

BOUNDARIES AND YOUR CHILDREN

<https://fiercemarriage.com/boundaries-and-your-children>

[00:00:00]

Selena: When it comes to boundaries and our marriage and boundaries and kids, that's a hard thing to navigate because I feel like all of kids is just boundary setting. *[laughs]* Like all parenting is boundary setting. But what about the times when we're setting boundaries from our kids to protect our marriage, to make sure that we are in a place of health? What does that look like? Because oftentimes it can be skewed of like, "Give me the me time" or "my kids are annoying. Get them away so we can have our time." What should inform those decisions and attitudes?

Ryan: Yeah, if we're not careful, our kids can suck the life right out of our marriage in a really covert way.

Selena: They don't mean to...

Ryan: They don't mean to.

Selena: ...but they do it all the time.

Ryan: And that's on the parents too. Because you've heard of people who once their kids leave to go to college or whatever, they're left with like, "Now we don't have a relationship anymore because our whole life revolved around our kids."

Selena: Right. Boundaries are good.

Ryan: Boundaries are really good. We love kids, kids are a blessing from God. However, they do have to be bounded. *[both chuckles]*

Selena: Bound.

Ryan: Bounded with boundaries. So we're going to share on that today. We're also going to share about some additions to the Frederick household. So yes, we'll see you on the other side.

[00:01:14] <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.
- [00:01:47] <podcast begins>**
- Selena:** It's two additions but it's not babies. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** I totally pulled a fast one on you.
- Selena:** My eyes got wide. *[Ryan chuckles]* I was like, "Are you pregnant, Ryan?" *[laughing]*
- Ryan:** I am.
- Selena:** No, we don't believe in that, folks. You know that. My great uncle passed away this last week and I grew up spending time on his 40-acre farm. I used to help harvest vegetables in the summer and a bunch of...
- Ryan:** Taters. They are called tater salad. *[chuckles]*
- Selena:** Yeah, right. Just learned a bunch of life lessons and got to have slow summers on the farm. It was really great. So he will be greatly missed. His daughter lives on the farm still, and their cat had kittens, and she actually was just like, "You know what? I would really love it if you guys..." The girls already knew we're going to love the kittens when we went down there just to visit them. But of course, you can't just ever look at kittens. But we did bring two home because we were kind of thinking two would be great. They're just running around in a big, old barn loft. They were farm kitties born on the farm.
- Ryan:** Can I add more texture to this? *[laughing]* Sorry. Because people are like, "That's great. How do you just add two cats to your house?" Well, as you know,

if you've been listening, by God's grace, we moved recently. Not far, but we moved to a little bit more land where we've got some room to kind of spread out a little bit. And part of that is this piece of land came with a tiny little barn. This lady that...

Selena: I know. It's hard to say it's a barn, but it is. There's a little loft and they had a little mini horse.

Ryan: So we've been literally looking for barn cats. *[Selena laughs]* We named them Garbage and Sprinkles. *[both chuckles]*

Selena: That's the mommy-daddy names. We call them Garbage and Sprinkles.

Ryan: They're both these Calico cats and they are true blue barn cats. Breed in a barn, raised in a barn. We hope that they continue living in a barn. Right now they are living in the house because they're kittens and they're defenseless, and there's coyotes in the woods and stuff. But yes, the one that Dela named Fiona is the one that Dela picked. They're both these Calico cats. It's from Fiona's Lock book that she likes. It's like the tail was either genetically gone or was crushed really early on. It doesn't have a tail. It's got this little flap of weird-looking skin.

Selena: Yeah. It works occasionally.

Ryan: It kind of just dangles there. That's the one I'm calling Garbage.

Selena: The other one is Daisy. He was like, "If it's a boy, I'm going to name it Pa." And I was like, "Why Pa?"

Ryan: And you were like, "We'll be thinking about it a little bit?" *[chuckles]* We're going to let..."

Selena: "Let's think about some of the stories you've read and some of the names." And she's like, "Daisy." I was like, "Oh, would you like to name it Daisy? I really like that name."

Ryan: As it turns out... okay, and this is off-topic. Sorry. But Calico cats, there are three thousand and one chance that they're going to be female.

Selena: Male.

Ryan: No. One in every three thousand is male.

Selena: Gotcha.

- Ryan:** So these are both girl cats, which we're very happy about.
- Selena:** Yeah, maybe we'll keep the line, but hopefully not too soon. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** So we have a little tiny barn and these cats are going to live there. They have a job, right? They're not pets. They're working animals—and that's to keep our little piece of land free of mice, rats.
- Selena:** I think Daisy is going to fill that role really well. I'm not really about Fiona. [00:05:00] She's a snuggle bug. So we'll see. But that's our adventures in the Frederick household.
- Ryan:** Little quick update. So all around kids and boundaries... This is a bit of a segue, and I juked my own wife out saying that we had additions in the Frederick household.
- Selena:** I just follow you blindly.
- Ryan:** But it's all around: how do we maintain marital health? Now, we're going to try really hard today to walk this line between talking about practices of parenting and actually discipling our kids because our hearts are really kind of passionate about that. But we do want to keep it marriage-centered. So you'll feel us pushing and pulling against that boundary there, trying to really focus on it.
- But our focus here today is how to create healthy boundaries around our marriage... Okay, hear me out. Around our marriage that kids aren't in. There are certain parts. Yes, our kids are part of our lives, we're all the integration, we're all about letting them be a part of every aspect of our lives where it's appropriate. And there's the thing. We talked about this in the first week. Boundaries exist because there is a better and a worse scenario.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** In this case, there's a better scenario where our marriage is healthy, we're maintaining the health of our relationship: how we communicate even in terms of our intimacy, in terms of some of the conversations and topics that we will and won't address with children within earshot. There's a better and a worse in those situations. So it's really clear. Obviously, with the intimacy piece, that is we lock the door, you are not involved, and we don't want you even knowing about it. *[both chuckles]*

Ryan: And there's other ones where maybe we're arguing. We have to have really clear boundaries around how we're going to argue because we have to recognize that our conflict even has a purpose.

Selena: Right, the way we conflict.

Ryan: The way we have conflict yet is important, not just for our kids focusing on us, but so that we can parent them better but we can be in agreement with one another, and not be divided against each other. So there's some nuances in this situation.

Selena: This is number two of four episodes on this series entitled Boundaries. So last week we kind of spoke generally. We leaned a little bit more heavily into in-laws. We also recorded a video for Gospel Centered Marriage around boundaries with some of our friends...

Ryan: That will only be available there, unfortunately.

