

RULE BENDER VS RULE FOLLOWER?? HONORING EACH OTHERS' DIFFERENCES IN MARRIAGE

<https://fiercemarriage.com/rule-bender-vs-rule-follower-honoring-each-others-differences-in-marriage>

[00:00:00]

Ryan: In our marriage, I happen to be the rule Bender.

Selena: This is true.

Ryan: Selena is the rule follower.

Selena: 100000%.

Ryan: Just Mrs. Perfect. [both laughs] Yeah. This gets us into trouble. Or I'll say we start to argue over it.

Selena: Well, and when we're young and in love and teenagers, I always thought it... it was something that drew me to you. Now I curse the... No, I'm kidding. [both laughs]

Ryan: How dare you.

Selena: No. But you were always like the one who jumped off cliffs and you always did the things. Like you're riding the line and I was like, Oh, he's so adventurous. Now, I'm like, you are so unsafe. [laughs]

Ryan: So what we're getting at is in marriages, and perhaps in your marriage, there are different - what's the word? Different tendencies, different... just differences. Yet still, we are called to honor one another in those differences. Now, a rule-bending versus rule-following, that's an interesting one. We're actually gonna to do a deep dive in today. But there are other things like what if one's a talker and one's not a talker?

Selena: You are so a talker.

Ryan: Clearly. Yes. I'm doing all the talking today, doing all the hefty... heavy lifting. The hefty lifting. Or what if one is a dreamer and the other is-

Selena: Not.

Ryan: ...kind of the practical one, the logistical? One is a big picture person and one is a detail person. [laughs]

Selena: Details aren't gonna worry themselves out. You think these dreams are gonna come true just by-

Ryan: You think dreams are gonna work themselves out? [both laughs] Anyway, it's gonna be a good conversation. See you on the other side.

[00:01:26] <music>

Ryan: Welcome once again to the Fierce Marriage Podcast. If this is your first time, welcome. I already said welcome, but two welcomes to you first-timers. My name's Ryan, this is my-

Selena: Only one to people who've been here before.

Ryan: If you've been here before, you get a more jaded welcome. We've seen some things together. I'm Ryan. This is my lovely wife, Selena. We're the Fredericks. We like to have fun. We also like to tell our listeners that you can catch us every Tuesday just about on the Fierce Marriage. You can also find us on Fierce Parenting. On Fierce Parenting? Fierce Parenting podcast. Did you just go cross that a little bit? [laughs]

Selena: Maybe.

Ryan: Look like you did.

Selena: Did I?

Ryan: Maybe. This is the multiple-episode day.

Selena: Oh my.

Ryan: So Fierce Parenting goes out on Thursdays.

Selena: Thursdays.

Ryan: Check that out. We also like to mention our Fierce Fellowship. Those are the hardy folks-

Selena: Hardy folks.

Ryan: ...that have seen fit to lock arms with us to ensure that this mission does not stop, does not slow, in fact, it speeds up by the grace of God through our Fierce Fellows. You can go to fiercemarriage.com/partner to find out. Well, that's cracked up to be- [both laughs]

Anyway. All right. We're answering a question from Selena's good friend, Anon. Another one. We're getting a lot of these. It's question-

Selena: Very active friend.

Ryan: ...about honoring one another in their differences. A very needy person this Anon. [laughs] Just kidding. You're not needy. So this is about differences, honoring one another in differences. She does drill into the dynamic they have about rule following versus rule bending.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So, Selena, do you mind reading this for us?

Selena: Sure. "What do you believe the Bible says about how to honor one another in our differences? Here are a few dynamics that cause me to ask this question. The dreamer and the practical, logistical one. The listener versus the talker. Especially the rule follower versus the rule bender/breaker. Recently, the rule follower versus the rule bender dynamic has taken a toll on our relationship. I, as the rule follower feel like a killjoy many days and it can make it hard for us to have fun together at times.

I also feel disrespected when I express that I plan to follow the rules and would like him to do the same but he does what he likes anyway. I can't control him or change him, but I'm having a hard time knowing how to honor him, especially when I don't agree with him and feel dishonored myself."

Ryan: Great. So, Selena, do you identify with any part of what this listener is?

Selena: No.

Ryan: Not at all. None of it at all.

Selena: That I'm the rule follower, you're the rule bender-

Ryan: Which you mentioned.

