

I LOVE YOU... I JUST DONT LIKE YOU RIGHT NOW

<https://fiercemarriage.com/i-love-you-i-just-dont-like-you-right-now>

- [00:00:00] **Ryan:** Okay. I just want to ask some really kind of tough but honest questions really quickly to start this whole thing out. So, a little quiz, if you maybe don't like your spouse as much as you had hoped. [Ryan chuckles and Selena laughs] Do you prefer spending time with others over your spouse?
- Selena:** Hm!
- Ryan:** Is sex more of an obligation than it is a joy?
- Selena:** Mm!
- Ryan:** Okay. I know there's some nuance to that one, but just bear with us. Your spouse is no longer a priority! Is that the case, meaning that you're not going on dates or you don't have thoughtful communication or margin or patience for each other when you're listening? Would you rather be at *work* than at home? Ohhh, baby!
- Selena:** Mmm-hm.
- Ryan:** Or, this one's a big one, perhaps you refuse to do things at home that you're otherwise willing to do? So, for instance, read scripture with— Maybe you're reading scripture with guys in a Bible study or something?
- Selena:** Mm...
- Ryan:** Or a lady's Bible study, but you just don't want to do it at home for whatever reason?
- Selena:** Mm. With your family?
- Ryan:** Or that could be with your family. That could be praying as well!
- Sf** Hm!
- Ryan:** Or maybe fun with your spouse is just a thing of the past?
- Selena:** Mmm.
- Ryan:** Okay. So, these are all big questions and they all kind of center around a theme that we've seen arise as people have written in to Fierce Marriage. And it's this idea of... "I love my husband," or, "I love my wife. I don't *like* them." [Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles] "I don't want to be *around* them. But I'm *committed!*" Okay?
- Selena:** Right.

Ryan: So, we're going to talk through maybe where that begins, where that dislike begins, how to address it in our own hearts, and then maybe some practical ways out of some of these questions or these scenarios that I've just shown us just now. So, anyway! I think this'll be good conversation. Hopefully it's fruitful in your life! Thank you for joining us! We'll see you on the other side.

[00:01:43] <Intro Sequence>

[00:02:14] **Selena:** Sorry. Had our [Ryan chuckles] theme music in my head. 'Cause I listened to our podcast the other day and I was laughing at us. [Both laugh] Just 'cause of some of the funny things that we say. [Both chuckle] I'm like, "These people are funny." And then I remember it's us. But it's just really funny.

Ryan: Oh, like the "Sex. Communication. Finances."

Selena: Well, *that's* funny, but just listening to us talk, I'm like, "We should be friends with those people." [Both laugh] "They're funny." [Selena laughs harder]

Ryan: So, listeners! Okay. Our intro, right? It's not kind of the typical intro that you'll hear in podcasts, right? 'Cause I know that the music's not just like the standard like *inspiration!* [Selena does a sound effect and laughs] It'll be like lots of clapping [Someone clapping] and whistling, [Selena begins to make sound effects of hipster music] and like hipster music.

Selena: Should we change it?

Ryan: Maybe. I don't know. I like it though, because it reminds me of Arrested Development. [Both snicker]

Selena: [Laughing] Goodness sakes. [Ryan laughs]

Ryan: It's like, "This is Arrested Development." [Both laugh]

Selena: [Cackling] "This is Fierce Marriage!" [Both chuckle] Oh, my goodness.

Ryan: I love that!

Selena: [Imitates a little ditty] It is.

Ryan: [Imitates voice of an actor from the show] "They're illusions, Michael."

Selena: It's kind of fun and cheeky.

Ryan: Yeah. Being an Arrested Development fans, if you're looking for—

Selena: Well... What season?

Ryan: I don't know if it's— Yeah. You got to start at like Seasons 2-4, we'll say. Anyway.

Selena: Anyways! This is where I don't like you. So...

Ryan: [*Scoffs*] Whatever!

Selena: Just kidding. We laugh together on that.

Ryan: You are Gob Bluth. [*Both snicker*]

Selena: I think I am. [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: [*Imitates same voice from earlier*] "They're illusions." [*Selena giggles*] Yeah.

Selena: "The money was *in* the banana stand."

Ryan: I'm Buster. [*Imitates actor's voice*] "Hello, mother." [*Snickers*]

Selena: "How much is a banana, anyways?" [*Ryan laughs*] "Like, \$20?" It's our best line ever. We use that a lot in our marriage.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Anyways!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: You got to laugh in your marriage. Otherwise, you just might not like each other. So! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah! Laughing is a *huge* part of friendship. I think that was one of the reasons we became friends in the first place. And laughing, I think, is one of the reasons we *continue* [*Selena chuckles*] to be friends. In fact, *today* you were just like, "Whenever we're in a funk, if we can just laugh—"

Selena: Just tell a dumb joke.

Ryan: The trouble comes when one person's laughing, the other one's not. [*Both laugh*]

Selena: You've been in that place *often*! [*Laughs harder*]

Ryan: Where I'm laughing, or where I'm not laughing?

Selena: Where you laugh at the wrong moments.

Ryan: Yes, yeah.

Selena: But he learned! *[Ryan cackles]* Just wives, throw a hot sandwich at their head, the husband's head, and they'll learn.

Ryan: Good thing I'm a good dodger. *[Selena chuckles]* Otherwise, I'd have to report you to the spousal malfeasance hotline!

Selena: *[Chuckling]* Malfeasance hotline. *[Ryan laughs and Selena inhales]* All right! Thank you so much to our listeners, raters and reviewers. We're so grateful for that! If you haven't rated or reviewed, please— *[Enunciates better]* rated or reviewed, yep!

Ryan: Got it! Nailed it!

Selena: Please do that! Five stars. *[Ryan chuckles]* Go for it!

Ryan: *[Chuckling]* Okay. Um, yeah!

Selena: Come on, Mr. Patreon!

Ryan: Oh, yeah. Patreon. *[Selena laughs]* If you guys want to be a part of what's happening with Fierce Marriage, with Fierce Families, everything around Fierce Parenting *even*, which that's a new thing, by the way!

Selena: *[Whispers]* Don't go there yet!

Ryan: We'll go there.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: Anyway. [Patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage) is how you can do that. We just ask that you pray about it, and if God leads you that you would lock arms with us! That's how we keep things ad-free. That does support us directly. It helps us buy shoes for our children. *[Selena snickers]* And it helps us put cuts of meat on the table, and you—

[00:05:04] **Selena:** It helps us get transcriptions *[Ryan snickers]* and get the word out, and support. Yeah! This Fierce Marriage team really—

Ryan: Just know that if you don't get on Patreon right now, it's *gruel* for dinner *[Selena laughs]* ... for us, all right?

Selena: *[Selena laughs]* Stop! *[Both in unison, with intense accents]* “Gruel!” *[Both laughing]*

Ryan: Prison mike! *[Cackles]* Oh, also! Okay. So, we have, today, we're recording this on a Thursday, but it's—

Selena: Going to drop on a Tuesday.

