

**BE ROMANTIC OR... REPENT??**

<https://fiercemarriage.com/be-romantic-or-repent>

[00:00:00]

**Selena:** Daily prioritized romance in marriage keeps the passion alive as it also keeps the relationship in a dynamic state. You can think of romance as a solution that rustproof your marriage. A couple that prioritizes romance as a daily feature in their relationship will never wake up and find themselves emotionally rusted out. Rather, their marriages will quote-unquote, "shine like new" as long as they keep rustproofing it with romance.

**Ryan:** Oh, nice.

**Selena:** Don't we like that? It's not my words.

**Ryan:** Those words come from the legendary Jimmy Evans. He's in this space, in the marriage space. He's just been doing the good work of encouraging married couples for decades.

**Selena:** Decades.

**Ryan:** This comes out of one of his books, I think is one of his latest books "The Four Laws of love." Actually, we're packing up because we're getting ready to move. Praise God. Maybe we'll share the story at some point. We're not moving far but a bit more space. God is gracious. Now it all worked out. But anyway, I'm packing up these books, and I'm like, "Man, I should really..."

**Selena:** We get really distracted packing, especially books...

**Ryan:** Especially books.

**Selena:** ...because you're looking at them and you're just like, "Oh, man, I remember this or "I fully would like to dive into this." *[both laughs]*

**Ryan:** If you want to feel inadequate, pack up your books. For me, it's how many of these books that I actually read and do I remember. Oh, man. So God is gracious. Somehow we get to retain the good stuff. *[Selena laughs]* Anyway. I gotta be honest, this topic of romance, to me, it can feel really tiring because...

**Selena:** Really?

**Ryan:** Yeah. I think it's just a chord that has always kind of harped on...

**Selena:** In the marriage space?

**Ryan:** In the marriage space. It's like, "You got to keep that fire alive." I agree. I very much agree with that. But if you know us, we tend to go right to the core of it, is like, what is the fuel for the fire? I think we're going to get more practical today. Right? *[both laughing]* I think. Because you wrote the rundown and said you *[inaudible]*.

**Selena:** I love just watching them.

**Ryan:** Watch *[inaudible]*?

**Selena:** No. I love you. Yes and no. I think it's going to start eliciting some practical questions of how we can... You know, it is going to the root. And that's why I think that this struck a chord in us. This one chapter that we're talking about, it's actually chapter four, prioritize romance. It feels like it kind of sucks the romance out of it when you say prioritize romance, *[Ryan laughing]* but that's because we tend to believe that it's just kind of this extra or it should be spontaneous or it's something that is just this whoo, whoo or like anniversary time or Valentine's Day just passed. You know, that kind of love.

Jimmy's arguing, and I'm so on his side, we've kind of been conditioned by fallen society to believe this idea about that. So we'll explore how this is not true. And Jimmy says so. So I'm going to follow him

**Ryan:** Right. We'll see you on the other side.

**[00:03:00]** <Intro>

**Selena:** Welcome to the Fierce Marriage podcast where we believe that marriage takes a fierce tenacity that never gives up and refuses to give in.

**Ryan:** Here, we'll share openly and honestly about all things marriage—

**Selena:** Sex—

**Ryan:** Communication—

**Selena:** Finances—

**Ryan:** Priorities—

**Selena:** Purpose—

- Ryan:** And everything in between.
- Selena:** Laugh, ponder, and join in our candid, gospel-centered conversations. This is Fierce Marriage.
- [00:03:32] <podcast begins>**
- Selena:** You may or may not have dropped that [inaudible]. I thought we're jumping right into it. *[both laughs]*
- Ryan:** I was hoping that you wouldn't have forgotten that. I should have given you the leg squeeze.
- Selena:** You know how I like the legs squeeze. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** Romance. You gotta keep it alive.
- Selena:** Just like you like the circle finger. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** Step one to good romance is leg squeeze.
- Selena:** Wrap it up. *[both chuckles]* You like to wrap it up my finger.
- Ryan:** All right. Where are we going? *[Selena laughs]*
- Selena:** Anyways. Let's start out how we always start by ratings and reviews. If you have not rated this podcast or left a sort review, please do so. That is the currency of the podcast world. Plus, it just helps people if they're on the fence about whether or not they want to listen. I always look at reviews. When I see a new book, I read the review. I read many reviews and I read about the person. This is not a book, sorry. I just shot books and so I think authors like credibility and review. So please leave a review and a rating.
- Ryan:** That's awesome. Somebody left a review. I want to thank you. I don't know if you want us to share your name so I'm not going to share it. But you'll know who you are. It says, "Ryan/Selena, We are in a very dry spell and have been for quite a number of years. I've downloaded many of your podcasts to listen on my drives to and from errands. Your words give me a lot to mull over." I'll take that as a compliment.
- Selena:** It's awesome.

- Ryan:** "So much rich scripture in God's word for us married couples. A literal instruction book in all areas of life, if we would just apply it. Thanks for the challenge. [00:05:00] Thankful for your prayers for all of us. Keep up the good work."
- Selena:** Awesome.
- Ryan:** That's very encouraging. Also, if I'm looking for a marriage podcast and I got to read that review, I'll be like, "All right."
- Selena:** Dry spells. Hmm. Yeah.
- Ryan:** Yeah. *[both chuckles]*
- Selena:** I can relate.
- Ryan:** I can relate.
- Selena:** I don't mean to laugh. Sorry. We joke about that because we definitely have been in dry spells. So we're not laughing at or laughing at ourselves.
- Ryan:** Okay. Are you sure? That wasn't clear enough.
- Selena:** Come back. Come back. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** All right. The second thing. That was ratings and reviews. If you want to partner with us on a deeper level, we have a way of doing that through the website [patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage). And really that's a place for people who not only benefit from the content but also want to see the content continue. This is how we support our family. This is how we feed our little three daughters is through this ministry that is Fierce Marriage, which is primarily right now the podcast. So if you want to be a part of that, we would be greatly blessed by that. We just asked two things. That you pray about it. If God leads you, then you would follow through to go to [patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage). There's links in the show notes. I think that's it for now.
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** Actually, this is timely because we have just finished two mini-courses in our Gospel Centered Marriage ecosystem that we're creating. If you've been listening, you'll know what we're talking about. But basically, it's a marriage content, growth, and enrichment video platform. Basically, there's a six-week onboarding basics of marriage course that we encourage all couples to go through. And then we're going to be adding these mini enrichment modules

along the way, mini-courses. We just finished recording and editing 5 Habits for a Healthy Marriage, which is based on our eBook. We get a lot more practical in it. And then also five keys to a healthy perspective on sex.