Selena: It will only be available there.

Ryan: But fortunately, anyone can be a part of Gospel Centered Marriage.

Selena: Yes. Yes.

Ryan: Go to Gospelcenteredmarriage.com. *[chuckles]*

Selena: There you go. We talked about in-laws more heavily. That was the focus. And family. So go check that out. We might touch and bring up a few points from that conversation as well because it was so incredible. But yeah. So if you are new to the Fierce Marriage kind of space and you've listened to a few episodes and you haven't left a rating and a review, please do that. That's very helpful to us and to our listeners.

Ryan: Thank you, listeners. You came through. We had some really encouraging reviews. So I'm just really thankful for you that have... And if you haven't had a chance to do it, don't feel bad. Just enjoy the conversation and enjoy the content.

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

Ryan: Selena is like, "Don't do that." No.

Selena: I'm kidding.

Ryan: But don't feel bad. Just know that if God is leading you, and you feel compelled to do that, that is something we really do appreciate. With that said, no strings attached. We're not going to hold it against you if we meet you in public someday and you're like, "I listen to your podcast," I'm not going to be like, "Did you leave a review? [*Selena laughs*] And if you didn't..." I'm not going to say that. [*both laughs*] Instead we're just going to, you know...

Selena: Cool.

Ryan: ...we're just going to be glad to meet you. That's the rating and review piece. [Patreon.com/fiercemarriage](https://patreon.com/fiercemarriage), that is our community where we connect and do early releases. Actually, sometime in the next few weeks, we're going to do a Zoom. Kind of live zoom thing. We do have some time off coming up. So that might be later than I'm hoping. You guys probably feel this too, but life has been extra chaotic and everything.

Anyway, if you want to support us, that's how you do it in a very direct, tangible way. There are benefits to the patrons. But the biggest benefit is that you are on mission with us in this thing called Fierce Marriage in pointing couples to Christ and commissioning them for the gospel. You will be a part of that. And if you want to, go to patreon.com/fiercemarriage.

Finally, we mentioned Gospel Centered Marriage. That's our new kind of online learning ecosystem. You can go there and sign up and take... basically, there's a core marriage course and the ongoing enrichment courses that are being released every month or two. There's a growing body of content. The point there is that our dream is for every couple to go through the six-week core, which really firmly establishes your foundations on the gospel in all the key areas of marriage.

And then after that our encouragement to you is just to spend a night a month, one night a month going through a one a 60 to 90-minute exercise [00:10:00] with the course and with a discussion guide so that your marriage is always kind of being grown and developed on the things of God. So go to gospelcenteredmarriage.com, and you'll be able to find out all the information for that. That's it.

Selena: Awesome. So quick recap. Last week we talked generally about boundaries: what they are, why we don't have them. We did touch a bit on the in-law dynamic and what is our biblical instruction around or on boundaries, what are we supposed to follow and look to. So there are three things that we want to kind of keep in our mind as we're listening to this episode. What keeps us from having boundaries? And these are the three things that we need to keep coming back to. Why we don't have boundaries, or what keeps us from having

them. And we mentioned this last week is they are either unclear, they're unsaid, or they are unenforced.

So this just goes obviously so brilliantly when you have the child-parent relationship, that whole dynamic, including your marriage. So how do we begin talking about that? Again, like you said, our goal today is not to talk about parenting techniques, but to talk about how do we implement boundaries that are godly and not selfishly motivated in order to keep our marriage covenant intact, and healthy, and thriving for the glory of God? So what are bound... Oh.

Ryan: I just want to make a distinction between those three terms real fast? So the unclear piece, that's more in terms of like what do we recognize ourselves as good boundaries. In other words, we know what the boundaries should be. That's whether they're clear or unclear. And we're going to talk about this at length, but, for instance, we need to have time to connect as a couple. That's a clear boundary. That's the first one is why boundaries don't actually work is they're unsaid. In other words, we haven't communicated that to each other. "Listen, I need time with you or I'm going to feel like we're drifting apart." We tend to do poorly when we don't have time. So we have to articulate that we need X amount of time, X so often throughout the week. That's you're saying it.

Now the unenforced piece is if we fail to understand and then say and then enforce those boundaries, it's as if they don't exist at all. I just want to be really clear on that distinction between those three reasons why boundaries don't work.

Selena: Right. And just to kind of redefine what a boundary is, we think that healthy boundaries they really define expectations, they show respect for others, and they rooted in self-control. Because the Bible does command us to control ourselves, right? Our human sin desire is to control others and not necessarily ourselves. So it's just expectations that show respect for others and rooted in self-control.

Ryan: It's good. Really good.

Selena: So we're going to walk through what we talked about: kids, marriage, boundaries. What do boundaries require? We went through this last week, but we're just going to add that kid piece to it because it does illuminate how we should behave when we're having conflict, or how we can enforce different boundaries and be unified on them. Because I think sometimes we have different understandings of what parenting should look like in certain moments. And then how does the Bible instruct us, the gospel? What does the

Bible and Jesus show and model and teach us in how to live out these boundaries? How do our convictions form those purposes and motivations behind it?

Ryan: Yeah. I think it would be really helpful... I'm going to jump down just a little bit just to grab this whole piece. There's a distinction here. And this has to be really clear at the outset between boundaries that elucidate truth and demonstrate godliness. There's a difference between those types of boundaries and boundaries that are there to obscure the situation entirely.

Selena: Right. And we see this I think most prevalently as an example of just when we have conflict. Right?

Ryan: Right. You might hear somebody say, "Yeah, my parents never fought around me," or "I never saw my parents fight." That could be taken a number of ways. Is that because they're fighting somewhere else and you can't see them, or they've been really good at hiding it? Or is it because they never actually fought? Or is it because you realize they had conflict, but it was healthy?

That to me is drawing a boundary around how we have conflict. We'll just use this example is we don't want our kids to never see us disagree or even really fight. We want them to see that because even in Christ-centered, godly marriage, ideally, even our conflict is put to work for the good of the gospel. Even our conflict is used for our good and our kids' good. That even when we fight and we sin, God will somehow use that for His glory and to show His kids repentance, to show our kids repentance, [00:15:00] to show us what unconditional love looks like...

Selena: And identifying sin and pride.

Ryan: Yes. And then the repentance of... Yeah. The healthy boundary there is not we never want our kids to see us fight. The boundary is if and when we have conflict, we want to have conflict that is biblical, healthy and constructive, and productive. So we're not going to call names, we're not going to...

Selena: No curse words.

