

SHOULD A HUSBAND EXPECT SEX AFTER A NICE DATE?

<https://fiercemarriage.com/should-a-husband-expect-sex-after-a-nice-date>

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Ryan: We're gonna do something a little different today on the Fierce Marriage Podcast. We're going to process through in real-time. So often when we are thinking of content to share with you guys and things that might be helpful, relevant to current events, to life, to maybe what God's doing in our lives, we've spent hours beforehand processing through and writing our outlines, writing or rundowns, as we call them.

And you know, so many times I've just wished that we could hit "record" on the processing side because it helps my heart so much to just think through, Okay, what are the right questions to be asking? What does scripture say? What weight should it bear on our hearts in these areas?

And today, the question we're going to process through is, is a husband entitled to or should he request to/demand, however you want to phrase that, sex after a nice date?

Selena: Dema-

Ryan: Demand is a better word.

Selena: It's important how you phrase it. So you can't just say however you want to phrase it, because for the sake of the conversation we have to phrase it the way that we're talking about it.

Ryan: Yeah. And that's part of how we process through, is how are we going to phrase it in a way it's not going to distract from the topic at hand? Because people on the internet go off the rails pretty quick if you just use the wrong word and get the wrong tone across. *[both chuckles]* So here we are. We're gonna process through that. We'll see you on the other side.

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Ryan: I feel like this is a question that we've... we don't struggle with it, we process through it almost always when we go on a date, I feel like. And we're having a conversation here today because yesterday we had kind of extraordinary date.

Selena: Yeah. Well, we've tried to do it once a year, but then of course COVID happened so things kind of shut down and we were not able to do what we did, which we'll tell you about in a minute. But-

- Ryan:** Yeah, we try to spend, you know, once a quarter, or once or twice a year we do something that's more than just going out to lunch or you know-
- Selena:** An all-day thing that's not involving work or anything.
- Ryan:** Although technically we do do some work on those trips. We're using it right now- *[chuckles]*
- Selena:** Conversation.
- Ryan:** *[inaudible]* No. So what did we do? What was our extraordinary date that we went on?
- Selena:** We went to Mariners game. So we live in Tacoma area, so a little south of Seattle, about 40 miles. And we went to lunch, we went to... we just spent the day together. His mom watched the girls and we just got to hang out and took a bus up, enjoyed Seattle, had lunch, went to the game, which was an awesome game, by the way.
- Ryan:** We were playing The Yankees.
- Selena:** We played the Yankees. That was a game that ended the series. There was like 43,000 people. People don't come to Mariners games like that. And it was great.
- And then we rode the train home and just spent like all day together. And it was a lot of fun. We were just being together, enjoying not being interrupted by children, eating slow, just holding hands, *[both laughs]* all those things that you can kind of do with kids too. But there's always this pressure, at least, I feel this awareness of my children, right? *[laughs]* Like, okay, I don't want to lose them, they're hungry, now they're tired. Like, we're just kind of always catering. So a day without them was good for our marriage.
- Ryan:** Yeah. Yeah. But it kind of does... It always makes-
- Selena:** It didn't yesterday.
- Ryan:** ...I get to process this in real-time. But yeah, you wonder... And we think of The Office, right? We're big fans of the office. Whenever Pam was getting ready to go out on a date with this guy-
- Selena:** It's like a new guy.
- Ryan:** ...and Phyllis is like, "You should get the lobster."