- Ryan:** It's two months *exactly* from now... We are releasing...
- Selena:** Our latest book!
- Ryan:** Latest book! Thank you! [*Laughs*]
- Selena:** See Through *Marriage*! It is on... Amazon, and—
- Ryan:** It's on Amazon.
- Selena:** Other places you can order.
- Ryan:** Yeah, you can pre-order it! But if you want to be part of the movement, you can go to SeeThroughBook.com and see what's available there. We were recruiting and are recruiting for a launch team, but that is going to close after this week. [*Selena gasps*] So, make sure that you—
- Selena:** Are you serious?
- Ryan:** Go, if you want to be part of the launch team, go to SeeThroughBook.com and just give us a little bit info there. That way we can reach out. It doesn't mean you're automatically on it, but you can at least have first dibs on being on it. So, we would appreciate that! But that book is *all* about transparency!
- Selena:** Mm-hmmm!
- Ryan:** It's all about being known! It's all about what does it mean to be known by God and to know God *truly* and to see yourself *rightly* in light of who God is! That's the first step of transparency. From there, you can get to know yourself and learn things like emotional maturity and emotional intelligence. And then from there, you can be transparent with each other.
- Selena:** There's a lot there, people. [*Whispers*] Don't give the book away.
- Ryan:** And then from there, you can be transparent in *community*.
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** So, it's all about being *see through*.
- Selena:** Right. And you know there's a fine balance, right, of airing your dirty laundry and going on and on about things that maybe we shouldn't go on about. And so, there's kind of just some even some *rules* of engagement, right? In that space.
- Ryan:** Yeah!

Selena: 'Cause I think that sometimes we can over share or under share. So, how do we... share? *[Laughs]*

Ryan: Well, we have to share with an end in mind. That's the key!

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: To meaningful transparency. You're not just sharing just to let it all out, but you're sharing because you want to be made more like Christ. And that's a part of the sanctification process.

Selena: So, go buy the book, 'cause there it is. *[Laughs]*

Ryan: Yeah. Well, there's a lot of stories and—

Selena: I was trying to create a *hook*, babe.

Ryan: We share our own stories. And thank you for sharing the hook. *[Selena laughs]* I think people who are interested...

Selena: Yes! They'll go read it.

Ryan: Are hooked! We'll see. Yeah!

Selena: All right.

Ryan: So today, is it ready for our topic?

Selena: Fierce Parenting.

Ryan: Oh, yeah! Fierce Parenting's a thing if you want to grow in parenting encouragement. We're going to be sharing transparently.

Selena: Help us start sharing about that! Ohhh, boy. Buckle up.

Ryan: Hey, we don't know everything. But we promise to just kind of help—

Selena: Do the same thing we've done with Fierce Marriage.

Ryan: See Jesus. *[Chuckles]* Yeah. Okay.

Selena: Lord, help us!

Ryan: Okay. So, what are we talking about today?

Selena: We're talking about how I love you, but I just don't like you. We hear this a lot through all of you, listeners, readers, all of that. We hear kind of this underlying tone of—

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And it looks like a lot of different things, like the questions you asked in the beginning. Do you prefer to spend time with others over your spouse?

Ryan: That's a big one.

Selena: Is sex more of an obligation than a joy? Is your spouse a priority even? Or you can't wait for them to kind of leave the room for a while, right? I mean—

Ryan: I think the work on is huge, too, in that sometimes it's easier to be at work, even though you're working hard, you're working long hours, but it's just easier because you like it more, and it gives you more enjoyment.

Selena: Or it's not dealing with...

Ryan: And you're avoiding all the home issues. [*Chuckles*]

Selena: Right. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: And so, yeah. If we're not careful, we can create— What's the word? We can manufacture—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Extra time at work!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Or maybe projects or—

Selena: Or we just—

Ryan: Extended leaves—

Selena: Right. And meals and quality family time just, again, falls to the wayside. It becomes optional. And we just could skip it! Right? 'Cause it really doesn't matter if we skip it.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And then here goes a month, two months, three months, of—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: No real engagement with your spouse, let alone your children. And there's going to be some gaps there, I think.

- Ryan:** Another big one that I think comes up a lot as a symptom of this is you are very impatient, or you get *annoyed* very easily. Or little things get under your skin. Right? Whereas you might have been warmer in this regard.
- Selena:** Right. Which I think that—
- Ryan:** You kind of get colder.
- Selena:** Just living with another person, there's going to be some annoyances. Maybe that's just me. [*Chuckles*]
- Ryan:** Yeah! Of course.
- Selena:** And so, I think it's not letting those annoyances take root in some ways and understanding that, okay, there are things about that person—
- Ryan:** Ohhh.
- Selena:** That kind of annoy me. Like I used to apparently *eat* really loud. I don't do that anymore. It's taken 17 years. [*Ryan laughs*] I'm more aware, and now our children eat really loud. [*Both laugh*]
- Ryan:** I'm an auditory... person.
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** I *hear* everything.
- Selena:** He hears all the things. I'm like, "I need to stuff your ears with cotton or just don't clean your ears. Let the wax build up," [*Ryan laughs*], "So you can't hear as well."
- Ryan:** I got news for you, sweetie! I don't clean. [*Both cackle*]
- Selena:** But still, it's like you're the *loudest* in the morning. Let's just put that out there.
- Ryan:** Oh, why am I the loudest in the morning?
- Selena:** 'Cause you're making coffee and... banging all around! [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Well, excuse me for serving you that way!
- Selena:** Thank you. [*Both chuckle*] No.
- Ryan:** So, I have to say this, 'cause I'll be in the car—
- Selena:** You're an auditory—

Ryan: And I will be like, [*Whispers*] “What was that?” [*Selena laughs and Ryan chuckles quickly*] [*Ryan speaks quickly*] “What was that?” [*Resumes normal speed*] And you're like, “What in the world are you talking about?”

[00:10:04] **Selena:** And our car is *rumbling* from—

Ryan: I heard when our bearings were going out *ten* thousand miles before they actually went out. [*Selena cackles*] I was like, “Something's going down.”

Selena: [*Chuckles*] Something's going down.

Ryan: I know when there's a *tiny* hum in the engine that's not supposed to be there.

Selena: If you say that long enough, then just—

Ryan: [*Laughs*] Then you'll always be right! [*Both laugh*] I knew a hundred thousand miles of... So, anyway!

Selena: No, and then I'm—

Ryan: Those types of annoyances.

Selena: And then, I am a smell person. I don't like... smells. And wet textures. [*Selena laughs and Ryan snickers*] I don't like— I like to be... [*Laughs*] clean. And not stinky.

Ryan: So, I have to make sure that my breath is on *point* if I'm trying to get fresh with my wife! [*Laughs*]

Selena: If you want any kisses, you better believe it, sir! [*Laughs*]

Ryan: And I got to take three showers a day, 'cause—

Selena: Whatever!

Ryan: [*Laughing*] Whatever.

Selena: One's good enough.

Ryan: I'm a man! All right?

Selena: [*Laughing*] That's always—

Ryan: Men have smells!