**Selena:** Oh, boy! Talk about romance. Talk about romance.

**Ryan:** This is timely because habits and intimacy are really where romance... Those two places are where romance happens. It's where you have this habit of talking to each other a certain way [*Selena laughs*] or treating each other a certain way, or... What?

**Selena:** That's exactly what we're talking about today. And you're just saying talking a certain way. Jimmy would say being empathetic. [*laughs*]

**Ryan:** Okay, well.

**Selena:** I like this. This is good. It's Ryan's version and then it's more connected. This is great.

**Ryan:** Okay, final last thing. And it's not a promo thing at all. But, friends, we've been going through it. So we would appreciate some prayers. We've had... I can't even begin to list off all the different... it feels like we're under spiritual attack.

**Selena:** Yeah, it feels like there's just kind of setback after setback.

**Ryan:** Oh, yeah.

**Selena:** Pretty sure I got the Rona.

**Ryan:** Pretty sure.

**Selena:** Moms can't be sick. It's just hard. It's just hard.

**Ryan:** My whole week was...

**Selena:** It was short.

**Ryan:** We're trying to serve you because I mean...

**Selena:** I know you were so great. And it's just hard with three little ones. The youngest is just like, "Mama, mama, mama, mama, mama" no matter what.

**Ryan:** And then we had... I don't know if we said this on the podcast, but couple of weeks ago, we put our dog to sleep.

**Selena:** I did not say that.

**Ryan:** That was posted on social media and Instagram stuff.

**Selena:** 15 years guys. It's the worst.

**Ryan:** She's been part of our marriage almost as much as we've been a part of our marriage.

**Selena:** We are married 17 years and she was 15.

**Ryan:** And she was a big part of my recovery after we got back from Europe. I had to have open-heart surgery and you bought me this puppy. You surprised me. And she quickly became my best friend. She was my shadow everywhere. She's an Australian shepherd. So if you know Aussies, you know what I mean. Anyway, that was really sad. *[chuckles]*

**Selena:** Don't talk about it too long.

**Ryan:** Yeah, we can't talk about it...

**Selena:** I get a little teary-eyed.

**Ryan:** That was really sad.

**Selena:** That was like two weeks ago almost. The worst.

**Ryan:** Oh, my goodness.

**Selena:** And then we're trying to move and then we got dumped with snow, which is cool. I like snow.

**Ryan:** The whole country get kind of blast with cold weather.

**Selena:** It's weird for us. It's weird for us to have that much snow.

**Ryan:** Yes, we got a lot. And then it melted.

**Selena:** And then it melted in like...

**Ryan:** A day.

**Selena:** ...five hours.

**Ryan:** Anyway. I just want to give you an update because last week we actually posted from an interview with Teagues that we recorded a year and a half ago, but it's still so hope-filled and so timely.

**Selena:** It's one of the best.

**Ryan:** It's one of the best. If you missed last week's, Episode 200 of this podcast. So they actually are Episode 100 and then the second listing of that same thing. The replay is episode 200. That was just a complete coincidence. I'll call it providence.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** All right.

**Selena:** I like that.

**Ryan:** All right. Let's get into this. Romance.

**Selena:** Romance.

**Ryan:** How are you going to romance me?

**Selena:** Prioritize romance. *[chuckles]* In this book, "The Four Laws of Love," we were reading in chapter four. I love how he organizes everything. But he talks about the four elements of romance. We're not going to get into all of those. We're probably going to talk about the first one a little bit and then the last one. You got to get the book to read the other ones. Sooo... *[laughs]* And you should. It's an amazing book. But like we said in the opening, a lot of us tend to think that romance is just kind of this extra part of the relationship. It's an [00:10:00] extra effort. You think candles, you think rose petals, or nice engaging conversation. *[chuckles]*

**Ryan:** What do you think of when you think of romance? I don't even know what I think of.

**Selena:** Okay, we're 17 years in a marriage and you think romance it's like, "If you give me flowers," and like, "That's cool. I like them." But unless they're the ones that I really like. And you know those ones.

**Ryan:** But you don't see flowers as a romantic thing.

- Selena:** I feel like I should see them as a romantic thing, but I don't. I think of it like you're just being kind and sweet to me and nice. You're not trying to put out the vibe. I don't know.
- Ryan:** I'm always putting out the vibe, baby.
- Selena:** I always think romance is the vibe. Like it's trying to get there, right?
- Ryan:** It does feel like. Is that what romance is? Is romance like I want to schmooze you because there's an end game? The end game is in the bedroom.
- Selena:** I think yes and no. Because we can very much be put off by that. As a woman, if you're like romancing me, I'm like, "Nah, buddy, I see right through this."  
*[laughs]*
- Ryan:** Or if that's not consistent. If I'm a huge jerk to you.
- Selena:** Yeah, if it's not consistent. And if I'm completely aloof to your efforts, then I mean, that's another conversation. But yeah, the inconsistency of it. And that's exactly where I think he, Jimmy, talks about... he says like, our society just thinks that you get married, you're on this high. And then once the honeymoon stage is over, things are just inevitably just going to... "you're just going to join the multitude," he says, "of the married and miserable."  
*[chuckles]*
- He says it's false. And I fully believe that. I just don't think anybody's really put words to those kind of feelings and cycles or things that we understand, how we understand marriage to play out I think in our day and age. We sometimes think the wedding is like, the high point. And you and I would argue that it's not. It's the beginning of where you're starting to roll your sleeves up and started building your covenant in your life together.
- Ryan:** For sure.
- Selena:** Anyways, he's saying that marriage must be a priority. Not marriage.  
*[chuckles]* Romance. I'm sorry. Yeah, marriage should be a priority. That's another 5 podcast episodes. But he's saying that romance should be a prioritized and prominent feature in your marriage relationship if you're going to keep the passion and intimacy alive and growing.
- Ryan:** Okay. What I hear you saying is, and what Jimmy saying, is that romance isn't just a certain type of date, it's not a certain type of gesture, but really, it's an attitude of proactive pursuit that is centered on the other person.

