

Selena: *Stepping* into marriage.

Ryan: Did you have expectations around... who would be doing laundry, and who would be doing dishes? And—

Selena: We would be—

Ryan: Cooking dinner?

[00:20:00] **Selena:** Doing *everything* together. [*Both laugh*] *Everything!*

Ryan: Yeah, that's funny. I'm laughing because I know that's probably what you were thinking! [*Both laugh*]

Selena: Well, let's just be honest. We tried to do this one time already, record this, and it was like 10 to 20 minutes of this. And we're like, "This is too much." I think I just encapsulated that whole 20 minutes in that one sentence.

Ryan: [Laughs] You wanted us to do everything together.

Selena: "We would do *everything* together!" I'm a very...

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Quality time person.

Ryan: Yeah, yeah. And because we had been dating and we did everything we could do together, it...

Selena: It just kind of...

Ryan: It followed.

Selena: Flow— Yeah. Just flowed into it.

Ryan: It followed that course

Selena: And then when we *didn't* do everything together [Ryan snickers and Selena chuckles], when I was finding myself doing the womanly duties at home, I got a little frustrated [Ryan laughs] because I was looking at it through that lens. And I—

Ryan: The womanly duties. [Laughs]

Selena: Like laundry, it feels like! [Chuckles]

Ryan: [Chuckling] Okay. That's offensive. That was offensive. I'm kidding!

Selena: Okay. The womanly "fingers" here.

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: Duties. Plus, I was in—

Ryan: The homemaking things.

Selena: College. And you have these professors—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: That are like, "This is not her role! She shouldn't have to do it. It's lesser!" [Ryan laughs] Just totally attacking all things of God.

Ryan: [Chuckling] Okay. This is—

Selena: Okay. Go ahead!

Ryan: This is rich.

Selena: You're turn!

Ryan: This is rich.

Selena: What was 20-year-old Ryan? What were *your* expectations?

Ryan: So, I didn't expect that you would— I just want to say this. I honestly didn't expect that you would just be doing all the womanly things. [Laughs]

Selena: [Chuckles] I know!

Ryan: Okay. 'Cause—

Selena: I didn't expect to either. But then when they started to happen, then—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Then I was like, "Wait, wait, wait! These are the things my *professors* were telling me *shouldn't* happen!" [Both laugh]

Ryan: Yeah. So, yeah, I was expecting—

Selena: Yeah, yeah, yeah. God's word. [Laughs]

Ryan: I was expecting... I think I was expec— I was "embracing," I should say. I was embracing for the full responsibility of making sure that you were provided for.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Because I fully, still to this day, I mean, God just wired in, and I think He wires it into us as men, that we are meant to protect and provide! That's just how we're wired. I will gladly bring home the bacon, so-to-speak. And I don't honestly even want to spend it. I don't even care! You can do what you will—

Selena: Spend all the bacon?

Ryan: [Ryan chuckles] Spend the bacon! [Selena chuckles] Take it straight to the store! [Selena laughs] Just pull it out of your wallet. [Both snicker] No! But I'm not motivated by anything other than that, I should say.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: I just want to provide for you and our daughters. Now... So, that's kind of, I think, hardwired into a lot of men.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Not equally, but... And that's not to say—

Selena: And there's a lot that feeds into that.

Ryan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Selena: It could be cultural, could be personality, could be—

Ryan: So, I'm not saying that that's in any way the perfect...

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: There's ways that I distort that.

Selena: There's ways that we provide—Yeah. And there's ways you provide and—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Other husbands provide in different ways, I think.

Ryan: So, I think as a young husband, or young fiancée, I was thinking, “Okay. I'm having to provide for my wife. How can I do this?” At the time, two years prior to our wedding, I was working—

Selena: Two months.

Ryan: Sorry. Two months prior to our wedding [*Selena laughs*], I was a janitor! No, no! I hadn't gotten a janitor job yet. I hadn't gotten the big job yet.

Selena: And that was the big time! [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: I did groundskeeper. I was groundskeeper Willie [*Both laugh*] at the church! [*Ryan takes on an accent*] Groundskeeper Willie! [*Ryan resumes normal speech*]

Selena: What's that from?

Ryan: That's from The Simpsons.

Selena: Oh. Are you really quoting that?

Ryan: He's timeless.

Selena: Oh, okay.

Ryan: Groundskeeper Willie is timeless.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: And hilarious.

Selena: And you were a dish boy!

Ryan: And I was a dish— *[Both laugh, and Ryan takes on an accent again]* “Dish boy!” *[Selena laughs]* “Fetch me that hat jug.” *[Ryan resumes normal speech]*

Selena: You’re washing dishes...

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: At like a pub, because you didn't really have a job. I think I was working at Starbucks part time.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So, we were like, “Yep! Somehow, we're going to afford a really nice place to live!” *[Laughs]*

Ryan: I was making ten bucks an hour, and...