- Selena:** Yeah, "You should order the most expensive thing on the menu."
- Ryan:** And then Stanley in the background just, you know, is moping or whatever, say, "You're gonna have to put out."
- Selena:** And Phyllis is like, "Oh, yeah, you're gonna have to put out."
- Ryan:** And Pam's like, "Stanley!" *[both laughs]* Then Phyllis goes, "Oh, yeah, you're gonna have to put out." *[Selena chuckles]* Of course, that's obviously in a secular context. If you're not married, you should never be putting out.
- Selena:** No. *[chuckles]*
- Ryan:** But the point is, is that... And so we joke about that because I am always concerned as a husband because I planned this about a month ago. I bought the tickets because it was a Yankee game. They're good tickets. I got a great deal on them. I wanted to take you to this restaurant, which is incredible. It's called The Crab Pot. And they take this whole big bowl of like steamed seafood goodness, and they pour it on the table, and maybe the bib. It's like this hilarious experience, but it's really good. It's not cheap.
- And the whole time when I'm planning this I'm like, "I don't want Selena to feel in the back of her mind that this is all just a ruse just to get her in bed." I don't know Why do I think that? Like why...
- Selena:** Well, because we've had a habit in the past I think in our marriage just... It didn't start out like that, right? Like you date and you have fun and you're like, "This is so great. I love you." And you know, sex, I think it evolves during the life of your marriage, you know? At one point it-
- Ryan:** You said we had a habit of doing this. So there's a process in it.
- Selena:** Okay, have. But I don't know that it was a habit. I think that-
- Ryan:** As a husband, okay, I would never consciously think, I'm just gonna buy my wife this nice dinner, I'm gonna, you know, spend all this time and effort, but really what I really want, like all that is just a precursor to just how have sex later. [00:05:00]
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** I don't consciously think that. Although-

- Selena:** And is it wrong to desire that?
- Ryan:** And that's the question. Because although I don't think it's wrong for a husband to want his wife sexually, in those moments, especially, not because... not because... I'm not thinking, "Okay, she ordered the lobster so now she's really stuck. *[both laughs]* That's not what I'm thinking. It's not like this degree of like, "Okay, well, I spent \$200, therefore-
- Selena:** No. But there's this expectation, I think. It is hard not to expect.
- Ryan:** And this is the question. Is that expectation wrong?
- Selena:** No. I mean-
- Ryan:** What do you think?
- Selena:** I think if you flipped it for the woman, right, we're talking about sex, and we're kind of talking about it in context of a bargaining tool, right?
- Ryan:** Sure.
- Selena:** But we're trying to kind of peel back the layers of if we go out on a date, does that mean that we got to put out? *[laughs]* And does that mean that it's wrong of a husband to expect that? Is that wrong for a wife to say, "I'm tired of a headache and turn over and go to sleep after a nice date like that?" Right? *[Ryan laughs]* Where do the chips fall after something like this?
- Ryan:** And if that does happen, is the husband-
- Selena:** Is he being selfish?
- Ryan:** Or does he have a right to be frustrated?
- Selena:** Right. Right.
- Ryan:** One of the words that came up in our pre-pre-conversation on this was this idea of entitlement. As a wife or as a husband, am I entitled to things? Are you entitled to anything? Not just sex, but anything. Is there other entitlements within a Christian marriage? I think yeah, there are entitlements. Like I am entitled to exclusivity with you. Meaning that you are not allowed to go and share your intimacy with anyone else.
- Selena:** Neither of us are allowed to do that. Exactly.

Ryan: Exactly. And that's an entitlement that I think is good and right and true and healthy.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: An entitlement, I think.. You know, Paul talks about this in 1 Corinthians, I think, 7. So starting in verse 1, it says, "Now concerning the matters about which you wrote, quote..." So this is them. They had written this to him. "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." That's kind of a platonic view. We saw a lot of this early Gnosticism, this idea that anything that's of the flesh is inherently evil.

Selena: And that was the belief, yeah.

Ryan: Kind of that was the belief and there's this deeper kind of spiritual richness that needs to be pursued. And you can reject things that are of the flesh. And that was in and of itself holy. That's not a scriptural thing. We are people that have bodies, we have spirits, we have minds. We're holistic in that way.

So Paul is debunking this. And he says, "You wrote that it is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." And then Paul starts, he says, "But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband." Again, the exclusivity right there. "The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights..." Conjugal means-

Selena: Sexual rights.

Ryan: ...sexual rights. "...and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does." Say that out loud in today's culture, and you're not gonna get-

Selena: Mm, you just did. *[Ryan chuckles]*

Ryan: I didn't say it, Paul said it. "Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does." That sounds an awful lot like entitlement. And here's the imperative here. "Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

So a lot is happening there. But basically saying, you have given yourself over-

Selena: Right. In this marriage covenant, you have-

Ryan: You're entitled to my body; I'm entitled to your body. And I am not allowed to withhold from you. Think about that. And you're not allowed to withhold from me.