- Selena:** Right. If you think about the most romantic time in your relationship, it probably was when you were dating. It probably was when you were first engaged and first married. So, this passion and intimacy ideas are kind of around first love. That idea of your first love. Think back to when you were dating me. You were much more... What words would you use to describe that time?
- Ryan:** So this new and twitterpated. I was twitterpated. *[Selena laughs]* I could not wait to see you, to hang out with you, to hold your hand, to be around you.
- Selena:** Were you sensitive to my needs and desires?
- Ryan:** I would have thought so. But now that we've been together for more than 20 years, obviously, I know your needs and desires way better now and I'm more sensitive to them.
- Selena:** Right. But at that time, your attitude towards knowing me was highly sensitive.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** You were much more engaged in wanting to know what my needs and desires were.
- Ryan:** And we dated for four years. So it's a little bit...
- Selena:** And we were young. It can be a little different.
- Ryan:** It's a little different. Like the very beginning, absolutely. It was like...
- Selena:** I guess the newness of it.
- Ryan:** ...I wanted just to know: Who is this girl? What's in her head.
- Selena:** Right. And often we can feel like this was just going to wane on as our marriage years go on. It's just we get to know each other and just going downhill from here, buddy. But the truth is, is that it doesn't have to be like that. It doesn't. How can I say this? How can I say that this doesn't have to be like that? Well, Jimmy gives us a little physics lesson which my classical mind and education now that we're doing with the girls is just like, "Yes, this is awesome." *[both chuckles]* Talking about the three forms of matter.
- Ryan:** Ah, there's four.
- Selena:** Okay. *[Ryan laughs]*

**Ryan:** Sorry.

**Selena:** It's not the states of matter. There's four in the state of matter. It just forms...

**Ryan:** Oh, really?

**Selena:** Yeah. Plasma. I just did this yesterday.

**Ryan:** Okay.

**Selena:** Liquid solid gas.

**Ryan:** Forms of matter and state of matter.

**Selena:** Okay, you take it up with Jimmy. This is what he says.

**Ryan:** I'm just being difficult.

**Selena:** Dynamic, static, and entropic. It's entropic?

**Ryan:** Yeah, I think so.

**Selena:** Entropic.

**Ryan:** It sounds like dying.

**Selena:** The four states of matter are liquid, gas, solid, and plasma. Just to clarify.

**Ryan:** Oh. All right. All right.

**Selena:** Anyway. [00:15:00]

**Ryan:** Cliché. *[Selena laughs]* It's classical.

**Selena:** So if we understand the three forms of matter, dynamic is growing, static, staying the same or stops growing, entropic is dying. So the truth of the matter is that anything that isn't growing is static and will eventually become entropic and die. So take that perspective into our marriage. When it comes to marriage and sake of this episode, romance, if it's not growing, then it's probably going to be headed in the wrong direction and it will eventually die.

I have to admit something here. I always think that we're growing. Or I always think that there's this fourth way. That if we're not growing, we're staying the

same. But we're not actually dying. And I think that's a lie that I've had to come to grips with. And I think that's where I would become a little lazy. Does that make sense? Like, I'm thinking...

**Ryan:** You become complacent.

**Selena:** Yeah, I can become really complacent. Like, "No, it's good. Our marriage is good."

**Ryan:** You're maintaining.

**Selena:** Yeah, you're maintaining versus actually growing. And if you're not growing, then there's no other option. You are essentially dying, right?

**Ryan:** Yeah, I guess. I haven't thought that hard about it. *[Selena chuckles]*

**Selena:** Sorry.

**Ryan:** That makes sense. Like if you're going about your life...

**Selena:** I get real weird about, like, if not A then B. And I'm like, "Really? There's no C?" So that's what I'm...

**Ryan:** Oh, he does have a C. That static. So yeah, you're just maintaining. But you're saying that...

**Selena:** I can use maintaining and being static as a reason to be complacent in marriage. I think that God has definitely brought that to light for me and saying, "You need to be intentional. You need to be dynamic. You need to be growing." So how are you growing? And how is God growing me? By listening to a marriage podcast, or by reading my Bible. I think one is way higher than the other.

**Ryan:** Maybe this will encourage you. I don't think you have to be growing in leaps and bounds all the time...

**Selena:** Sure.

**Ryan:** ...to still be growing.

**Selena:** Good argument. Yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay. So you can be having small conversations and making progress and how we're talking to each other, how we're connecting on all the different levels

without feeling like, "Oh, we just had this massive breakthrough. Until we have another breakthrough, we're dying." *[Selena chuckles]*

**Selena:** Yes, thank you.

**Ryan:** So there's a way you can grow steadily.

**Selena:** This is why I love you. This is why I love you.

**Ryan:** Okay, I love you too.

**Selena:** I think I'm more intense than I understand. *[laughs]*

**Ryan:** You're so intense, especially about this kind of stuff. *[both laughs]* I'm intense about a lot of things.

**Selena:** So, anyways, I'm just...

**Ryan:** He has a definition here that I really like. I know we defined romance, but I really want to say what he said. He said, "What makes romantic love so special is that it is preemptive, not reactive." I'm convicted here. I've been listening to a series. It's by a guy named Tommy Nelson down in Texas. It's on the Song of Solomon. He does a really good job. I don't even know the link to it. It's like this really obscure sermon series I found on some obscure... A friend of mine sent it to me. And I've been listening to it while I've been painting. And it's just mind-blowing.

He's talking about how he pursues his wife. He's got this Southern accent. So it's really compelling. He's very fatherly, and he'll talk about getting a whooping and all that kind of stuff. Anyways. He might ruffle some feathers in our modern-day and age here. But anyway, the way he talks about his wife is just so sweet and so endearing. You can tell he loves his... He's the poet. She seems like she's more of the realist pragmatist. He's the romantic, the artistic type. He's a preacher, so he's very gifted and communicating. Anyway, so I've been feeling like, man, what do I...? I love you. I want to be so sweet and kind to you. I want you to know that I love you. I bought you Valentine's Day book and it was such an awesome book it was out of stock. I bought it like a week in advance.

**Selena:** But the fact that you've thought about that, and the fact that you knew that that would be a book that I would like and didn't just give me like an Amazon gift card to buy books, even though that is awesome as well because I have a list of books...