Selena: This was like 10 years ago, people. *[Laughs]*

Ryan: This was 17 years ago. *[Chuckles]*

Selena: It was a long time ago!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: It's *pittance!*

Ryan: But even then, that was not a lot. And so, I quickly realized that the dishwashing thing was not sustainable. The landscaping thing was not sustainable. By God's grace, and I mean that, I got a job as a janitor at an apartment building that was across the freeway from where we were going to school, college.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: ‘Cause we had transferred to the same state school.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, yeah! It was like a coup, right?

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: I got it like two months before, and they were going to let us go on our honeymoon and they're going to pay our rent pre-tax!

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And it was like a benefit thing. And so, yeah, I was mostly consumed with that side of it, because when you're that young, you don't have any that figured out.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Now as far as bringing into the marriage expectations around managing life, I had kind of just assumed that we would figure it out, I think.

Selena: Yeah, I think we both did because we were so externally focused on our careers, our...

Ryan: Well, it's going to school with this—

Selena: Going to school, yeah.

Ryan: Aspirations of a career.

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: It was kind of a certain *season* of our life, where we were kind of, yeah, that whole coming of age, what we were going to do.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: And... I think the questions hadn't really been asked about—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Our relationship. We just assumed that we'd nail it because we nailed it when we're dating. We were great engaged. *Finally*, we're married, so, we're just going to keep rocking it here. Right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: We're just going to be checking off the boxes, doing the right thing and making money. [*Inhales*] So, it wasn't until after, I think, probably after our first five years of marriage that God really kind of broke us in a lot of ways, after us

going overseas and you getting sick, which is all in our book; you should check it out! [*Inhales*] It wasn't until we realized that we were not operating in a spirit of generosity, we were not serving one another well.

[00:25:13] **Ryan:** [*Quietly*] Mm.

Selena: We were being very self-serving. We were acting. I think there's just two ways you can kind of look at this shared responsibility. And this is kind of where it comes from our story of we were dealing with each other very contractually! We didn't really—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Understand the idea of marital covenant and what that meant! This is early. Again, this is early Ryan and Selena.

Ryan: So, just as a clear example of that, say, but yeah. You're absolutely right contractually. But as a clear example, I would be... So, I was doing web development.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: We had moved out of state and we were living hand-to-mouth. And I was grinding!

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: To basically build a company of web... and client base to provide for our family. And *you* were doing photography. And so, you were earning. But a lot of times it was disproportionate in the sense that you were earning, but I was earning, say, 80% of the income.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And you did Starbucks as well.

Selena: Well, and it was very hand-to-mouth. It was very... by the seat of our pants! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Oh, yeah! We went paycheck to paycheck. Your rent's due tomorrow. I hope that invoice gets paid so that I can pay rent. That, I mean, seriously, that sort of thing.

Selena: [*Chuckling*] It's where we—

Ryan: Or I hope that check doesn't bounce.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, I was working probably 18 hours some days. Most days more like 12 hours.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, I'd be in the office just grinding...

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: 'Cause it was in an apartment, and we had two bedrooms. One was the office [*Selena snickers*], one was the bedroom.

Selena: Yep!

Ryan: And I would come out and I'd be like, "Well, what have you been doing all day?!" [*Selena laughs*] Like, "I've been working!"

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And you had other things. You were serving at Young Life! You were helping with a local barn. And so...

Selena: [Exhales like a horse] Yeah.

Ryan: I'm just saying very tangibly.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: And so, like the dishes would be done or the dogs—

Selena: They *wouldn't* be done.

Ryan: Sorry. The dishes wouldn't be done, or just the house would be in disarray.

Selena: There's— Yeah.

Ryan: Or whatever that pain point is.

Selena: It's amazing how those things kind of just light a fire [*Selena chuckles*] of just...

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: "Okay, time to fight! Dukes up."

Ryan: [*Inhales*] Right! And so, you get on the defense because you feel like, "Oh, he's just doing that because he's being kind of just alpha male!"

Selena: He's chauvinistic! Or—

Ryan: “And being chauvinistic—”

Selena: Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: “And not loving me!” And I'm thinking, “Man! I've worked,” this is me being innocent. I'm thinking [*Selena cackles*] ... No! But I'm thinking, “Hey, I worked all day long!”

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: “You should be contributing to this household as well.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And you're thinking, “Well, I did contribute. I did this work, even though it may not have had as much income! But I worked—”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “Almost as many hours!”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Or, “You didn't see all this other stuff that I did.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or...

Selena: And we, I mean—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: We tended to do that a lot, I think, in our marriage.

Ryan: Mm-hm!

Selena: We still have those tendencies. But again, coming back to these two ideas of contractual versus covenantal. So...

Ryan: Right.

Selena: There's these two ideas of how we can share responsibility within our marriage, and we tended to deal with each other contractually.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: At the beginning of our marriage. And then into— I would say just in the recent years, God's really shown us this whole idea—

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Of what covenant means, through His nature and who He is.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: We talk a lot about covenant through the podcast. So, you can check out other episodes. But covenantal, this covenantal response can really only come from our identity in Christ.