Selena: I can already see where this could go wrong, right?

Ryan: Right.

Selena: Because it almost feels like a holy like exclusivity, entitlement. We're married so these are the rights and privileges that we get to have. However, it becomes diluted with sin when we start exercising the authority outside I think of those bounds for selfish reasons, for selfish gain in order to abuse the other spouse or to assert some sort of unholy, ungodly type of dominance-

Ryan: Or power or just control.

Selena: ...that the Lord has not, I think, set out for us to have.

Ryan: So I think Paul, the next words that he says here after "you do not own your own body type stuff," I think he's telling... he uses the word "Do not deprive." Or at least that's how the translators are doing in the ESV version. "Do not deprive one another." If you think about deprivation, you deprive your kids of food if you don't feed them. You deprive them of maybe affection. Or I could deprive you of affection. I could deprive you of conversational attention.

Deprivation is... [00:10:00] I think it has underneath it a need that is healthy and right and good and true. Paul doesn't say, Wives, you should have sex with your husband whenever he asks for it. It's not about the husband's desire, it's about the husband and wife need and the health of the... the need of the marriage.

And he says, "So that Satan may not tempt you." So he's talking about you individually. Don't deprive one another individually, but also so you as a couple will not fall into sexual temptation.

Selena: Because it will happen—you will be sexually tempted. If you're not fulfilling the sexual desires within your marriage, you're going to start looking outward. It's not like, Well, I'm disciplined enough, I won't do that. No. We have a tendency, we have flesh, we have sin that is always at work within us. And this is how the Lord has set it out for us to engage in sex.

Ryan: So there's a real need there. And Paul makes a very specific case where he says it very specifically, If you do it, do it for a reason and do it for a limited

time, and then afterward come back together. So I think it should be the exception and not the rule.

Selena: Right. It's very defined.

Ryan: And it's very clearly defined. I think it's definitely a red flag if being intimate regularly is more the anomaly than the norm. This should be instructive for us. There should be regular conjugal rights being exercised by both the husband and the wife. There are always going to be... not always. But there's always gonna be nuances and complications in some cases.

Selena: Right. You have to use discernment.

Ryan: And you have to use discernment and wisdom through that. We're not saying across the board, like, every husband and wife should be having sex 3.5 times a week. If you're not, you're refusing.

Selena: In sin. *[chuckles]*

Ryan: That's not what we're trying to say. But there is a theme, though, that Paul is getting at there. But let's go back to the original question.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: What is it about this idea that a husband takes his wife out for a nice date and therefore expects her to give him sex afterward? You had said something early on that it's different, right?

Selena: It's the question behind the question. So we're asking that question of, you know, is the husband entitled to sex after a nice date? Well, entitled, obviously rubs us all the wrong way. The ideal response is that if we are already intimate, we're already connecting, we're already at a good foundational start, this type of question wouldn't necessarily rub you the wrong way. And it also you would have a quick answer for it as a married couple that is engaging in their conjugal rights on a regular basis. You would say, yeah, absolutely, I want to have sex with my husband after such a nice day-

Ryan: You would think so. *[laughs]*

Selena: ...because what a wonderful way to end such a beautiful and wonderful day, right? That is something that we have to grow into. Maybe. I've had to grow into as a wife, understanding that it's not just a duty although part of it is. But it's not only that. The Lord has grown me in knowing that... What?