- Ryan:** You spend on Amazon no matter what anyways. You have an Amazon gift card. So our debit card. So what did you get me for Valentine's Day?
- Selena:** You know what? *[both laughs]* I got you a house. There you go.
- Ryan:** This is a cry... for help! *[Selena laughs]*
- Selena:** Now I feel bad. I don't know where we're going now. *[both laughs]*
- Ryan:** We're defining romance here.
- Selena:** We're defining romance. It is preemptive. He said that romance sends a critically important message to our spouses. It tells them they're in our hearts and we're thinking about them when we don't have to. It also tells them that we love serving them and meeting their needs and desires. That book that you got me shows me that you are thinking about me, that you don't have to and that you do love and serve... [00:20:00] you love serving. And you serve us very well.
- Ryan:** Awesome. Awesome. Yeah. Okay.
- Selena:** So, when we're defining romance, again, we're trying to understand that it is like he said, like Jimmy said, preemptive. It's not reactive. So maybe you're in a spot where you're saying, "Hmm, I don't feel like our marriage is very romantic and I don't really know where to go from here." Let's think back to our first dates. You know, we were attentive and pre-emptive and proactive. He says that's very emotionally electrifying. It's like, that's awesome. Because it is. When you're dating, romance is easy. You want to because of all these factors that he lists out.
- Once we secure our spouse, for lack of a better term, the work kind of begins. But in reality, again, we start to get lazy with each other. The whole entropy aspect. We start being static, we take each other for granted, we're less attentive. We may even start doing stuff that our spouse really doesn't like despite their complaints against us.
- Ryan:** So how do we get back?
- Selena:** How do we get back? How do we get back?
- Ryan:** How do we preempt our loss of romance? I'm thinking about listeners that could be listening that are tuning in right now. We're going to have obviously the newly married or nearly married, and they're kind of thinking, "All right,

either this isn't going to happen to us," or "Okay, it will. Let's be proactive about it."

**Selena:** There's no oldie marriage in there? *[laughs]*

**Ryan:** I'm starting there. And then you have people like us that are kind of somewhere in between and then you have people that have been married... You know, we get a lot of messages from people that have been married many decades. Two, three decades. So I think...

**Selena:** And that's how to have a good marriage? *[chuckles]*

**Ryan:** Yeah, you should be doing a podcast. Anyway, how do we get back to it? I love this first line is that we must first look to Jesus and ask yourself, Have I left my first love? Explain that a little bit.

**Selena:** Yeah. In Revelation 2, we see Jesus warning the church of Ephesus to return to their first love, which is Him through repentance. So He's encouraging them and all the work that they've done. And then he's saying that he has something against them, that they've left their first love. And the only way to get back is through repentance and to do the first works when they're first safe. So understanding how far they have fallen, and then their encounter with Him. And then from there, you know, moving on. So romance revelation, right? How does this all kind of...

**Ryan:** I want to read Revelation 2:3-4. It says, "I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent."

So, what Jimmy is doing here, he's making a case for the fact that your first love is a state that can be retained. It can be retained. And if it is lost, if you lose that, if you've abandoned the love you had at first... In this case, it's Ephesians' love for Christ, love for the gospel. Or they don't have a love for the gospel, but the love and light of the gospel. So if you do lose it, then there's a path back to it. That's the case that he's making right here.

**Selena:** Right. I think there's a parallel to this. Because the way back for any of us is repentance. It's an acknowledgment of...

**Ryan:** Sorry, it's roughly my feathers right now. So if I'm not romantic, I need to repent. Is that what you're saying?

- Selena:** Well, I'm saying take a few steps back and ask yourself, why are we not romantic? Why have I abandoned my first love, which is Jesus? Because typically... not typically. I believe that there is a strong connection between the life and thriving of our romance and my relationship with Christ and the gospel.
- Ryan:** Let's hover on that some more because we've defined romance as it's special and that it's preemptive and not reactive. So basically, he's saying the way we're talking about romance is it's love in action. Love with like some energy behind it, some intentionality put into it. I'm just processing this in real-time. So you said, think about the reasons why you might not be romantic, aka loving your wife the way that she'll feel loved.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** For me, usually it's because I'm too busy, [00:25:00] I'm too tired, I've got too much going on, my life is out of whack, out of balance. Usually, that's work-related or I don't know, there could be other stuff going on in our lives. And it might not be my fault directly. It might be other stuff. But usually, I'm overwhelmed. Or I'm being really selfish and not thinking about you.
- Selena:** So you're saying a lack of priorities, and you're saying a...
- Ryan:** Selfishness.
- Selena:** Selfishness. Which...
- Ryan:** And those do come back.
- Selena:** They come back.
- Ryan:** If I'm getting up in the morning and I'm having my time with Jesus, and I'm praying to Him and submitting my life to Him, I have a list of resolutions that I go through, if I go through those resolutions and commit those to the Lord, pray through the Lord's Prayer, He has a way of directing my steps when I submit myself to Him. So if that's out of whack, then it's way more likely that this area of my life will be out of whack as well.
- Selena:** Absolutely. What I'm also saying is, when you said like, "If romance is nonexistent in our marriage, do I need to repent?" Well, I would say yes. But then I would follow it up with this verse in Revelation when Jesus is saying, "Repent and do the works first." Do the works that you did first. Jimmy also references this in a way that saying the feelings and emotions may not be in

those first works of you pursuing the original first love of your marriage, like your spouse.

**Ryan:** Through the works you did at first. I'm just thinking through the epistle to the Ephesians and how profound that was in terms of how Paul is making the case to the Ephesians, that they are not outsiders anymore, that Christ and His resurrection have paved the way for a new era of the family of God.

**Selena:** And he's recognizing...

**Ryan:** That it's not just the Jews, it's also the Gentiles. They're folded in and therefore they're adopted. Now, that is the model for us. And he ends Ephesians with this call to...that's the whole armor of God piece, but it's in light of the family unit within the larger family of God. Sorry, I'm processing in real-time. So the works they did first would have been them...

**Selena:** There's an enthusiasm there. There's an inner gratefulness and then an attitude of gratitude *[laughing]* for lack of a better term. I'm sorry, that rubs everybody the wrong way. Kind of just spilled out of me. But if we are in this place of, well, my marriage is not romantic, why do I need to repent? Well, the attitude right there in that moment is probably indicative that there is some pride or there's some lack of reverence, or there's lack of humility. And so none of those things are going to facilitate this environment of romance. Right?

**Ryan:** What if you're just not a romantic person? I think of the couples that have approached us in the events we've spoken at...

**Selena:** They are just more pragmatic about their marriage? *[chuckles]*

**Ryan:** No, just their version of romance maybe it's a far cry from our version of romance.

**Selena:** I think you have to define what romance is, first from a biblical standard, which it's looking at the other person, right? Romantic love, like we said, is so special because it's preemptive and not reactive. That's what makes romantic love, in a biblical sense, I think different than in a worldly sense.