Ryan: Yeah, no curse words. We're not going to make fun of each other or... *[laughs]*

Selena: We're laughing because all of these have happened, folks, if we're really transparent. Full disclosure. All of these have happened.

Ryan: Yes.

- Selena:** But for the perfect couples out there that have not had this happen, you can just laugh at us. *[laughing]*
- Ryan:** You guys can disregard this part because you got it all figured out.
- Selena:** Stop.
- Ryan:** Where are we going from here? Sorry, I went off script a little bit.
- Selena:** You know, we talked about the unclear, unsaid, and unenforced. As a mom, I know it's hard for me to sometimes continually reinforce these boundaries. Because you feel like you're enforcing them a thousand plus times a day of, you know, trying to protect your kids or teach your kids both in the marriage space... It's different when dad comes around, and there's this dynamic of training and you're protecting the children and you're teaching them. Proverbs 22:6, raise a child on the way they should go so when they're old they will not depart from it.
- I know that mothers have this and we do this every day. But there's something about the dad dynamic. Like when you come in and you sit down at the table, or your presence is here, there's just this like, I don't know, this whole nother aura or this whole nother... that you can say something and they just are like, "It's clear. It's said. It's enforced." That's what I feel like sometimes. And I know that's not always the case.
- Ryan:** Last night... we won't get into the fight. Last night we had an argument, a fight. We didn't handle it perfectly. God is good we reconciled. But the fight was around the amount of chaos in our life. We mentioned that we had moved. Well, there's still a lot of post-move chaos happening. And I'm making dinner because you were doing who knows what. *[laughs]* Just lounging around...
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** I'm kidding. ...and the kids are making a mess in their room. And I had asked them to clean up their Legos twice.
- Selena:** Guys, asking your kids to clean up Legos is the worst. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** I love Lego.
- Selena:** We love them but they are so...
- Ryan:** I mean, if you step on the Lego, it's like next to torture. Anyway, I asked them to pick them up in the morning, and then they're like, "Well, we got to get

ready to go." So I said, "Okay, well, we'll do it later." Another thing came up, and it was nice out, so I said, "Let's go outside." Anyway, they came down, it was like six o'clock, time for dinner. I'm making dinner and they're playing with their new kittens. And we want them to enjoy the kittens, but I said in my dad voice, because every dad has one, "Girls, I'm going to ask you a question and I want a straight answer. Are your Legos picked up right now?" And they said, "No." I said, "Go do it." They just both went upstairs. *[both laughs]*

Selena: Yes. Like I said, they know the boundaries that they can push with us.

Ryan: "Go do it." *[laughs]*

Selena: Yes. So I guess just to begin there of this idea of training our children, I think setting up boundaries can be such an obscure thing to try to figure out because you're like, "I want to train them for God's glory, for their good, but I don't always know in the moments." It's like, "Am I making a good decision here and training them and putting this boundary? Is this boundary a good boundary for them to be following?" Because I question my boundaries all the time, which is why I am not very good at enforcing them all the time.

Ryan: Then how does that relate to us? Again, the clearest one is our mommy-daddy time. Not quote-unquote, "mommy-daddy time," *[both laughs]* but mom and dad time where we need to connect. There's a difference. If you're married you know. And you're probably married. Point is there's health there. So when they come down, they're constantly interrupting us, we basically say, like, "We love you, we want to teach you but just get out of here. You're not welcome here." *[both laughs]*

Selena: We try not to be passive-aggressive like Dwight. "I love you, just don't cross me." *[both chuckles]*

Ryan: The message you have to communicate there is that "mom and dad have a relationship too and we need to talk. We need to talk about mom and dad things. And you don't understand and you will someday and you can listen, but you're not invited right now." And that's enforcement with them.

Selena: Right. Again, it's going back to this idea of a boundary that there's a good or bad or good and a better, right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: There's this idea that some things are wrong and some things are right. And that is so... I don't know. Now more than ever, at least it feels like in our culture, the lines are being erased on every front. So, I feel that especially as a

parent sometimes of just "where do I put this boundary? In 20 years, are they going to think about this boundary and think, 'Wow, why didn't my mom set that boundary up?'" And they probably are not. I'm very much an over thinker. But under the umbrella of training, what are the purposes that we are implementing these boundaries?

Because we can be unclear about them and then training is kind of falling apart. Like you said, they don't understand them, we're not saying them, and then we're not enforcing them. But it can't just be about the boundary. It has to be about the greater purpose, which in this case is the health of our marriage, right?

Ryan: Well said.

Selena: In this case, it's been unified.. It's modeling that marriage covenant relationship that God has set up. God has ordained these orders and these purposes. So in one respect, it can be argued that I am walking in disobedience if I am not honoring and upholding my covenant before... Like, if everything is being sacrificed in the altar of children, right?

Ryan: Yeah. I mean, clear example is you've got kids with needs and they're loud. I'm not sure if we'll bring this up later, but we talked to some friends, Matt and Lisa Jacobson a while back on the podcast, and they were...

Selena: They have nine kids.

Ryan: They have a lot of kids. They told us they have their morning coffee time. And that's non-negotiable. All the kids know. Some of them are grown, some of them are younger. And one of the things Matt said is like, "Kids, if you let them, they'll suck every ounce of energy right out of the room."

Selena: We're like, "Amen. Amen." [*chuckles*] I couldn't have said it more perfect.

Ryan: So, one example where you could be maybe dishonoring God in your marriage, because you're trying to be a hyper-attentive parent is you've got a kid who is like, "I need water, I want this, I want that," and your spouse is just needing desperately to connect with you. Or they're hurting, and they need your help to work through an issue, or then they need your help to work through a sin. Or instead of maybe dealing with that issue, you thought it's easier just to pour myself fully into my kids. So I'm in a busy myself about the business of parenting and I've just given up on my marriage. Or my marriage is more work than them.

That is where you enter into sin territory. And that's the whole good and better side. It's not that parenting is bad. You're not choosing to go to the bar and get drunk or to go do whatever that vice is. Instead, you're choosing a good thing. But remember, the definition of sin in biblical terms is disordered love—is that you love something more than God or you put something at a higher priority than He's commanded you to.

Selena: Or even Him Himself.

Ryan: And in the human case, it's usually I put myself above God, and I want to be God to myself, I want to be the master of my own destiny.

Selena: With the marriage, it could be we put our kids above our marriage. And that is not something that God has ordered nor is that loving to your children. It might seem in that moment but it really is not. I mean, if you look at verses that talk about loving your children, of course, Ephesians, right, fathers not provoking children anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Well, part of instructing our children is also modeling and walking out this covenant of unity, this covenant of I am married to another person, God has ordained this. This is above you and you need to understand this.