Selena: [*Laughing*] I go—

Ryan: It's a musk! [*Snickers*]

- Selena:** *[Laughing]* Every time, I'll be like, "What is that smell? It smells like you're kind of... stinky." *[Giggles]* And you're just like, "I'm a man!"
- Ryan:** I showered today.
- Selena:** "This is a man smell." *[Chuckles]*
- Ryan:** All right?
- Selena:** So...
- Ryan:** I went to the gym! Do my thing. Whatever. *[Selena laughs]* Don't make me sound like Pigpen. *[Selena laughs harder and Ryan snickers]* Like there's just flies just... swarming about.
- Selena:** Sometimes it happens when it's summertime, 'cause you go jump in the water and you're like, "I'm clean! I jumped in the lake." *[Selena cackles]*
- Ryan:** *[Clear throat]* What do you mean? I took a bath. Saltwater bath.
- Selena:** Aw, we're getting off on a tangent. Okay!
- Ryan:** So, there is that sense of you can get annoyed with each other. And it's when we stop dealing with those annoyances with charity and with grace—
- Selena:** Yeah. Our hearts—
- Ryan:** And with a warmth about it!
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** 'Cause what happens is you internalize it, right? Okay. So, let's continue with the annoyance piece. So, hopefully that rant was not wasteless.
- Selena:** *[Smacks her lips to create noisy chewing sounds]* The loud chewing?
- Ryan:** Yeah! *[Selena does several louder chewing sounds]* If I— *[Selena smacks more intensely]* *[Both laugh]* Oh, my word. So, if I were to just internalize that and say, "Oh, she doesn't care that I'm here. She *knows* that bothers me, and *still* she doesn't care." *[Selena makes more chewing sounds]* "She's completely—," *[Ryan chuckles and Selena giggles]*, "careless. And she's disrespecting me! She's *usurping* my authority as the husband!" *[Selena laughs]* "She *hates* me!" *[Selena cackles and Ryan giggles briefly]* This is all happening in my head.
- Selena:** Yes. You go down some slopes really fast. *[Laughs]*
- Ryan:** You know, yeah. *[Snickers]* It's—

Selena: I've learned this about you.

Ryan: And so, I—

Selena: But it helps me reel you back in.

Ryan: But instead, if I say, "All right. It's not because she doesn't love me." [*Selena snickers*] "It's not because she doesn't care."

Selena: [*Giggling*] Maybe it's just I *forgot* and I'm enjoying my food! [*Both laugh*]

Ryan: "She just is—"

Selena: 'Cause it's *so* good!

Ryan: She's just eating a very delectable morsel right now.

Selena: You made it! You made it. And it's so good that I just forget all of my—

Ryan: [*Chuckling*] Okay...

Selena: [*Chuckles*] My decorum.

Ryan: Yeah. Yeah, I just want to spend so much time with you that I can't take that third shower a day. [*Selena giggles*] And so that's because of *you* that... [*Selena cackles*] It's 'cause I love you!

Selena: Anyways.

Ryan: So, but the difference is you internalize it, or you treat with charity.

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: And internalizing it then starts to kind of plant seeds of, and this is where it gets really insidious—

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: Because it starts small.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And again, we're using one of these examples. But think of any reason why maybe you could—

Selena: You don't like your spouse.

Ryan: Stop liking your spouse.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Maybe something they said or maybe just a tendency or maybe a relationship they have.

Selena: A habit they do, yeah.

Ryan: Or a habit. You start to *resent* them—

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Because you internalize it in this way, and it starts to grow from a seed into full blown roots of division, roots of—

Selena: Bitterness.

Ryan: Roots of bitterness.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: Roots of *disdain* or—

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Or what's the word? It's like you just a really— I can't think of the word!

Selena: I'm not a thesaurus.

Ryan: It's almost like an anger!

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: [*Inhales deeply*] Roots of discontentment.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Things like that. Gosh! I wish I could think of that word I'm trying to come up with right now. Anyway! I'll come up with it later when it's not relevant.

Selena: It'll happen later.

Ryan: But so that does grow!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, you might be in your marriage and you're saying, "Oh! Absolutely, I'm committed to this because I made this promise. And I said, 'I do,' and I mean it.

I just don't have to like it!" *[Both laugh]* And so, "I just say, 'I love him,' 'I love her.' I just don't like her right now."

Selena: Well, and that's the thing. I think we can say those jokingly and infrequently. But I think if it does tend to settle in this dislike for our spouse, this discontentment with it, because it goes from, I think, dislike/annoying, to disliking, to discontentment, to ungratefulness, to all out division, right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So, we just have to be careful about the extent of something lasting. And again, I think getting to the root of it before the root gets to us.

Ryan: Mm-hm!

Selena: Is a very important thing. So!

Ryan: I want to bring up one more example just because I feel like it's relevant. But...

Selena: Go.

Ryan: You could be bitter toward your spouse because of their career. And—

Selena: Yeah! That's good.

Ryan: And what I mean by that is, so say I'm, or you're— *[Clears throat]*

Selena: *[Whines]* "You *always* run the Fierce Marriage podcasts!" *[Ryan laughs]* "I never get to run them!" *[Resumes normal voice and snickers]*

Ryan: Or you're always *absent* because of this thing.

Selena: It's true.

Ryan: And clearly, that's your mistress now.

Selena: That's true.

Ryan: Or that's your Mister. *[Snickers]*

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: *[Chuckling]* I don't know. I don't know if there's a thing.

Selena: *[Quietly]* I wouldn't laugh about that.

Ryan: *[Snickers]* Well, I'm saying I don't know what's called a Mister.

Selena: There's someone else that's getting your—

Ryan: I don't know if that's the word is what I'm laughing at.

Selena: Your affections. Yes, there's something that's getting the best of you. The time, the energy, the focus, everything that—

Ryan: Right.

[00:15:00] **Selena:** You as a spouse desire from each other is going somewhere else. And so, therefore it's going outside of marriage bed.

Ryan: Yeah. And it's funny cause we talked—

Selena: You cause jealousy.

Ryan: We talked about transparency, and this *only* is able to begin to happen when you don't *live*—

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: With transparency. You don't realize it's happening in yourself.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You don't realize kind of the baseless nature of it in terms—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Of we have no right to be indignant toward each other.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: On a moral level.

Selena: [*Quietly*] Yeah.

Ryan: We can be angry and frustrated and deal with that, but on a *moral* level, we can't say they are on a lower plane from, and we'll talk about all this.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: They're on a lower *plane* for me *because* of this behavior. Right? So, when we don't live transparently, we don't understand *accurately* ourselves who God is, who we are in light of Him, and we understand how to *be* transparent with our spouse.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: This starts to take root. So why is this? I think let's start there. Is why do we, to get to this— Well, before we get to “here's how to fix it,” let's talk about why is this our tendency to, and how does frustration and bitterness get into our guts?

Selena: Right. I mean, I think the first and most obvious answer is that we're sinners and that we're broken. Right? Our tendency is to collapse, I think, within to ourselves, to look to ourselves. [*Clears throat*] Excuse me. To fix ourselves. Right?

Ryan: Hm.

Selena: We want to. There's shame, there's fear, there's pride, there's discontentment! And so, we look inside ourselves and we sit there. We don't want to ask anybody else for help. We don't want to show anybody this because we're afraid, right? We're afraid that they will see it, especially our spouse. And maybe we're not afraid that our spouse sees it. Maybe we're like, “Yeah! Finally, you see it!” But there's that bitterness and that closure that happens. And we feel justified in our not liking them because of how they've acted towards us. Is that clear?

Ryan: [*Slowly inhales*] Yeah! Yeah, I think so. And then that coupled with the lack of margin to actually deal with it.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So often these little seeds get planted, and you think, “Okay. I can get over that. I can deal with that. I just need to talk to him or her about this.” And then life happens!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And you have kids. And you're tired. And all the chaos of everything, and we're going every which way. [*Inhales*] And for whatever reason, we've built our life in a way that doesn't give us the time to connect intentionally. And so, it's like a perfect storm.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: I don't have margin to deal with this, so I don't! And then it starts to take root. And then all of the sudden, I don't like being around you.

Selena: Right, right!

Ryan: And it's too hard to deal with because I've been suppressing it. And I'm on the brink of giving up. [*Inhales*]

Selena: Right, right.

Ryan: And I don't know, do we— Is it now the time to talk about kind of our cultures?