**Ryan:** I just don't want to make people feel bad if their love is thriving, they're growing, but they may not identify with the ideals classical romance. Again, we were careful to identify or define romance as a preemptive act of love.

**Selena:** We have to, again, go to Jesus first. First things first. Go to Him, repent and ask Him for guidance and leadership and submit ourselves to Him. We need to go

to our spouse and repent of sin of being static. I think those are things that are okay to talk about and repent of. I feel like I could even repent to you of sin... I feel like I've just existed in our marriage and I've checked the boxes through the week, and that is good and loving, and probably intentional and somewhat romantic. But I think that I'm definitely feeling challenged to interpret romance, maybe more than the weekly sex.

**Ryan:** Romp in the hay? *[Selena laughs]*

**Selena:** No, no, I also say it. I think there's more to this. If I think that that's all there is, then how prideful of me to not think that God has created more for us as familiar as we are with marriage and sex and all of that, to think that, is very, I think prideful of me.

**Ryan:** This is still kind of rubbing me the wrong way because there's this correlation between lacking romance and having to repent. [00:30:00]

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** I struggle with that because I think of all the various cultures that... Like how culturally informed is saying that? That's a very westernized view of what romance is. So again, we've been very careful to define that romance is an act of preemptive love, to mean that I am going to go out of my way to love you. Now that could look like the western Hallmark film vision and romance.

**Selena:** Usually, doesn't.

**Ryan:** But I'm thinking of a couple in Zambia or a couple in Uganda or a couple in China or a couple in Thailand, I mean, or even Middle Eastern or Near Eastern married couples a thousand years ago. I just want to be really careful that romance is not something that's...it's so much deeper than whatever that first Valentine's Day view of it that we get.

**Selena:** Right. Right.

**Ryan:** That's why it's rubbing me the wrong way. But maybe we take the word "romance" out of it and just say like this. "If I'm not loving my spouse, preemptively, I need to repent." That I think I can get on board with.

**Selena:** Okay. I think that's way more clear. *[laughs]*

**Ryan:** Okay. Well, that's why we're having this talk.

- Selena:** No, I think it's much more clear. And that's what I feel like I was trying to say, but again, I'm not great at...
- Ryan:** No, you're fine.
- Selena:** Because when I'm writing those words, I'm like, "Gosh, I don't feel like my level of repentance has a direct correlation to our level of romance." I don't think that's true. I think that it does filter down and has an effect on our romantic life if I am living in sin, or if I am being static and not engaging with my husband, engaging with...
- Ryan:** So there are a few ways that this can play out. I'm thinking because we have a one and a half... Well, one... How old is she?
- Selena:** She's like one and a half. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** Almost one and a half.
- Selena:** I don't know how these kids are. They're just running around.
- Ryan:** And she's been really needy lately. I as your husband, you need to be free to know that you can love me preemptively without having jumped through all these, whatever the arbitrary hoops are. Instead, you can choose maybe a way to carry yourself around a certain conversation or topic. I'm thinking about something that's God's been convicting me in is being super soft with how I communicate with you. I never want to hurt you. Like that's been going through my head. I don't want to hurt my wife. I don't want to wound her. I want to speak to her like I want my sons-in-law to speak to my daughters. Oh, yeah, if you're listening to this, *[Selena laughs]* be warned. I have a safe and it's not for money. It's full of metal objects. *[both laughs]*
- Selena:** Anyways.
- Ryan:** Anyway, that fire other metal objects. I'm thinking...
- Selena:** No, that's really...
- Ryan:** I'll pause. By the grace of God, I've been hyper-aware of that. And so when I'm getting ready to react to something and say something, I will pump the brakes. And that, to me is a version of loving your spouse preemptively. And that's romantic in a way.

- Selena:** That's exactly the next step and idea that we're going to talk about is empathy. Because there's these 12 phases of romantic love that Jimmy talks about, and we can kind of run through them, but it's not like this....
- Ryan:** You don't get to quarrel when you're there.
- Selena:** Yeah, no, actually it's lots of romance. *[both laughs]* I think the purpose of the 12 phases of romantic love is to help us identify maybe and understand where we are in terms of our marriage and to kind of put words to it, and to go back to our first love of Jesus to repent and believe. But to say, "Okay, this is where I'm at, this is how we are not engaging well." You're hitting on empathy is what you're saying. God has been saying, "Be empathetic towards your wife essentially. "Put yourself in her shoes. How do you want to be talked to?" It grows life in me when I hear you say that. I don't know how to say that in another way. But I feel empowered. I feel that you really care about me. It makes me feel safe and it fosters that deep, romantic love that is not just a feeling but it's a belief that I trust you beyond my own.
- Ryan:** If you're looking for a verse, this is the one to zero in on. 1 Peter 3:7. "Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered." Consider that. Look past the weaker vessel piece.
- Selena:** I don't think they mean that.
- Ryan:** It's not to say it's less. But like if we were to have an arm wrestle...
- Selena:** I would so win. Every time. *[both chuckles]* I'm kidding. [00:35:00]
- Ryan:** The point is, is he's saying, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor, so that your prayers may not be hindered. There's a correlation between my prayers being heard or prayers being... I won't say heard, but my prayers been hindered. There's a correlation to my reaction, my interaction, my relationship with God. There's a correlation between that and my relationship with my wife.
- Selena:** Right. Which is where I'm saying, yes, the act of repentance keeps the rest out of the pipes, right?
- Ryan:** Totally.
- Selena:** Is that what we talked about? In our relationship. So that romance and our desires are able to kind of flourish. You don't desire romance if you're not

connecting. So how do we begin connecting? Repentance is one way. It sounds like a big heavy word, but it is one way.

**Ryan:** Here's the thing with repentance. Sorry I jumped in. Repentance as is the way to soften a hardened heart. Whether it's repentance to God, or repentance to another human. Namely, your spouse. If you can go to them and be genuinely contrite in spirit and repentant for something that you did wrong, that's going to soften you. And when you have a softer heart, you're going to start to connect, you're going to start reestablishing those vital lines.

**Selena:** Right. Which I think this goes into our 12 phases of romantic love. We can kind of run through them.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Awareness is the first one. I think...

**Ryan:** I remember that. I saw you across the gymnasium.

**Selena:** There it is. *[laughs]*

**Ryan:** With the harps, the wind blowing to you.

**Selena:** Awareness of each other. You know that first time you saw them? Maybe it wasn't the greatest first time.

**Ryan:** My heart dropped through the soles of my shoe.

**Selena:** Whenever the time came that you were aware and in love with your spouse. *[chuckles]* Or you were aware of them.