- Ryan:** So-
- Selena:** We struggled with this obviously.
- Ryan:** I think maybe we could just walk through the day. Because here's what I was thinking. So I wasn't thinking... All right, I'm going to get Selena on this. We took the bus from Tacoma north. It's an express bus. It's a nice bus. We got up there and then we're walking around in the city. I'm not thinking the whole time like, "Man, I just..."
- Selena:** "Can't wait to get home and get in bed." *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** Here's the thing. I'm not thinking that but I'm also thinking, "I hope that this ends that way." To be completely honest.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** Because I want you in that way and I love you in that way.
- Selena:** And I think that's a healthy desire. It becomes distorted when that is the only objective, I think.
- Ryan:** I know. I know. So I'm thinking two things.
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** Well, really the overall thought is I love my wife and I like spending time with her. That's the overall thought. Underneath that, I'm thinking, "I hope it ends with a happy ending." *[Selena laughs]* And then I'm thinking, "I hope she doesn't think it has to end with a happy ending." *[both laughs]* I'm just being honest because-
- Selena:** You're kinda trapped.
- Ryan:** I feel trapped because I clearly love you and I'm doing all this because I love you. And that love should culminate in the act of making love.
- Selena:** Right. And that's a right desire.
- Ryan:** But I don't want you to feel obligated because that undermines love itself when you feel like I'm just doing it to get from you-
- Selena:** Again, foundation, motivation, trust.

- Ryan:** So it comes back to trust, it comes back to intimacy as a theme.
- Selena:** A theme of having given conjugal rights. Like if we haven't had sex in six months, and then he's all doing this elaborate date-
- Ryan:** And it's out of character.
- Selena:** ...and it's very out of character, then for him to kind of want that from me would feel unnatural. It would feel very selfish. It would feel like he's making his [00:15:00] desires known and he's just banking that all this is gonna pay off, you know?
- Ryan:** You feel like I'm basically... this is gonna sound crude, but I think it's just the right word. You're gonna feel in some sense like a prostitute. Like I'm just paying a fee to have access to the merchandise. It just happens to take eight hours and it happens to take a lot of decorum and a lot to kind of dancing around it, but ultimately, that's what... it cheapens it-
- Selena:** It does.
- Ryan:** ...if that's what you suspect. Now, what goes through a wife's mind? Because, okay, we were about to celebrate 19 years of marriage. We've been together for 23 years. That's a long time. In my mind, I'm like, "What have I ever done to not earn your trust in this way? What have I ever done where you felt like this is a warranted belief that I'm obligating you to give me your body in a way that you don't want to?" And the answer is nothing. I've not ever done-
- Selena:** You've never done anything to break my trust in this area.
- Ryan:** Why then after being together 19 years, why is that the end of the night you're like... And this isn't you. I know we're processing through it. Because you are the most generous, selfless woman I could ever imagine. Like, if I ever I come to you and I'm like, "Selena, I just really need comfort sexually right now," you're like, "What can I do?"
- Like you're very giving to me. And I never want to... Like people really care... if you care that she's very giving. But still I get the sense of like, "Okay, Ryan's expecting this, therefore, the guard has gone up a little bit." Is that not true?
- Selena:** I don't think it was yesterday. I don't think that I was like, "Oh, great. We're gonna have to put out." I wasn't going to let that kind of attitude dampen the day because it's not... Again, that's just the whole wrong attitude from the start of like, "Well, I have to put out?"

Okay, first of all, what does that even mean? Like, okay, let's look at the purposes of sex. Let's look at what the Scriptures teach us about sex and intimacy with a spouse. It's not putting out. It is connection, it is procreation, it is unification. Like there's so much more to that picture than putting out.

And so if I'm just answering that question, then it's not going to be... yeah, the walls are gonna go up. But again, I have to remind myself when those walls are going up, "Selena, this is not what you're doing. This is what you're doing." Which leads us to kind of like the next question of what could dating actually be in your marriage? Like, what should it be? And not just this... What's the right word? It's not just this ruse, like you said, to get to have sex in-

Ryan: Not a transaction.

Selena: It's not a transaction. But it could actually be, you know, connecting with your spouse, it could actually be spending time with them and talking with them and engaging them.

Ryan: That's good. So I want to back up a little bit into that trust idea, because you have all the... Maybe this is gonna sound too strong. But you have empirical reason, maybe all the reason in the world to know that you can trust me.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: We've never had infidelity in our marriage. We're very honest. Like you're the only one I've ever been with. And same for you. So you have all the empirical evidence to say, like, "I can trust my husband." But there's something in the moment that maybe would put that trust on the shelf because maybe it's suspicion or tiredness. Or what else could it be?

