

## I CAUGHT MY WIFE TEXTING ANOTHER MAN

<https://fiercemarriage.com/i-caught-my-wife-texting-another-man>

[00:00:00]

**Ryan:** A few weeks back, we did an episode called The Dangers of DMs. And DMs are nothing more than basically a private virtual space where you can have conversations with other people. We talked about why that's dangerous. Go back and check that out if that piques your interest.

Today we're talking about, in another sense, the dangers of DMs on your phone, your text messaging, because we have a question from a viewer, a listener that deals directly with this. It's a heartbreaking thing to consider but I think there's hope in the heartbreak.

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** And I think there's something for all of us to learn. So I'm thankful for this couple who wrote him with this question. We're gonna share that with you on the other side.

[00:00:41] <music>

**Ryan:** First of all, thank you for joining us. My name is Ryan. This is my lovely wife Selena. We are the proprietors [*Selena laughs*] of all things fierce: Fierce Marriage, we have the Fierce Parenting Podcast if you've not checked that one out, we have videos on YouTube under the Fierce Family. It's all under this banner of fierce families, which for us is an effort to create families or to build families for the glory of Christ. We don't create families [*Selena chuckles*] but we help others build families for the glory of Christ. So thank you for joining us.

Today is a sensitive topic. And so we're gonna read. It's a rather long question that was written in by a gentleman. We're gonna read it to you, and then we'll unpack it, and we'll process through it together. But it has to do with text messaging other people.

**Selena:** Right. And as we kind of go through some of the bulleted points after we read the text or the email that he sent us, we're not trying to shift blame or question his situation. We're asking questions from this email that he sent us just for the benefit of viewers and listeners. So we're not saying that he did these things, or he didn't do these things, or why didn't he do these things? We're not accusing him. We're saying, "Okay, this is a good jumping-off point for a conversation about this. Do you want to read it?"

**Ryan:** Yeah. "So I recently was in the hospital with my wife. And while in the hospital, I heard her phone constantly going off while she was sleeping. I was wrong but I tried unlocking her phone and noticed that she had changed her passcode. I tried her watch and it unlocked and I found text messages of an inappropriate nature between her and another man. I was just gutted. This wasn't the first time this had happened. It was the second.

While I know that she hadn't met up with this guy, the text messages were enough, and here I was taking care of her in the hospital while she was talking to him. I confronted her about everything. I wanted to walk out and leave. I left to take a walk and stood at the front of the hospital wanting to just end it all, heartbroken. For some reason, I walked back into that hospital room, forgave her, and continued to take care of her. I told her I wanted his number blocked for us to communicate, for us to do whatever we had to do to get our marriage back on track.

To this day, while I've tried to move past it, I still struggle with trust and the fear that it may happen again. I love my wife, and she says she loves me, but how do we move forward? How can I let God move my heart to fully forgive and trust her again? These guys that she has spoken to seem like they want a relationship with her but sex is all I get out of the messages I've read. I want us to rebuild our marriage and then recommit ourselves to one another. How can we go about doing that?"

**Selena:** So really good questions. I think it's sad but hopeful because there is a lot happening but there's a desire for reconciliation, at least from what we're reading here. So, again, as we walk through some of these issues, and things that are kind of listed out in this email, we're not trying to accuse Aaron is the person who wrote this in, but we're trying to ask some questions to hopefully shed some light for you our viewers, as well as our listeners and also encourage Aaron, I think, later on.

So let's begin with the phone was locked. Okay. Her phone was locked.