**Ryan:** For me, number one and two, they were right next to each other. Awareness and interest.

**Selena:** Yes. *[both laughs]*

**Ryan:** I was aware of you. I was interested. I'm still interested.

**Selena:** And then there was a positive change, which is number three.

**Ryan:** What is positive change? What is that?

**Selena:** He didn't define it, so I'm defining it. *[both laughs]* As you're starting to make some moves towards each other, there's a positive change. It's not a negative.

It's not like, "Oh, not interested. I get it." It's "Oh, he's interested" or "she's interested. Okay." So there's some positive change. We're taking steps towards each other.

**Ryan:** Okay. I see.

**Selena:** Which probably is dating, right? Those beginning phases of dating. That's a positive change.

**Ryan:** You didn't talk to me for like a whole year after that first fateful day when I saw the gymnasium floor. *[laughs]*

**Selena:** Okay. You didn't go to our school until the next year.

**Ryan:** No excuses! *[both laughs]* I don't want to hear it. You knew what you were doing.

**Selena:** I had no idea.

**Ryan:** Yeah, I was pretty invisible. Anyway, we struck up a relationship. We were friends for a solid year.

**Selena:** Positive change.

**Ryan:** Positive change, baby.

**Selena:** Four is romantic interest.

**Ryan:** And that's when we both started raising our eyebrows a little bit saying, "Oh, hey, you."

**Selena:** "Hey, hey, hey." You came back from football camp and your hair was not two colors. Your braces were off. You're all in shape.

**Ryan:** But you told me it's all physical for you. *[both laughs]* Let's just be honest. Let's just be honest.

**Selena:** Stop! You know you're the hottest man ever.

**Ryan:** Oh, yeah. Let's pause the podcast. All right. The fifth one. We're going to move on. It's kind of steamy up in. Studio Frederick.

**Selena:** High emotional focus. So romantic interest, start raising your eyebrows. There's this an emotional focus, right?

- Ryan:** Yeah. This is coupled with I think with number six, which is positive romantic exchange.
- Selena:** This is looks different at dating levels vs marriage and dating. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** Our DTR talk was in my 1994 Honda Civic.
- Selena:** Hello *[inaudible]*.
- Ryan:** That was his name. And we sat there. The car was off but the radio was on. And I kept...
- Selena:** You were always clicking on something.
- Ryan:** I was always hitting the brake. I was nervous. My foot was on the brake pedal and I was probably pumping it a little too much even though we're sitting in the driveway. Killed the battery dead. Like absolutely dead. We actually had to go get a new... My parents, they couldn't even get the car to restart after that. I don't know what was wrong with it. That thing got more air than a skateboarder at the X Games. I'll tell you what?
- Selena:** Oh, 17-year-old Ryan.
- Ryan:** Man. No, I'm not joking. There was a set of railroad tracks by the Walmart.
- Selena:** Anyways. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** And when you hit those things going 50 miles an hour...
- Selena:** Country live in here.
- Ryan:** So we had that kind of positive romantic exchange where we said, "I like you. You like me. I could see this going a long way. Let's make it official." We started dating. And then we had strong feeling. Number seven. Strong feelings of love and passion.
- Selena:** You know when we talk about love people that we are talking about biblical love. And here I think what Jimmy's saying is the strong feelings of love and passion. You know what those emotions are. They are overflowing from a deeper connection of it's not lustful like, "I just want you." It is "I know you, [00:40:00] therefore I want you." If that makes sense. So strong feelings of love and passion.

Deepening relational bonds. I would say that goes steps towards marriage for us. Like we have these strong feelings of love and passion. We want to be together all the time.

**Ryan:** I mean, frankly, I think that's where it does... the relational bond. Let's use that in a really kind of clinical sense. There's a bond of marriage, right?

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** There's a deepening of that to the end of marriage. Well, if you're married, that's only step 8 of 12. Now, 12 is not the ideal here. I would call it the pinnacle of this process is that deepening of that relational bond. Because then in number nine, it's normalcy. I love normalcy. I love routine.

**Selena:** Same.

**Ryan:** I love consistency.

**Selena:** We've come to love it. We've come to love it because it's novelty.

**Ryan:** Because our life is chaos right now.

**Selena:** Yes, it is. Normalcy is very much desired. I think normalcy is where the growth is actually happening.

**Ryan:** Well, you actually get up to cruising altitude. That's probably the least exciting part of a flight is cruising altitude, unless you have a lot of turbulence. And that's exciting in the wrong way. But you get to normalcy.

Then number 10 is reality, which both of these... I don't like how they have this pejorative sense. I know what he means but realities...and parentheses is conflict, difficulty, fatigue, and illness. So, reality that the fantasy is shattered. The perfection is marred by "Oh, yeah, we live in a fallen world. We are ourselves in a fallen state. We're both sinners." So conflict, difficulty, fatigue, and illness are still real. And we're reminded of that because we finally been on this thing long enough. So the temptation then is to move down this. Now, think of it like it's a hill. We cruised over the hill. We're on the other side of it now.

**Selena:** At 7, 8, 9. 10 is heading down.

**Ryan:** 10 is reality. 11 is distraction and disinterest.

- Selena:** Which I think I would say a lot of our marriages, this is where we exist. We're seeing distraction and disinterest and then we wonder why. Number 12, there's a loss of romance. You wonder why there's no connection and why someone or something else... He says that...
- Ryan:** Number 5.
- Selena:** Well, no. He says there's never an excuse for an affair. But when there's a loss of romance, it definitely can open the door for opportunities like that to happen.
- Ryan:** Well, I mean, because they're oil and water. Romance with my wife is naturally exclusive. There's no room for anything else in there because I'm completely fixated on you. And that's why if now my fixation is not on you, it's going to be somewhere. It's going to be either in myself, it's going to be somewhere unhealthy, like maybe on the internet, or in some other unnatural fixation, or on another individual, which is extramarital, extra-biblical.
- Selena:** Extra biblical?
- Ryan:** It's outside of the Bible.
- Selena:** Outside of the Bible. When you say extra-biblical, it sounds like it's super biblical. And I was like...
- Ryan:** No, it's outside of what the Bible's design for marriage, God's design. So I want to hover on this number 11 just a little bit longer.
- Selena:** Sure.
- Ryan:** It's the distraction and disinterest. What does that look like? You know that's like if it's you. But distraction could be a number of things. So we can be distracted by really good things. But because of the disordered love, they become bad things.
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** So if I'm distracted by work, or I'm distracted by... I mean, I'm thinking if you're in the ministry... Like for us, I can spend literally all day responding to messages and questions and doing ministry. But if I do that to the detriment of my own wife, my own marriage, I am now living in sin because I've just ordered that priority. As a man, I'm called to love my wife. Like in 1 Peter, it says, "Called to honor her in a way that's really unique to that relationship." And if I forsake that relationship, then I'm now living outside of that call. I'm

now living in sin. So there's that sense of distraction, which will lead to disinterest.