Ryan: Mm!

Selena: And *knowing* who *God* is, knowing His covenantal nature, understanding Him.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And then, understanding who we are.

Ryan: Well, I mean, and that goes back to the verse we read in John 13. It says, “You call me teacher and Lord and you were right for so I am. If I then, your lord and teacher have washed your feet you also ought to wash the feet of one others—” [*Both laugh*] Nailed it! “You also ought to wash one another's feet.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, when you say our identity in Christ... Okay. So, we're called to be image bearers. We're image bearers of God. We're also called be conformed into the image of Christ.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Sanctified through the power of the Holy Spirit. Now, what is the attitude that Jesus has in that scene?

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: Is it tit for tat? Is it [*Selena chuckles*] ... contractual? Is it, “Hey, you guys! Wash my feet and I'll wash yours. Hey, here's my cloak! I'm taking it off.”

Selena: Or, “Hey, you just called me—”

Ryan: Which, by the way, people said that He—

Selena: Teacher and Lord. Does that mean anything to you? [*Cackles*]

Ryan: [Chuckling] Yeah. If I'm your teacher and Lord, wash these feet! You know?

Selena: Right, right!

Ryan: No. He said, "Yeah, you regard me in this way, but let me show you..."

Selena: I'm going to model—Yeah.

Ryan: "How to regard one another."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: To be servants of each other.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: To be selfless, to—

Selena: To value one another! [Exhales]

Ryan: Yeah, to value— I mean, come on. You've probably seen this. If you've been in church for any period of time, or you've watched YouTube at all up on this topic [Selena scoffs lightly], it'll be like somebody will explain to you what it meant to wash another's feet.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: All right. But you had sandals, but your feet were *caked* with dirt. And it wasn't like you had sudsy soap [Selena snickers], and all this other stuff to use and scrub brushes. It was you take your cloak and you would get the dirt off their feet, and you would wipe them dry with your cloak! And inevitably your cloak would get dirty itself.

[00:30:01] **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: And it's not just *any* dirt! It's not just... this benign dirt.

Selena: It's like dirt from the streets, where there was no sewers, or toilet—

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: Sanitary areas, right?

Ryan: It was *extraordinarily* dirty.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, our King, right?

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: God Himself, God in the flesh, has submitted Himself to serving—

Selena: Lowering Himself *again*...

Ryan: Lowering Himself—

Selena: It feels like.

Ryan: Not only He took on flesh, but He is now *servicing* us! The people who've betrayed Him.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Go all the way back to Israelites, who they whored, it says—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Against God. The whored themselves out as the bride as God's bride, and they were an unfaithful bride. And so, here He is serving. So... Okay. [*Scuffs*]

Selena: Yeah. When we talk about servanthood and responding—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: From our covenant, we're responding, again, from a place that is understanding the gospel—

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: That has *seen* the model of Jesus and seen who He is. And knowing that God sees us...

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Through Christ, it just *breaks* me! Right? Because we are *not* Christ. We are nothing *close* to Christ.

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: But *because* of Christ, we are made new and we are covered by the blood of Christ. Therefore, God, when He sees us, He sees *Jesus*.

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: And to be in that place...

Ryan: That is our starting place.

Selena: It humbles you!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: That's our starting place. That's where we can come and say, "Okay, you know what? Ryan, I can serve you in this area. I know that me doing this is a means of loving you as Christ loves me. I can only love you because Christ first love me." Right? To extend this grace is extending a smidgen of grace that God has just *poured* out oceans upon oceans for me. Right?

Ryan: Mm. So, that gets rid of *all* sense of self-righteousness, of indignation.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or feeling *just* in being—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Angry.

Selena: Right. There's pride there, right?

Ryan: That pride, yeah. And so, they've said they're are studies that say righteous anger, that it fires and triggers the same pleasure centers of the brain as an addictive drug.

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: So, there's this dopamine hit that happens, or *pleasure* that happens, when you feel self-righteous anger! Not self-righteous, but righteous anger!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, "You said you were going to do this, and you didn't!" And so, it almost feels good to be mad.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Is what I'm saying. And so, but if *we* have as our starting point, like you said, Selena, this place—

Selena: If Jesus is—[*Chuckles*] Yeah.

Ryan: Of somebody who's a recipient of God's grace—

Selena: Mm-hm.