**Ryan:** That's not an abnormal.

**Selena:** It's not abnormal.

**Ryan:** Everybody's phone locks. The question is why was the passcode changed?

**Selena:** Yeah. Why was it not known by her husband, right?

- Ryan:** Yeah. You know my pin number past code, everything, since day one. Probably before we were even married. What would you think if all of a sudden you want to get on my phone, take a picture, do something, look at it...?
- Selena:** Well, if it's not a normal practice for us to not know each other's, right, our past codes or whatever, then I would obviously I'd jump to conclusions. There would be some suspicion. I would ask some questions. Why are you all of a sudden feeling the need to change your passcode? Did one of our kids find it *[chuckles]* and now is like purchased many things on your phone? You know, what is the reason?
- You know, we do talk a lot about privacy versus secrecy in past episodes and why there really is no secrecy in marriage. Privacy, how would you define that in marriage?
- Ryan:** Well, I mean, privacy is you're [00:05:00] granted a certain level of individual maybe autonomy... How do I say this? I'm thinking of like you're going to the bathroom. That's what I'm thinking of.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** You know, privacy is good in those senses, but not hiding anything.
- Selena:** Right. Right. Right.
- Ryan:** Or privacy... I don't know. I'm thinking of those types of things. But I can't think of any situation where it's like, "Oh, I need to have part of Ryan that you don't get to see." No, that's antithetical to marriage. We talked about prenups last week. In a sense, you can have kind of an interpersonal pre-nup where you say like, "I'll give you all me, but not this part and this part." No, that's not marital. That's not covenantal. I don't know if there is any privacy in marriage, other than the bathroom thing. *[both laughs]*
- Selena:** We also have little kids. I literally had Louisa, the two-year-old, her fingers were under the door like that meme and she was like, "Can you see me now?" And I'm like, "Yes, give mammy privacy, please." *[chuckles]* You know, it's just kind of-
- Ryan:** "I don't care what you do. Just go away." *[both laughs]* Go away.
- Selena:** Excuse me, we also talk about things like the phone drop test. And so you know that we're all about transparency. We're all about being known, walking in the light as He is in the light. So what is your policy with your phones? Do you know each other's passcodes? Can you throw your phones on the table

and say check out whatever you want?" Can I ask for his phone anytime? Can he ask for your phone?

Ideally, these are normal practices, not for the case of policing and becoming, you know, suspicious. It's not about that. It's about knowing one another, be unified in one another. And these are things that we might have to partake in, especially if trust has been destroyed.

**Ryan:** I would contend even it's not so much about the test itself or the practice itself. It's about how does it make you feel when we propose this to you, that you should let your spouse go through anything and everything on your phone? How does that make you feel?

Whatever that little zing was in your guts, that's a neon sign pointing to an area of your heart that is obscured to your spouse, it's obscured perhaps even to you, and that you think maybe you've made light of something that shouldn't be made light of. And it's been hardened to the sanctification and the softness of the Holy Spirit would provide.

**Selena:** [inaudible 00:07:13] Yeah.

**Ryan:** The beauty of being able to be exposed in that way is that you can actually... there's greater joy. There's greater freedom. This is what Christ said. It's for freedom. "I set you free." Like, how can we expect to be free if we're not walking in the freedom that Christ has given us? You know, because it's possible to profess the name of Christ, but yet to refuse to walk in His name. That was what the rich young ruler did. "Lord, Lord, tell me what to do." He said, "Do this." "I can't do that. Sorry." That's effectively what we do with these types of issues.

So that was the first one. His... Her phone was locked, excuse me. And he said, "This is not the first time but it's the second time."

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** And then all they wanted was sex. So what's the pattern that's emerging from these? And it led us to ask this question, and maybe you ask it later on. But what in her heart is going on that she's seeking validation in these ways?

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Now, she's never acted on it. That's one thing. But why is she entertaining-

**Selena:** The affections of another man? Yeah. Have you seen a pattern? Is there a root or a deeper issue? Is intimacy an issue in their marriage? You know, if you've experienced something like this, was intimacy... did the lack of intimacy play into what actually happened? Or is there a deeper issue here?

**Ryan:** Yeah. So as a husband, I would probably be reeling from the offense. And then by God's grace, I would hope and that's what I encourage you to do, Aaron, in this situation is turn and now think, "Okay, what led to this?"

Again, I'm not trying to blame. "What could I have done to contribute to whatever that need was?" And or what is happening in my wife's heart that she feels the need for that and then feels that this is the place to get validation, to fill that need? And it's hard to do when you're hurting. So you kind of have to step back, let the bleeding stop a little bit, let some of the healing begin, and then begin to pray through and think through some of these questions.