Selena: We can. And I think I just want to talk about this root of bitterness, sort of.

Ryan: Oh, you had it down here.

Selena: 'Cause we did talk about how bitterness sets in, right? And we all know that verse in Hebrews 12:15, "See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no 'root of bitterness,'" that's in quotes in the Bible, "springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled." Well, that root, those quotes around root of bitterness, is alluding to Deuteronomy 29:18, which says, "Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from the LORD our God—"

Ryan: Mm!

Selena: "To go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit."

Ryan: Wow! So, it starts there!

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And then we turn away from the truth of God toward some other lie. And in—

Selena: The truth, yeah!

Ryan: Deuteronomy, it was other gods.

Selena: The truth of our covenant that God's given us, right, with each other. We can very slowly start turning away from that.

Ryan: Yeah! So, I mean let's talk about the cultural piece here, because I...

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: I feel like there's a lot of weight, and it's good!

Selena: [*Quietly*] Mm-hm.

Ryan: Okay. So, we tend to overcorrect on this stuff. So, think about back in the pre—

Selena: Like, 500—

Ryan: World War 2.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: Right?

Selena: Sure!

Ryan: So, think about your grandparents' generation and maybe their parents.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, great-grandparents, grandparents, if you're in your 30s. They would have had some semblance of a marriage. Right? And they obviously got together. There was some probably some cute courtship where they met each other. Maybe it was an arranged thing that wasn't strange back then.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And they got married, and there was a sense of romance. But most of the romance revolved around the courtship and around maybe the act of making children. [*Chuckles*] I'll say it that way.

Selena: Right, yeah!

Ryan: But, and then there's a kind of a friendship and a sweetness about it. But it wasn't something that— it wasn't like they were just this ooey-goey sort of couple—

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: Where there's always this affection, at least. And that's not the picture we get.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, culturally speaking, that was not always a positive thing! It might not have been a negative thing, but it wasn't as a positive thing.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Because you had a lot of emotional suppression! You had maybe husbands who were lording their authority over their wives. You had wives that felt crushed.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, we're talking about the 20s, 30s, 40s, on into the 50s, we start to see some of the sexual revolution take root! In the 50s and 60s—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: On into the 70s. And then total overcorrection to that.

Selena: Right!

Ryan: Meaning that now it's like...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You know, we had the first wave feminism movement. Again, some very positive aspects to this, also some very toxic aspects to that. Now we're on the third wave of feminism [*Selena chuckles*], which is a totally different beast now. But the point I'm trying to make is that *now* we live in a culture that is the opposite of what maybe our grandparents or great-grandparents grew up in.

[00:20:15] **Selena:** Yeah.

Ryan: In that now we're so in tune with our emotions that it's like if our emotions don't align with what we think they should align with, then all the sudden, we're not just doubting our emotions or doubting maybe the circumstance. We're doubting love itself.

Selena: Yeah...

Ryan: Or we're doubting marriage as an institution itself. Or we're doubting God's word itself. And we're doubting: "Maybe I made a mistake. Maybe this covenant was a mistake."

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: "And I need to get out *because*—"

Selena: There's that--

Ryan: "I no longer like my spouse."

Selena: There's that turning away that's happening from the covenant.

Ryan: Where's—

Selena: Our marriage covenant—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: That God's given us. The turning away from His truth.

Ryan: And turning to that "other God."

Selena: "Other God," yeah!

- Ryan:** But then that's the contrast. In the 50s, it was like if we didn't like each other, then we just stuck it out! It was just, "Oops." Like, it's not what I hoped.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** But now it's, "I got to find a way out."
- Selena:** Well... Right.
- Ryan:** And that's why this is so different and insidious now! If our friendship is lacking, then I think we need to be aware of our propensity culturally, and our propensity personally to disregard love, if we are missing the affections of love.
- Selena:** Right, right. And I mean, that goes from marriage and divorce, because divorce back then was forbidden. People were outcast. Right? That was a—
- Ryan:** There was a difference, yeah.
- Selena:** A *very* different— There's different pressures—
- Ryan:** Culturally speaking.
- Selena:** Different cultural society...
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** Would look down *strongly* on that. And then now today, it's just regarded as, "Hey, do you got your prenup signed?" [*Chuckle*] Like it's another check in the box of—
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** "Just in *case* this doesn't work," right?
- Ryan:** And marriage is now commoditized—
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** In that, "Get married as long as it adds value to the vision of your life that you have."
- Selena:** And that's what I think is so awesome about God's word, is that no *matter* the cultural or societal climate, God's word is true.
- Ryan:** Mm! It's timeless.

Selena: It is alive. It is. We talked about this in the Hebrews, was talking about God's word and how it's alive and it divides, it discerns, it helps us, it *knows* us! It can be authoritative over us if we submit ourselves to it.

Ryan: Mm. Yeah.

Selena: And if we go to Colossians 3:11, I think we want to start there, right? That you wanted to read that?

Ryan: Yes! Yeah. So, again, we're trying to look at what could cause us to view each other maybe in ways that aren't holy. They aren't biblical. [*Inhales*]

Selena: Right. And then...

Ryan: And then start to dispel some of those root causes.

Selena: Yeah! The verses after 11 we'll read.

Ryan: Yeah. So, let me go to Colossians 3. Yeah, we go to Colossians a lot. I feel like it's been a theme of our lives the last year or so.

Selena: It has! Yeah.

Ryan: We don't stay in it, but it's like we always come back to it. Anyway! Colossians 3:11, it says, "Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all." So...

Selena: Little context.

Ryan: [*Clears throat*] Yeah! So, obviously Paul—

Selena: Paul, he's in prison writing letters to the people of Coloss—sye? —Say?

Ryan: Colossae, yeah.

Selena: Thank you. Colossae.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: About some dangerous teachings that were happening kind of in the new church. And so, he's writing in response to these teachings. And we see specifically in this verse how there's no status distinctions—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: With God, which is a huge thing in that time!

Ryan: Yeah—

- Selena:** I think it still is! There's still some residue of those kinds of beliefs.
- Ryan:** Yeah. So, it's interesting because, yeah, there's no status distinctions, like you said, with the covenant people of God. Philippines, Ephesians— Is it Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians—
- Selena:** Galatians, Ephesians [*Ryan laughs*], Philippians, Colossians. [*Selena giggles*]
- Ryan:** [*Chuckling*] Thank you! So, Galatians, okay, was all about grace. [*Selena snickers in the background*] Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians.
- Selena:** Uh-huh.
- Ryan:** But where this is the third let— They're not in any specific order that I know of. They probably are, but it's just interesting to see the progression of the early church, in that it was Jesus came, He was the Messiah. Some of the Jews accepted Him, some of the Jews didn't.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** That's why we have Judaism today, and that's why we're Christians, 'cause we believe Jesus was the savior and He was the Son of God and He is King and all that.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And so, and what He did is, and Paul opened the door based on his interaction on the road to Damascus with Jesus himself for the Gentiles. And Paul became the missionary to the Gentiles, opening up not just to Jews, but now to all these other...
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Like, for—[*Chuckles*]
- Selena:** People groups.
- Ryan:** People group! Mud bloods. [*Laughs*] That's what I want to say. When you talk about Jews versus non-Jews, that was the view! It was like, "We're Jews. We're the people of God. Those Gentiles..." It's this catch-all phrase.
- Selena:** Right. Yeah.
- Ryan:** It's anyone else!
- Selena:** Yeah.