- Ryan:** The person who's sitting in the chair while Jesus washing my feet...
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** How can I hold—
- Selena:** What else could my response be? But to—
- Ryan:** Yeah. But to—
- Selena:** But to love and serve.
- Ryan:** Love and serve, and how that service looks. It doesn't mean that you just enable laziness, okay?
- Selena:** Right, right.
- Ryan:** It means that instead of flying off the handle and feeling righteous anger—
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** You communicate in a way that's more productive. Again, it doesn't mean that that person, you're just going to— You still have to work to an agreement on this stuff.
- Selena:** Right. We definitely have to gain agreement and we can't just *divide*.
- Ryan:** But it's not going to divide and create the schism in your household.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** And it's, again, it's not like, "Okay. Well, you *said* you're going to do this, so why didn't you do it?" It's more of, "Okay. This is where things are falling. Please know that even though it's falling here and maybe it seems like you might have more responsibility in this area, like I'm doing things that you're not always seeing and you're doing things that I'm not always seeing."
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** So *truly*, if you *do* want to try to divide and find out equal stuff, I'm saying this because this has been my whole argument for our whole marriage, and I'm like, "I do all these things, and you don't see!" And you're like, "Do you want to go upstairs and work on the website? Do you want to go make sure all the bills are paid? And all of this is happening too! And this..." And I'm like, "Suddenly, changing diapers doesn't seem so bad," right?

Ryan: [*Inhales*] Right.

Selena: This is where I think the grace comes in—

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: Is just to remember, *if* you guys have wal— We've walked through this. You're gaining some agreement on some things. When it starts to creep in that you're starting to question whether or not he or she, your spouse, is fulfilling their *duties*, remember that...

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: That [*Snickers*] yeah. They are probably doing more than you think. Right? Extend that grace.

Ryan: And if—Yeah.

Selena: And probably do. And if it doesn't *feel* like they are, then ask them with humility. Approach those conversations—

Ryan: Yeah, and I think that's where we're getting to, is—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And I don't want to be too prescriptive because there are instances where maybe there's an unequal balance here.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And there are spouses who abuse this servant—

Selena: And that's—Yes. That's what I was trying to say, is you have to first gain agreement, I think, on these shared responsibilities.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: *Through* generosity.

Ryan: So, it starts with an agreement *around* who we are in Christ—

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: And what that means for how we... *act* in love toward one another.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And we serve one another from this place of security and humbleness.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And grace because of Jesus.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So... I don't know! One clear example— So... this could be applied to anything. I mean, you have to apply it to your own family. You have to apply it to your own marriage. We had one where Selena, for a long time, you were in charge of balancing the checkbook and making sure all the [*Selena scoffs*] bills were paid. Remember that?

Selena: Yes. But now I think I have a little bit of number dyslexia or something because it *never* worked out quite right! Every month—

Ryan: It never did.

[00:35:00] **Selena:** Never did!

Ryan: It never did! And it's not because you're dumb! You're smart!

Selena: But I felt like I was dumb, because I was like—

Ryan: Well, and as a husband, if I wasn't careful, I would make you feel that way because I was frustrated.

Selena: You did make me feel that way sometimes.

Ryan: And so—

Selena: You may not have meant to, but I did, 'cause I was like, "I worked so hard to try to get this right! And it's still not right." [*Ryan laughs*] "And now you're mad at me! That's not right. And I'm trying, like..." [*Selena laughs*]

Ryan: So, instead of fighting and fighting and fighting through that—

Selena: "I'm trying my best!" [*Laughs*]

Ryan: And we did have lots of fights over it. I think one day I was just like, "You know what, Sel? I'm just going to start doing that." And it's not because you can't— You can probably figure out. You *did* figure it out the majority the time. But I just said, "This is causing a lot of issues. So, let me just take that part of our household and I'll just do it."

Selena: Yes, Mr. AP Calculus! Please [*Ryan laughs*] take [*Selena laughs*] the responsibility of finances!" Well, the—

Ryan: They're not the same, by the way. 'Cause—

Selena: I think this is kind of an interesting—

Ryan: I flunked out of accounting, so... *[Both laugh]*

Selena: *[Laughing]* Well... Okay!

Ryan: *[Laughing]* It was not a good idea.

Selena: Well, this is an interesting point, though, right? Because—

Ryan: *[In an accent]* The derivative of this—"

Selena: *[Sound of a hand smacking something as Selena chuckles]* Stop!

Ryan: "Income statement is..." *[Ryan laughs]*

Selena: You're better with numbers, I feel like.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And you understand that side, *naturally!* You have a natural *bent* towards those things. I have to work, I think, twice or three times as hard to understand how you understand those things.

Ryan: Right!

Selena: Versus give me something tangible to do and I will do it without complaining. I will work hard, and it will be done! And would you argue that?

Ryan: Not in the least. And I think you hit on a really important note.

Selena: Like I'm a workhorse versus, in some areas.

Ryan: Selena, you're—

Selena: And then there's—

Ryan: You're the hardest worker I know.

Selena: Okay, but I'm not trying to say that. Sorry. Thank you!

Ryan: No, but what I'm— Let me finish this real fast.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: 'Cause I know you got a lot of stuff going on in your mind. I think you hit the nail on the head in that we are a *team!* We divide—

Selena: There it is!

Ryan: We divide— [*Laughs*] We divide labor in the sense that I'm not, as a contract, like, "You have to do this and I'm going to do this. If you don't do that, then you're in trouble."

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: It's, "Let's do what we're most inclined to be successful at."

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: "For the mutual enjoyment of our family."

Selena: Right!