Always a caveat, right? There's always a caveat. When you have a newborn or an infant, that time is crazy. It's a big fog. Those are moments and those are seasons where you can serve and love each other. It's not that you put the two-week-old baby down when they're screaming and crying because they're hungry, and you're saying, "I need mommy and daddy time right now because we have not connected." You got to just work those things out for yourself. Right?

Ryan: Yeah, you have to discern and be wise for the seasons.

Selena: But these verses about love is patient and kind, well, when we're enforcing these boundaries... and again, boundaries are not a negative thing. Boundaries are there for our good, for our flourishing, for our growth, for our freedom, for us to embrace freedom, which feels ironic, right? Culture would say like, "Why are there lines? Why are there boundaries? That's limiting freedom." And God says, "No, this is the path to freedom is by having these defined lines and order and boundaries."

Ryan: But I will add that when it comes to parenting and marriage, it's riddled with arbitrary boundaries. So people who have opinions are creating boundaries. They're saying, "This is right, this is wrong." One huge can of worms—we're not going to get into it—but one huge, huge can of worms in the parenting space...

- Selena:** Why are you mentioning it?
- Ryan:** To make a point.
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** I don't want to debate the point. I just want to make it. ...is that some people will die on the hill of how to get your kid to stay asleep.
- Selena:** Oh, yeah.
- Ryan:** There's all kinds of methods. There's...
- Selena:** How to get your kid to sleep through the night basically.
- Ryan:** Yeah. Those boundaries, I'm just going to say, are largely arbitrary. You're not going to find anywhere in scripture that says, "Thou shalt get your child to sleep by following such, such, and such method [00:25:00] and being faithful in that way."
- Selena:** People have locked their kids. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** That's a place where you are the parents. And God has given you brains, and he's given you hearts, and He's giving you, to an extent, instincts to follow as a mom, as a father. So when you die on those hills, you're dying on a hill that the Bible has not given you to die on. So that can cause all kinds of division in your marriage. Those arbitrary boundaries can cause division between you and your kids, where God did not mean for division to be there, or for a boundary to be there, or between you and your in-laws, between you and your friends. We have to be wise.
- Selena:** Yeah. Well, I think it's hard to discern between arbitrary and a godly boundary because our desires are so strong, and we want what we want. We want sleep. We want to feel good about the decisions that we're making. And Christ's model and examples: die to yourself. It's service. He is the servant King. Does that mean we are just a doormat? No. The very act of serving and dying to self brings life. It brings deeper joy. It brings...
- Ryan:** And service is never just relegating responsibility to enact godly things in that space. That's the difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking. Peacekeepers are passive. Peacemakers are actively making peace in that situation. That's what I think is the distinction between service that is a

doormat and service that is Christ centered, Christ-motivated, and standing upright and working out the good of God in that place.

Selena: So I want to take a shift real quick and I want us to kind of just discuss this idea of depending on this... Just to say this clearly, depending on the stage that you're in with your children, I think your boundaries may look and function differently. We don't have some of the same boundaries we do as a 4-year-old versus like an 18-year-old. But the purposes I think behind them should be the same throughout. What are those purposes? This is what we're talking about today. What are the purposes and how are they defined? What are they rooted in? Are they rooted in your selfish needs or your desperate pleas for control, or are they rooted in Scripture? And are we being obedient through and through?

Because the marriage focused purpose is for the health of our marriage. We need a healthy marriage to be able to raise children within this covenant that God's ordained. Also part of teaching and training our children in these different ages and stages, I think one of the biggest pieces that we learned talking to the [inaudible] was how to invite them in. So they're on the other side of the boundary... Inviting an outside... Sorry. I'm probably not saying this very clearly. When your children disobey, are you just...

Ryan: They breach the bound.

Selena: ...they breach the boundary, are we inviting them in? Are we chasing them away? And why? Inviting them into understanding why this boundary is here. To love and honor them as a person I guess.

Ryan: When you say inviting them in, it feels like you're saying inviting them within the boundary.

Selena: Sorry.

Ryan: You're saying the boundary exists. We're inviting you to respect this boundary.

Selena: Yeah. And we're going to tell you how we're going to relate to each other.

Ryan: We're not going to change the boundary itself. In other words, "This boundary still exists. I still need time with your mom to connect. I'm inviting you to show me that you want to respect and help me enforce this boundary."

Selena: And that you understand. We're going to help you understand.

Ryan: And if they don't show that they're willing to engage in that invitation, then you have to make the boundary stronger in different ways depending on the age of the child.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So I'm thinking of you have a young child and they just need everything, and they just always are asking for things. That boundary is going to look very different than a grown child who has developed a codependent relationship with you and they are maybe always making a mess of things and you always are the one that's saving them out of it. And that's causing issues in your marriage, because there's a perpetual unhealth there.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So as a parent of a grown child, there comes a time where the child needs to learn how to be more independent. Now, we're not there in our lives. We've seen it happen in other couples.

Selena: We've seen different stages of it, I think.

Ryan: Different stages. And I'm not saying you send your 18-year-olds to just spend for themselves. They will need help. But if you have a 35-year-old who is still acting like an 18-year-old, then there's a different boundary that needs to be placed. But here's the thing, and that's what you just said, and I love it, is the purpose is the same. Because for the health of our marriage, we can't be your Savior, nor can we be your parent in that capacity for your entire lives. That is not healthy. That is not godly. There is a line that needs to be drawn there. And that's different depending on the age and the stage of the child. But the point we're making here is not how to make those boundaries with your child or what the right braking point. [00:30:00] The point is, the spirit of the boundary around your marriage is that there exists a better and a worse scenario for the health of your marriage.

Selena: Right. Right. I think it becomes really unclear sometimes when you have younger children in the house because you have to deal with their responses. Because typically, you know, our 18-month-old is not... I'm not going to say, "Lou, go play quietly in your room while mommy and daddy have some talk time." Never happens, folks. Unless her sisters run upstairs and say, "Come on, let's play." And then it happens for about 10 minutes, which is a lot of time I get it.

But the purpose behind what we're trying to do... so we've got some work coming up for the podcast, or we just need to connect. There's just some things that we need to connect on. "So, Lou, you can go play with your sisters, or you can go sit in your crib for about 15, 20 minutes. And you may cry and that's okay." Because this is a boundary that needs to happen. It doesn't happen often because she actually does go play with her sisters pretty well and we can kind of give her stuff to play with when she's around us and we're trying to talk. But at any point, if she becomes a little overbearing and she starts encroaching on those boundaries, then we have to draw them. And there might be a time of crying, and there might be a time of frustration.

