

HOW TO WRITE A FAMILY VISION STATEMENT

<https://fiercemarriage.com/how-to-write-a-family-vision-statement>

[00:00:00]

Ryan: Greetings and welcome, Fierce Families. This is a rare... Well, not so rare these days. We had a mash-up last week.

Selena: Last week. *[laughs]*

Ryan: Now it's another mash-up. But here's another thing. It's the 300th Fierce Marriage episode.

Selena: Wow.

Ryan: It's also the beginning of a new year, although this content is timely. So if you're listening at another time of the year, you can still listen to it now. *[Selena laughs]* But today we're going to continue where we left off last week.

We talked about the importance of being a family on mission, including as a married couple, as parents, what that means to be riding the ship and moving in the right direction, instead of just kind of passively drifting down the stream when we're family's on mission, why that's so important and what that means.

Today we're going to walk through how to put that to work, that knowledge to work tangibly through something that we created a few years ago called The Family Vision statement, which includes a mission statement, includes core values, and includes a vision statements, mini envision statements.

We're gonna walk through each one of those, we're gonna give you an eBook to go through if you want to do that with your family. And we can't wait. This is one of my favorite things to talk about. So let's get to it. We'll see you on the other side.

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Ryan: Selena, I remember a crucial moment in our lives. There's been many of these.

Selena: Like which one? *[laughs]*

Ryan: There have been many. But we were at a crossroads. What had happened is we had had our first daughter, we had just moved back home. We had been away for five years. We lived over 1,000 miles away and we were moving back home and I was doing web development, like from my little laptop, serving

clients as you can as a web developer, serving clients really all over the world. We run hinged I'll say. We run tethered, not run hinged. We run tethered.

Selena: Very hinged. *[laughs]*

Ryan: We didn't know what in the world we were going to do because we could have moved back, we could have stayed home. We were temporarily staying somewhere. We had no idea where we were gonna end up. We had all of our stuff jammed into this short 1995 U-Haul truck that I had gotten pennies on the dollar.

Selena: We had our two dogs, the truck, Prius, the bikes. *[Ryan laughs]* Like this train of stuff of our lives. I took our six-month-old on an airplane flight back up from Southern California to Washington. And-

Ryan: We had no idea what we were gonna do because we could literally live and work anywhere or so we thought.

Selena: We had options. Yes, we had options.

Ryan: And that's the key. We thought we had all these options when in reality we didn't. We didn't have any way of-

Selena: How do we filter through that? How do we distill down what the Lord wants from us? Many of you may find yourselves at that. I don't know, I felt like before knowing what a family vision statement was, before knowing what it meant to live on mission as a married couple or a family, we were just trying to grab onto any sort of tool that would give us some direction or some sort of sense of affirmation of "Yes, this is it. Yes." Or "no, this is not it."

So we spent money on plane rides to visit churches in Texas to see if this is where the Lord wants us. We lived with family for months at a time just trying to figure out where are we supposed to land, Lord? We have a family now and we really can't just go anywhere. We could technically but we don't want to.

Ryan: Now many couples might be thinking, "That's not a bad problem to have." Well, I'm telling you, it's not unique to us. Now, given that I was a web developer, geographic lack of constraint was unique. But many couples live as if their options are relatively limitless.

Now, no couple is gonna say, "I'm gonna go be a Saudi Prince," right? Nobody is gonna say that. But they might say, "Yeah, I could go into job doing this." They kind of just think in nebulous terms and all while drifting down life's stream, life's river, and not living on mission.

So we want to walk you through today kind of a culmination of last week's conversation. Based on that conviction and that realization that we are called to live as a family, not just as a man and as a wife living separately on our own missions, but as a family unit living out this great commission, living out the cultural mandate, with that conviction in hand, we started really wrestling with this.

And the way that looks, we were in this situation and I basically started spending hours and hours a week thinking through. I didn't even know I was doing this because I wanted to present to you... Because we were really racking our brains, what are you gonna do? So I wanted to present to you kind of a way for us to think through this that was rooted in Christ, that was biblically informed and biblically driven. And then we could actually concretely-

Selena: Not as tangible.

Ryan: ...think through.

Selena: Yeah, we could actually check things off the list.

Ryan: So if you had to say it, Selena, what is a family vision statement exactly?

Selena: It is a written document that describes what matters the most to your family.
[00:05:01]

Ryan: It's a rallying point.