Ryan: "To serve each other, not because I'm just doing my tasks."

Selena: Or you're better at making money. Right? There's this thing about income and careers, right?

Ryan: Ohhh, yes.

Selena: Like if he's—

Ryan: Yep.

Selena: If he's the bacon-getter [*Chuckles*], right?

Ryan: The hunter-gatherer.

Selena: Yeah! If one of you is—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And it's mostly the him, right? If the husband is the provider, the worker, then that's how it should be. Right? But the Bible's not really clear about that.

Ryan: What do you mean, that's how it should be?

Selena: Like our income—

Ryan: What did you mean by that?

Selena: Doesn't equal spiritual household roles. So, if the husband is a stay-at-home dad—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And the mother has a well-paying job—

Ryan: Okay, okay. Yeah.

Selena: Sorry, that may not have been very clear there.

Ryan: Nah. I see—

Selena: You look like you were sweating! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Let me say this. I'm like, "Oh, my gah, what is she saying?" [*Selena laughs harder*]

Selena: Good thing you can delete it!

Ryan: No. [*Chuckles*]

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

Ryan: We'll leave it in. But I— [*Selena laughs followed by Ryan laughing*] We'll just let people just sweat with us for a second. [*Selena laughs*]

Selena: I'm sorry...

Ryan: I think what you're saying is that we tend to conflate the ability to earn income with the importance of one's roll in the household.

Selena: Right! We're trying to overlay these—

Ryan: And that's not the case.

Selena: These spiritual...

Ryan: Income! In Kingdom terms, income is probably bottom of the list, in terms of importance.

Selena: Well, it's made for streets, right? [*Both chuckle*] Of gold.

Ryan: Gold, yeah! So, but in terms of, like we read from C.S. Lewis, that quote is, "It's all about being..."

Selena: A homemaker.

Ryan: The homemaker being the most valuable, especially in a kingdom economy! When you're *disciplining* young lives—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: We're told to train our children up in the way they should go. Income is just a means to that end!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It's a means to glorifying God.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And that—

Selena: And too often we make the wrong equation here.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: Like, he works, so he should be the spiritual head. *I* work as a wife, so *I* should be leading this. If I'm making the money, I should be making the decisions kind of thing, right? There's just kind of a skew of leadership.

Ryan: That's a potential, yeah

Selena: Yeah! And so, I guess what we're trying to say is, yes, the Kingdom mentality, God's economy, is *not* that. It is like almost opposite of that, right?

Ryan: So, just to poke it a little bit.

Selena: Go ahead.

Ryan: At that a little bit more. Okay. So, in the 50s, right? I love reading old ads because they're so offensive. *[Both laugh]*

Selena: To today, yes.

Ryan: They offend our modern sensibilities—

Selena: To the roles of—Yes.

Ryan: In radical ways. In some ways, they're all pretty insidious because they're all rooted in some level of...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Sinfulness. But—

Selena: *Not* God. *[Chuckles]*

Ryan: But the old ads are like, “A happy husband is a happy household,” and [*Selena snickers*] it’s got the housewife with the soap that she’s using [*Selena scoffs*], ‘cause it cleans better.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or it's like, “Have your husband's slippers ready when he gets home!” And, “Let him smoke a cigarette so he can have healthy lungs.” [*Both laugh*] And all this stuff. But that's a caricature for sure! But that attitude is not... It's not a biblical one, the attitude that if I'm a breadwinner, then you're now a homemaker, and somehow—

Selena: Right...

Ryan: Those are mutually exclusive.

Selena: Or, yeah, and they’re against each other.

Ryan: We tend to...

Selena: But...

Ryan: We both do Fierce Marriage together.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Sure. I’m doing a lot more of the daily tasks of managing Fierce Marriage, but Selena writes as much as I do. You talk as much as I do.

Selena: Well, and if you want to go to the Bible about it, just go to Genesis 1. “In the beginning, God created all these things. And then, male and female in his image, he created them.” Right?

Ryan: All right! [*Inhales*] Right! It's not—

Selena: We’re—

[00:40:00] **Ryan:** We're both made in God's image.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: We're both of equal value, worth and importance.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And in terms of the household, there might be different roles!

Selena: Yeah!

- Ryan:** And that's fine! But it doesn't have *anything* to do with how valuable you are, how worthwhile you are, and how *important* you are. We tend to say that we attribute importance based on role—
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And God never did that! He attributed importance based on your identity as one made in His image.
- Selena:** Right. And again—
- Ryan:** And that's *fixed* and unchanging.
- Selena:** Absolutely. And again, this talk just to get a little more... We don't want to ignore the aspect of unity here. Like it's not *your* piece of the pie and my piece of the pie. This is our pie, together. It's not divided anymore. [*Ryan chuckles*] Right?
- Ryan:** And I get all the gooey center.
- Selena:** Yep! [*Ryan laughs*] And I get the crust. That's why we're brought together. [*Selena laughs*] Right there!
- Ryan:** So, you're right! And so, the—
- Selena:** So, the thing— Go ahead.
- Ryan:** Well, I just want to make one note, because this is why we have identity crisis.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Right? Because if you're role ever changes and your identity is attached to your role, then you're doomed for an identity crisis. So, if you're the breadwinner and your whole identity is attached to your role, based on your income—
- Selena:** [*Quietly*] Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** Based on your job, based on your position, based on your performance, if ever that is threatened, or it goes away...
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** What is also threatened and what also goes away?
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Your identity!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And what happens when your identity goes away? Then you're lost.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And it creates all manner of issue in your marriage, in your household.

Selena: So, getting to some of the tangible things of how do we gain agreement around... cooking, cleaning, taking kids to school, projects around the house. How do we gain agreement? Well, if our foundation is in God—

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: Right? Our foundation is covenantal. We're looking at the person and work of Jesus, the life that He lived, the level of *servicing* that He gave and showed and modeled for us. [*Inhales*] We need to look at each other with those *same* eyes, through that same lens. Right?

Ryan: Hm! That's good.

Selena: Are we going to do that perfectly every day? No. But we are going to try every day! By God's grace, we have the opportunity every day to love each other well. Now there's an adjustment period. It takes time to *change*...

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: Old habits. Right? And we have to, again, recalibrate our view of love. If love is patient and kind and not envious, it's just not *boasting* or arrogant—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Or rude or insists on its *own* way. Right?

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: We're looking at God's word. We're looking to the person of Jesus. Okay. So, I have these things in my "fanny pack" of life! [*Both laugh*] And I'm—

Ryan: Your utility belt. [*Laughs*]

Selena: Yep. My [*Chuckling*] utility belt. And I'm saying, "Okay. Who's going to do the cooking? Who's going to do the shopping? Who's going to do some of these things?" Well, I think I'm, in this season of our life, I'm better suited to be doing this right now. You are very good at what you do for Fierce Marriage! I can't build a website. I can't do social media very well. I can't do these things. You are learning; you're gifted in those. Yes! You step into that. I am going to step

into this role where I feel called. And I feel like God affirms that calling! It feels uncomfortable sometimes at the beginning.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Because, again, we're dealing with an identity crisis oftentimes. We are dealing with...

Ryan: Yeah

Selena: Some changes in life. I feel like that's usually where these arguments happen around. Okay, who's going to maintain the house? Who's going to have the career? Who's going to—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Initiate sex? [*Laughs*] And all those things!

Ryan: So, here I just want to share a tangible...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Transparent example from our own *recent* history. When we—

Selena: Oh, dear! [*Chuckling*] This isn't in the notes. I'm a little nervous.

Ryan: When Louisa was born...

Selena: Oh, yeah!

Ryan: You basically said to me, "It would be really helpful if you were just in charge of dinner every night."

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Do you remember that? And breakfast. [*Selena cackles and Ryan laughs*]

Selena: [*Laughing*] Sorry! It just sounds like, "If you could just cook *all* the time, it'd be great!" [*Cackles*]

Ryan: But earnestly, and you asked—

Selena: Yeah! The first few weeks. And friends helped too.

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: Yes.

- Ryan:** And so, we had the meal train thing going, and we had... But I just, for whatever reason, that was the thing.
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** That was the role that I was going to fill, because—
- Selena:** Well, and you *liked* it, and you were *good* at it!
- Ryan:** Well, and so—
- Selena:** Still are!
- Ryan:** I started whipping up breakfast every morning. And now—
- Selena:** You still do. Most of the time.
- Ryan:** We pretty much split it down the middle—
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Where some morning's, whoever's feeling inspired.
- Selena:** So, what you're saying is there's *seasons* of where we have to serve each other more?
- Ryan:** Yes. And... I'm going to be honest! There were times that I'm like, "Man. I kind of feel a little bit like 'Sally Homemaker' over here." But then, okay. I'm just being honest! I feel like maybe this isn't a good use of my time. Then I thought, "What better use of your time is there than putting food in your kid's mouths and serving your wife, and being home with your family?"
- Selena:** Who's been up all night nursing a baby? [*Chuckles briefly*] And—
- Ryan:** Yeah, we're—
- Selena:** Trying to *heal* from having a child? It's okay!
- Ryan:** And we're big fans of—And you know what? On the Fierce Parenting stuff when we get started on that, we'll talk *a lot* more about this kind of posture that we've taken of when the baby sleeps, you sleep.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And so, that means that maybe I need to watch the kids in really weird times because, you know? And so, anyway! [*Inhales*] That attitude and having that generosity was so liberating for me as a husband to say, "I'm going to serve

you, even if that means that I'm going to do things that maybe *I'm not...* already inclined to do, or good at doing."

[00:45:03] **Selena:** Right. Or—

Ryan: "And I can serve you in this way."

Selena: And if you can't be home or available in the ways that maybe Ryan is able to, then you're saying how can we—

Ryan: And that's because I'm working upstairs, and I just step downstairs.

Selena: Right, right, right!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: But then you're saying, "Okay, let's make sure we have a plan!" Let's see how we can help others and others can help us, how we can engage in our community and say—

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: "Hey, we need help in these areas." And nine times out of ten— No, I'd say like [*Inhales*] 12-billion-times out of ten people are going to want to help. They want that opportunity to be able to—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Serve and love you, *especially* the people of Christ, right? The people in our church.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: The body of Christ.

Ryan: So, I want to... [*Exhales*] And you have this in the notes. I want to make sure you get to this. But you might be asking yourself, how do we actually gain agreement around these things? This is something that you feel you're fighting about a lot. You're arguing about a lot. They're heated arguments—

Selena: Who should do what?

Ryan: Yeah! How do we divvy up this thing called life, and how do we find agreement and a good rhythm and flow that's not just going to get broken the first time a wrench gets thrown in the gears? [*Selena chuckles*] So, there's... Selena, you wrote this down. It's really good. And I think this also couple as the Couples Challenge... *Double* as the Couples Challenge, I mean.

Selena: Oh!

Ryan: So, you list out your daily weekly responsibilities.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, things like cooking, shopping, bills, kid routines for school, bath time, diapers, bedtime [*Chuckles briefly*], playing, sports, extracurricular activities, church, projects around the house, *work* [*Laughs*], work hours, whatever those priorities are, whatever you're spending your week on, thinking of task-wise. Also, maybe put in there... ideal personal time, so quiet times and reading time or whatever.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: I love giving Selena two hours to go read if I can do that. Sometimes it's easy, sometimes it's not!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: But the point is, is list all this stuff out, all your responsibilities. And *then*, now this is, Selena, I love this. You put it in here. Instead of just divvying out the chores and saying, "I'll do this. You do that." *Instead* ask, "How can I serve you in this area?"

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, if maybe the wife traditionally is the one handling the laundry... Okay.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: Husband, don't just say, "All right! You got the laundry."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Husband, ask your wife, "How can I serve you in this area?"

Selena: Right. And that is just honey to our soul, right? Those words of just, "How can I serve you?" But you may be sitting here, listener, saying, "I feel like I'm being crushed already. How can I even *ask* that question to my spouse? How can I even say, 'How can I serve you?'"

Ryan: Because he won't listen, or yeah.

Selena: Well, not even just because he won't listen. Because you feel there's no margin. And so, that's going to beg the question that you all take another *big*, humongous step back probably and look at your life and look at *all* the big stones and things that are—

- Ryan:** I have an existential crisis. [*Both laugh*]
- Selena:** No... [*Laughs*] No!
- Ryan:** [*Laughing*] Sorry!
- Selena:** Get a *family vision* and plan! That's what I was going for.
- Ryan:** Yeah, yeah. That's good.
- Selena:** Is look at the *big* stones. What is eating up all the time and energy? What is getting the best of you? Is it the things or people that God *wants* you to be investing in? Or is it not? Because if we're already feeling crushed by the weight of certain things, maybe we need to analyze those certain things and put them through the filter of Jesus, and say, "Are these the things that You want me to be paying attention to right now? Or these things that are on the peripheral? *What* are the priorities here?" Again, it begs the question of priorities! And...
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Again, we can't just, okay, take on everything. And how can I serve and do *all* the things. No! If you have no margin to give— Not saying that—
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** *There should be* some sacrifice in service, right? There should be an element of sacrifice.
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** That's what makes it, I feel like, service. It's a deeper part, an aspect, of it.
- Ryan:** [*Clicks tongue*] Yeah.
- Selena:** But...
- Ryan:** I think the big underlying theme here is that we are called children of God, yet that same God who's called us His own children has come down and washed our feet and served us.
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** And not just that He died! [*Chuckles*]
- Selena:** Mmm...
- Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] He died for us. So, and then He said—

Selena: A *horrible* death! A horrible death.

Ryan: “Now *you* serve each other.”

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: And so, the attitude, the posture, here is a *completely* counterintuitive one!

Selena: Countercultural.

Ryan: Counterculture.

Selena: Counter world. [*Scoffs*]

Ryan: In that we are to be generous *servants* of each other.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Not people trying to extract as much value out of our spouse as we possibly can!

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: That's what trading is!

Selena: It's contract.

Ryan: That's what contracts are!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: So, I'm trying to extract value from you.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: You do this and I'll do that. If I can extract that value, we're good. And so, the attitude is not that. The attitude is one that says, “Jesus, You have given so generously—”

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: “And You've served me.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “How can I serve *you*, Jesus, by serving my family?”

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: “By asking my wife, my husband, how I can serve him or her?”

Selena: So good! So good.

Ryan: If you have a hard time finding agreement around this... It's not easy. Okay?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Obviously, it takes *two* to make that happen.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: And so, if you feel helpless...

Selena: Bring in some outside help.

Ryan: Bring in some outside help.

Selena: Get your community. Get some pastors. Get a counselor.