Let's also get really practical. The way that screens have changed our physiology is astounding. I don't think we're going to understand the full effect of it for another decade, for another 10, 20 years. The way our phones have changed our need for stimulation, for dopamine, for entertainment, for... We are so terrified of boredom that I just I wonder how it is affecting marriages. Because you're always jonesing for a fix, and you're distracted because of it. So you're either always watching something. You always got to catch the game. You always gotta catch the show. You got to binge the next episode. You got to play the video game.

**Selena:** How is that [00:45:00] affecting your expectations for your relationship or your [inaudible]. We talked about entropy and dynamic and static. So you're looking at things that are possibly not even real that are, you know, there's filters.

**Ryan:** And they're super stimulants. So it's the same thing with taste. Sorry, I'm going a little bit of a tangent. But you think about like food that is really unhealthy for you, like chips or any really good cheeseburger, they are super stimulating from a taste standpoint. They're really fatty, really salty, really flavorful, really intense so it makes you want it. But then you go to something that's fell off a tree and you're like, "This doesn't taste good."

**Selena:** Celery. *[chuckles]*

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** Actually, you would argue it doesn't...

**Ryan:** A dietitian will tell you if you back away from that stuff for a period of time and you go eat a head of lettuce, you'll be like, "Oh, this tastes great. There's flavor here. It's really get go." Same thing happens with distraction and screens because you have all these really hyper entertaining, hyper-stimulating interactions. And not just sexually, but just interesting things. Even podcasts, you're always being interested.

Now you're looking at your spouse, and they don't have anything interesting to say. They don't look particularly interesting. They don't sound interesting. They're not entertaining. So you just get disinterested. I don't know, maybe we need to do a little study there and see.

**Selena:** Maybe we do. Because talking about getting back to romance, getting back to this preemptive love that lives in an environment of attentiveness, that lives in an environment that is not distracted or disinterested, but that is engaging, that is the environment that love and romance... That term I get how you say it rubs you the wrong way. But the idea of preemptive love, of thinking of the other before yourself and in spite of yourself, that is flooded. If we, by distraction, disinterest, if we are not being attentive, if we are not doing the works first and if we are not...

I mean, talk about love languages. Those are the ways that we are building our romance, deepening our bonds of relationship. "Are we bilingual in that?" he says. Romance occurs as if both spouses become emotionally bilingual is what he says. So like a romantic husband knows how to speak his wife's love language and romantic wife knows how to speak love in her husband's language.

**Ryan:** Wow. I love how Jimmy does this because you can only do this when you've been doing this for 30 years.

**Selena:** Seriously? *[chuckles]*

**Ryan:** He's going to say things that he says because you're like, "Don't question. I've seen it. I have the data in my head. I've seen it." So he says, "This is what romance looks like to the wife." And I love that you can just put terms to this because I always feel really nervous to do that because I'm always just hearing the one voice. It's like, "How dare you tell me? You don't know women?"

**Selena:** Right. And Jimmy is like, "I know women. I've talked to plenty of them." So he says, "To the wife, romance looks like emotionally... they want to be emotionally connected." Let me know if you agree with these. *[Selena laughs]*

**Ryan:** Conversational. I thought it's controversial.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** Conversational.

**Selena:** Yes. Yes. Yes. Plus. Plus. Plus.

**Ryan:** Mostly, mostly, not totally, but mostly non-sexual.

**Selena:** At first.

- Ryan:** At first. Okay. *[Selena laughs, Ryan chuckles]* And male initiated. That's interesting to me. You get more out of it when you feel me pursuing your heart. And this is going to be... hear this term in a non-sexual way. But when I'm penetrating you in that way, I'm sorry, but what I'm trying to get into your heart and into your head, you feel more romance that way.
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** Okay. Sorry to use that word? Was that a weird word?
- Selena:** No, it's fine.
- Ryan:** Okay. And then for the husband, he says, romance looks like it's honoring, sexual, fun, and comfortable.
- Selena:** I wish Jimmy was here. I have some questions for him. *[both laughs]*
- Ryan:** You do?
- Selena:** But does that make sense to you? Does that like... you're like, "Yeah."
- Ryan:** What did I text you? I was painting yesterday.
- Selena:** Painting walls, not like doing murals and.. *[both laughs]*
- Ryan:** Just doing my art! I like being myself.
- Selena:** We never clarified that. People are just like, "What was he painting."
- Ryan:** I'm painting inside of the house that we're supposed to be moving into because the walls are super dingy. Anyway. So I texted you and you're like, "Hey, we ordered pizza because our life's a wreck right now."
- Selena:** It's where we're at.
- Ryan:** I sent you, I was like, "Pizza is ordered and it'll be there." And you're like, "Hey, we'll wait for you." And I was like, "Don't wait. I'm going to try to finish painting the bathroom. I'll be home like a half-hour later than I planned." Then I said, "I can't wait just to get home and just hang out with you and just basically chill and watch..." We're watching Mountain Man. [00:50:00] That's the thing we're watching right now. That's the comfortable part. You're more comfortable to me than any other place in the planet.
- Selena:** Well, and see, I can misinterpret that as lazy, honestly.

- Ryan:** Well, I've been painting your house for the last seven hours. *[both laughing]*
- Selena:** No, no, no. Not that. My house. No comfortable aspects. But I also can identify that as yes, I want to be comfortable with you. That romance is something that has to be comfortable. I think it's a requirement. But I can also say that as like, "He just wants to come home and watch a show."
- Ryan:** Don't ask anything of me. *[both laughs]*
- Selena:** What I to examine is why would I respond that way. Why would a wife respond and say, "Oh, you just wants comfortable, just lazy and all that." Well, because the preemptive love has not been a habit in their daily and weekly life. Is that a good argument?
- Ryan:** Ideally, you would feel that. You would know that I'm not just checking out in that moment, but I'm just needing rest with my wife.
- Selena:** And I knew exactly what you're saying because I know you, I know where we stand. I know that this lack of effort and just comfortable and being together sounds loving. And it sounds awesome and wonderful, and you want it. And that's good. It wasn't like a sexual thing and wasn't a lazy thing. I just want to I guess highlight what romance looks like. It's not a default. It is very much an active thing.
- Ryan:** Before we move on, we're going to do the couple's challenge after this, but I glossed over it. But for husband romance looks like being honored.
- Selena:** I wanted you to touch on that.
- Ryan:** That is probably number one, like way high above the others. It's not a baseless honor but it's a sense of like appreciation, I think, of a) my role as your husband, I held a special place in your life.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** And it's in a place that is unique only to me, and that you recognize and you expect me to step into that place. You make me want to rise up. And that feels super romantic. And then when you also show honor for, you know, the fact that I was home later, but you weren't just mad at that, you were saying, "I got the sense that you're thankful that I was actually doing what I was doing for our family."