Selena: It really is. It's a rallying point. The bigger picture is that it is your family's battle cry. It's distilled. It's ideas that are distilled down that unify your family, again, around God's purpose, around living in the light, around being an obedient, faithful follower of Christ in the world that we're living in today.

Again, if we don't have something like this to filter through even good decisions, filter through good financial decisions. Are they on mission with where the Lord has been taking us? Yes or no? Why? Why not? These are questions that, again, they will pivot our ship one way. We're going somewhere. We're either drifting backwards, we're drifting apart, or we are paddling furiously, and teaching our kids how to paddle with us up the stream of the vision that God has for our family.

Ryan: So given that it's a written document, given that it's the rallying point, what are the granular parts? Meaning that, is it just a sentence? Is it just a paragraph? Is it a list of things of ideals?

And I'm gonna say, no, it's none of those things. The way we've concocted it... Now, this is all just coming out of our experience, out of our time that we've spent on it, yours might look different, but we're gonna give you hopefully some ideas here today, and walk you through the Frederick family vision statement. Because actually, specifically, someone did write in and ask that we do this, which is the reason I'm thinking about it and we're doing it. So thank you for that request by the way.

Selena: It's very timely. Thank you, Lord.

Ryan: So just very broadly speaking, we think a family mission statement should include your mission statement. Again, this is within, if you're a Christian, within the Great Commission. Like we don't get to say, "God's doing that but we're going to do this." No. Christians do what God asks us to do. But the mission statement for our family vision gets much more granular, which we'll show you today.

Core values. That's a tricky one. I think core values is probably the hardest one, and I'll explain why, or we'll explain why when we get there. And then my favorite part, the envision statements. And what the envision statements are it's kind of a "I envision this". At this moment in time in the future, I'm envisioning seeing a certain thing.

It's not about naming and claiming. It's about living soberly knowing that one day you're gonna be in a deathbed, what you want to see? One day you're going to be, you know, walking when... You know, if you have daughters, you're going to walk her down the aisle. What are you envisioning that is like? What kind of man is she going to marry? These sorts of things.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: We're gonna walk through ours. Do you have something you want to add before we do that?

Selena: No. I was just making sure we didn't miss anything. Again, we're gonna show you where to pick up this eBook, *Crafting Your Own Family vision*. Because it talks about what a family vision is not, it talks about what it is, why you need it, which we've kind of danced around some of these principles, and how it is sort of a living document.

Sometimes it's ever-changing—you're going through different seasons of life. Again, as a believer, though, your purpose and your mission is under the Great Commission, and following Christ, being a light. So let's just walk through ours. It consists like what you said, have three main things: mission, core values, and envision statements. Again, these can be revisited every year, every couple months-

Ryan: I rewrote it coming into this because I'm like, "I haven't updated it in a while."
[Selena chuckles]

Selena: It's been a while.

Ryan: Some of that stuff I think you're gonna see for the first time here today-

Selena: Yeah, which is great.

Ryan: But we've already talked about it and I'm just ratifying it. I'm articulating it in terms that I know that you already agree with. So broadly speaking, the Frederick family vision statement includes our broad mission, which is, like I said, broad. It's this: To know God and to make Him known. To know God and to make Him known.

In other words, we want to be able to mine the truths of God, to identify the character of God, to grab a hold of Him. Really He grabs us. We can never grab a hold of God.

Selena: To know Him.

Ryan: But to know Him and understand His character, to know His law, to know His words, to want Him. And then in turn, to obey Him—maybe that should be in here—but then to make Him known. So to take that knowledge that we get about who God is and that experience of knowing Him and give that to others.

Now, that's very broad. Frankly, it's too broad, which is why we've broken it down into more specific statements. In other words, we know God and make Him known by five things. This just gives you ideas. In the family vision book, it kind of goes through the anatomy of a good mission statement.

Selena: Right. Sort of it'll give you kind of prompts-

Ryan: You don't wanna be too generally. You don't wanna be so granular that, you know, you can't even get it out. But you want it to be inspirational and all these sorts of things. So we're gonna share ours. We know God and make Him known by one,—we can maybe alternate on these—

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: ...being dedicated students of the Bible.

Selena: Right. And how do you break that down? I mean, in our day-to-day rhythms, every day we're reading scripture with our children, and every day we are reading or striving to read, go through a Bible plan every year. So Going through our Bible, [00:10:00] being in it daily, not simply a study of a certain book, although those are great. I would push a Bible reading plan and feasting on the word daily.

