

## WHAT IF I WANT KIDS BUT MY SPOUSE DOESN'T?

<https://fiercemarriage.com/what-if-i-want-kids-but-my-spouse-doesnt>

[00:00:00]

**Selena:** So what happens if you get married and you get like a bait and switch on something big like having kids? What do you do about that?

**Ryan:** That's a good question.

**Selena:** What do you do about that?

**Ryan:** What do you do? Well, in some sense, every marriage is a bait-and-switch, right? Because you marry somebody-

**Selena:** It's true.

**Ryan:** ...and they end up-

**Selena:** No, I'm kidding. [laughs]

**Ryan:** You know, you end up being married. And they become married Selena. Married Ryan is not the same as-

**Selena:** The real dating Ryan. [laughs]

**Ryan:** Date Ryan.

**Selena:** Date Ryan. [laughs]

**Ryan:** Nice to meet me. [both laughs]

**Selena:** Nice. It's true.

**Ryan:** I should bust up my fedora.

**Selena:** We always put our best foot forward, right? When we're dating we put our best self forward. And I mean, yes, you get to know each other. But once you're married and you're committed and there's no getting out of it, all of the sin, all the selfishness, everything about you that you had so greatly hidden away, right, it's gonna come to light and it's only a matter of time.

So what do you do when you step into a marriage and you both agreed at the beginning like, we want to have children, and then first two years into

marriage, you know, trying to have a baby, and all of a sudden one of you says no.

**Ryan:** This is actually a question we got from a Fierce Marriage listener, which we intend to answer as well as we can. But it brings to bear a larger question. Is it a moral obligation for Christian couples if they're able to have kids-

**Selena:** Married Christian couples?

**Ryan:** Are you obligated to have kids, biblically? In other words, to phrase it differently, is it a sin to intentionally not bear children? So we're gonna talk about that on the other side.

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**Selena:** I'm hooked. Were you hooked?

**Ryan:** Oh, very hooked. I'm here for the rest of this episode. That's for sure.

**Selena:** I don't know if probably I'll-

**Ryan:** You might check out like 20 minutes in. [both laughs] So this is a bit of an onion. There are layers.

**Selena:** Layers.

**Ryan:** You start to peel back the layers and you start to realize, oh, there's more to this. Because we mentioned not having kids. Well, by what means are you not having kids?

**Selena:** That's a whole nother conversation.

**Ryan:** It's a very different conversation. And we'll touch on it here. I think we don't need to spend hours on it. There's a fairly clear Christian stance that can be taken, should be taken. Before we do that I'm Ryan. This is Selena. We are the Fredericks. We do Fierce Marriage just about every Tuesday. We do Fierce Parenting about every other Thursday at this point.

So if you're a parent, check out Fierce Parenting on the YouTube channel and or the podcast called Fierce Parenting. I haven't mentioned this. We also have the Fierce Families Conference. We had our first one about six months ago. Those episodes are all up. They're not episodes. They're talks that were given. I think there's like 16 of them or something.

- Selena:** Power-packed.
- Ryan:** There's a lot of content there.
- Selena:** It's great.
- Ryan:** Look for the Fierce Families Podcast. Listen to that. Also, go to [fiercefamilies.com](https://fiercefamilies.com). There's audio and video there as well. And on YouTube, you can find the playlist. Final piece of business then we'll get into this content here. If you'd like to partner with us, we've recently gotten some new fierce fellowship. What do you call them? Fellowshipers? Fierce Fellows.
- Selena:** Fierce Fellows.
- Ryan:** Thank you and welcome. That means the world to us. It's so encouraging when we see that come in: Hey, you have a new Patreon supporter. That to me says, wow, the Lord is providing, and wow, look at these other people that are on mission with us.
- Selena:** Amen.
- Ryan:** So thank you.
- Selena:** Thank you, thank you.
- Ryan:** If you wanna be a part of that, just go to [fiercemarriage.com/partner](https://fiercemarriage.com/partner). You're welcome here either the way. But if that's where the Lord's leading you, we ask you to pray about it, and then go for it. Okay.
- Selena:** Okay.
- Ryan:** Business out of the way. Let's get down to real business now.
- Selena:** Okay. So we got this question in from Kimberly, not Anon. Maybe they're friends.
- Ryan:** Anon's given us a break for the time being.
- Selena:** Yes. "What do you do when your spouse tells you they don't want children after previously stating otherwise before marriage? My husband and I have been together for six years and married for almost two years, and have been trying to have a baby for almost a year now. The entire time we've been together, we were both on the same page about starting a family one day. We've even suffered a miscarriage back in August, and it absolutely

devastated us both. But just last week he decided to tell me that he had a change of heart and he doesn't want a baby anymore. And apparently, he's been feeling like this for a long time. I don't even know how we move forward from this. I feel so betrayed. I love him so much, but I'm in complete shock that this is even happening. We are in the process of trying to get marriage counseling through our church, but in the meantime, I need some type of insight on this situation. Please help."

Well, Kimberly, thank you for sharing. It's a very tough topic to share and to be transparent about and suffering a miscarriage and having to just bury your soul and feeling betrayed by your spouse.

**Ryan:** So thank you for writing in because you're not alone. I can guarantee you there are other people that are at least wondering around this question. The situation's gonna be different. So, thank you. I do want to speak to the husband a little bit. I wanna be gracious to him. Miscarriages, I think, husbands are often overlooked in the pain that that causes to a husband.

**Selena:** and that was when my questions from reading this.

**Ryan:** He's probably reeling. And who knows if he's resolved this in his heart and in his mind, so he's still mourning. It's a potential. The other side could be... You know, I remember when you told me that you were pregnant with our first. It's like the whole world changes for you, but for the husband as well. It's like all of a sudden there's a third life.

I, as the head of our household, am responsible. You feel the weight of that responsibility. And so given the miscarriage there, it could be the case that he felt the weight of that hit his shoulders. The miscarriage hit, there was a mourning process. The baby passed away. That weight, at minimum has changed... It may not be completely lifted because you had a child that you lost. And you never get over that in a sense. But he may be thinking, "I don't know if I could bear that weight again" or "That was gonna crush me, it didn't in that way."

**Selena:** Well, and going through that cycle of trying and then waiting and trying again and-

**Ryan:** Yeah, totally.

**Selena:** You know, when we were first trying, people were like, "Oh..." The doctor's like, "Don't talk to me until you've tried for six months." And now I've even heard doctors say, "Don't talk to me unless you've been trying for a year." So there's kind of a lot of messages being shot at new couples or people trying to

have their first children. And it's hard to sift through all of those things. And then, yeah, you do suffer. Suffering a miscarriage is a loss of life, loss of potential future with this child. So they're hard things. And I think we tend to maybe underestimate the impact that they have on our hearts and souls and our minds maybe.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So all that is the preface to what we're about to say. This is tough. On the other side given what you're going through together... Oh, and I wanted to say this. You're in the right process of trying to get counsel from your pastors. Keep doing that. Persevere through whatever inertia there is, whatever hurdles you have to jump over scheduling-wise, whatever logistics to make that council happen. You have to work through this.

So with that, the wife, I think in this case, does have a right to feel betrayed. You had a pretext before you entered into the marital covenant. You said, Hey, this is the type of family we wanna build. This is who we wanna be. As your future husband, I also want to be the future father of your children. That's a betrayal of trust.

**Selena:** Well, and then even from the wife's side, if ever I hear you say, I've been thinking about this, or I've been feeling this way for a while, to me that feels like a betrayal because you haven't even come to me when the initial feelings or notions or thoughts started so that we could discuss this as a couple, as a married couple. So not only have I felt betrayed when you... you know, she might have felt betrayed first at the altar. You know, we made these promises, we were under this pretense. Now you're telling me you've not wanted this for how long? It feels like another just jab. Right?

**Ryan:** Yeah. It's not clear whether or not he didn't want kids before they first conceived or after the miscarriage happened. But the question that it brings to bear is if you had clarity around this current reality before you got married, in other words, if you knew you were marrying a guy who did not want kids-

**Selena:** That's a different conversation.

**Ryan:** That's a different conversation. You may not have chosen to marry him. So, yeah. So the terms have changed. Or the terms haven't changed, but the delivery on those terms has changed. So I think you have a right to be frustrated, to be a little overwhelmed by this and to want to get to the bottom of it and to want to, Lord willing, get back to that place of agreement. Because you want a good thing. Kids are good.

We have to hash this out. We're gonna go into the big next question, meaning that, is it just a preferential thing? Do we have freedom as Christians to forego

the blessing of children? Because God calls something a blessing, are we obliged to receive that blessing? That's the big question.

But before we can answer that, you listener, couple, Kimberly it's you listening to this, or it's your husband listening to this, or couples who would be in this situation, or you're speaking to another couple, you have to ask yourself this question: Do I actually care what the Bible says?

**Selena:** You have to start there.

**Ryan:** We have to start there because our opinions don't matter. I say this lovingly. Friend, your opinion doesn't matter either in terms of what other people should do. We have to look at an authority greater than us and say, what does our authority say? What does God's word say? And if we see what it says, then the rubber meets the road, we say, does it actually influence how we behave? Because otherwise we're just talking in circles.

**Ryan:** That's putting it nicely. I'm just like, we have to go to the authority, the Truth. It is not just another opinion. God's word is the way, the truth, the life.

**Ryan:** You either obey it or you reject it.

**Selena:** And you disobey it. [laughs]

**Ryan:** So the question is, do you care about obeying God? If you do, is this something that is required of us in order to be obedient to God? So what does the Bible say? You all know this, the Bible calls children a blessing, a heritage from the Lord. This is one of the main themes.

This comes from Psalm 127:3-5. "Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord..." That's also translated as blessing in some of the places. "...the fruit of the womb, a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate."

You all know that verse and you even hear the word quiver and you start thinking... depending on how you grew up, you might be thinking of the opposite end of this spectrum. The quiver full movement. Which basically says like, you should never not have kids. Like never try to not have kids. Whenever you're having sex as a couple, it should always be a possibility. And in doing that, you are trusting that into the Lord and He's giving you the blessings that He would have you have.

But we, I'm not a proponent of the quiverfull thing. We are not [both chuckles] Because I think that's taking it to the nth degree, that it's not necessarily biblical. People argue for it. So we're not gonna make the argument to counter it right now. We're not going into that level of detail. But I just want to kind of hedge that some people that might be thinking that right now.

But the big theme we see in scripture is that the value of children on every instance and every narrative that we see as God is talking to His people, as God is talking to Adam and Eve in the garden. We'll read this passage next. He does have a command to them: Go and be fruitful. That is a command.

But in every instance, the value of children is presupposed. It's assumed. There's never a sense in which children are not to be wanted, they're not to be valued. Children are a vast sign of wealth. That is the mindset of the scripture. Now, Selena, what is the mindset of our modern day and age around children? What is it?

**Selena:** We've got this disordered value of them. We are not valuing them in the sense that God has given them to us as a blessing. Our modern-day sees them as a... what's the word?

**Ryan:** Lifestyle choice.

**Selena:** Like a lifestyle choice or just kind of a token of "we had our kids, we did the thing. That's the next step." We don't wanna be inconvenienced. We wanna have them at the right time. We wanna have the right amount and the right gender, all those kinds of particulars, right-

**Ryan:** This is-

**Selena:** ...to fulfill our own desires.

**Ryan:** Right. It's the level up in my lifestyle building. That's how I level up.

**Selena:** God forbid. He actually, the God of all knowledge and wisdom have, you know, a better, bigger, more beautiful, vast reason than we could ever comprehend.

**Ryan:** And that's the product of many... you know, the water we're swimming in, the hyper individualistic, the atomization of people, all the way back to the enlightenment, and just the idea that I am the arbiter of my destiny. Mix that with a good dose of consumerism, mix that with, you know, culture that's detaching sex from procreation at every turn. So you start to see children as a lifestyle choice. It's how you level up.

The same can be said about a wife. I talk to young brothers who are... you know, they're looking out at the landscape at... you know, they're single, they might be trying to find a girl to date, to marry. And he was to... hey, he who finds a wife finds a what? A good thing. So being married is good. It's normative. It's right. It's a good pursuit. But many see marriage as a lifestyle choice in the same way.

**Selena:** I think as Christian couples, we can't step into marriage without also saying yes to having children. Do you understand what I mean? When we take apart the piece-

**Ryan:** That's a bold statement. I do tend to agree. And the reason why biblically is gonna come from Genesis 1.

**Selena:** Right. I'm just saying when we take a part of the piece, I wanna get married because I want to get married. It's that next step. It's what we do.

**Ryan:** You're saying it's a whole package.

**Selena:** I'm saying it's a whole package. Yes.

**Ryan:** So if you plan on-

**Selena:** Getting married,

**Ryan:** Remaining childless before you head into marriage, then is marriage for you? Well, but I want companionship. I want... Well, okay. [laughs] Let's talk about that.

**Selena:** Again, we're taking what we want, right?

**Ryan:** Companionship is good.

**Selena:** We're scooping the cream off the top and not-

**Ryan:** Sure. And that's not to say the rest of marriage is a cakewalk.

**Selena:** No.

**Selena:** ...if Kids aren't involved.

**Selena:** No. But-

**Ryan:** But the point-

**Selena:** ...the idea... you know, it's naive of someone to think that.

**Ryan:** So here's where that thought's coming from. Genesis 1:28, it says, "And God blessed them..." It's in the garden, of course. God said to them, first command, okay, be fruitful. Second command: multiply. Third command: fill the earth. Fourth command: subdue it. And fifth: have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

So the first charge is to bear children. The second charge is to multiply, to do the same. Then only the third, the fourth, and the fifth have to do with the dominion, the work, the subduing the earth. And so often we flip it. Now this is in the context of creation. So it's baked in arguably to what God created man for.

We'll see similar passage in Genesis 9 here. And then I'll address one of the arguments I can already hear in my head. Genesis 9:1 says, "And God bless Noah and his sons..." This is post-flood. They're coming outta the ark. And he said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth." So if you remember the story of the flood, everybody's killed.

**Selena:** They really died.

**Ryan:** Except for Noah and his family and the animals in the arc. Now they're stepping out and He's giving them the same command to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth. Then again, six verses later, it says, "And you be fruitful, multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it."

So what do you hear right now? Some might say that these two statements, okay, it's post kind of apocalyptic event, after the flood, and then the Edenic version Adam and Eve was post-creation. So they're unique because humanity was just starting out. There was no-

**Selena:** Sure.

**Ryan:** They were the seed of humanity.

**Selena:** Every marriage is just starting so out.

**Ryan:** But they had to have that command.

**Selena:** Right. Well, did they though?

**Ryan:** But that command is was for them in that time. It's not necessarily for Ryan and Selena. It's not necessarily for Kimberly and her husband. They could say that.

**Selena:** People could argue that, yeah.

**Ryan:** Now, what's the counter to that? Well, it comes back to what I said about it being baked in. Is it part and parcel with humanity themselves?

**Selena:** Yeah. Because God didn't... I mean, I don't wanna say God didn't say because there's a lot of things that we can leave unsaid. But it wasn't a cutoff for the blessing. It wasn't a cutoff for the multiplying.

**Ryan:** Sure.

**Selena:** Go and do it. But in the context of marriage, in the context of covenant, do these things.

**Ryan:** Does this apply to all Christians... Does it apply to Adam and Eve? Does it apply to us like it applied to Noah and his family? Well, let's look at Exodus 20. It's the 10 commandments. And it says this, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness in anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them for I the Lord your God I'm a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children of the third and fourth generation, but of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments." To a thousand generations, I think some translations say.

So to a thousand generations. Does that sound like it slowed down? I mean, how many generations have we seen since Adam and Eve? Are we thousands of generations out?

**Selena:** And it's not like a literal. He's like thousands. It's still an ambiguous-

**Ryan:** It's meant to be this perpetual growing of generations. I'm not saying that that's the... Oh, that's the command to have as many kids as you can. But I am saying that there seems to be this idea that the fruitfulness should extend for a long period of time. And this is more of a universal idea.

Even Deuteronomy 28, you're talking about blessings for obedience and blessings for cursing. And he says, you'll be blessed if you obey the voice of the Lord your God. Blessed shall you be in the city. Blessed shall you be in the

field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle.

So again, we see the same sort of order. You as a people in your obedience as a result of it, and because of God's grace, you will be blessed. Now, you yourselves will be blessed in just being you and living your life. How does that work itself out your children? It's the first thing. Then it's gonna be the cattle, it's gonna be the field, it's gonna be the fruit of your labor.

**Selena:** Right. And we've flip-flopped those orders. So if children are valued in all of scripture, are there reasons why, legitimate reasons why Christian couples should not have children? I mean, yes, a physical impairment. Something that would make them unable to. That's one, I guess-

**Ryan:** Yes, of course.

**Selena:** ...cut off for someone.

**Ryan:** If you're not able to have kids, that's the Lord's prerogative.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But others will cite, well, Jesus didn't have kids. Paul didn't marry, didn't have... Jesus didn't marry and have kids. Paul didn't marry and have kids. Well, okay-

**Selena:** Well, marriage is not necessarily a commandment, right?

**Ryan:** No. Not at all. Of course not.

**Selena:** But if you get-

**Ryan:** If you take marriage and kids as a package, it starts to make a little bit more sense in that if there's a reason for the two becoming one flesh, that is very, almost like uncomfortably physical. You know what I mean? Because I think as Christians, I think, Oh yeah. It's kind of nice. Two become one flesh, and that's so symbolic. And it's so obviously, you know, you're consummating. There is a unity that happens in your sexual intimacy and your physical intimacy, all that, spiritual intimacy. Oh, it's so wonderful. But the literal outworking of that is two becoming one flesh. And that God will write on that child the soul-

**Selena:** The two becoming the one flesh of the child. The child becomes the one that comes from the two. That's what you're making...

**Ryan:** So this is kind of a deep rabbit hole when you think about how a soul is created and how the imputation of Adam's sin even through...

**Selena:** Yeah

**Ryan:** So it does go a little bit kind of weirdly deep more than I realized up until about two months ago. But the point we're trying to make is that there's a very physical aspect to two becoming one flesh, marriage being the avenue through which that union happens. The natural package, outworking of that is childbearing. Couple that with the Genesis 1 mandate. Go be fruitful, multiply. Couple that again with Genesis 9, Deuteronomy 28, Psalm 127-

**Selena:** It doesn't leave a lot of room for Christian couples who are able to choose to not have kids and still be obedient. Is that too bold to say? Like, there's not a lot of room to argue that.

**Ryan:** I think that's safe to say there's not a lot of room. So now because there's gonna be the what about stuff? Okay. So now the big questions are what if we wanna wait? And what if we don't want seven kids, we would rather have two?

Selena just said this, and I agree because we've had this conversation already in advance. There is little room I think for us to say that a Christian couple has complete freedom to choose childlessness if they're able to have kids. Now, does that mean Ryan and Selena think that if you're married you have to have kids? Well, let's read some articles from some pretty smart people who love the Lord. John Piper being one of them, the guys over at Ligonier, and Tim Challies, which we mentioned in the past.

They all kind of, I think, resonate with what we're saying. So we're not on an island in this. They resonate with this. But John Piper's addressing the missionary thing. Because somebody wrote in and said, "I know that you said it was permissible for couples to wait to have kids and to limit the number of children they have. And you said it is permissible in some cases for a missionary couple to forego children altogether. But how about non-missionary Christians?"

So he kinda gets into the weeds of that conversation. So he's hitting some of these big themes. And what he struck me was at the end of the article by John Piper... By the way, if you wanna look it up, it's on Desiring God and it's called Are Christian Couples Required to Have Kids? Is the big theme is that children are a precious gift. He hits on that. He hits on another big theme that God knows families will struggle. So some of the arguments that are made around this are, well, I don't wanna bring kids into a hard life, or kids will make our life

harder because we can't afford it, or we're just not mature enough, we're not ready for it. So he's saying that God knows we'll struggle yet-

**Selena:** He still calls it a blessing.

**Ryan:** ...family's still good. That leads to the next big theme that he addresses. The goal of this life is not to avoid struggle, it's not to avoid hardship. It's not to say, oh, that's a hard thing, therefore I don't want it.

**Selena:** Right. That's just our tendency and our self-preservation and our fear, right?

**Ryan:** Right.

**Selena:** But the Bible tells us that even in our suffering, we are like Christ, like suffer as Christ suffered, and know that there's a promise at the end of it, there's fruit to be born.

**Ryan:** So what he says is, "From the standpoint of God's word, none of those possible heartaches and none of those guaranteed stresses are reasons to not have children because the Bible does not share the modern viewpoint that the aim of this life is the avoidance of hardship."

**Selena:** That's good.

**Ryan:** "On the contrary, the assumption of the Bible is that through many tribulations we enter the Kingdom ( Acts 14:22) and that the testing of our faith produces steadfastness (James 1:3), and that there's joy to be found through giving ourselves away. Jesus said it is more blessed to give than to receive. That's Acts 20:35."

**Selena:** I mean, don't think that we're just saying these things, not having our own sort of internal struggle. Because you know, hearing like it is having to give yourself away every day produces steadfastness. Looking back at the last 10 years that we've had children, yeah, we're not the same people that we were. Experience has taught us the blessings of our children and the hardship that they bring. It brings blessing. It sanctifies you. And to say that it's more blessed to give than receive-

**Ryan:** I say this with trepidation. The hardship is not over.

**Selena:** Oh, no.

**Ryan:** And the blessing is not over.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** I mean, that they're not grown.

**Selena:** No.

**Ryan:** So when we raise them and we're raising them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, it's with trembling-

**Selena:** It is.

**Ryan:** ...that we say, Lord, please use our efforts per the promises we see in your word.

**Selena:** Use our-

**Ryan:** Use this to create fruit in this little child's heart. Because my prayer is not just that our kids will follow Christ, but our grandkids will. That to me is the proof in the pudding. And we don't have it. So we're here with you saying like, Lord, be merciful to us. Use our efforts.

So he gets into some other factors that people will consider, well, I don't wanna contribute to the problems of society. He mentions global warming. I'm not sure much of our audience is on that train.

**Selena:** Ooh. [laughs]

**Ryan:** But he ends with this idea that God has made the path clear. What struck me about this article, again, I mentioned it earlier, at the end, he says, a lot of the kind of heady reasons that people will justify not having kids, they'll give you... I mean, you get on Twitter and have an argument with somebody, you're gonna hear all the reasons. "X, Y, and Z. I'm not gonna have kids, whatever."

And he said in all of his time that he's been a pastor and he is worked with couples, he says, not one in a thousand of these couples decides to not have kids by sitting down and calculating everything he said. Basically, it boils down to selfishness.

**Selena:** It does.

**Ryan:** And so that's a heart check.

**Selena:** Yeah. For all of us.

- Ryan:** For all of us. We're not trying to wag the finger here.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** Would you wanna read this last commentary?
- Selena:** I do wanna read that because I feel like he sums it up. Just that biblical blessing—this is John Piper—and that voice of nature and that God-given longing should be followed, I'm arguing, unless God Himself makes it crystal clear that the self-denying path of Christ-exalting obedience is childlessness.
- Ryan:** That's that little room.
- Selena:** That's that teensy tiny sea that like... And that's just, and that's a pastor arguing that. That's not-
- Ryan:** And there are for sure some that would say Piper's off the rails on this. I'm sure we have some listeners on that side. I don't claim to have the full understanding of everything that's being argued in this issue. It seems to me that if there is a little bit of room, it's very tiny and you better have crystal clear confirmation that that's the case. And so what do you do now?
- Selena:** That the self-denying path? That was one of the keywords too, because-
- Ryan:** The self-denying path.
- Selena:** We talk about marriage and day in and day out and it's always, how do you love? You love selflessly. You die to self. Ephesians 5. We are always dying to self. We are always dying to our sinful self. So having kids, you better believe it's a death of self.
- Ryan:** Right. So if you can look your Lord, your spouse, you can look yourself in the mirror, face to face, and say, we are making this choice because it is the righteous thing to do-
- Selena:** Knowing that it's gonna be hard, knowing that we're gonna have to grow-
- Ryan:** Well, I'm talking about if you choose childlessness, you can look God in the face-
- Selena:** Oh gosh.
- Ryan:** Like you can pray without stumbling over your words... That's not the litmus test, by the way. But what I'm trying to say is that you can say to God, honestly,

you can have confirmation in your gut and the Holy Spirit. Now you have to line it up to God's word. He would never contradict His word. So if it's just God's voice, quote-unquote, if you're listening, scare quotes, if it's God's voice saying to you that children for you aren't a blessing-

**Selena:** Oof. Probably not God's voice. [laughs]

**Ryan:** Yeah. Clearly not. Because what God... Now, the point is this is just a really important thing to consider with God's word in mind. Now, if you heard all that stuff we talked about from God's word, and you can say, Nope, you've missed this, that, and the other, which that's what the Bible says, which kind of negates the conclusions you're coming to... I don't know that that's there. But if you can say that, that's, to me, you're listening to God's word. I don't think it's there. That's the whole point. So if you care about what God's word has to say, then this has to be a consideration you're making.

Now to Kimberly, what do you do? So you're still reeling. August is not that long ago. That's when the miscarriage happened. You know, your husband could be dealing with that still. It could be that this has just been tucked back away somewhere and it's just easier not to deal with it. And that means saying, I don't like the idea of having kids. I've been thinking that for a while, which honestly probably means like since August-

**Selena:** Yeah. Ouch, this hurts. I don't wanna do it again.

**Ryan:** So all I can say is, are you on the same page with God's word? At one point you were in agreement on this. Communicate through this. I hope this has been loving enough that you would feel comfortable sharing this episode with your husband, listening with him. Talk to your pastors about this.

**Selena:** Yeah, keep talking.

**Ryan:** If they love God, they love God's word and they love you, they will help you. Our prayer is that you are blessed, that the Lord blesses you with every ounce of blessing that He has for you, unequivocally. And we happen to think that if you are married, there is a strong case to be made. That biblical marriage among Christian people, and even among people who don't acknowledge this, who are not Christians, marriage is designed for the family.

**Selena:** For flourishing. Yeah.

**Ryan:** For the fruitfulness, for the multiplication. And yes, it does extend beyond having children, but that's a big part of it. That's the voice we're trying to make here. So Selena, do you think we've put the fork in this one?

**Selena:** I think we've tried. I think that, you know, you have to go to the word yourself and you have to sift through it, and you have to talk to your pastors, and you have to just do the work if you want to kind of get through the situation and to find agreement to reconciliation and to, you know, live in obedience to God's word.

**Ryan:** Whether or not you fall on the side that we're on, or you feel strongly in the opposite way, if you go and Google search that thing, you're gonna get confirmed. Either way. It's gonna confirm your bias. So if you really wanna know what God says about this, you're gonna have to go to the word, and-

**Selena:** God's word is the plumb line, not our selfish desires or whatever desires are of the day.

**Ryan:** That's the hard truth here. So our encouragement is just to go to God's word and act accordingly. If you don't know who Jesus is, you don't know what it means, all these things that we're saying kind of sound like, wow, you're putting a lot of weight in this book.

**Selena:** It's book called the Bible.

**Ryan:** Well, I'll tell you what, we wouldn't have Christ, we wouldn't know anything about Him if we didn't have God's revelation of Him. He revealed himself to us through creation. Look around. Prick your finger, look at what comes out. That's blood. That's a life given to you by God who created you to operate that this amazing creation He's given us. But He's also given the blood of His own son who came and became flesh Himself. That's Jesus Christ. He died so that we wouldn't have to die for our own sins. Instead, he made atonement for our sins and gave us right standing before God when we place our faith in Him.

We want you to place your faith in Christ. And so to that end, we recommend that you find a friend who believes in Jesus, who follows Him, who knows the words. Say, Hey, let's read the Bible together. Find a pastor, a church that you can go to and spend Sundays there, and then get under the teaching of God's word. If you have a hard time finding either of those things, you go to this website, it might help. It's [thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com).

Let's pray. Father God, thank You for /your mercy. Thank You for Your grace. Thank You for the reality that you have given children as a blessing, and that as married couples that is something to behold, something to be grateful for, to be cautious with, but also faithful with, faith-filled.

Lord, I pray for the couples that are wrestling with this. I pray that You would help them to see clearly. I pray that /you would help them to submit any selfish desires unto You, That they might be made more into the likeness of Your Son, whether that's through the process of going through this, through the blessings and difficulties and heartache of raising children. Lord, that they would do all that unto Your glory and not unto their own. We ask these things humbly in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Selena:** Amen.

**Ryan:** Okay.

**Selena:** Woo.

**Ryan:** Thank you for hanging out with us for Fierce Marriage. This has been a good episode. I think last week we talked about money for that. This was kind of a shift.

**Selena:** Yeah, it's good.

**Ryan:** If you haven't subscribed yet to the YouTube channel, go ahead and do that. That helps us a lot. By the grace of God, we hope to continue doing these videos as long as He allows. And so by subscribing, you get to see those. So this episode of The Fierce Marriage Podcast is—

**Selena:** In the can.

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

**Selena:** Stay fierce.

**PODCAST NOTES**

- **Referenced scripture**
  - 1 Timothy 2
  - Genesis 1:28
  - Genesis 9
  - Deuteronomy 28
  - Psalm 127:3-5
  
- **Recommended resource**
  - [thenewsisgood.com](https://thenewsisgood.com)

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