**Selena:** Well, and one thing that wasn't kind of answered in this email and, you know, he could speak for her was when he confronted her, he said he confronted her, was she remorseful and repentant? What was her response when she was confronted? I mean, clearly, they're still together and he forgave her, and they took those steps. But if he's still feeling this, he's still seeing these patterns, has she repented of that? You know, has the offender kind of come with this remorseful, repentant spirit? Because if not, then I think that's another red flag or something to talk about and something to consider.

**Ryan:** And you can't make someone's hearts off toward that.

**Selena:** No

**Ryan:** Like if they're not genuinely repentance upon being caught [00:10:00] or upon realizing the gravity of the thing they've done, no amount of "you should feel bad" will make them feel bad. In reality, they need the Holy Spirit to bring to light, I guess, the depth of that sin and the depth of the need for that forgiveness both from your savior, which you have, if you pray this in Christ, but also from your spouse, which comes through asking and receiving that forgiveness.

**Selena:** Right. He said, "I wanted to leave..." He wanted to just quit, right? He wanted to just let it go but he took a walk, he came back, he forgave her, and took care of her. I mean-

**Ryan:** Bravo. Bravo.

**Selena:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Ryan:** Well done.

**Selena:** I mean, he could have called it quits, right? We all have that opportunity in a moment where you're just crushed, and everything that you thought your spouse was, or anything, you know... all of the things that you believe come crumbling down. And he could have walked away. He could have said, "I'm done, and I don't want to deal with this anymore." But he didn't, right? He did not do that.

**Ryan:** I want to tweak that a little bit because yeah, he... I don't think biblically he had a reason to walk away. So pause for a minute because I want to push back a little bit on what you said. I don't think you were saying this, but he wanted to walk away and you said that he could have walked away. But biblically speaking, he did not have that freedom to walk away.

**Selena:** No, biblically speaking, he should not have.

**Ryan:** And he didn't.

**Selena:** He didn't.

**Ryan:** Like we're not saying that he was justified at that moment to just peace out and say, "Hey, take care of yourself in the hospital. Good luck. So long."

**Selena:** Most people would though I feel like.

**Ryan:** I don't know that most people would. I think they may have not turned around and forgiven quite as quickly.

**Selena:** Yeah, I agree.

**Ryan:** And praise God for that. He forgave her. But I just want to be clear that texting in this manner is a betrayal. It's not a biblical reason to seek a divorce or to abandon your marriage.

**Selena:** Yes. I must have said that a little too quickly. It's not what I meant.

**Ryan:** It's all right. So here's the thing, and we talked about this last week. Forgiveness can be instantiated, can be actuated without feeling the effects of the forgiveness yet. And so part of what I hear Aaron struggling with is that, "I've forgiven her but I don't trust her. And I want to be close to her, but it's hard. How do we move forward?"

And I think my encouragement here is, you are moving forward. This is what moving forward looks like. This is what you've forgiven your wife, you've begun to move past this betrayal. It's just a process. It just takes time. And I would encourage you to continue on that process and don't let yourself become discouraged. And continue to set up boundaries that are healthy.

**Selena:** Yeah. And we'll get into that a little bit more.

**Ryan:** Continue to-

**Selena:** Just face it.

**Ryan:** Ask your wife to rebuild trust.

**Selena:** Yes, absolutely. We don't have to be afraid. One of the next things he said is he said, "I'm gonna block his number. Let's do what it takes to get back on track." And I think that's awesome. Cutting off the sin, like getting rid of whatever is coming between them.

But what does it mean to get back on track? Did you have a conversation? Or have you, not just Aaron, but if somebody in this situation, have you had a conversation with your spouse about what it looks like to be back on track? Not just not texting someone of the opposite sex naughty texts, but what's the offense here? Right? Not just, "Okay, I'm just not going to do this." But what are you going to do? What are you working for and wanting?

Did you both get help? Have you gone to a counselor or a pastor or a guide couple, as we call them, like a mentor, a couple that knows you? Are you being known in these hard situations? Because you shouldn't navigate them alone. I think when you isolate yourselves is when the real attacks can begin to happen and in your heart and in your mind.