Ryan: And Paul's now writing to say, "No! That's gone. Now the covenant people of God are—" It doesn't matter, you're— Like, I love the phrase—

Selena: The phrase, "It doesn't matter, you're—"

Ryan: Well, it's interesting how he used... He says, let's see here, "Here there is not Greek and Jew." Okay, so Greek, the Greek culture, they were polytheistic. They were the intelligentsia of the day.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: The Jews were kind of the religious culture within, obviously, the subculture of Christianity that was budding of the day. And then you have the Roman Empire.

[00:25:06] **Selena:** Mm-hm.

Ryan: Which was the political power.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Right? So, he's saying all those distinctions are gone. You have circumcised, uncircumcised, that's Jew and Gentile is what that's referring to. Barbarian, Scythian, and slave and free.

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: So, he's hitting all of these socioeconomic strata, these different levels—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Of the socioeconomic culture they lived in. And I thought Scythian was especially interesting 'cause I was reading about it, and it says this was a people group located along the northern coast of the Black Sea. To the Greeks, the Scythians were violent, uneducated, uncivilized and altogether inferior people. In contrast to such discrimination and prejudice against other races and cultures, Paul shows that Jesus, who is all and in all, binds all Christians together in equality, irrespective of such differences. So, what I'm trying to get at is, is we're trying to apply this to, okay, why do we stop liking each other?

Selena: This is a bit of an extreme picture, I think. We're not—

Ryan: It is.

Selena: You're not the barbarian. We all are different people groups. Right? We're all different. *[Laughs]* It's the Greek—

Ryan: Basically, any difference—

Selena: Yes!

Ryan: Any sort of distinction between us...

Selena: Earthly distinction.

Ryan: Earthly distinction between us, I think is room for us to in a way...

Selena: Be reminded that Jesus is our common ground.

Ryan: Well, and it's in a way, a way for us to think of ourselves as superior or inferior—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Perspective to others.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, when we think about how that might apply to marriage [*Snickers*], or any sort of irritation that we have or any sort of moral indignance that we have is based on—

Selena: For sure.

Ryan: “Hey, I'm superior to you. You chew loudly. That's gross and annoying! And I don't. And how dare you!”

Selena: “Why can't you be more...” Yeah! “Why can't you have better manners?”

Ryan: Right.

Selena: “Why don't you act like this in front of these people?”

Ryan: Or, “I love our family this way, and clearly you don't because you're out working all the time. And I'm better than you because of that.”

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: “And you're a barbarian.” [*Both laugh*] Well, but that's—

Selena: Right! There's this—

Ryan: So...

Selena: There's these views, yes, that we have.

Ryan: Yeah! And so, the Scythians were violent people. And so, the Greeks were civilized! They had their way, like, “We have—”

Selena: Very scholarly, and—

Ryan: Yeah, we’re scholar—And yeah!

Selena: Intellectual and the philosophical.

Ryan: Right!

Selena: And... [*Laughs*]

Ryan: Exactly! And you clearly don't get it.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And therefore, I don't like you anymore! [*Selena scoffs*] You're just— And so, Paul is saying to them in this church, he's saying all those distinctions are gone. And so, how does that apply to us, 'cause clearly we're not thinking...

Selena: Right.

Ryan: This is talking about church and the salvific work of Christ and how it applies to various people groups, and how there's no power structures because of Jesus, right?

Selena: Right, right! So—

Ryan: And in marriage—

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: What I'm trying to get at is in marriage, we can have the same attitude, but how does Jesus just disassemble or whatever, does he deconstruct those presuppositions, those things that we tend to hold over each other's heads?

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That's what I'm trying to get at.

Selena: It's great! And then He, and if you go to the next verse, so Colossians 3:12 and 13, and 14! Sorry. [*Clears throat*] He says, “Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

Ryan: Mmm!

Selena: So, we see this instruction and this teaching of if you are in Christ, then put on as God's chosen and holy beloved ones.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Put on kindness and meekness and be patient with one another, even with that annoying spouse that chews loud! And then we see the model of Jesus, right? That He shows us. He shows us this new self...

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Of how we are made new in Christ.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And so, we don't deal with each other in the old ways.

Ryan: And—

Selena: Go ahead.

Ryan: Yeah! Well—

Selena: These new ways of bearing with one another, not just turning away from our covenant, not just cutting it off, hardening our hearts, turning away from it, because maybe we are justified in it. But even if we are, is that what we're called to do, to turn away?

Ryan: And that's what's such a beautiful thing about this passage, is Paul is talking to people of the new covenant!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: That it's a foregone conclusion that they're stuck together. And Paul is saying, "Listen, there's no distinctions here. There's no status distinctions. You're stuck together! So, therefore—"

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: "Love each other in this way." And like you were saying, he points us to Jesus so beautifully. And he says, "Just as you forgive each other," right? So, clearly there's some sort of pain and hurt.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And there's something that's lingering here, and a bitterness that's developing—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: That's taking root. And Paul is saying, “No! Forgive.”

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: “Get in there.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: What does he say? It says... What? I don't have it! I'm on the wrong book here. It says—

Selena: Bear with one another?

Ryan: “In humility, meekness and patience, *bearing* with one another.”

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: “If one has a complaint...” Okay. What is a [*Scoffs*]... What is losing friendship and not liking each other if not having a complaint against another?”

[00:30:04] **Selena:** Right. Yeah, yeah.

Ryan: So, if one has a complaint against another in this covenantal community, we're talking about the covenantal community that is you and your spouse in your marriage, forgiving each other—

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: As the Lord has forgiven you. That's a... I mean, I don't know if he's meaning to reference this, but Matthew 18 is the parable of the unforgiving servant.

Selena: Mmm...

Ryan: We talked about forgiveness a while back. Search through the Fierce Marriage Podcast.

Selena: How to Apologize to Your Spouse? Is that the one?

Ryan: Yeah, like the art of apologizing.

Selena: Apologizing.

Ryan: We also talked specifically about forgiveness.

- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** So, there's apologizing, which is like dealing with an immediate hurt.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And that's not necessarily a deep-rooted thing. And then there's forgiveness, which is like a *process*—
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Of walking out—
- Selena:** After the apology?
- Ryan:** The act of forgiveness. [*Selena chuckles*] After the apology, yeah. But it's talking about the parable of the unforgiving servant. And do you remember what happened there? I mean, I'm sure you remember, but I'm putting on the spot right now. Basically...
- Selena:** Of the unforgiving servant? Yeah! He went out and didn't forgive.
- Ryan:** Yeah, the rich, what? I don't know what it was. I always forget the King. Okay, so the king wished to settle accounts with his servants. And when he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** 10,000 talents would have been in today's dollars six *billion* dollars. Okay. So, can you imagine if someone owes you six billion and you're like, "Oh. Time to settle accounts." [*Selena snickers*] It's like a—
- Selena:** I'm six billion short! [*Laughs*]
- Ryan:** Good 'ole Harry Dunne Lloyd Christmas situation. [*Selena cackles*] "See that I.O.U.? Want to hold on to that one."
- Selena:** \$250,000!
- Ryan:** [*Laughing*] \$250,000.
- Selena:** Might want to hang out at that one. [*Snickers*]
- Ryan:** Okay! So, somebody owes him six billion dollars. Clearly the debt's insurmountable.
- Selena:** Right.

Ryan: And the king says, "You're forgiven your debt."

Selena: Which is an illustration, obviously of—

Ryan: Yes. And then that same servant who had just—

Selena: Jesus.

Ryan: Had his forgiveness given to him—

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Went across the street and said, "Hey, you. You owe me 10 bucks. Pay up or whatever. You're done!"