If you've listened to us for a long time, you've watched our videos, you maybe know we've had... this is some of the things that we've walked, we've talked through is your default is walls and not... especially because of some of the family of origin stuff-

Selena: Well, and I do think that the family of origin stuff plays a deeper role than I would like to admit. When a parent walks out on a child at a young age, that's going to leave a lasting effect. And I never did get counseling or anything really for it, maybe I should, to build up trust. But you know, that's where he thinks-

Ryan: Just mentioned, "I should probably get counseling for that." *[laughs]*

Selena: Sorry. You still feel that I tend to put those walls up. But that's because that's a deep, deep, deep self-preservation. And that's to expose the most intimate parts of myself, there's still a little bit of just the like, "Huh, that's scary."

Ryan: It's huh, how you say it. *[laughs]*

Selena: It's scary. And it's only momentary and it's usually pretty quick. But this side of heaven that might just be my battle right now of just... with anything new, any friendships or anything that... It takes a long time to become my friend and for me to trust you because it's not that I don't want to trust you but with deep things of the heart. And if we're not talking scripture, then I'm sorry, it's gonna take a long time for us to have any sort of friendship like intimacy-

Ryan: As a husband-

Selena: ...let alone like yeah-

Ryan: Many husbands feel this way. You can think... [00:20:00] So how long is it? Is 23 years together enough to... So 19 years marriage, isn't that a long enough time to have open and unfettered access to your trust? And I think maybe that's the wrong approach because... Husband, you got to know your wife too and know that. Okay, yeah, she does trust you. I know you trust me. I also know that there's a warming-up process that has to happen. And this is one of the-

Selena: For me, maybe not for you. *[laughs]*

Ryan: And this is where the date... You got to warm me up a little bit. *[both laughs]* Not just the machine. This is where the date conversation really comes to a head for me, because it's like, "Okay, I know that you trust me. You know that you trust me. We have all these years together.

We've also spent eight hours being warmed up by the state. *[both laughs]* And we've laughed, we've smiled, we've been affectionate in really light-hearted ways. It's not like I'm, you know, clea... Like we're not all over each other. But we're holding hands, a little kiss here and there, a hug here and there, you know, a picture together.

Then you get home, and it's like the kids are there and it's like all that just kind of like sloughs off. It's like we're back to square one. And that's understandable. But I think as a husband, that's where... we have to get back to the heart of love. I think love by nature wants two things: to give wholeheartedly to another person. Like by definition, love cannot be held back and reserved. I want to give all of myself to you. If you really love that person

you give all of yourself to them. Love also wants all of the other in return. This is what the gospel is.

Selena: Perfect love drives out fear. So for me-

Ryan: Let me finish this thought because this is what the gospel is. Jesus has given His whole... He's died literally a sinner's death so that we might be brought into the fold of God. And He's given His entire self to us. What does Jesus require from us in return? Our entire self. He requires for us to die to ourselves.

There is a transactional component in that. It's not transactional in that we initiated it. Jesus initiated it and it's by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone that we are saved. But then that's when it's like, Okay, as a recipient of that grace, there's... James talks about this. It's a natural outflow of that love. So that's the picture of the gospel. I'm a sinner receiving grace free of charge, yet it will cost me everything, not to receive it, but because I have received it.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: Now, take that picture and look at marriage and look at a date like this. I want to give you everything. That's why yesterday what I thought through, you know, the bus trip fees and had the right amount of cash on hand because none of the cards ever work on buses. That's why, you know, I had thought of the restaurant and I knew what we were going to do. And I had this whole plan. And it's because I love you, and I want to experience that with you. And then I think the case we're making here is it's natural then to say, "I want all of you back."

Selena: It's natural and good.

Ryan: It's natural and good. And it's not like, by the way, if for some reason we're not able to consummate this thing at the end of the night, I'm not going to then... I mean, I'll be frustrated, but I'm not going to be like, "Man, I don't love you anymore." It's gonna be like, "Yeah, that was a little bit rough."

Selena: Disappointing.

Ryan: Disappointing. I feel like it didn't kind of come to a close. Like it was incomplete.