So again, are you in agreement? And did you define what it means to get back on track, to reconcile, to come back together, and recommit yourselves? Because clearly, the next part is you're still struggling with trust and fear. Right?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** So what do you do in these instances? What can you do?

**Ryan:** I mean, aside from what we've already said, I'm just thinking of the Israelites in the desert and how quickly they were to forget all that God had done. And the solution to not forgetting was to keep the right things in front of them.

**Selena:** Yes, yeah.

**Ryan:** Deuteronomy 6. Like teach your children as you come in, as you go like so that it's constantly in front of you. Don't forget. And so I think maybe that's a huge component to this is not just remembering all the right accountabilities, all the right things, but don't forget the God you serve and don't forget the promises that He has given you.

In Christ, yes, the promise is to endure, the promise is for joy in this situation that lacks joy, a promise promised to have hope in Him that is eternal, even though the situation isn't currently hopeful. You have those promises.  
[00:15:00]

But you also have the promises of a life, that as you conform yourselves, plural, both you and your wife to the Word of God, there is a flourishing that happens. We're not talking about prosperity gospel. We're not talking about that. We're talking about there is a way about the universe that when we fall in line with our role as the created beings who are designed to glorify God, there is a human flourishing that happens that is not able to happen outside of that obedience.

That's a promise you hold on to. So just like the Israelites in the desert, you hold on to the promise of the law, you hold on to the commands of God, trusting that He is good. And so what that does is that it lifts our eyes beyond the current suffering, the current circumstance, the current monotony of the Mana every day, day in and day out. Instead, it lifts our eyes to the goodness of God and the faithfulness of God into the future that may or may not be within our grasp. But the hope is within our grasp, and that's what we cling to.

**Selena:** That's right. Okay, so two more sections here we're just going to run through quickly is how do I move forward? How do I let God move my heart to fully trust and forgive her? Sorry, I've reworded that wrong. How do I let God move my heart to fully forgiving her and trusting her again?

**Ryan:** Okay.

**Selena:** I think, again, the first thing I would say is rebuilding trust, it takes both of you, it takes the repentance, it takes the agreement, the acknowledgment of the sin, and the brokenness of trust. And not doing that alone and in a vacuum. Doing that with a pastor, a Christian community. Being known in those situations.



**Ryan:** This may or may not land well. I think you may need to lift your eyes to and live for something bigger than yourselves. And you go through the hurt, you go through the pain, but... now these types of things can happen to all manner of couples. But it seems to me there's a pattern of it happening with couples that are maybe less focused on the kingdom-mindedness of being on mission as a couple.

**Selena:** Sure.

**Ryan:** Now, of course, it can be one guy who's passionate and is maybe a pastor or does ministry somehow and the wife is just kind of a tag-along. Or vice versa. The wife could be the passionate one, and she's on ministry and on mission, and he's just kind of the breadwinner, or whatever the role is.

But I would say, together find unity around the call you have in Christ as those commissioned into the cause of Christ, those commissioned to share the gospel and do the work of building Christ's Church. Like lift your eyes. Put your hands on the plow. Be about a business that's bigger than yourselves, bigger than whatever the next step in life is, bigger than whatever the next financial decision is, bigger than whatever this situation is.

Because that has a way of... as you unify around the same end goal, you end up walking side by side and you're headed toward the same horizon. That has an uncanny way of allowing the relationship to actually progress because... C. S. Lewis talks about this. He's like, If you just have a friend who's just all about the friendship, that will never be a true friendship, despite what that person always wants it to be. It has to be about something bigger than the both of you. That's when true friendship begins. He talks about brothers in arms in the trenches of war, he talks about people walking alongside each other in missional aspects like these. It's always got to be about something bigger than you, otherwise, it will never be anything you want it to be.

**Selena:** Absolutely. I think of ways that... how do you be a person that is bigger than you, right? Being in your Bible together, praying together, seeking, again, the will of the Lord, the mission. What is God calling you to? It is... I mean... What is that saying? When you're bored or idle hands...