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And starts strangling him. And then the king caught wind of it and said, "You wicked servant."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And threw him in jail and threw his whole family in jail, and said, basically, "You're stuck here until you've paid off because of your wickedness." He who is forgiving little loves little, who's forgiven much loves much type of thing.

Selena: Right. And we are all forgiven of much, obviously! That is a story of and a parable about us and how Jesus came and forgave us of that insurmountable debt. Right?

Ryan: Right.

Selena: He came so that we could be forgiven of that debt. And so, we can't stay in this place of unforgiveness with our spouse and with each other. And you're like, "Yeah, Selena, that sounds great, but... it sounds really hard also." Well, yeah, it kind of is. And sometimes you got to do hard things [Ryan chuckles] that you don't want to do.

Ryan: [Chuckling] Yeah.

Selena: And—

Ryan: Wait! What?

Selena: God is—

Ryan: How dare you!

Selena: God is good!

Ryan: Yeah, no.

Selena: In those processes to sanctify us, to journey with us, to not leave us alone, to give us His word to instruct us.

Ryan: And that starts— So, forgiveness is a tough thing because there does...

Selena: It's a process.

Ryan: To have reconciliation there needs to be some repentance!

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: Somewhere in there.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: And maybe repentance seems like a heavy word for if you're just annoyed and it's turned into the place of bitterness. Well, maybe you need to repent and say, "Hey, I've let this divide us," or, "I've let—"

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: "I've not talked to you about how angry I am about your job."

Selena: Hm.

Ryan: "I've not talked to you about how angry I am about how you've disrespected me over and over again. And it's created this place of bitterness."

Selena: Right.

Ryan: "And I don't *like* you because of that! This is no way to live our marriage! I need to repent to you—"

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: "And ask for your forgiveness." And where that comes from is this understanding of Matthew 18.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Understanding what Paul's talking about in Colossians 3.

Selena: Mm-hm.

- Ryan:** “Forgive as we are forgiven in him.”
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Meaning that... we always say this. It's if Christ has not held my offense against me, how can I possibly hold your offense against you?
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** And yeah, there's an emotional reeling that you have to deal with. Hurt.
- Selena:** Yeah! It's not an instant moment—
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** That everything is magically changed. That's just not the way God works, because that doesn't bring about holiness and sanctification.
- Ryan:** Mm.
- Selena:** And God wants to do the surgery and He wants to come in and bring healing. But that takes time and that takes [*Inhales*]—
- Ryan:** Mm-hm.
- Selena:** Addressing and understanding and owning the conflict that's at hand. So, I think I just want to mention what happens when, kind of the fruit that is born, when we decide to turn away from our covenant, just briefly. And when they're talking about that root of bitterness in Hebrews, I think I read?
- Ryan:** Yeah!
- Selena:** Hebrews 12, the root of bitterness. And then in Deuteronomy, we *miss out* on not producing fruit of the Spirit when we are turning away.
- Ryan:** Hmm...
- Selena:** And that root of bitterness is taking place and creating a poisonous and bitter fruit within our marriage. So, we see that, right? We see that when we turn away, our hearts get hard.
- Ryan:** Hm.
- Selena:** And we start to justify everything that *we* do. We start to *really*... dissension and hate and frustration start to set in towards our spouse because this is the fruit of not going to God. Right? This is the fruit of, “Okay. I'm going to turn over here because this is what I feel, and this is it.” So instead of turning to how

we feel and walking in that, we can turn towards God, right? We're turning to God. We're saying, "Okay, Lord. My heart is *hard* right now."

[00:35:02] **Ryan:** Hm.

Selena: "My spirit is weak. I'm frustrated. I'm hurt. Help me, God! Help me, Holy Spirit. Lead me in this situation with my spouse." And like you said, once we start coming to each other, being transparent, sharing these thoughts that we're having, these internal dialogues, these frustrations, sharing them *humbly* with our spouse, that is where the Holy Spirit can begin to produce fruit in us, of patience and kindness with one another. And long-suffering with one another.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: And... yes.

Ryan: I just think this passage from Colossians is so... It speaks so richly—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: To exactly what you're saying, in that it says, "Above all these, then put on love."

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Paul writes about love in 1 Corinthians 13. Everybody knows that love is patient, kind, gentle, all that kind of stuff. But Jesus has shown us and lived love.

Selena: He's modeled love for us, yeah.

Ryan: He's *modeled* love.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And not only that, He sent the Holy Spirit to enable us *to* love.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And so, what you're saying is it takes a certain amount of humility to say, "I can't love perfectly. I need help. God help me."

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Also, "Wife, help me."

Selena: Right.

- Ryan:** “I have not loved you well. Let's work through this together.”
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** And He doesn't just leave us. And then He says this: so, “Put on love, which binds everything together,” okay, “in perfect harmony.”
- Selena:** Mm-hm. This is Colossians 3:14.
- Ryan:** We're putting it on! We're putting it on, like actually *adorning* ourselves with love.
- Selena:** It's an act. Yeah!
- Ryan:** Choosing to do it.
- Selena:** Yep.
- Ryan:** Trusting the actions of love will bear the affections of love. Okay! And then He says this, “And let,” okay, “Allow. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.”
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** “To which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”
- Selena:** Mm.
- Ryan:** “Let the word of God dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, spiritual—.” [*Inhales suddenly*] So, there's this... We've hit our common ground in that we may be different in these ways. We may want to hold these things against each other. But we have our common ground, and that is the person and work of Christ!
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** Now we are going to go to him together in a community of worship. In this case, the community of our marriage.
- Selena:** Yeah!
- Ryan:** Me and you, and we're going to worship, trusting that, as we're putting on love, that we will let the peace of God reign and dwell in us richly.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** So, all that to say is if you're in a place where you feel like you've lost your friendship, or you're in a marriage, you don't feel like you like your spouse, it is

a beautiful reminder from Colossians. See that as a reminder of how loved and forgiven you are in Christ and how you can love and forgive because of Christ.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And let that be the place that leads you back to a place of affection, that leads you back to a place of liking and enjoying each other.

Selena: Yeah, and unity and yeah! Knowing why you fell in love with each other. And God is so good—

Ryan: Mm.

Selena: To mold us moment by moment, right? It's not this just grand, "Poof!" [*Snaps fingers*] We're changed.

Ryan: Yep, absolutely.

Selena: It's a moment to moment thing. And it's going to take grit and work. And that's *good*. It's *good* for us, too! We need to lean into that and embrace that.

Ryan: Mm. I—

Selena: So—

Ryan: I wanted, and we're going to address those early questions about your friendship if it's deteriorating, we're going to address those biblically, but I just want to remind you what Paul said. He says— I'm in Matthew again. I keep going back and forth. [*Selena giggles*] It says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom." So, each one of these things we talked about, like spending time together over your spouse or sex is a chore and not a joy, I think there is wisdom— I *know* there's wisdom in God's word that we can teach and admonish each other in those places, that we can find our way out of that wilderness.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Back into the place of trusting God.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And being closer to each other.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Does that make sense?