Ryan: Yeah! There's a lot of past episodes, we've talked about kind of breaching hard conversations.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And how to set up the timing and the tone for all that, so that you can perhaps have your words fall on a more open, receptive hearts!

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: But the bottom line is, is you can't make your spouse do anything. Only God can do that. So, if you need help, get it! Pray. Get help. Continue seeking God's face on these things!

[00:50:07] **Selena:** Mm-hm!

Ryan: And then just trust. But more than anything, find your security, find your hope, find your identity, find your joy—

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: In your identity in Christ.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: Okay. And try not to get lost in the weeds on this stuff, knowing that the day-to-day is— What is it you always say as a mom? You say, “The days are long, but the years are short.”

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: So, it's easy to get kind of caught up in the long days and forget what God is doing over a year or doing over months.

Selena: So good, *so* good!

Ryan: Hopefully that was helpful!

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: The Couples Challenge, just as a reminder if you're listening to this, list out your daily/weekly responsibilities, then instead of divvying those out, ask each other, "How," and again, ask *each other* this!

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: "How can I serve you in this area?" And then just see where the conversation goes.

Selena: So good.

Ryan: All right?

Selena: So good...

Ryan: All right! Quick reminder! Before we close out in prayer— Do you have something you want to say? Something else?

Selena: I just want to read 2 Corinthians 3:5.

Ryan: Okay! Go ahead.

Selena: It just says, "Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God."

Ryan: Oh! That's a good verse to close out on.

Selena: So, yeah! We can just end that.

Ryan: Let's pray, actually! I want to pray after that. [*Laughs*]

Selena: Okay! Go ahead.

Ryan: That's a good verse.

God, I thank You for serving us, Jesus.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: For giving of Yourself, for washing Your disciples' feet and *then* calling us into that same life, not just so we could live lives of service. Really, that's a byproduct of just loving You!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And we get so much *joy* out of loving You and letting that translate into how we love and serve each other. So, thank You for teaching us.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: For leading us, our Teacher and our Savior. God, we love You! I pray for the husband and the wife who are struggling right now, that You would give them all the hope and joy and peace they need, whatever season they're in.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: God, I pray that You'd make them *thirsty* for Your word! You'd make them hungry for Your word. You'd make them hungry for a *Christian* community. And I pray that You would satisfy their hung **Ryan:**

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Satisfy their thirst. And keep them coming back for more, Lord. I pray for stronger marriages, stronger families, across the country, across the world for our good, but ultimately for Your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Selena: [*Quietly*] Amen.

Ryan: Okay! Quick, quick reminder! Fierce Parenting, you guys. [*Selena laughs*] Fierce Parenting. I'm saying it now 'cause we're recording on a Wednesday; this will drop in six days. So, by the time you're listening to this, you can go to fierceparenting.com. There's a form there. We need your input. We need to know what kind of content serves you best, whether that's podcasts, blogs, social media posts, Instagram, Facebook, or what types of content, books. But also, the second question is what topics are you wanting us to address?

Selena: [*Slowly*] Yes.

Ryan: And again, we don't know everything! But we're going to share what we do know openly and transparently. [*Inhales quickly*] Same attitude, just different subject matter. Again, go to fierceparenting.com. Find our handle, Fierce Parenting, on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. And we will be posting daily, many times, daily—

Selena: All right!

Ryan: On those places. So, that's the reminder!

Selena: [*Loudly, like an exhale*] Woo!

Ryan: Fiercemarri— Fierceparenting.com! [*Selena laughs*] That's going to be really hard! [*Ryan laughs*]

Selena: It's going to be really hard! [*Ryan cackles*]

Ryan: Selena's wheels are spinning.

Selena: *All right.* We're just going to leave it there. So!

Ryan: All right. This episode is!

Selena: In the can!

Ryan: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much for joining us once again for—

Selena: We'll see you in six days!

Ryan: For—[*Laughs*]

Selena: I want you to say the “Stay fierce” part! [*Selena chuckles and Ryan laughs*] I was trying to change it!

Ryan: [*Laughing*] Okay, go ahead. [*Laughs*]

Selena: Okay. I'm off the roll now!

Ryan: Thank you for listening to [*Selena laughs*] the Fierce Marriage Podcast! We will see you in about—

Selena: Seven days. So, until then!

Ryan: Stay fierce! [*Chuckles*]

Selena: [*Happily whispers*] Yes!

[00:53:30] <Ending Sequence>

[00:53:49] Podcast ends.

PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:05:10]**
 - Fierce Parenting website:
 - <https://fierceparenting.com/>
- **[00:10:00]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - John 13:1-17, *ESV*
 - Matthew 20:28, *ESV*
- **[00:15:00]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Mark 10:45, added emphasis, *ESV*
 - Ephesians 5:25, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Ephesians 5:22a, paraphrase, *ESV*
 - Galatians 5:22-23 (fruit of the Spirit reference)
- **[00:35:00]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Genesis 1:1, 27, paraphrase
- **[00:50:07]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - 2 Corinthians 3:5, *ESV*

FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

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