And for me, the peacekeeper—I'm not great at peacemaking, I'm learning—but I don't want kids crying. I want everybody to be happy. And God has softened my heart and shown me that it's okay for them to cry a little bit and it's good for them to understand boundaries and discipline. They won't always cry. They won't be seven and crying about the boundary that you put in place. They'll actually embrace it and they'll feel safer because of it.

Ryan: And they will watch and understand, "Okay, mom prioritizes her marriage in this way. Therefore, when I'm married, I should probably do the same thing." Ideally. Now, that's not a perfect translation all the time. But the point is you're modeling it. It's for the good of your marriage, but it has this ripple effect generationally.

Selena: And it's a difficult thing to learn because babies are born with so many needs. They need everything. They need you for everything.

Ryan: And listen, there's a time to meet every need, and there's a time in the 7-year-old and the 10-year-old and 12 to meet every need as a parent would, we're just saying that where the rubber meets the road, if your marriage is suffering because there has been a disordered love here, the child is always trumping your marriage. They're always trumping the health of your marriage. You're always tired and beat up because you're always dealing with these issues in every other aspect, and your spouse is suffering, your marriage is suffering. That's when we're saying like it's time to make a grownup decision and to recognize, to see it... What are the three things? You have...

Selena: Unsaid.

Ryan: Unsaid.

Selena: Unclear.

Ryan: So unclear. So you see it clearly. Like we're here to give you permission to say it's okay to draw a line between you and your kids when it comes to your marriage. They don't get in there. Your spouse was there before the kids got there, and your spouse will be there after they leave.

Selena: Ryan jokingly says that to our kids. *[laughs]* He's like, "I love your mom. She was here first." I'm like, "Well, yeah, it's true, but I don't want to..."

Ryan: I mean that like I love you in a different way...

Selena: Of course.

Ryan: ...than how I love them obviously. But we're here to give you permission to see that boundary clearly. To say, "Listen," husband, wife, whoever you're talking to your own spouse saying, "our marriage needs to be put on a higher priority in this area." And that's the clarity piece. Now it's time to communicate that to each other and communicate that to your kids. And that's what we're talking through here. And then don't forget to enforce it. *[chuckles]*

Selena: Right. Do you want to go through what boundaries require or do you want to just kind of discuss a little bit more boundaries in marriage and around marriage? I think we should go through these a little bit. We talked about what boundaries require.

Ryan: I think really quickly we go through that because I do want to get into the really specific... We've talked generally around some issues. I'd like to get more specific if we can. Boundaries require... you wrote this list here. So governance of discipline. And what that means is enforcement.

Selena: Yes, yes. And it's around the idea of self-control. We talked about this last week with our spouse, having boundaries within our marriage, with each other. So we are going to have some governance and we're going to discipline ourselves in the fact that we are going to have self-control in how we deal with each other when our emotions may not align with the behavior that we are supposed to be engaging in. So if I'm responding out of sinful emotions and just flying off the handle, then I need to exercise governance and discipline, and self-control.

When kids are involved, you almost augment that because they are sinners and they're loud about it. When we talked about earlier, when we have conflict, we still need to engage in self-control, we still need to build their trust and walk them through the conflict that we may be having with each other, but also if there's conflict with them.

Ryan: Okay. We'll get into the specifics. I just want to mention priorities and margin. We'll talk about that later on. And that's a function of your discipline and self-control in this area. The second thing that boundaries require is trust and obedience. This is the key. Trusting that, being obedient to God will bear fruit that is godly and is eternal. Because we can say like, "But it feels so good to fly off the handle," and I don't care if my kids are listening because I want them to know how terrible their dad is. That feels good to put him in his place because he's whatever the... whatever the fault is.

Trust and obedience would say that there's a way to go about correcting and encouraging and exhorting and rebuking that is godly. But it doesn't feel as good. Why? Because our flesh is reigning in that area, and we need to follow the spirit instead. And that takes trust...

Selena: Submit ourselves.

Ryan: ...it takes submission. Oh, we love that word, don't we?

Selena: Mhh.

Ryan: We love the word "submission". So submitting ourselves to God's word, trusting and being obedient to it, knowing that it will be better than what we think is good.

Selena: Boldness and clarity. We kind of touched on this in terms of the unclear and the unsaid part.

Ryan: This is the third one, right?

Selena: This is the third one. But having that boldness and clarity to... guys, it's something I had to learn to be a parent. Like, when you say no, and they don't listen, or they just stare at you. How do I not be wishy-washy? Or you're on the other side of the spectrum and you just got a heavy hand, right? "Ah, no," and it's yelling them the first time. So how do we as a couple establish good parenting philosophies and techniques that are clear, that show that we love our kids, but that we're teaching them boundaries now, even in the smallest things of not touching, like not touching hot things? Because as they get older, the boundaries get wider and different. So we want that training to begin. We need that boldness. We need that confidence and clarity.

Then the fourth one was vigilance. That goes without saying. *[giggles]* I feel like there's a lot... You talked about a piece, I think, last week with being vigilant about our boundaries, not having them be arbitrary, right?

Ryan: I mean, there's this saying that the chain is only as strong as its weakest link. You could say that about boundaries in the sense that they're only... Think about a castle. Like one day a week, or one day a month... Let's say you have this castle. The rest of the month, it's got this massive wall built around it. This beautiful, strong, functioning, good wall. And how effective is that wall if once a month the wall is just gone? That's when the castle is going to get ransacked. That's when the destruction is going to happen. And you can't just the next day just have a New Castle again. You have to rebuild all the destructive things. So you have to be vigilant with boundaries because a breached boundary can cause so much damage so quickly.

Now there's grace, and we're talking about parenting, there's a little bit more of a flex here in terms of room to mess it up, I will say, because you have grace for one another. Anyway, that's what came to mind as you were talking about that.

The fifth one. I think that boundaries requires love and patience. Just be patient and loving in how you enforce them with each other and with your kids.

Selena: Right. It's so easy to just run over anybody in your way with your, whatever, your word vomit, whatever, however you're feeling and just letting that just spray everywhere, and everybody just deals with what you had just said and felt. But again, we're in this for the long game. There's an ending insight that we probably can't see. That makes a lot of sense.