**Ryan:** Idle hands are the devil's playground or something like that. *[chuckles]*

**Selena:** Right. And again we're not accusing here. We're just trying to propose some other circumstances that might be contributing to, you know, the why. Why did this happen? Put boundaries in place, which might be a part of this next section of how do we rebuild our marriage, how do we recommit ourselves to each other?

Obviously, boundaries in place are good, not from a spirit of policing one another, but out of a spirit of lovingly checking in. Again, living for that bigger purpose of preserving our covenant, unifying our hearts and living in a deeper oneness that's unshaken, right? You can't do it on your own either, which we're all about that. You just can't battle on your own.

**Ryan:** Love hopes all things, 1 Corinthians 13. That's one of the overlooked aspects of love. Everybody knows it's patient and kind. But what does it mean that love hopes all things? I'm actually hoping and expecting for the best in you, I'm hoping expecting the best in us because we have [00:20:00] the best sort of love in Christ.

So in addition, again, to everything that we've said how do we rebuild our marriage, the encouragement is you are. You are rebuilding your marriage. Just keep at it. Keep going. Burn the ships, so to speak.

Last week, we talked about prenuptial agreements. And a few weeks back or maybe many weeks back, we talked about burning the ships. Like this is it. You're building it. Now just put your hand on that plow together. Talk, talk, talk a lot about, you know, How are we doing? Where can we improve? You know, without being navel-gazers, okay? Because you can get so wrapped up in ourselves, we don't even look out.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But ask yourselves, maybe set, you know, weekly time. "How are we doing? How do you feel? How do you feel loved by me? How can I love you better? What can I do to make our marriage what it needs to be?" And hopefully by God's grace, your hearts will be open to whatever those suggestions are. And you will also be led by the Holy Spirit in seeking and desiring the right things.

**Selena:** Amen.

**Ryan:** So, Selena said this: we don't do it on our own. It's because we need the help of the Holy Spirit. But we don't have the Holy Spirit until we are regenerated in Christ. And we don't have Christ until we place our faith in Him because He is the God-man who came, lived a perfect life, died the sinner's death, didn't stay dead, rose again so that we might rise again with him in the last day.

When we place our faith in Christ, He tells us, He says, "My peace I give you, my peace I leave with you, not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." That's John 14. He doesn't give as the world gifts. So if we want to experience something that's otherworldly, to

be able to love one another in an otherworldly fashion, we need Christ. That's what you mean by "we don't do it alone." We need the Holy Spirit.

So we want to invite you into that. If you don't know Jesus, or at least you thought you did or maybe you think maybe you didn't, let me tell you, the water is great. Come on in. We'd love to call your brother or sister in Christ. Go to this website. [Thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com). And there's details there.

Let's pray. Father God, thank you for the honesty of this man. I pray for them as they go through this trial. They're likely already months into it. Lord, I pray that you continue to strengthen them, give them endurance. Lord, I pray that they would see your grace in their lives and it would enliven in them a love for one another that is otherworldly.

Lord, help them to make the right moves. Help them not to stumble on this journey. Deliver them from evil, keep them from temptation. Yours is the kingdom. May yours be the kingdom again in their life. Lord Jesus, in Your name. Amen.

**Selena:** Amen.

**Ryan:** All right, if you're listening, watching this far, chances are you've enjoyed this content. Well, you have an opportunity to be a part of it. Let me tell you... *[laughs]* I'm just kidding. We wouldn't be here if it weren't for our awesome partners, our patrons. So if you want to be a part of that tiny community... Actually, it's growing. I think there's 400 or so.

**Selena:** It's a wonderful community, no matter the size. *[chuckles]*

**Ryan:** We love you, patrons. Thank you for what you've done. If you want to partner with us, go to [fiercemarriage.com/partner](http://fiercemarriage.com/partner). We would be honored and blessed by that. Either way, we're going to continue making this content as long as the good Lord allows it.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** So yeah, this episode of Fierce Marriage is—

**Selena:** In the can.

**Ryan:** We'll see you again in seven days. Until next time—

**Selena:** Stay fierce.

**PODCAST NOTES**

- **Referenced scripture**
  - John 14
  
- **Recommended resource**
  - [thenewsisgood.com](https://www.thenewsisgood.com)

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