Ryan: This realization is how I justify spending the time and money on a seminary. Some of you know this. I'm going part-time, like a class at a time, chipping away. And it's a huge commitment. It takes a lot of time. Selena knows there's a lot of nights I'm up late reading or studying. And it costs money, more money than I want to pay. But because I want to learn this... You don't have to go to seminary to know the word. You can learn it by reading it.

Selena: We've been entrusted with-

Ryan: But the vision statement helped articulate that that is something that we value. Now, if we truly value it, then we are willing to put our money and our time where our mouth is. Not to say we do that perfectly everywhere. But let's go through these first, then we can talk through him granularly. So to know God and make Him known by being dedicated students of the Bible. What's the second one?

Selena: By giving our children a Christocentric education. So Christ-centered education.

Ryan: Number three, by crafting Christ-exalting resources to edify His bride, in other words, the church. Number four.

Selena: Engaging deeply in our local church community.

Ryan: Number five, by building businesses that honor God through wise stewardship and integrity. So what you're getting into is the nuts and bolts of how we know God and how we make Him known. So how do we know God? By being students of the Bible. How do our children know God? Well, we're giving them a Christocentric education.

Selena: A Christ-centered education.

Ryan: What I mean by that is, I will die on this hill. I will die on this hill. You need to give your kids a Christocentric education. Now, how you go about doing that is up to you. It's up to you. You can help educate, you can send them to a school that gives them a Christocentric education.

Unfortunately—and we've gone through this, so we did a whole series on government schools—that's not happening in government schools. It will never happen in government schools. So do with that what you will. You can put one and two together.

And then the other option is Christian school. Well, some Christian schools aren't Christocentric. So we question that. We're gonna leave that there. We have a whole series on that. You can go find that on fierceparenting.com.

The next one is crafting Christ-exalting resources to edify His bride or the church. Now it's what we're doing great right now.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: We write books. We've written seven books. So far, we have two more releasing very quickly. And Lord willing, more after that. That's how that flushes itself out. Engaging deeply in our local church community.

Selena: This I think is a newer one for us because we've just kind of found a church. So we've been getting to know-

Ryan: We had a home church for a while, and we were engaged very deeply in that. *[laughs]*

Selena: Sorry. Well, yes, sorry. *[chuckles]* I'm just looking ahead the season that we're in. Because I wouldn't say that we're engaged deeply in our local church. I think that we are connecting and building relationships.

Ryan: I heartily disagree.

Selena: Doing the word to deeply connect-

Ryan: I'm sorry. I heartily disagree because we just had like 13 adults and 21 children in our house, and they're part of our church community. They don't go to the same church with us.

Selena: They don't go to the same church.

Ryan: But they're very much part of our church community.

- Selena:** Tomato, tomato. Okay? *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** Well, it's the same. We are deeply engaged. *[laughs]*
- Selena:** Yes. But in this new church that we found, we are not deeply engaged. We go on Sundays. We've been connecting with other families.
- Ryan:** I disagree. We've been to almost every event. What else is there to do?
- Selena:** There's been plenty of events we have been to.
- Ryan:** We need to build relationships. I'll give you that.
- Selena:** Okay. Number five. *[Ryan laughs]*
- Ryan:** Building businesses that honor God through wise stewardship and integrity. And I say businesses because we do have Fierce Marriage, but also since we publish our own books, that's adding the plural to the business side of things. But our hope there is not just to get more wealth. The hope is to steward it well unto the glory of God and do so with integrity.
- If you're ever been a customer of ours, you need to know this, if you bought a book from us, you bought rings from us, you have anything our policy is simply this: always default to generosity. Meaning that if you have an issue with your order, we want to make it right as soon as possible, as generously as we possibly can. Now, we can't give away the farm but that's one of the governing principles on our team is always be as generous as you possibly can. And that's driven by this idea that we want to steward with integrity.
- Selena:** So I think just-
- Ryan:** So go buy our books.
- Selena:** ...some broad strokes here. The first one, like so just being in the Word of God, knowing God's word. That's really going to set the stage for making more wise decisions and then discipling your children in knowing God's word and educating them in that.
- And then, what is your industry? What is economy of your home? What do you do? Like, if the mom stays home and the dad works, how are you building, [00:15:00] I don't want to say resources, but how are you building a place that can edify the church? Like are you being hospitable? Are you opening your

doors to people from your community, your church community? I guess things just get people to think not just what we do.