Ryan: This one makes a lot of sense in terms of how you would relate to one another. Let's say we have a disagreement in how we should be parenting our kids and there's a boundary developing. So we have to create boundaries in how we disagree around disciplining our kids, how we disagree on even things like... I mean I'm thinking... I tend to be a lot more... I'll say this. I tend to be a lot less risk-averse when it comes to our kids and doing things. You know, think things like riding in the back of a pickup truck on a country road or sometimes we go up in the mountains and I'll put the kids in the back. The rule is sit down but I'll leave the back hatch open on a forest road. You know, I'm not going fast.

Selena: You probably see what I'm thinking and feeling at those moments.

Ryan: So, we could fight. We could fight. I'll say, "They're fine. They're fine. Why are you so worried? Why are you being such a wet blanket or whatever. We're having a good time." And you're like, "Why do you hate our kids so much?" So the boundary there is not what you do with your kids. The boundary we want to talk about there is: how do we discuss that in a productive, helpful,

endearing, loving patient way? And that's where love and patience I think comes in.

Selena: And the final piece, which I think it plays more into this relationship with parent and child. [00:40:00] It does with each other, but we talked about it last week with each other's empathy. Seek to understand the other person or the party, and this will help set the trajectory for the boundary. There's nothing like empathizing with your kids. It seems so easy to just lay the boundary down, the rules, whatever, and just walk away, "you deal with it."

But the thing about it is, is that when we empathize with them, when we say, "I know this is hard. Your mom and dad, we know that it's hard to not want something." We're dealing with a lot of coveting in our household a little bit, and we're learning gratefulness and thankfulness. But it's hard to not want a new toy that your friend has or something that, you know...

Ryan: I hate it when you tell me that. *[both chuckles]*

Selena: It's hard. And so they understand that we understand the struggle as well. So that builds trust, that builds, I think, our relationship, and it keeps our heart soft, I think, towards each other because we're practicing the empathy obviously with each other as spouses but also with our kids. And we're modeling that, as well.

Ryan: I think at this point, let's talk through these actual... like where this needs to function in a marriage. So very specific examples. You probably already thought of some listener as you're hearing us. So we're going to bring up a few that came to mind for us. Now, you have a mind and you have God's Word in front of you, so you can probably apply what we're saying.

Selena: And you know your...

Ryan: You know your situation.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Okay. So the first one we mentioned is how do we interact with each other. I mean, that's in terms of our conflict. We'll talk about that more down the line. But around parenting styles and philosophies. Okay, one of you feels like it tends to be harder on the kids. One tends to be super, I'll use this word, licentious with them. Meaning there's always a reason, and the reason always justifies whatever the action is.

Selena: You always. *[Ryan chuckles]* I'm just kidding.

- Ryan:** So we're not here to tell you in this podcast where those lines are and whether or not you should be more gracious or...
- Selena:** That's another podcast. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** That's a totally different thing. Here, it's how do we, husband and wife, Ryan and Selena, you and your spouse, get an agreement on this? The important thing is we do need to agree. We need to parent with unity, we need to parent according to God's Word.
- Selena:** We need to find that agreement, I think too.
- Ryan:** And that's the whole thing with clarity.
- Selena:** It's like go up the ladder. So it's not just about this decision that is on the table in front of us. Go up the ladder. You do this with me all the time of when I feel like we're against each other, and we're fighting about something for the kids, you're like, "Babe..." Like the car on the mountain, you're like, "I want our kids to be safe. I don't want them to fall out and get run over. I want them to be safe." And I'm just like, "I can't comprehend this. This is not adding up with your actions." But when you say that, honestly, I have to learn to trust you in those moments. Even if I don't feel like it and I don't want to, I trust that you are going to be the dad, God is God, I can submit some of these feelings, I can just relinquish them. Maybe not submit. But I will relinquish them and I will trust that you are not going to do anything that is too crazy. Although sometimes I think my brakes are good to be enforced.
- Ryan:** That road goes both ways. I need to trust that your motherly instincts... you also love our kids. You're not just trying to minimize their fun.
- Selena:** No. But I know like, "Hey, Louisa can't hang on very well." So maybe we should go a little slower and somebody else holds her.
- Ryan:** Right. Right. So we have to have a conversation around that. Again, we're here to tell you whether or not you should have your kids in the back of a truck going up a mountain road. Of course, if you're going to do that, be very careful and go slow...
- Selena:** Here comes the bad reviews. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** ...and do it in a way that completely safe.
- Selena:** Just be smart.

Ryan: But the point is, is we have to have that conversation. So the boundary there is, listen, we're on the same side and we're not going to let this divide us. And at the end of the day, we're going to find a place of compromise that we both feel honored and we also both are being led to trust one another and maybe in a new way without being reckless in that.

Another example of this. Same principle is around screen time. We talked about this. I grew up in a household where our default activity as a family was to watch TV together.

Selena: I don't think that's uncommon.

Ryan: It's not uncommon. Right now my comfort...

Selena: And TV was different back then.

Ryan: It was very different back then. But our default was not to go do an act... Like we did plenty of activities. Don't get me wrong. But on a weeknight... We lived in the northwest, so it might be raining and cold outside. So it's like what do you do? Our default was not to play a game. We played games, some, but more...

Selena: Or read a book or draw.

Ryan: Or even sit and talk or do [00:45:00] projects around the house. It was always like, "Let's just kind of turn the TV on." Again, that was in the 80s and 90s, different culture than today where screens are everywhere and they're literally like engineered to be addictive. So there are different considerations today than there were back then. I want to be gracious to my parents. I loved growing up on 80s TV and the 90s movies. It was great.

But with our kids, my tendency is, at the end of the day, I've been putting high octane mental load on work stuff, and reading and study and scripture and all that kind of stuff for you guys and for a seminary. So at the end of the day, I just want to veg out. And my veg activity is turned on... We watch Dr. Po on Disney Plus. He's a farm that... and it's pretty brutal. So if you have a queasy stomach, don't watch it. There's a lot of prolapsed things in farm animals. Anyways. Selena's default is not that. You would much rather read a book. And I'm thinking, "Read a book? I don't want to read another book."

Selena: A TV is easy. Reading a book is less easy although I find it much... it's become easier. It's a habit that you have to begin. And it becomes easier. But it's so much richer to me to have them ask questions about a story or laugh or say,

"Can I see the pictures?" and talk about it. There's just so much more there. Again, I'm not against screen time because kids go in cycles.

Ryan: You're for balancing it, not just going...

Selena: Well, again, what is the boundary here? Right?

Ryan: Well, for us, it was, "How do we find agreement in this?" And we were just talking and it was a lightbulb moment for me because I was like, "Listen, I don't feel like sitting down and reading a chapter book with the girls because they want you to read it with the voices and all that."

Selena: Well, you've set that standard. I don't do voices.

Ryan: I do voices and accents. It's a rich experience. *[laughs]*

Selena: My husband goes pedal to the metal every time, people.

Ryan: So Selena said, "You know what? But you can just sit on..." Because I said, "What I like about watching shows is I don't have to think about it and I can sit and snuggle with the girls. And we can laugh and we can enjoy the story together." And you said, "well, you can do that and I'll just read you the story." And I was like, "Whaaat?" *[both laughs]* And then you said... and this is where we found agreement because I'm getting what I really am longing for in that moment. And you said, "That would be a hope fulfilled for my soul. That is a deep so longing for you to read stories to your kids." And who am I to take that from you?

So this is a way that we can find compromise, and that boundary is upheld, and that we are in agreement. And it's not about the activity, it's about that we're in agreement on it, and it's a healthy direction for us.

Selena: Exactly. Exactly. You wanted to touch on priorities and margin. I think that might be a good spot right now. We're getting home on time but we can talk about that real quick.

Ryan: I want to talk about intimacy too after this.

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: So priorities and margin. What we mean by that is if your family... And please hear this with all the grace that I can muster. I'm not trying to be point the finger. But if you can say confidently that very rarely does your family sit down around the table and have a meal together, whether that's breakfast, lunch,

dinner, or most often families are having dinner together because of work schedules and all that, if that's a rarity for you, then I would challenge you and say that there's probably some margin that needs to be regained.

Selena: Through a boundary.

Ryan: Through some sort of boundary in your life. The boundaries that we established as a couple around our kids have an effect on the margin that we have as a family. For instance, if little Johnny is doing everything under the sun, they're going to piano practice, then you have soccer practice, then you have acting practice... *[both laughs]* I don't know what to call it.

Selena: Typically, their school. And then if you have any sports activities, that usually takes up quite a bit of if not all of the day.

Ryan: Yeah. And then they're going to their friend's house, and they're going to youth group, and then they're going to... I mean, all these really good positive things. It's not like Johnny is out peddling drugs.

Selena: Being a street youth.

Ryan: Being a street youth. *[both chuckles]* I was a street youth, so be careful.

Selena: It's true.

Ryan: The point is, is that there is a time when those good things become bad things. And that's where you need clear boundaries. Say, "Our family, our marriage needs this for health." And if we're always running around, if Selena is always running the kids around and I'm at home, or I'm always working, this goes the same way, I'm always working, I'm working later, I've got all these different projects, all these ambitions, things that are for our family to provide, and I'm providing the best... I'm doing God's work. But if now the girls are going to bed and I'm not saying good night because I'm working or I'm gone... Okay, we need to create boundaries around those types of things.

In the parenting, this conversation again, there's a lot of overlap here. But thinking in terms of boundaries between us and our kids in a really healthy way [00:50:00] has to do with saying no to your kids for the purpose of... This is a Fierce Parenting side. Every decision you make for your kids is discipleship. Every decision you make as a parent is discipleship. Questions, what do you disciple in them in? When you allow them to do every sport, you're discipling them in something. Now, if that sport is taking them away from you discipling them to things of God, that needs to be thought through and changed. You need to be training them up in the way of God. The point I'm trying to make

here is we need to say no to some things to say yes to the best things. Say no to good things to say yes to the right things.

Selena: And in doing so, we're setting a boundary.

Ryan: Yes.

Selena: So for us personally, nighttime is such a precious time. But also in terms of community, Bible, community, Christian community, how do mom and dad grow in that? Our kids know that dad has guys Bible study and his guys group on Tuesday, Mommy has hers on Wednesdays. That's two nights out of the week. That's plenty of nights to be gone.

Ryan: It's a lot of commitment.

Selena: However, we can use those nights to really invest in the children and really show them, yeah, Daddy is at his Bible study. It's Tuesday. They know this rhythm, they know this habit, and they understand that this is a boundary that has been placed for the heart of our family, for the heart of my husband to be grown and sharpened, for the heart of me as a mom and a wife and a woman to study God's Word, to dissect it with other women and to encourage other women, to pray for and be prayed for. This is the vocabulary we use with them. We aren't just saying these out of guy's Bible say. In their terms, they're with other guys learning about Jesus, learning how to be better daddies, how to be better husbands, how to be men of God.

Ryan: And the same goes for when you're going. I'm telling them that you're studying God's Word with other women so that you can grow in the things of God, just like they will one day. I say, "One day you'll go with mommy," and they love that idea.

Selena: And they get special time with daddy. So there's this balance again with...

Ryan: Screen time and candy.

Selena: ...this dance of...

Ryan: No boundaries when mom is gone. *[both laughs]*

Selena: ...boundaries. Let's talk quickly about intimacy. Is there something you want to mention?

Ryan: Yeah.

- Selena:** It's kind of obvious, right? There's no...
- Ryan:** We've talked about this at length and I think there's a podcast episode called "Having a Healthy Sex Life After You've Had Kids." Something to that effect.
- Selena:** That one's a doozy to name. *[chuckles]* Let me just tell you.
- Ryan:** Yeah, there's a lot of stumbling blocks in there. The point that we're trying to make is that it's really easy, especially with young kids, to see your intimate life just completely tank. And I'm not talking like the immediate... you've just had a kid. But I'm talking like you've got a one-year-old...
- Selena:** Toddler.
- Ryan:** ...or a toddler and sleep is hard to come by and all the...
- Selena:** They're not quiet or bound unless they're asleep. And they don't play.
- Ryan:** And they're old enough to walk into your bedroom, they're old enough to turn the doors knob
- Selena:** They shouldn't be left alone.
- Ryan:** So we've had to work through that as many of you have as well. So here's the first thing being clear about it. So let me be clear. You need to connect with your spouse intimately. And that means every facet of intimacy you got. Obviously, there's sexual intimacy, spiritual intimacy, emotional intimacy. Specifically, right now I'm talking about sexual intimacy. And if that's something that you feel like you are involuntarily giving up because of your kids, let me just be clear that you can create a boundary in this area. And that's good, right, and true. You're not forsaking your kids. And you can get an agreement your spouse on that. And you can fight for this. And that's a good thing. That's the first piece.
- Unsaid, it's articulating to each other... We talked about this a lot. Listen, we need boundaries here. Here's the boundary. We need to be intimate X number of times per week or every other number of days. For us always is say two to three days is about when we know it's time for us to carve out the time to be close, to be intimate with one another. That's the same piece is that we need this. Now it's you start talking through what does this boundary look like. Kids need to be in bed on Tuesdays, on Fridays, and on Sundays and you'd be in bed before 5 p.m. *[both laughs]*
- Selena:** Yeah, right.