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: And that leaves an understandable amount of dissonance in the night. But you know, as a husband, I can still say, "Yeah, my love is still there for you. Maybe there was a need that wasn't met, I'm not gonna hold it against you. Let's talk through that."

And this is why I love that as generous that goes back and forth is so amazing, because you're looking at me saying, "I know. I know. I know that'll be good." Now maybe you can speak to that. Do you feel like this obligation and do you feel like that's a bad thing? Or do you feel... what goes through your mind? Because last night you did have some-

Selena: Yeah. I was enjoying the time of just being together because I don't feel like we get that kind of teenagery feel to just kind of be together as a couple without any other obligations to anyone else. So I was just enjoying that time together. And last night, I was really tired and there was a bit of hesitancy and you were kind of in a little bit of a funk. Like we were kind of-

Ryan: Because I could sense it. I could sense the hesitancy. *[both chuckles]*

Selena: Well, I don't know. I don't know why... I think it was just like off put by you. I don't know. It just kind of felt like, okay, we've had this nice day together, we should kind of just be like lock and key fit and we just go. And it was like, mmm. *[both laughs]* There's a little more warming up, I think, for us.

Ryan: And you know what went through my head honestly is I thought, [00:25:00] "Okay, this can be a thing or doesn't have to be a thing. Like this doesn't have to become a big affront to my relationship with my wife."

Selena: And we've grown in that though, because that was not always his response and it's not always been my response to just bounce right back and like, "Okay, let's just let this go." I mean, of course, why wouldn't the enemy want to attack you in that moment as well? I mean, you've had a nice day together, it's been peaceful, it's been joyful, it's been... I've appreciated him, he's appreciated me, we feel like our buckets are full. Why not at the end of the day would the enemy not just be like, "Hey, let's just make this and this wrong, mess this whole thing up and just kind of have it come crashing down."

Ryan: That's good because-

Selena: You gotta fight for it with some resilience, to be honest.

Ryan: And we talked about this in our book, *Fierce Marriage*, about how one of the purposes of sex is to be that dim reflection, again, of the gospel, of being fully

known and still fully loved, being completely and utterly revealed and naked, literally, but still loved.

And so in that moment, you're not only naked, of course, physically, but you're thinking, "Okay, my expectations, my emotions, my thoughts are on display here, too. And I remember thinking, "This can be a thing, or it can not be a thing." And you remember what I said, I said... I don't know if you remember this, but I said, "Thanks for the awesome day. I had a really great time today." And I started thinking about all the connecting that we had done all day long.

Selena: I think that's wonderful, because that's what it shouldn't be. Like dates should be those points of reference reminding us of how we love one another and how we can be grateful for one another. And when those moments of like wanting to preserve self or wanting to hide or not give of ourselves, we can remember what was given to us and remember and give back.

And I think if trust has been broken, it's going to take some time to kind of rebuild that trust in the motivation of your spouse, right? Me as a wife, if I've used sex as a bargaining tool to get other things that I want to purchase or other ways of feeling like he loves me or something, then if you guys haven't walked through that, you need to talk about that, because that's not the right motivation for sex. We need to rebuild some of that trust and we need to restart.

So I guess, I don't know, just some questions to ask to end the episode of asking yourselves as a couple. If you feel like dates are like this, if you've ever felt this kind of pressure, or felt trapped or felt like you got to put out to your spouse, you know-

Ryan: Call it the Stanley dynamics.

Selena: The Stanley dynamic. *[both chuckles]* Just take a few steps back and ask yourselves like, how did we get to this point? How did dating become this in our marriage? And could it be something different? Could it actually be us connecting and loving one another and ending it with great married sex at the end? Like that's okay to say and that's okay to indulge in.

Ryan: Absolutely.

Selena: So how can we... Or am I misinterpreting it as the wife or is he misinterpreting it as the husband? Are we seeing this from an actual godly perspective of he is giving to me because he loves me, and I want to give to him because I love him, not just...?