Ryan: Yes. I want to step down off. If we're on an ivory tower, *[both laughs]* I want to step down off whatever that-

Selena: Chap chap.

Ryan: We're not trying to say, "Hey, look at our example. Do like we do." We're saying, these are hopefully gonna give you ideas to stare at each other in the face and ask hard questions. "What is our mission? How do we fulfill it? What is God calling us to? What does His Word say? You don't need to do like the Fredericks do, like the Fredericks do. That's not the point of this. I wanna make that clear.

Selena: Not everybody wants or is called to be a business entrepreneur or anything like that.

Ryan: Yeah, it's not.

Selena: Be a faithful worker.

Ryan: Be a craftsman.

Selena: Be a craftsman. Be a faithful worker. Be a loving and leading head of your household as a husband. And be as a submissive, respectful and loving wife.

Ryan: I'm glad you said those. *[chuckles]* That's good.

Selena: But you understand the depth and perfect purpose and beauty and perfection that, again, if you're in God's word and you know His word, and you see that these are not just... It's not a power struggle. This is not a power struggle or control for a role. It is the purpose of God being lived out daily. Moving on, we will-

Ryan: You're stunning when you talk about God's-

Selena: We're never going to get through this if we don't... *[laughs]*

Ryan: I'm sorry. Okay, what is all this even based in? Our family... Maybe should have been... It used to be the top and then I edited the document.

Selena: How dare you move God's word down? *[chuckles]*

- Ryan:** Well, it was a mistake.
- Selena:** I know you would have started with this.
- Ryan:** Our family verse, it's all over in our household, I'll say.
- Selena:** But it was your verse when you were like a teenager.
- Ryan:** No, it came out of this process.
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** Galatians 2:20 was my teenager verse.
- Selena:** *[whispering]* I'm sorry.
- Ryan:** "I've been crucified with Christ." A very hardcore. "Not I longer live, but Christ lives in me." This is Acts 20:24 and goes like this, "I do not account my life of any value, nor is precious to myself." Pause. How countercultural is that for Paul to say that, and now for us to read those words and to be able to echo as Christians? Yeah, it's not valuable unto myself, it's not precious to myself. But this, the verse continues, "If only I finish my course and the ministry that I received..." Pause again. My course, the ministry I received. It's not for you to finish someone else's course or the ministry they received for you to copy them and try to-
- Selena:** We're not all called to be Paul. We're all not called to be Ryan and Selena. You are called to be you. You are called to live out your purpose, your mission, your life that Jesus has called new ministry.
- Ryan:** We like to call that staying in your lane. And that's a beautiful thing. Do the thing you're called to do.
- Selena:** Do the thing.
- Ryan:** Do it well, and just stay focused.
- Selena:** Do it unto the glory of God.
- Ryan:** And plot away and do your best at that in the grace of God. The verse continues. "...the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus..." and this is the crux of it all, literally, cross. "...to testify to the gospel of the grace of God."

And so whatever that course is, whatever that ministry is, the underlying, the bedrock of that can and should be this overarching mission. We read about, last week, the Great Commission, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: So that's the mission side of it. If you were to take this analogy, we used it last time, we'll continue with it, of a family is like a toy boat, if you will, [*Selena laughs*] or some sort of vessel floating down the river. This mission side helps us to point this vessel in the right direction, say, "Okay, we aren't just going to float passively. We're going to point intentionally toward whatever the mission God has given us, within the grand mission of the Great Commission. And now we're going to move forward." And the mission governs that.

Let's do the core values first and then we'll get down to brass tacks because this does illustrate it. So what are core values? I said this is the most challenging part. The reason I said that is because oftentimes, core values, as we write down in instances like these, they are little more than wishful thinking. We will write down a word and say, "We want to be that word." Faith or community, family. Like we want to be that word.

Selena: So you're saying what the difference is.

Ryan: I'm arguing that core values is something far more primal than that and more ingrained than that. It's not something that we read into our lives. It's something that we mine out of our lives, and understand, how has God wired us?

Selena: Okay.

Ryan: So one of them that we had for a while and it's actually been bumped off the list, I try to keep it to five or less. [*both chuckles*] And I do recommend keeping it to fewer. But one of them that was on there was freedom. And for a long time, that was a core value that we had. And what I meant by freedom is that we wanted the ability to move quickly and with little inertia. So that's why I was a web developer. [00:20:00]

This was before we had a family mission statement. Because I had this something in my guts that said, I would love to be able to kind of... The world is your oyster. If I could just learn how to write code, took the time, the energy, the years it took to learn that, I can learn how to design, I could theoretically—and we did live it out. The results were varying—

- Selena:** It wasn't what we got. *[both laughs]*
- Ryan:** We were very much hand to mouth. But now I get to use those skills for our ministry. So God is sovereign in that.
- Selena:** Always. Always.
- Ryan:** But the point is, is that that was an extremely important thing to us. And it was baked into our very kind of nature at that season of our lives. Now, as we've grown, as we've had more children, and as we've changed-
- Selena:** There's no more freedom, guys. *[chuckles]* I'm just kidding.
- Ryan:** We've realized that, yeah, that's just not as important. We really want to hunker down. We don't care about going on a sporadic trip or moving suddenly. The other things have overwritten that. What's overwritten that is community and family. Those are kind of intertwined.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Let's just read through our core values here. As we're reading through them, listener, viewer, I encourage you to think through what are the intrinsic values that you hold as a family. And maybe you share some with us, maybe you have some that are your own. This is going to be the hardest thing that you do. It takes a lot of time. This took me two months to come up with this. Now maybe I'm slow. I don't know.
- Selena:** So the first one is stewardship. Second one is community. Third one is big faith. Fourth is family. And fifth is fruitfulness. So quickly, because I think we are pushing it here, but stewardship. We own nothing. We are stewards of all God entrusted to our care. We live with open hands. Our life is a river, not a reservoir.
- Ryan:** We don't account our life has any value and precious to itself. In other words, we are just stewards of whatever God places in our hands, and we will take it, steward it, and then when He takes it back, it says. Community.
- Selena:** This is so good.
- Ryan:** The subtext here is we are designed for community. Quality relationships matter. We invest real time into real relationships with real transparency.
- Selena:** Right. Again, Christ-centered, real community, real relationships that matter. I don't know that we understood what that meant for a long time in our lives.

I think we did have some community but it was because the church said we had to have community, and so we had a community group. I'm saying before kids and stuff. I don't know. It just felt much more discombobulated as if it was like another part of our lives. It wasn't central to how we operate as in day-to-day.

Ryan: I mean, we had friends-

Selena: It's all disconnected, I guess.

Ryan: We spent real time in real relationships. Problem is we had no real transparency in those communities.

Selena: There it is. Well said. *[chuckles]*

Ryan: God has brought us on this journey of understanding that you need all those things to have authentic community.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: So how this is born it's weighed in our lives... We have two acres here where we're at a tiny little farm. Like half of it is forested so it's little. But we've always wanted to have land. Selena *[inaudible 00:23:05]* in horses. She want to do horses. We don't have horses now. *[Selena laughs]* Because that's not in our core value. *[laughs]* That's actually part of our family.

Selena: Not yet. *[laughs]*

Ryan: Interesting. But we would have loved to move out into the boonies and get 20 acres like many of you do, I know, many of our listeners and viewers, but we just could not do it because we valued community. We knew that if we lived 45 minutes out of town that it might be sustainable to do that for a season but we are not wired to be driving an hour and a half on a weeknight to go have church community or to go see family.

Selena: I think that some people and some seasons of life that it's okay. But again, you have to filter through what the Lord is calling you to and filter through, you know, why do you value that? Again, we encourage you in the last episode to question everything. Why do you value living that far out? Why do you value... And then the next question is, how would you value community in those instances?

Ryan: A family might be called to be pioneers in that place.

- Selena:** In ministry. Absolutely.
- Ryan:** And that's a communion with the Lord.
- Selena:** Number three, big faith. We fear God. He is God, we are not. So we obey God obediently and trust Him. We obey God obediently. *[chuckles]* We are obedient. Yes, we obey God and trust Him to be God even when He asks us to do difficult things. We expect much from our good God.
- Ryan:** That's how much we obey God is we obey Him obediently.
- Selena:** Obediently. *[laughs]*
- Ryan:** It's part of redundancy department. *[laughs]*
- Selena:** Well, what is this the doctrine of man and the doctrine of God? Like, this is who I am, this is who I'm not; this is who He is, this is who... We are not Him. There's a lot that goes with that when you distill that down.
- Ryan:** We start with we fear God. And what we mean by that is that we... [00:25:00] The core value is big faith. In other words, we are striving... Now we do this in varying degrees of success. We're striving to do the work that He's put in our hands to do, trusting Him in big ways, taking big risks.
- Selena:** Because we understand-
- Ryan:** Because we believe... Now we're not taking foolish risks, but we're striving to take faith-filled risks.
- Selena:** Yeah, because we understand who He is. We fear Him with a holy fear. We understand that He is the same God in the Old Testament as He is in the New Testament.
- Ryan:** Well, and fear to me-
- Selena:** The reverence.
- Ryan:** Fear is the beginning of wisdom. Fearing the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It's seeing God as God and you as not God. And so yeah, there's a very real fear component that He could, at any moment, pull the God card *[Selena laughs]* and decimate everything. But He doesn't because He's good. And that's, again, knowing that He's our good God.

The next one is family. Very quickly. And this just flushes itself out in that we make each other a priority by giving our very best time, energy, and resources to one another. And sometimes the best comes at the end of the day. *[Selena chuckles]* It doesn't always come easy. One of my personal resolutions, I resolve daily to embrace our children intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and in play every day.

Selena: It's good for you. *[both laughs]* Look at those As. I am learning to just try to connect with each one of the children a little bit, have a time on their own, and to see them for who they are, and not just the responsibilities that they bring along with them.

Ryan: The last one is fruitfulness, then we'll get into the envision statements. But fruitfulness means this, is basically that life is short. Some of you know our story. I almost died early on in our marriage, the second year of marriage. So I feel like I'm on borrowed time all the time.

Selena: I hate when you say that.

Ryan: I know she hates it. I honestly don't fear death, but I'll just live as hard as I can while I'm here. Life is short. We want to do work that creates eternal fruit. This means that we gladly forego earthly fruit unnecessary. And we expect fruitfulness to follow faithfulness, either in this life or the next. So fruitfulness to follow faithfulness.

So the impetus for us there is to be faithful in fruitful things. So what are fruitful things? Well, raising our kids up in the way they should go and training them in the Lord and sharing the gospel and reading the word. It ends up being a filter for things like... I'll just say this to just be transparent. I don't know how transparent I could be on this.

Financially speaking, like doing this sort of work isn't lucrative. I'll say that. I will say that God has provided more than we need but it's not like we're sitting on some sort of retirement nest egg or whatever. We are very much trusting God daily with our work. You know, you don't always see the nitty-gritty of that. But we are very much trusting. And He has shown up for us time and time again. And how many times have I been stressed out and then the next day, I'm like on cloud nine because I've somehow realized or seen God come through?

Selena: Once again. *[laughs]*

Ryan: Once again.

- Selena:** He is so faithful.
- Ryan:** And then I'll just slap myself and say, "Why did you doubt?"
- Selena:** "Why did you think you were your own provider, your own sustainer?" Again, resting in the faithfulness and fruitfulness of God.
- Ryan:** Like I'm not gonna go get a high-paying job just because it pays well. Now, if God calls you to that, and that's what you do, so be it. But there's a willingness to forego the earthly fruitfulness for eternal fruitfulness.
- Selena:** These next pieces look really long to me.
- Ryan:** I know I'm losing my wife here.
- Selena:** You're talking about envision statements. What's the distinctive? What is an envision statement? Can you just define what that is? Because we go from this mission, this overall umbrella scripture that kind of says this is what we're about, this is the scripture that we are trying to live into fully, these are our core values because of this vision. Now, these envision statements, I've always been a little like, It feels like a lot of just sentences about things we like to do.
- Ryan:** To me, this is the part where it gets real before it is realized. That's the purpose of the envision statements is you envision a real scenario. That's how you like... I would say maybe if I'm using a corny way to put it, like putting on your faith goggles and saying, like, This is what I hope this will bring to bear.
- Now, we've broken it down in these different categories. We're not gonna do that here today. But you could do this for various categories. So I'm gonna share our vision for family. But I also have vision for career, I mean, the work that we do, and there's also a vision for our home, there's a vision for our giving, like, why and how we give.
- Selena:** Not just financially but of our-
- Ryan:** Of our time and the types of... So like, what is an organization willing to support financially? Well, they gotta be gospel-centered, they need to be faithful, they need to be fruitful, those sorts of things. We want to be on certain frontline issues. Anyway, that's the vision for giving.
- We also have a vision for the home. When we were looking to move, we didn't know... We're just like you're on Redfin or whatever, Zillow, whatever [00:30:00] your crack cocaine is [*Selena chuckles*] and you're looking around and you're like, "Ooh, ooh, pretty house. Ooh."

Selena: "Yeah, we can live here. I see this."

Ryan: But if you don't have that vision for what we're actually trying to build in the home, then you can forget and you just, you know, kind of fall for whatever it looks most attractive right then. So really quickly, because I'm losing my wife here. *[laughs]* Vision for family.

Selena: I will follow you faithfully. It might just be slower sometimes.

Ryan: You'll rush me. You'll rush me. It's okay.

Selena: 35 weeks, people. *[chuckling]* 35 weeks. It's all I'm saying.

Ryan: You're sitting very comfortably on that chair. Again, we're putting on our faith glasses, and we're looking what will this hopefully look like in X number of years. And so here we go. Our envision statements are meant to inspire and realign if ever we forget what it is we're fighting for.

So we envision a family that serves God wholeheartedly and measures our own worth by who He is and what He's done. So that's kind of more nebulous. It's not as specific. But the point is, is that we measure our worth by who He is and what He's done, not by who we are or what we've done.

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: He defines us.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: The next one is we envision a happy, healthy, humble household that cares deeply for each other, and those who enter our home.

Selena: Now, we're not striving and forcing our children to be happy and healthy all the time, right?

Ryan: Genuine happiness.

Selena: Yes. We were trying to cultivate in them the joy of the Lord. When things are not going well, when they're not feeling great about life, or whatever is getting them down, they can still see the goodness of God in those situations and respond appropriately. Again, it's training, it's discipleship. It's our training and discipleship.

- Ryan:** You can revise it to not say happy but-
- Selena:** You're welcome.
- Ryan:** ...instead, use the word joyful or even content. I think it'd be really good. Happy-
- Selena:** See guys, real life right here.
- Ryan:** You can revise it whenever you want. It's yours.
- Selena:** It's yours.
- Ryan:** They're your oats, right? Grow them where you want. *[both laughs]* So we envision an active family who goes on adventures together regularly and has, by God's grace, the means to do so. In other words, we want to live beneath our means in such a way that if we, you know, want to take a trip... We live close to the West Coast. And so one of our favorite things to do is to go and like find an Airbnb or a cheap hotel. Maybe not cheap. Maybe we're getting a little too old for the Motel 6s.
- Selena:** Too many kids for the Motel 6.
- Ryan:** Something very attractive from financial standpoint. But just to say, at the drop of a hat, let's go take a Friday off, and go Thursday night, Friday, Saturday, come back, let's gather with our church on a Sunday. But let's go do that. Let's not just sit around all the time. But with a baby on the way, we don't do that as much right now because—
- Selena:** ...of seasons and time. Again, this is something we value.
- Ryan:** You may not value that.
- Selena:** I mean, maybe you're active really during the week, and weekends are very much a part of your rest and that's your rhythms, you know, do that. So we envision a missional family who gives to others from the overflow in our hearts and lives or hospitality missions and finances.
- Ryan:** I want to skip a few and just-
- Selena:** Go for it.
- Ryan:** This one I like so I'm gonna share it. We envision a cultured family where each of our children understands that the world is a big place in need of a big God

and transformation through His gospel. That's one of the reasons we classically educate because it helps us... Am I right in that?

Selena: Yeah. I'm thinking of everything we do that. We study geography, and we study the world. Also, I've mentioned this a few times, but we watch this Christian news in 10 minutes. It's called A World Watch. We watch it every day. Well, Monday through Friday. And they touch on every major issue in the world. They will warn you, you know, "Hey, story two might be a little more harsh for young ears, so just beware." So they don't shy away from abortion. They don't shy away from politics, anything. And they take you around the world.

And I'm constantly being asked by our children... Our middle one is like, "Is this happening right now?" or "Did this happen in the past?" Because they will do historical timelines and pictures and help you understand the history behind maybe something they found.

But the other thing is that they show you videos from, again, different parts of the world where there is a hostile environment where women cannot be seen without headdress and they can only see their eyes. And my girls are asking, "Why do they have to dress like that? Why is this happening like this? Do they believe in God? Why don't they believe in God?" You know, they have all the questions around this. And so bringing that context as much as we can right now to them.

Ryan: You know, as they get older, yes, we want to be able to take them so they can experience some of these things in real life and in real-time. Here's the perfect example. Because right now, there's not really a good way for us to do that because of their age. But also it's very expensive. Traveling is not easy with all that... I mean, COVID is lifted mostly, but COVID shut all that down for two years.

So where does this leave us? We still envision that. [00:35:00] Now I'm thinking, as the father, as the primary breadwinner, as the co-strategist of this household, how can we begin? We talked about getting to know missionary family and going to support that family regularly so that our kids can have regular immersion of the mission that is not American.

Selena: Right. I will argue, though, I think locally there are a lot of, I think, places of culture that kids can be exposed to and see and understand and you know, whether it's... Again, it's not stepping into someone's life, but maybe it is, you know, going to a dance class. We looked at hula dancing as maybe silly as that sounds. But I'm half Hawaiian and I was like, "Well, this is part of their culture, and maybe they could learn something about this."

Ryan: I can't have my daughters moving their hips like that. *[both laughs]*

Selena: It's not all that.

Ryan: A lot of the arms too. *[both laughs]*

Selena: But also, yes, I mean, supporting a family that's a missionary family. We also know quite a few Slavic families as well. And so understanding, you know, what are some distinctives of their culture, and what do they value. And having conversations and eating dinner with them. There is so much here at our fingertips for the season that we're in. So hopefully, we're making that effort to live out that vision statement.

Ryan: So there you have it. Family vision statement, mission, core values, and then the envision statements, and whatever else you decide to pepper in there, whatever you decide to do to modify that. The whole point of this episode was to show you just one way of doing it, the way we've done it, the way we found that really works for us, to give you a tool, which I'll give you that URL in a minute.

But we pray that you take this and you run with it. If you do have a mission statement that's up here, it's in your head, you probably do, let's get that written down. Let's get that articulated. Pray over that. Talk about it with your spouse. Bring your kids in to the mission, so that they can participate and they can understand this is why we're doing this. It's not just because mommy and daddy like to do this, it's because it's what we are about. It's what we're busy about.

Selena: Yes, it really brings borders and it brings life and it brings boundaries so that the things of God can really thrive in your marriage, in your family, and ideally throughout your community as well.

Ryan: That's good. So if you want to find that we have an eBook. It's called... I think it's *Crafting Your Own Family Vision Statement*, is what it's called. It's available to you. If you're on the Fierce Marriage side, you're gonna try a new website. It's fierceparenting.com/vision. I created a quick URL that'll take you right to its download form. It's the only way we have right now set up to get it. [Fierceparenting.com/vision](https://fierceparenting.com/vision). We actually spend a lot of time on this. It's completely free. We hope that it blesses you. We hope you take us up on the offer.

Let's pray. Father God, thank You for the gift it is to have a mission. That we don't have a God who is silent, who is absent, who is not working, but you are

working. And you've called us into that work with You. Not only that, but Christ you're the general of our army, You are leading the charge, You are a war captain. And You are calling us off the bench into this great commission of loving others, of preaching the gospel, of being Your hands and feet here on this planet.

I pray for these families, these couples, these husbands, these wives. I pray that You would refresh in them a sense of what you're calling them to do in light of the Great Commission. Their unique local expression, whatever that looks like, I pray that they would have a very clear idea of what that is. Lead them as they write this down, as they walk through this process for them and for their family. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: I'd be remiss if I didn't mention it, but we are talking about all this. We have all this context because Christ is good, because God has saved us. And you know what that means? It's basically this: that we're sinners, that we stand before a God who is real, who is perfect. He is what... the word we use is He's holy. We are not perfect, and we have offended Him. We have sinned against Him. He has given us a way to live and we have not lived that way. And without His help, we would be damned.

But with Christ, He sent His own son—this is a gospel in a nutshell—into Earth. That's what Christmas is all about. And He came into Earth as flesh. He lived a perfect life and He died. That's what Easter is all about. He died so that sinners can be saved by His perfect life, by His death and brought into His perfect life through His resurrection.

So we want to call you into that. If you're not a Christian. We want to invite you to follow Christ. If you want to take a step down that path, go to thenewsisgood.com. We would love to meet you someday. If not here, then in glory as a brother or sister in Christ.

With that said this episode of Fierce Marriage/Fierce Parenting mash-up, first episode of the year [*Selena laughs*] is—

Selena: In the can.

Ryan: [*laughing*] See you again in seven days. Until next time—

Selena: Stay fierce.

PODCAST NOTES

- **Referenced scripture**
 - Acts 20:24

- **Recommended resource**
 - thenewsisgood.com
 - [Crafting Your Own Family Vision Statement](#)

FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

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