- Selena:** Yeah! And I think as just an obvious statement, we're going through a lot of scripture. If you feel lost, dive into God's word. Get into it, allow it to instruct you.
- Ryan:** Good.
- Selena:** Allow it to be the authority and encouragement in your life, because so many times we base even our feelings and our emotions and the way we think about things on external things, where really scripture should be our compass, right? Our instrument to how we navigate—
- Ryan:** Hm.
- Selena:** This life and our marriage.
- Ryan:** Which we talked about that last week, was how to read your Bible together. [Snickers]
- Selena:** Boom.
- Ryan:** [Chuckling] And so, hopefully you didn't miss that episode. If you did and you're wondering where to start, we offered some suggestions there.
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** But let's take a few moments here. Okay, so we kind of opened up this episode with maybe some things that...
- Selena:** [Clear throat] Some questions to get ya'll thinking—
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** About your marriage and why you may not like each other.
- Ryan:** All right. So, let's start about the first one. So, say you prefer spending time with others over your spouse. How can we address that with God's truth?
- Selena:** ... Why? I mean, first, it's asking the question why you prefer. 'Cause it's easier, right? It's probably easier and more enjoyable, so...
- Ryan:** Hm.
- Selena:** Are those, *easy* and enjoyment, are those the reasons that God says we're supposed to stay together with our spouse, or... I mean—
- Ryan:** Yeah. I mean, that's a good question.
- Selena:** I'm getting...

Ryan: Well, you might—

Selena: I dive deep real fast, so...

[00:40:01] **Ryan:** [*Clicks tongue*] Well, I think asking the question why is always a good place to start. I think the why could also be rooted back to your understanding of what it actually means to have a spouse and spending time together.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: When you see your marriage as something that's designed and ordained by God—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And the fact that you have become one flesh, you see that person as not just something to add value to your life. They do that.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But they're not just that.

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: They are someone who you are called to disciple.

Selena: That's good, babe.

Ryan: Somebody who is called to disciple you!

Selena: Good job!

Ryan: A relationship that has to be *mined* for richness, that has to be developed and stewarded to the glory of God if we are to bear the fruit that we want!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You talk about Deuteronomy. Okay. We went all the way back there and you're saying the root of bitterness and how it would bring forth a bitter root in Hebrews 12.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Well, in Deuteronomy, it was all about God's law. And God said, "If you follow my law, you will bear fruit! If you follow my law, you will be blessed. If you don't, you won't bear fruit! You will be cursed." And there's beauty in recognizing and conforming ourselves to God's *way* of things.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: And when we say, “We are one flesh,” that has meaning! We are married in a covenantal marriage. That has meaning! So, if I don't want to spend time with my spouse over others, I don't have a covenantal—

Selena: Consistently.

Ryan: Consistently.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I don't have a covenant relationship with my buddies.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I have a covenant relationship with you.

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: So, am I relegating my responsibility, or am I shirking or avoiding my responsibility by just not *dealing* with—

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: Whatever issues that we're having?

Selena: Right!

Ryan: And so, I could be made brave—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And courageous to deal with that if I understood what my marriage was.

Selena: Right. And there could be a number of reasons for why we don't face those. And I think that—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: You have to explore those!

Ryan: Right. You—

Selena: And not be afraid of them and not just—

Ryan: Yeah.

- Selena:** Shut it out and decide. Right? You have to figure out why.
- Ryan:** And there's a number of assumptions here. And you have to bear with us, listeners, because there's so many different scenarios. But if you have a spouse that maybe is just completely off the rails or unruly or will not listen, obviously, a lot of these things assume that it takes two.
- Selena:** Mm-hm!
- Ryan:** And two are coming to the table.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** If you are in a one-sided marriage, first off, I'm sorry. That's really hard. Our next piece of advice is to get help from somebody else, to help you see clearly and to help them. Sometimes you need a third party to kind of jar things loose.
- Selena:** Mm-hm.
- Ryan:** So, just know that we're making some assumptions here. That's not to say that your scenario is not different or unique in some way.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Hopefully you'll find something that will be helpful.
- Selena:** We mentioned at the beginning of the episode also that sex can become more of an obligation rather than a joy. And I think when it becomes an obligation, we need to go back to God's word and understand the Bible's view of sex. What are the purposes of sex, right?
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** It's not just a physical act, but there is emotional intimacy, spiritual intimacy—
- Ryan:** Yeah. That's good.
- Selena:** Procreation, all of that. So, again, looking at the bigger picture within the context of the Bible is pretty much the answer for most of these. *[Laughs]* But...
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Just to kind of bring some texture back to these questions. The next one was your spouse is no longer a priority, right? You don't do dates. You're not really thinking about how you're talking to them; you don't have margin or patience to listen. And this goes back to what you said—
- Ryan:** Mm.

Selena: About understanding that we're one flesh. And what does that mean to a greater degree? What is that?

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: If I'm not treating you well, then I'm not treating us well. I'm not treating...

Ryan: Yeah!

Selena: Myself well in some ways. Not that that should be the motivation because that's selfish, too. But...

Ryan: Yeah! And that's actually, I think, there's one here that says you'd rather be at work than at home.

Selena: mm-hm.

Ryan: I think that goes in line with your spouse is no longer a priority.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I think it's understanding the primacy of our calling as disciplers and disciples.

Selena: Mm!

Ryan: Over work, over passion.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay? Over what you want to do. We're called to be disciples and disciplers. And so, there's a priority that needs to be rearranged if...

Selena: That's so good! I'm sorry. I'm just like, "This is so good!" [*Ryan cackles*] 'Cause so many times I deal with that or I have friends that are just like, "You know? I just don't feel like X, Y and Z," right? [*Selena laughs*]

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And it's just like sometimes you just have to submit and disciple and do what God has asked you to do!

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: I mean, there's just some grit that takes doing!

Ryan: And it's going to go against our flesh.

Selena: It is!

Ryan: And that's what it means to live by the Spirit.

Selena: And that's— Yes! [*Sound of table being slapped*] [*Ryan laughs*] Yes!

Ryan: So, [*Selena laughs*] in the podcast— No. I—

Selena: Amen. [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: So, I think we can go through more of these. I think there's—

Selena: It's just ringing true in my own heart. I'm not saying that for—

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Like, “Oh, gosh. I hope somebody's listening!” [*Chuckles*]

Ryan: No, no! It, well—

Selena: It's very much like... Yes!

Ryan: It's bringing clarity to things. ‘Cause you start to feel this distance, like, “What is going on here?”

Selena: The things that we deal with, that's—

Ryan: “I feel like it's not right, but I can't put my finger on what's not right.”

Selena: Yeah, yep.

Ryan: It's kind of like finding that diagnosis, for one.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Say, “Okay. I'm forgetting the primacy of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.”

Selena: Right.

Ryan: “And that I need to follow the Spirit and not my flesh!! And that takes self-discipline!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Which is also a fruit of the Spirit!

Selena: Right.

Ryan: And so, all of these kind of go back to, okay, if our friendship is deteriorating, it's usually going to fall down. It's going to, I don't know.

[00:45:08] **Selena:** Break down.

Ryan: It's going to settle out somewhere. And breakdown! There you go. Somewhere I'm not believing exactly what covenant is. I don't understand the nature of friendship. I don't understand the nature that friendship takes work and investment and time and energy.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And that they are worth it! I don't understand that I can't hold it over your head that maybe you're lacking in an area that I'm not lacking in.

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: Because I need to remember that there's no Jew, no Gentile, no circumcised, no uncircumcised—

Selena: Right.

Ryan: No Scythians, no slave, no free! There's only Christ, who is all, and all is in Him, basically.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So, those root things will always kind of give us a place to start, to actually work through these. Now there's also tools. Right? Like having healthy conversations around tough topics. You're going to need some help there.

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: And we do have lots of information on how to communicate clearly and effectively around hard topics.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Maybe we should do a podcast around that next.