Ryan: Also, I'll add to that, the husband also gives up himself in intimacy as well. So it's not like now it's time for you to pay up.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: But instead I want to make that really clear. It's not just "I've done my part, now you do yours." It's we've had this incredible day together, let's finish this incredible day together. And I want to continue giving of myself to you, and I want to continue receiving you for my own joy, my own pleasure, my own...

That's, I think, what I really want to end this on is that it is good and right and true and beautiful for husbands and wives to be together.

Selena: Yes, and have one another.

Ryan: Even at the end of a wonderful time, at the end of a date, if there are those feelings of "Oh, he's expecting this," or "I have to give or he's going to be upset," if there's those feelings, our encouragement to you is (a) you have to slough off the idea that sex is anything other than the beautiful gift that it is from God. It is not a bargaining chip. It is not just a means of getting what you want from your spouse. Instead, it is something that God has given you to enjoy together. And it is good and right and true to want it. Husbands, it's good to want your wife this way.

Selena: And wives, it's good for you to want your husband in that way.

Ryan: And I would add this to that. Wife, it is good for your husband to want you, like to embrace that he want... Same goes for wives wanting their husbands. That is a very beautiful thing. Paul spends almost an entire chapter on that. Or half a chapter on like giving yourself to one another. Do not deprive one another.

And then you go a few chapters further and we won't get into it but 1 Corinthians 13, All the things that love is, I think at the very bottom of like the ontology of love is it's selfless. I'm always giving, giving, giving, not requiring but so earnestly desiring you in return. And that's the nature of love [00:30:00] and that's the nature of a biblical marriage.

Anyway, this has been helpful from my heart just to kind of like think through this and to do it in real-time. I'm thankful for you, Selena. I'm thankful that we've walked this journey. Friends, 19 years, here we are still figuring this stuff out. Don't really ever stop.

Selena: It may be so boring and predictable otherwise, right?

Ryan: Yes. But you got to keep talking. You got to keep the dialogue going. And you need to, more than anything else, keep your marriage centered on Christ, centered on the gospel.

What is the gospel? If you don't know, we have a website for you. Go to thenewsisgood.com. It's this reality, the truth, the good news that I'm a sinner dead in my sin, but Christ came and paid the price for my sin on the cross. He died for my sin, but He didn't stay dead. He devoured death itself. And He conquered death that I might live, that we might live. And He did so by His grace. And I need only a faith in Him that He is enough to pay the price for my sin, to be brought into the fold of God.

If you want to find out more what it means to become a Christian, you want to center your marriage on the gospel, two websites for you: Thenewsisgood.com, also gospelcenteredmarriage.com. It's an online learning class. It really puts teeth to the ideas that we've just presented here at the last part of this video.

With that said, let's pray. Jesus, thank you for this gift, that is my wife, this gift of marriage, being able to process through these things with her, my helper, my partner. God, I thank you for the struggles that we get through that make us better, that sanctify us, that help us to love each other better.

On the other side of it, Lord, I pray for the husbands and the wives who might be struggling for whatever reason. It might be intimacy, it might be communication, they might be in conflict, they might be rebuilding trust. I pray that you would place their feet on the firm ground of your word, firm ground of the gospel, that they might begin to step forward in the truth that you've given them. Lord, I pray that this ministry, this video helps them to that end, that they might glorify you all the more. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: Thank you for watching. This is fun. I like processing in real-time. I think we might do this more often.

Selena: Are you claiming to be a verbal processor? *[Ryan laughs]*

Ryan: I guess. I don't know. I don't know. If you're still here and you want to be a partner with us, this ministry is possible largely because of our patrons, you can become a patron, become part of that tight-knit community. Go to fiercemarriage.com/partner. We just ask you to pray about it. If the Lord leads you that you would take that step. Either way, we're going to be here, as long

as the Lord wills it, sharing openly what it means to live a marriage in light of the gospel.

That said, this episode of Fierce Marriage is—

Selena: In the can.

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

Selena: Stay fierce.

PODCAST NOTES

- **Referenced scripture**
 - 1 Corinthians 7
 - 1 Corinthians 13

- **Recommended resource**
 - thenewsisgood.com

FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

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

Shop: <https://shop.fiercemarriage.com/>

Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/fiercemarriage>

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