**Selena:** I think honor falls into the exact same realm as respect in Christ. Paul always intertwines the Bible and whatever it says. It's like Jesus just said it all.

**Ryan:** It's true. He did say that.

**Selena:** I know. But I don't want to be correcting who I'm saying said what.

**Ryan:** Say "the Bible says."

**Selena:** The Bible says.

**Ryan:** Pull the Billy Graham trick. Sales trick.

**Selena:** No, the Bible does say though that wives respect your husbands. And if I'm respecting you, and you are feeling that, knowing that, then that is a way of connecting with you and fulfilling some of those desires to be romantic and to be together.

**Ryan:** Because if I'm honest, we teased about Valentine's Day and how you didn't get me anything.

**Selena:** I didn't.

**Ryan:** Or you didn't think about it. It doesn't bother me.

**Selena:** But I can't leave you...

**Ryan:** What are you going to say?

**Selena:** I was honestly surprised that you got us anything because for one it snowed on Valentine's Day, and so I was like, "Nothing I happening."

**Ryan:** I was so prepared.

**Selena:** You were so prepared. You had stuff for all the girls.

**Ryan:** I have three daughters and a wife. I got to be on my game. Mother's Day is terrifying. I'm planning Mother's day right now.

**Selena:** I just come off of like... we have birthdays from July until January and holidays in between that. So January and February to me are just like, "Oh, okay, we got through everything. So I'm not even thinking about Valentine's Day. I'm like, "Yeah, whatever. We can have a candy bar. It's great." So the fact that

you were on it, I was so impressed. And I don't mean that in like you're never on it.

**Ryan:** I like to impress you.

**Selena:** There's a lot happening. So yeah, it was...

**Ryan:** I was like, "Did you get me anything?" And you're like, "Just wait till later."  
*[both laughs]* And that's all right.

**Selena:** See, you're just kind of creative.

**Ryan:** That's the gift that keeps on giving.

**Selena:** Keeps on giving. There you go.

**Ryan:** What's the couple's challenge for this week? Think back to when you were dating. And then here's some questions for you. So get that picture in your mind, when you were dating before you proposed...

**Selena:** The highlight of when you were dating. *[laughs]*

**Ryan:** Ideally, that's why you got... You dated and now you're married.

**Selena:** Some people have not great dating seasons.

**Ryan:** Hopefully it was good. Were there ways in which you were more empathetic toward each other? That's the first question. Talk about that. How can you begin to be more empathetic toward each other in order for your romance to be kindled? And then finally, are you being bilingual in your love language. If you need more on love language, just go to [fiercemarriage.com](http://fiercemarriage.com) and just type in "5 love languages." We have a lot of stuff on that. It's obviously a book by Gary Chapman. It's a perennial bestseller. They sold 20 trillion copies in the last...

**Selena:** Trillion. Every day. It sounds more...

**Ryan:** Oh my word! Ask yourself those questions. Carve out 10, 15 minutes to actually talk about it. You turn the TV off, put the kids to bed, and just talk.

**Selena:** 10 to 15 minutes?

**Ryan:** Well, it'll stop...

- Selena:** I'm saying just....
- Ryan:** If you say 30 minutes, no one will do it.
- Selena:** What? I would do it.
- Ryan:** Ten minutes will easily turn into 30. That's my take on it.
- Selena:** Okay, there you go.
- Ryan:** It's all bait and switch.
- Selena:** There you go. All right.
- Ryan:** Bait and switch.
- Selena:** I'm the conversational one sometimes. So I'm like, "What?"
- Ryan:** Okay, cool. Well, let's pray and we'll call it an episode. Is that okay?
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Lord, I thank you for this time. I thank you for your love for us and that Your love never tires. It never grows distracted or disinterested. You never lose that sense of delight in us because we were created for Your glory and Your glory we shall have, Lord. I pray that our marriages would glorify you. I pray that the marriages of the couples and the husbands and wives listening to this would be increasingly glorifying to you and not just static, not dying, but growing in glorification of you. I pray for the couples who feel discouraged that they would find hope in your word, they'd find hope in the fact that you are even giving them some things to act on right now that you have not forsaken them, you will never forsake them. I pray that their faith would be expanded and then would take steps of faith in whatever direction You lead. In Jesus' name, amen.
- Selena:** Amen.
- Ryan:** Speaking of direction, this was not planned, but we do have some courses available. It's an ecosystem that we just built this year. Just launched it a few months ago. It's called Gospel Centered Marriage. Go to [gospelcenteredmarriage.com](http://gospelcenteredmarriage.com). We have a growing content library there. But that might be the first step in a growth direction for you. So I encourage you to go check that out. [Gospelcenteredmarriage.com](http://Gospelcenteredmarriage.com). I start with the six-week marriage core course and then there are enrichment modules. As we

mentioned earlier, we have two that are releasing in the next week, two weeks.

Anyway, thank you so much for joining us on this episode of the Fierce Marriage podcast. This episode is—

**Selena:** In the can.

**Ryan:** All right, folks, we'll see the last seven days. Until then—

**Selena:** Stay fierce.

**[00:57:20]** <outro>

**Ryan:** Thank you for listening to the Fierce Marriage podcast. For more resources for your marriage, please visit [FierceMarriage.com](http://FierceMarriage.com), or you can find us with our handle @Fiercemarriage on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Thank you so much for listening. We hope this has blessed you. Take care.

**PODCAST NOTES**

- **[00:22:14]**
  - Scripture references:
    - Revelation 2;3-4, ESV
  
- **[00:17:56]**
  - Scripture references:
    - 1 Peter 3:7, ESV
  
  - Recommended Resource:
    - [Gospel Centered Marriage](#)

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