- Selena:** I don't feel like a killjoy. I'm just like, this is where I stand. And so if you're not there, I just am gonna turn a blind eye when you do things that I think are unsafe. [both laughs]
- Ryan:** We'll give some examples. Don't worry. I think also the dreamer/practical thing. So I'll-
- Selena:** That's how I'm a killjoy.
- Ryan:** Yes. Yeah.
- Selena:** I can see that.
- Ryan:** Because I'll say, "Selena, wouldn't it be great? Envision this."
- Selena:** And I'm like, "Oh, I'm tired already." [both laughs]
- Ryan:** Before I even put my hand down, if you're watching, envision this. She asks, "What are we gonna do about the dogs? [both laughs] Lemme watch chickens. I gotta call my mom."
- Selena:** I'm gonna tell my mom.
- Ryan:** Yeah. So there's that. Because I'm not oblivious to the need to work out those details. It's just not-
- Selena:** It kind of seems like you're sometimes though. [laughs]
- Ryan:** No. That's what you're for.
- Selena:** Right. So I'm not a killjoy.
- Ryan:** No. Here's what's-
- Selena:** You've just grown in what you actually present to me.
- Ryan:** It's true. I don't present as much [both laughs] because I know there's timing for these things. For instance, "I'll say envision, Selena, the Fierce Families Conference on the road, the Fredericks in an RV."
- Selena:** He's been telling me this for like a year and I'm just like, okay-

Ryan: ...going across country visiting our wonderful listeners and viewers and talking about the things of God around... And you're like, "Okay, well who's gonna watch our place?"

Selena: So there's always things. There's always ideas. I'm always glad that I go along most of the time. There's been a few where I've regretted. But I'm just like, whatever. Like God is sovereign and good and I'm not gonna... I don't feel like I'm dishonoring you. Am I dishonoring you?

Ryan: No.

Selena: And killing your joy? Okay.

Ryan: [inaudible] you are. [both laughs] You need to quit it. A lot more rubber stamping from you, if you wouldn't mind. Just off that rubber stamp.

Selena: I don't even have a rubber stamp, okay? But honoring one another in differences, what does that mean? Because I feel like we are very different people-

Ryan: As you were reading this, two big kind of divisions come to mind and how this question should be addressed. Honoring one another in those differences. The first one we've kind of played around with that dancing around a little bit. Well, let's get to the bottom of that. And also this other thing that she talked about quite a bit is the rule-bending versus rule keeping being a point of contention for them. So we could break this into two episodes. We're gonna try to tackle both those things here. All right. So first-

Selena: Dreamer here, and then... We'll just go one. It's like, nah, sorry.

Ryan: Listen, I'll take two episodes. This is a lot less work. [laughs] So honoring one another in their differences. So of course this depends on the differences. But in general, absolutely. The Bible gives us imperatives to honor one another. As Christians we're called to honor one another in a special sort of way.

This passage from Romans 12:10 says this: Love one another with brotherly affection, outdo one another in showing honor. Now the ESV is unique in that outdo notion, the idea that you're almost one-upping each other in honor. I think another one would say like, be fervent or be diligent in honoring one another. But still the point is there: we are to honor... Now we can say, well, maybe they're not different in that maybe there's no differences to be honored through. Well, I think that's a farfetched thing to-

Selena: Sure.

Ryan: These are people. There's gonna be differences.

Selena: There's gonna be differences.

Ryan: 1 Peter 1:22 says this. Selena, do you wanna read that?

Selena: "Since you have purified your souls by obedience to the truth so that you have a genuine love for your brothers, love one another deeply from a pure heart."

Ryan: Yeah. So what-

Selena: I wanna add something. The Bible talks about us being the body of Christ, as some our hands, some are feet, some are eyes and nose, those kinds of things. Clearly, there's gonna be differences. But I think the understanding there is that we all have different roles to play, we all have different responsibilities, all for the glory of God. And ideally we shouldn't be inhibiting one another. We should be helping one another.

Ryan: Right. And that's why we're told to do these things in the spirit of love. Genuine love, Peter says, for your brothers. Love one another deeply from a pure heart. You're not just trying to get your way. But the pure heart is, how do I love this person? Well, how do I honor them the way the Lord has given us to honoring one another?

So, as Christians, the unapologetic answer is absolutely you are to honor one another. Now if you, those differences are... if there's a sin difference, I don't think it's... if someone says, I don't think it's wrong to watch pornography, no one gets hurt, husbands make that case, which is a lie by the way. People do get hurt. It's a horrible industry. I hope that goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway. It absolutely hurts people.

Well, but that husband would make the case, or a wife, but the case would be, no one's involved. It's just, you know, whatever. Well, that's not a difference to be honored. That's a sin to be rebuked and to be called out and that man needs to repent and turn away from it.

But also there's a specific dynamic within marriage where we are called to honor each other in an even more special way. Right? So in marriage differences are good. