

THESE 3 LIES WILL DRIVE YOU APART

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Selena: No doubt in your marriage you've probably gone through a season of feeling isolated, either maybe as a couple or isolated on your own, feeling like you're alone in your marriage. Today we want to talk about that and address some of the lies that might be swimming around in our heads and our hearts that are keeping us in that place of isolation. So we will do that. See you on the other side.

[00:00:23] <music>

Ryan: Greetings and welcome once again to Fierce Marriage. My name is Ryan. This is—

Selena: Selena. *[chuckles]*

Ryan: We're the Fredericks, the voices, faces, founders of all things Fierce apparently. *[Selena laughs]* Welcome to this show. Anyway, the lies of isolation. I mean, just generally speaking, any time that I've ever felt really frustrated or separated from you, it's also felt like I've been under attack too. It's really true that the enemy does seek to kill and destroy. And he often does that by separating us from community. He isolates us so that the attacks can then be challenged less.

And a lot of times, the separation starts because we're believing on some level a lie that validates the isolation, that validates... So we feel like isolation is better than the opposite, which would be oneness or community.

Selena: Right. Right. We'll get into more of the conversation and defining what isolation is. But before we do that, we want to thank all of you listeners, raters, reviewers. If you have not done that already, subscribers, please do that. That gets the word out. It gets people hearing about the gospel in marriage. That's our goal. So keep on doing that. Thank you to those who have reviewed and support us that way.

Ryan: If you want to join arms with us in a very practical, really helpful way, helps us sustain the ministry, go to fiercemarriage.com/partner. That'll take you to a place where you can sign up to be a monthly supporter. Thank you to all of our patrons who have done that faithfully.

I tell you what, over the last two years, writing books, being marriage ministers has been pretty volatile. Like we never know if month to month it's going to make economical sense. But our patrons have really helped to shoulder that burden with us. And honestly it's been the difference between continuing lightly and continuing full force. So thank you.

Selena: Thank you. Thank you. So this conversation comes from our latest book called See-Through Marriage. We'll show that. Of course, there's links. If you know us, you've probably heard about this book already.

Ryan: This book actually released at the beginning of the pandemic.

Selena: It did. *[chuckles]* Maybe you haven't heard of it.

Ryan: We did what's called a Drive-By Book Launch Party. And it's called that because we called it that.

Selena: I wish you would have actually launched. I think we tried to launch with fewer people, but we should have done a launch launch.

Ryan: It was raining and it was-

Selena: It was kind of miserable on the first day.

Ryan: Our kids were in the car. It was actually a really miserable day. But the video made it look fun. So check out that video. *[both laughs]*

Selena: As videos should do, right?

Ryan: This was our latest release, and it came out right the beginning of that drive-by book launch.

Selena: Drive-by book launch. So if you are interested in this book, it's called See-Through Marriage: Experiencing the Freedom and Joy of Being Fully Known and Fully Loved.

Ryan: Seethroughbook.com. I jumped the gun. *[chuckles]*

Selena: This topic of isolation obviously is addressed in more depth. But here, for the sake of our conversation today, we are going to talk about the three lies of isolation that tend to, I think, be more common in our hearts and in our heads.

But I do want to say that I think marriages can go through seasons of disconnect. I think, you know, defining that means we're just not on the same

page for long periods of time. There's this consistent time that, man, we just cannot seem to get back in sync with each other. Right?

I don't think we need to be afraid of those seasons. I'm just saying that I think those seasons of disconnect can often lead and be a gateway for isolation if they're not dealt with properly.

Ryan: And being discouraged in those seasons makes the lies seem attractive.

Selena: Yes. Yes.

Ryan: I'm remembering back within the last year you and I had a... I don't know, I would say two or three weeks being there, where it was like you were speaking Spanish and I was speaking Japanese. *[both laughs]* And it was like we could not get on the same page. And it seems like when we started to get close, something would happen and it would rip us apart again.

And I remember going to bed many nights angry, and... Not embittered, not holding it over but just frustrated because we couldn't figure this out. And that led to all sorts of frustration in our intimate lives, in our communication obviously.

Selena: And I think the loneliness feels even more lonely or when you know you're not supposed to be alone in those situations, right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: So it often feels more bleak but-

Ryan: And try to record a podcast episode about marriage in the middle of...

Selena: It doesn't usually happen. We try. I think we've done a few.

Ryan: Sometimes we can rally and-

Selena: And sometimes we're like, "Mic drop. I'm done. Not today. Not today. It's not happening." *[chuckles]*

Ryan: It's true. But here we are. Apparently, we're doing all right. Or we're just really good at faking it, which I'll guarantee you we are not.

Selena: No, we're not. So isolation is often slow and it can be hard to nail down when it's actually happening in your marriage until it's too late. But as believers, we

are not without hope. So let's just start off with Genesis 2:18. "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone.'"

I believe the statement was made by God not just for this time as He's creating, but for all of humanity. Again, I'm not saying that you introvert, because we both have some introverted sides to us, can never be alone or away from your spouse, right? Because we all need to take time to get refueled to rest.

And this is not a statement about singleness either. Because you're single, you're not alone. We're not called to be alone in the context. If you see in verse 20, Adam was doing the work that God had put his hand to. The man gave names to all the livestock to the birds of the heavens, every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.

So it's a call to not be alone in the life and the work that God has put you in in this time in this moment in history. The enemy of isolation is unity, or as the Bible puts it, the two becoming one flesh or term oneness.

Ryan: Which that passage specifically is about marital unity. And you rightfully said that it's not saying that because you're single you are now somehow incomplete.

Selena: Yeah. Or excluded from.

Ryan: Because in Christ, and I think you can make the same case prior to Christ in the Old Testament, but in Christ, it's amazing how He uses this language "and the two shall become one flesh. What God has brought together, let man not separate." He's in that, in that passage, referring to marriage as a refute to the Pharisees.

But then, throughout Scripture, we have this picture of our union with Christ and His flesh being the atonement for our flesh and the forthcoming complete unity with Christ and glory as His bride unified with Him. *Bride* being the church universal.

So I love that picture, that yes, we're not called isolation, and yet that has to do with a healthy interdependence husband and wife but also interdependence Christian to other Christian. But it also, and I think ultimately has to do with our dependence upon Christ. Christ is independent. There's not an interdependence there. Like He doesn't depend on us.

But we depend on Him. And that is, we are not called to live alone in that sense. We are called to be unified with Christ through His blood and work on the cross.

Selena: It's interesting because there's this call to oneness. But oneness is not aloneness, I guess. That'll tweet, right? *[laughs]*

Ryan: Oneness is not aloneness.

Selena: It's not a call to aloneness.

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Because you're... Okay, maybe *[inaudible]* my tweeting abilities.

Ryan: I don't know if anyone would argue that.

Selena: No, I'm saying... I know. But when you think of a single person, they're not called to be alone. They're called to oneness in the body of Christ, the oneness with Christ. I mean, you look at the Trinity, three in one it's just-

Ryan: One, this implies two separate parts being brought together.

Selena: More parts being brought together.

Ryan: So that word implies that there was at one point not oneness. And so to say it's not alone. I want to tweet it, but I don't know.

Selena: I don't tweet at all. Apparently, I have a Twitter account.

Ryan: I have been following you for years and you never post anything. *[both laughs]*

Selena: I don't know. So when you start feeling isolated, you're starting to feel this drift away from each other, starting to feel alone, two things that you should do. First of all, don't hide. Don't hide like Adam and Eve in the garden. We don't have to be afraid.

Trust and be known by God and by other believers. Bring other believers around you through your church community. Hiding perpetuates isolation. So let's walk in the light, friends.

The second thing you should do is ask yourself and your spouse, is there any unconfessed sin that we're allowing in our marriage? I mean, we did say that oftentimes, there are some lies and there's sin that can underline this feeling of isolation or this drift. But there's also things I think that we deal with in terms of fear and anxiety and maybe some mental health issues that can kind of cause us to not want to deal with other people or not step out of this place

of isolation because we're so afraid. And again, fear I don't think is a sin. I think it's fear of man. But again, I just want to say that I think-

Ryan: But it's much easier to... I mean, you said don't hide and ask yourself: is there unconfessed sin? I mean, my first knee-jerk reaction was, well, it's easier to hide.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: It makes more sense to hide. I'm ashamed. So why wouldn't I just... I don't want to... Yeah, I get that I'm a sinner, but I don't want to bring it out into the open. I'd rather-

Selena: Rights, right, which is what we're gonna address.

Ryan: I'd rather deal with it myself. And we're gonna talk about that. But why should I deal with my unconfessed sin with her? Why should I do that? And why shouldn't I hide? Yeah, sure, I'm not leaving my wife. I'm not going to the bedroom... Physically, I'm not going away from her. We're still together. I'm not really hiding in that sense. I'm just not letting her know this 2% of my life. So what's wrong with that? So we're telling you that you just have to trust. Trust that there is something-

Selena: Two percent is a big deal. *[chuckles]*

Ryan: That 2% is the difference between feeling fully loved and feeling like loved but-

Selena: So not really loved.

Ryan: ...loved except-

Selena: So the first lie of isolation. This is lie number one. I can't be transparent or known by my spouse because I am trying to keep what little peace we have. So a couple of things happening here.

Ryan: Well, I hear this a lot from men who-

Selena: Sure. It's funny I have a wife voice in my head. Well, makes sense.

Ryan: I don't have other wife's voice in my head. *[Selena laughs]* I have my wife's voice in my head. I hear this from a lot of men, I've thought these thoughts to myself, too, is, you know, you're dealing with something. We talked about shame just a moment ago.

Mainly, you know, a lot of men deal with some sort of sexual pornography, addiction, just things of their past, and if they are just extremely afraid that if they are honest with their wife that it will devastate her and it'll be the straw that broke the camel's back. Because maybe she's caught him previously or they have a fragile trust already. And he's like, "I'm just trying to keep the little bit of peace that we have-

Selena: There's some truth to that, though, right? There is some truth to that because a spouse bringing up some unconfessed sin or something that can devastate, yeah, it's going to hurt. If it involves the other person, it's going to hurt them. Yes, it's going to be a breach of trust, and yes, there's going to be a lack of peace, right? However, however, we are believers and followers of Christ, so our hope and our end is not there.

Ryan: That's so huge. It comes down to, do we trust that God's way is better than our own way? Do we trust that when He says, "Confess your sins..."

Selena: Well, again, it's not about us. Essentially, it is, but it's not. It's about us, but it's not ending with us. It is ending with the hope of Christ redeeming us. And so in the book I use, which I'm kind of like, "This is a silly example," but not, I use Jonah and going to Nineveh. He's going to the place that he doesn't want to go.

God is saying, "Go there and preach the gospel. Call them to repentance, stop worshipping their false gods." And he's like, "Do you know what Nineveh is like, Lord? Do you know?" I don't want to go there. That's a dangerous, scary place to be proclaiming that kind of message." So he tries to run away and God puts him in a whale, in a fish, a big fish. And not saying that, you know, if you run away, you're gonna be put in a big fish, but a smelly, dark place that you're sitting there just cold shivering, lacking-

Ryan: Smelly, dark place.

Selena: I mean, it's not a place I want to be forever and ever. Obedience brings God's peace. Nineveh... he didn't want to go there. But if God is calling you to go to your Nineveh with your spouse and say, "Hey, I've got some stuff. I don't want to go here but I know that the Holy Spirit is prompting me, He's prodding me. I need to go. God hasn't given me a spirit of fear. 2 Timothy says, "But of love power and a sound mind, we can go to those places without fear."

Ryan: Okay, so what happens? What happens in Nineveh when Jonah...?

Selena: They repent! They responded!

Ryan: There it is.

Selena: They respond. Again, a trust in God's calling, God's leading. For us, if I know that I have to bring a hard conversation or topic to him, typically my first response is prayer for his heart, for him to be able to hear me, for him to have a soft response. *[chuckles]*

Ryan: Soft, squishy heart.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: But the thing about that, too, and this is maybe I want to highlight with Jonah, later they repent, they turn. And then Jonah immediately says he basically was upset because he didn't want them to receive the news-

Selena: Oh, Jonah. He thought they were undeserving of it.

Ryan: To me, that highlights the fact that His mercy is not contingent on our ability to navigate the waters well, or to even have the right motives. That He will have mercy on whom He chooses to have mercy and He will allow soften hearts in whom He allows soften hearts.

The question is, are we going to trust Him? As we walk into this quote-unquote, Nineveh situation where we feel like listen to all the odds are stacked against me, my wife... there's no reason she has to not throw this in my face for the next 10 years. I've done this before. She's will not trust me ever," are you gonna trust God with that or are you going to continue to trust yourself?

Because like you said, Selena, do you won't end up in that cold, dark, stinky place alone, effectively drowning and suffocating by yourself or do you want to trust God with what He said He will do?

Selena: There's one of two options. You only got two options here.

Ryan: And I think all of you can trick ourselves into thinking, the stinky place isn't quite as stinky as it actually is. *[Selena chuckles]*

Selena: Of course we do. Of course we do. But the truth is, is that we are called to be peacemakers and not just peacekeepers. We can only be peacemakers when we can trust and go to the Prince of Peace Himself. Trusting God means knowing God.

So this is a quick question. Are you spending consistent and daily time in the Word knowing who God is? Are you spending time in worship, in prayer, all of

those disciplines? I just want to throw that out there because if we don't know God, then it can be very hard to trust God in the situations.

Lastly, don't distract or ignore... One way that we run away like Jonah is that we distract our lives away and just try to ignore what's actually happening. But press through the fear, the shame, the insecurity. Whatever it is you're dealing with, press through that and ask, again, the Holy Spirit to help you walk through.

And two, this hard place. Right? Again, pray for the heart and mind of your spouse, your marriage. You do not have to live in loneliness and you don't have to live in isolation with your sin for the sake of keeping peace within your marriage.

Ryan: We can be so quick to gloss over what you just said. Pray for the heart and mind of your spouse. I will just tell you, we've written these books, 40-Day Prayer Journey, and the whole premise of those books is that God will do things that we cannot possibly do, if we will just trust Him. And often He'll do it regardless of whether we trust Him or not.

But when we align our hearts with God through prayer, and we're going to Scripture, we're praying and responding through and to Scripture, to the God who authored it on behalf of our spouse, we shouldn't be surprised when He actually says, "Yeah, I'm gonna soften her heart. You just watch me be God, and you trust me to be God."

I don't know, I don't want to gloss over the point. There is so much trust being expressed, if we will just humble ourselves and pray to God and contend for the heart of our spouse, even if we are the reason for their heart being hard.

Selena: It's such an opportunity for God to be glorified. So let's not overlook that.

Ryan: Lie number two.

Selena: Lie number two.

Ryan: Lie number two. Lie number two is I need the time alone so I can work on myself.

Selena: So that would be my response to most of these things. But pride would have us think that we can actually work on our sin alone and fix it, right? Spoiler alert-

Ryan: Oh, boy.

Selena: For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We cannot save ourselves. Outside of Christ, we cannot save ourselves, we cannot fix the sin in our lives. That is God's territory. We can confess our sins to one another, but the one who cleanses, renews, transforms, and redeems is Jesus.

And so if the two become one flesh, then you are called to not walk alone in whatever the struggle is that you're facing, whether it's sin addiction, insecurities, fear, anxiety, whatever. We're called to be known in our marriage to our spouse.

Ryan: So John Owen wrote *The Mortification of Sin*. He talks about this at length. Most of that book is at length. *[both laughs]* But he talks about how basically those who try to eradicate the sin out of their own lives, outside of the power and help of the Holy Spirit do so in vain.

Selena: So good.

Ryan: And not only will you fail, but you will wear yourself out and you'll end up sinning even worse.

Selena: Whoa.

Ryan: There's a deeper sense of pride that's happening thinking that I can just do this. Now, that's not necessarily what the lie could be. It could be I'm just gonna work on this just me and God and then I'm going to present to you a more holy husband. *[chuckles]*

Selena: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Ryan: There's some truth to that, but it's different in marriage. When you have marriage, God has... especially for husbands, He has given you a helper. He has given you a helpmate. If you are standing on a firm foundation in that you understand what the gospel is, what it means for you, you understand what love is, how God defines it, if you understand what covenantal love is, that is the strong foundation that any marriage can make it through virtually anything. I'll say "anything" by the grace of God.

So if you are standing in your marriage on that foundation, then I would say don't try to figure it out on yourself. You're cutting yourself off at the knees. Go to the one who is designed and given to you specifically to help you, right? I'd say, whether you're a husband or wife.

Selena: And this is not saying that if you are in counseling and your counselor has given you homework and your spouse homework, this is not that kind of situation because you're working on certain strengths and weaknesses as a person, as an individual. This is not talking about just going off by myself, you know, alone and he has no idea what's actually happening in my heart, right? We are being known even in those situations, and those times of working on specific areas in our lives.

Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Again, an opportunity for God to be glorified in our weakness, in our lack of ability to be known, to be working on ourselves by ourselves. It doesn't make any sense. And it doesn't give God any glory. And we can't even boast about it really, because we never will fix ourselves. *[laughs]*

Ryan: I mean, imagine trying to-

Selena: It's a dead-end either way.

Ryan: Some of you know our story. I had heart surgery. I cannot possibly imagine performing a heart surgery on myself. *[Selena laughs]* There's no possible way.

Selena: There's no way.

Ryan: You need to do the anesthesia just right. I could do without fainting from the pain. There's just no way because you actually have to stop my heart to work on it. And only God can do that delicate surgery, and only He can bring a dead heart back to life. And He will do what's necessary, but He is the only one who can do it.

Selena: So again, ideally, marriage should be a safe place for you to bring your struggles. And I know it isn't always. But I would say before you consider sharing your struggles with your spouse, first go to God, again, with your fears. Go to God because no doubt this narrative of, "Well, He's just going to exploit all of these things that I tell him. He doesn't really care about me. He's gonna throw it in my face whenever He gets mad at me." We've got to go to God with those fears, those worries, those anxieties. 1 Peter reminds us to cast all our cares on Him because He cares for us.

Ryan: That's a real possibility-

Selena: It is true, yes. It is an ideal.

Ryan: That if you're unequally yoked and your spouse doesn't value the things of God and just wants to throw it in your face, like that's a possibility. Now, that's a bummer. We're not here to say get over that. We're here to say that's an opportunity then to press even deeper into the identity that Christ has given you.

I'll say this, the prescription and description of love that He's given you, that even when someone is counting your wrongs against you, love would not count that person's wrongs against them. So that is an opportunity then to cling to Christ, to cling to the cross, and to trust that despite the circumstances He is still being glorified in you, in your suffering well. And it is suffering.

Because a lot of spouses are just worn out because they've tried and they've done the things and they just feeling like, "Listen, I know what he's gonna do." And they're right. But that's not a call to give up. It's a call to trust Christ more, our friend. So, I don't know, just be encouraged by that. Don't be-

Selena: I think I read in, I think it's in Matthew, yesterday about forgiveness. How many times do we forgive? Seven times? Like seventy times seven, right? Christ is just-

Ryan: So exactly 490 times. *[Selena laughs]* Not the point.

Selena: Forgive. And we have episodes on forgiveness and apologies. So go check those out. Because there's a lot on forgiveness. It's not just forgetting and moving on. There's a whole journey and process.

Some questions that you might ask yourself. "How am I living alone rather than in covenant with my spouse? If you're dealing with this lie of I need to just kind of work alone on it, on my sin, on my insecurities, look at your life. How is that starting to play out in your life? And where can you begin to see that working out?

Am I hiding and trying to fix myself? Why? What are the reasons that I'm living like this, I mean, maybe your spouse is a hard person to talk to and you're just kind of scared to talk to him about some of these things? Not scared in like physically fearful, but just nervous because you kind of can anticipate their response. But again, trusting the Lord, praying for your spouse. Knowing that no matter the response, like your salvation, your soul rest in Christ.

Ryan: Just wanna make really quick point. If the point of your marriage is to make one other more holy, then this makes a lot more sense. If the point of your marriage is not that... So here's an example. Scripture, you know, husband will

present his wife to the Father at some point. Just like I want you to be a bride, like spotless. Paul talks about this.

That's a really sobering/terrifying thing to think. Like, "God, you've watched every stray word, every unloving tone. You've heard all the mutterings of my heart. So, I am I going to present my wife to you, as spotless when...?"

So the point is there's going to be a lot of grace needed for me on that day. The point is, though, that marriage is not about just getting through the conflict. It's about "Hey, I'm here to make you holy. You are here to make me holy. God is using you to that end and me to that. So let's press into that." So when our view is elevated like that, then it becomes so much harder just to wallow in the sin or to-

Selena: Stay hidden in it, I think.

Ryan: Yeah. Or to rub your spouse's face in it. Like, "Listen, you made it known. Let's get out of here. Come on. Let's go. Let's do run from this place. Let's deal with the pain and let's move on." But it only works if your goal is centered on God's goal, which is sanctification, holiness.

Selena: This third lie, we don't talk about it in the book as being a corporate lie that we subscribe to as a couple, but I think that it kind of applies. It can very easily apply to both of us and not just one of us. This kind of lie of comparison. Like, "Our marriage isn't that bad. It's definitely not as bad as theirs." Maybe you're knowing what's going on in someone else's marriage, and it's so easy to play that comparison game. But spoiler alert. You will always lose as will the people that you're comparing to.

2 Corinthians 10:12, Paul is showing how comparing yourselves just shows a lack of understanding. It says, "Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding."

Again, comparing ourselves shows our lack of understanding of what might really be happening within our marriage. We may think we're good because we're not as bad as them, but the Holy Spirit, God might be prompting us, convicting us saying, "Hey, there's some sin here, there's some fear that I want you to be living in freedom from. There's things in your marriage." No doubt. We are broken sinners, everybody has said that they're dealing with that God wants to bring to the surface and root out of us for His glory.

Ryan: There's only one comparison worth making in marriage, and that's the Christ.

Selena: And we don't measure up.

Ryan: Which is why you need Him. Because though in the flesh we don't measure up to Christ, we are made positionally aligned with Him because of His grace. Right. So if you find yourself comparing to other couples, honestly, just let that in your mind from this point forward be that red flag to you that says that you need to turn your gaze and not say, you know, "We're not as bad as them. We're pretty bad, but we're not as bad as them so. So we don't really need to deal with this. It could be worse."

Selena: Well, and I think there's something to be said about couples that are around you that sharpen you and seeing that not a comparison but a gauge rather. Because we have couples around us that I'm like, "Wow, they sit and read their Bible together every morning." And we struggle with that. Sometimes our days don't match up with young kids and I read in the morning or I'd read at night, and he reads in the morning. We're working on coming together through that season.

Again, it's not a point of, "Man, they're super holy and like awesome Christians, and we are not." It is more of "I love that unity about them." It's usually something that you love that's leading that conversation rather than something that you're just trying to feel better. It's something bad that you're trying to make yourself feel better with.

Ryan: I'm trying to differentiate between the heart orientation that you just described versus a heart orientation that says "we're not as bad as them," or even comparing in a healthy way versus seeing it's been sharpening and helping.

Selena: I think it's pride versus humility.

Ryan: Well, and it has to do with your vision of things, right?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: So if your goal is again, to be more like Christ, to know God more intimately, then you'll look at another couple's example and say, "They figured out a way to know God more intimately."

Selena: I like that.

Ryan: "Let's follow what they're doing."

- Selena:** Or "Let's work to do that."
- Ryan:** Then we're not gonna feel condemned by that.
- Selena:** Or we're not going to feel insecure by that, right?
- Ryan:** Yeah. And we're going to iterate ourselves. We're gonna change a little bit. We're going to be a little bit more holy as the Lord allows and the Holy Spirit leads.
- Selena:** I think there's freedom that we can experience as a couple together by not comparing to other couples around us. Marriage, again, it's a means of sanctification, which is to be made more holy. And we can't experience His goodness, if we think that we have somehow arrived, right? This lack of understanding, saying, "Well, we're fine compared to them. We're good. I don't have any work to do here."
- So again, one of the lies that we're trying to dispel. Let's live honestly, let's live with our eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus, and let's let the gospel and the Holy Spirit bring the convictions as He see fits.
- Ryan:** As He sees fit. *[laughs]*
- Selena:** Sees fit. I was like, "That's didn't sound right coming out."
- Ryan:** He must see fits too. I know then. He sees you if you're watching. *[Selena chuckles]*
- Selena:** Just some final encouragement. I mean, whatever is keeping you and your spouse living in isolation, whether it's isolation from each other or isolation from Christian community, bring it to the Lord. Fear and anxiety, bring it to the Lord. Ask Him for wisdom. Bring others in, bring your pastor in, bring a counselor, a trusted Christian guide couple. Bring them in.
- If you have unconfessed sin... I mean, look at Genesis 3. How did God deal with Adam and Eve in their sin? He searched for them, He pursued them, and He covered them. We see our loving Father going to great lengths to call us out in order to bring us in.
- Ryan:** I wanted to touch on something else just very quickly. I wish I would have thought of this sooner, but here we are. *[Selena chuckles]* Generally these types of conversations sent around sin and shame. They can also center around things like doubt or things like fear or anxiety. You know, sometimes I will feel a great deal of, for me, anxiety. I don't usually feel anxiety, but

sometimes it crops up. And I feel like I don't want to bring it to Selena because it'll just make her anxious.

Selena: Right. Because he doesn't usually worry or have...

Ryan: Right.

Selena: When it's gotten to that point, then I'm like, "If he's bringing it to me, then it's serious."

Ryan: Some of that is me as a husband taking one for the team because I am trying to protect my family sometimes from things that aren't necessary. You have to be able to discern what's healthy there. But I just don't want it to be all about sin. It could be maybe you're struggling with, you know, believing in the Gospel, you're struggling with believing that God is who everyone says He is and the Bible says He is.

And here's why. Look at the suffering happening in the world, look at this relative of ours who got cancer and died. Look at this miscarriage that we had last year. I have all these reasons things that I don't believe who God says He is. I don't believe it.

And isolation, the lies would say that you just deal with that on your own. I'm here to tell you that that is not the way. The way is to press into the one who God has given you. Sometimes we hold on to these lies too, because it just feels better because I don't really want to believe that God is who He says He is.

Selena: It's familiar. It's safe. We don't want to...

Ryan: And there's something in my heart that wants to rebel against Him.

Selena: Always. Yes.

Ryan: So I just wanted to make that sub-point, that it's not just about sin, but it's about any sort of struggle that you have and the shame that might ensue or the inclination that you might have to run and hide in light of that.

Selena: So couple's conversation challenge options.

Ryan: Big one.

Selena: Again, they're in our book. You can read Genesis 2 and 3 aloud and take some time to consider kind of the relevance of this account to your own marriage.

What stands out? How do you see God's character kind of unfolding? The second one would be of the three lies that we talked about today, which one do you both readily identify with? Why do you think that is?

Again, going to God, asking Him for help, and then asking Him to bring people that you can take that to as well. Seek Godly counsel.

And then the last option, if this is a conversation about sin and confessing it to one another, confessing sin is a part of the Christian life. It's spiritual. It's a spiritual discipline?

Ryan: You could say that. I'd just say get used to it. Like, just get used to being known as a sinner. Like just get used to that. Now we don't focus on that identity because we're not identified as sinners anymore. We are identified as saints in Christ. But one thing that saints do is they rid themselves of sin. They offload it. And the way we offload is we confess to God, we confess to one another. So just get used to it.

And if you're finding that you're afraid to confess sin, either ask the Lord to help you overcome that fear, or find friends that aren't going to just throw it in the face. Find people that are going to help you through it and not just throw it back atcha.

Selena: And if you are not a Christian or you are finding us and you're like, "Wow, I like what they have to say about marriage, they talk a lot about Jesus and God and I don't understand maybe everything about Him and I want to, what's a website they can go to?"

Ryan: [Thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com).

Selena: [Thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com). And you can check out... So weird to be like, "Here's the gospel" on the website. But we love Jesus, we want to share Him in a way that is helpful to you. But we also will just shout it from the mountaintops if that's what He says.

Ryan: So here's the deal. Without Christ, we would be divorced 10 times over. Without Christ, I might even be in a grave right now. And you might feel like you want to be in a grave right now, you might feel like you're ready for divorce.

And we're here to say. If you want hope, you want real life, it doesn't start with fixing your marriage, it starts with Jesus. And that's why we're saying go to Him. Jesus is real. He was a real man. He walked this earth, He died a real

death, and He rose a real resurrected life, and He ascended into heaven and reigns and glory.

And He's inviting you into relationship with Him, into loving, obeying, honoring, and cherishing Him, giving you the free gift of grace, the free gift of grace, not by your merit, but so that you can then live out your life in a way that loves Him, honors Him and then spend eternity with Him. So thenewsisgood.com Check that out. And then find somebody to walk you through that disciple. You find a pastor, find a friend who knows Jesus.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank You for Your grace. Once again, we'd be lost without You. This is truer and truer by the day and truer in ways that we will never understand the sight of glory. So we love You. We want to follow You.

Lord, I pray for the couples feeling isolated from one another. I pray that You would embolden them by your Spirit to walk in truth, to walk in the light, to be known fully by their spouse so that they might be made more righteous through whatever difficult conversations that might need to be half had.

So, Lord, I pray for the husband struggling, the wife struggling, that you'd be their strength and You would push them forward, Lord, in Your grace. But more than anything, let them know that You are near and You will never leave nor forsake them. In Jesus' name, amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: Thanks for joining us. This episode of Fierce Marriage is—

Selena: In the can.

Ryan: See you again in about seven days. Until next time—

Selena: Stay fierce.

PODCAST NOTES

- **Book reference**
 - [See-Through Marriage: Experiencing the Freedom and Joy of Being Fully Known and Fully Loved](#), Ryan & Selena
 - [The Mortification of Sin](#), John Owen

- **Scripture reference:**
 - Scripture reference:
 - Genesis 2:18, 20
 - Ephesians 2:8-9
 - 2 Corinthians 10:12

- **Recommended resources**
 - [Thenewsisgood.com](#)
 - [40-Day Prayer Journey:](#)

FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

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

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