Selena: Sureee!

Ryan: [*Exhales*] Yeah, yeah. So!

Selena: And all of this to say, if you're feeling like you don't like your spouse, and there's just kind of this coldness you're feeling around them, just, first of all, look at the roots. What are some things that you're noticing about your rhythms, your life, your marriage together? How are those tension points? How

frequent are those tension points? And should they be telling you something? Is there some sort of cycle that needs to be broken there? But get *back* to pray and ask God, “God, help us to get back to that place of loving one another. Help us to get back to *liking* each other, to enjoying each other.” And being able to have *fun* with our spouse. Right? It's not going to be this thing of the past.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: But that we can have fun together, we can laugh hard together.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: We can fall off our chair laughing so hard together. [*Ryan chuckles*] You know? Whatever. I don't know. Nobody makes me laugh harder than you. [*Snicker*] And like—

Ryan: Yeah, we had some good laughs today.

Selena: It's always you. [*Ryan laughs*] Occasionally it's someone else. But it's mostly [*Ryan laughs again*] because they remind you something that *you* did [*Both laugh*] or something. And so... It's just, don't underestimate that, that laughter and fun with your spouse.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: And just praying and asking the Holy Spirit to bring you both around, to remind you of the truth and the goodness that God is our glue. Right?

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: God is the one who brought us together.

Ryan: [*Clicks tongue*] Yeah.

Selena: These feelings are going to come and go. And don't let them rule, don't let them reign.

Ryan: Mm-hm.

Selena: Ask the Holy Spirit to help break those down through His truth and through knowing God.

Ryan: That's a great encouragement. And I think it's... Yeah! I mean, what else is there?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: If we are in that place of loneliness and helplessness. What else do we have but to cling to the promises of God and His promises around what love actually is. And so, we talk about conforming ourselves to God's word. That's what you're talking about.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: That conforming our definition of love, our definition of *acting out* love, not letting culture's definition of love, meaning that—

Selena: Mm-hm.

Ryan: If you don't feel it, it's not real. That's a lie.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: You can choose love. And there's a lot of nuance. I think—

Selena: You can choose to love your spouse the way—

Ryan: Right.

Selena: The God has called us to love.

Ryan: Thank you. And you can also choose to enact wisdom in that. Don't walk through this alone! If you feel like [*Inhales deeply*] you're headed down a path where you can't find your way back—

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: Then you need to guide. You need someone to come alongside you to help you shine God's word, to be the lamp unto your feet—

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: And a light on your path. They'll walk with you. So, don't do that alone! Anyway! Selena, I just felt like when you were encouraging us at the end there, it was very pastoral and very loving. Can you...?

Selena: I think we need to do that at the end more.

Ryan: Okay!

Selena: We've been ending in Couple's Conversation Challenges for two years. I think we should end with some encouragement, maybe.

Ryan: Okay.

Selena: Switch that up! We'll try it out!

Ryan: As long as it—

Selena: See what ya'll think.

Ryan: As long as it has alliteration in the title of it, 'cause—

Selena: Always! [*Ryan laughs*]

Ryan: [*Laughing*] We were talking—

Selena: I *love* alliteration!

Ryan: You're writing a blog post for a friend's online publication, and—

Selena: No.

Ryan: I was asking you about it.

Selena: That was for Risen Motherhood.

Ryan: Okay. Well, I was asking you about it, and I was like, "So, when you're writing this thing, is it like a Texas Longhorn blog post?" And you're like, "What is that?" And I said, "It's got two points and a whole lot of *bull* in between." [*Selena snickers and Ryan cackles*] Come on, now!

Selena: He thinks he's funny...

Ryan: I think I'm funny. I'm not actually funny.

Selena: Why don't you go ahead and pray? I think you need to talk to Jesus.

Ryan: Oh... [*Ryan blows tongue*] [*Selena laughs*] I was talking to Him this whole time.

Selena: [*Laughing*] Oh, my bad.

Ryan: In my heart of hearts. [*Both laugh*]

God, You're so good.

Selena: So good.

Ryan: Your word is so rich.

Selena: Mm.

Ryan: And it's so full. And anytime we go to the well of Your word, we are satisfied. And so, I thank You, that You've given us such clear instruction on what it means to love without pretense, to love without distinction. I pray that that would help us [*Chuckling*] somehow in our marriages, understand what it means to love each other regardless of our differences, regardless of those annoyances, regardless of our hurts. God, not to gloss over where we've been hurt, but to deal with it in a biblical, good, [*Chuckles*] holistic, reconciliation way. I pray that You'd give us the wisdom and the wherewithal to walk down that path as we need to.

[00:50:16] **Selena:** Mm.

Ryan: And Jesus, help us understand the depth of our need for You, and the depth of Your sacrifice and Your goodness unto us. And it is by no merit of our own! And help that fuel our love for each other and for others. In your precious name.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: God, I pray for the spouse—

Selena: Mmph. Sorry!

Ryan: Wasn't done yet.

Selena: Sorry.

Ryan: I'm spiritual. [*Laughs*] Nah. [*Laughing*] I pray for the spouse!

Selena: I pray for the spouse! [*Snickers*]

Ryan: I pray for the spouse who's dealing with—

Selena: Mm...

Ryan: Some hurts! I pray that they would feel emboldened.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: And they'd feel Your joy to tackle this in a way that is productive and helpful. And I pray that You would give them soft hearts, husband and wife.

Selena: Mmm.

Ryan: That they would have soft hearts towards You, soft hearts toward each other. And that they would begin down the path of healing, whatever that journey looks like. Holy Spirit, thank you. In Jesus name! Amen.

Selena: ... Amen. I was just waiting.

Ryan: All right, ladies and gentlemen! [*Selena laughs*] Thank you for listening. Wanted to remind you, if you're curious about being on the See Through book launch team, you have one more chance to do that.

Selena: Hooo.

Ryan: Go to seethroughbook.com.

Selena: Mm-hm!

Ryan: And there's a form there. Eventually that form will be gone! And so, we want you to give us an indication of your interests so that we can at least tell you what the next steps are. You're not committing to it, but you're just saying you're interested in it. But that's going to be fun! That book's out in *two* months, and we hope it blesses many! Other than that, if you want to be part of the Patreon community, go to fiercemarriage.com/patreon [*Selena laughs*], or go to patreon.com/fiercemarriage. [*Both laughing*] I think either one will take you to the same place. And we'd love to partner with you—

Selena: Yeah!

Ryan: In the gospel there. So, with that said, this episode is!

Selena: In the can.

Ryan: All right. Ladies and gentlemen, we will see you again in about seven days, and until next time...

Selena: Stayyy *fierce*!

[00:52:03] <Ending Sequence>

[00:52:22] *Podcast ends.*

PODCAST NOTES

- **[00:15:00]**
 - Scripture references:
 - Hebrews 12:15, *ESV*
 - Deuteronomy 29:18, *ESV*
- **[00:20:15]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Colossians 3:11, *ESV*
- **[00:25:06]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Colossians 3:12-14, *ESV*
- **[00:30:04]**
 - The Art of (Actually) Apologizing podcast:
 - <https://fiercemarriage.com/the-art-of-actually-apologizing>
- **[00:35:02]**
 - Scripture references:
 - 1 Corinthians 13
 - Colossians 3:14, *ESV*
 - Colossians 3:16a, *ESV*
- **[00:40:01]**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Hebrews 12
- **[00:45:08]**
 - Risen Motherhood:
 - <https://www.risenmotherhood.com/>

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