- Ryan:** Mommy daddy need like three hours. No. The point is that in bed by whatever that time is. For us, the good bedtime for our girls is eight o'clock, their heads on the pillows and we're reading a story or we're talking to them. They're slowing down...
- Selena:** You go to find those windows typically.
- Ryan:** For us we have a... and this is just being really transparent. Our baby, she only goes for about two hours. Sometimes you put her down to the time she needs something.
- Selena:** She wakes up again. Yeah.
- Ryan:** She wakes up.
- Selena:** The first time. And then she sleeps, people. She does sleep. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** So we know that if we put Louisa down at eight o'clock or 7:30...
- Selena:** We have till about 10, 10:30.
- Ryan:** And if we dawdle... dawdle? Dawdle for too long...
- Selena:** Dawdle sounds *[inaudible]*.
- Ryan:** Dawdle. That's something I do at bed. *[laughs]* If we dawdle and say the girls don't get to bed till 8:30 or 9, then we know that we have till 9:30 until Louisa wakes up and needs something. *[00:55:00]* And that's like clockwork. So we know that if we're going to be intimate, then the older girls need to be asleep shortly after the younger one so that we can have at least some time to talk and not just be wham bam, thank you, ma'am.
- Selena:** There are those occasions.
- Ryan:** There are those occasions but we know that's not ideal. So you can create those boundaries and strategize. That's the...
- Selena:** And feel empowered with those.
- Ryan:** Yeah. And then enforce them. So have the discipline to say, "Tonight, we're going to wind down early kids, and you're going to be in bed." Some are better at this than others. We tend to fall somewhere in the middle. We're not super militant about bedtime, but we're also not like, "Go to bed whenever you

want." We have friends that do that and it works for them—with their teenagers, not 7-year-old, 5-year-old. The point is...

- Selena:** They're in their bedroom, they stay in their bedroom. And that's period.
- Ryan:** So when it comes to really tangible boundaries, get a door that locks. *[both chuckles]* Another thing is, for a season in our lives, when we just had two kids, we can only really find time in the afternoons when we had them with the show. Because our second daughter, she had a really hard time sleeping, we could never find the time at night. So we would say—and this is the marriage, people, so please don't judge us—we'd say, "Here's a 40-minute show..."
- Selena:** Forty. It was like... Okay, I'm saying it's like 22 minutes. But sometimes it would go to another one. So by around 40 minutes.
- Ryan:** You're right. In those instances, we wouldn't drag it out. *[chuckles]* It would be very, very fun.
- Selena:** Because they're young. But they would sit there and they're glued because they don't watch TV.
- Ryan:** Yeah. That was kind of...
- Selena:** Doors are locked.
- Ryan:** It's a win-win-win scenario.
- Selena:** Nobody can leave. Everybody's having a grand old time.
- Ryan:** Yeah, everybody's doing what they love. *[both laughs]* Anyway, the point is there are seasons for that. Now, that's not the case any longer, so we don't use that particular device. And then things like date nights, saying like, "Kiddos, Mom and Dad need date time. So you're going to spend time with grandma and grandpa." That is a form of a boundary. "...or with the babysitter or whatever, for the health of our marriage. You're not invited to this." We go out to dinner. Well, we don't do it now nothing's open or nothing has been open. But in the past, it would have been "someone else is going to put you to bed," and so on, so forth.

The point is, we want to encourage you to find this clarity between your marriage and your kids. And that's okay. And that's a good thing to pursue. Then take the time to articulate what that exactly looks like. Then be equipped and encourage one another to enforce these boundaries for the health of your marriage, even when it's hard, even when it feels counterproductive.

- Selena:** Again, there's wisdom and discernment. So if you're looking at your schedules and your kids are gone at school all day, and you're working, whatever windows you seem to find in your season and situation in life, embrace those with your kids. I think we are so quick to overlook. Like, "We don't have any time with our kids and trying to make time for us and all that." Well, it's not always about quantity. A lot of it is about quality. I can sit and read with my kids for 10 minutes, and their buckets are filled for hours. But if I am just like, "Well, just go to bed. I'll take you in and that's it," there's missed opportunities to lovingly create boundaries and fill their buckets so that when that boundary needs to be enforced you can get a better behavior in response I think.
- Ryan:** Good, good. We could talk a lot on this, and we will at some point, through Fierce Parenting, tackle these topics from a parenting perspective, not just marriage. But I hope this has been helpful. I think it's been helpful.
- Selena:** Yeah. I just want to set the stage for the next... We have two more conversations that we're going to have. I know we were going to talk about intimacy and technology. That was kind of a big one. And then...
- Ryan:** For boundaries, yeah.
- Selena:** For boundaries. And then we were going to possibly talk about more in-laws and extended family dynamics.
- Ryan:** That sounds right. We reserve the right to call audibles on that. We are...
- Selena:** My husband doesn't want you to be back [inaudible]. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** People have given us some questions that I don't want to...
- Selena:** Ahhh, okay.
- Ryan:** You can text or call in 971-333-1120 which boundary-related topics that you'd like us to cover. We may do a Q&A bonus episode or something. That might be helpful to do.
- Selena:** Yes.
- Ryan:** But go ahead and text or call in. If you've listened this long, you're probably interested in something. So 971-333-1120. With that said, we're fresh out of time. So let me close this out and pray. Lord, thank you for the gift that it is to understand boundaries and to enforce them. I pray that you would help us to do so in light of your Word, in light of, God, what you're calling us to do as husbands, as wives, as parents. I thank you for our kids, but also thank you for

our marriage that is separate from our kids in some ways, and I pray that you'd help us find health in this area.

I pray for the couples who are struggling, that You would encourage them, that You would embolden them to follow You more closely and to trust You more relentlessly, Lord. I pray that you would prove to them that you are faithful however You choose to do so. We'd love You, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: All right, this episode of the Fierce Marriage Podcast is— [01:00:00]

Selena: In the can.

Ryan: Thank you for joining us. We will see you again in about seven days. Until then—

Selena: Stay fierce.

[01:00:11] <outro>

Ryan: Thank you for listening to the Fierce Marriage podcast. For more resources for your marriage, please visit 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

- Recommended Resource:
 - [Gospel Centered Marriage](#)
- Episode mentioned:
 - [Having a Healthy Sex Life After You've Had Kids](#)

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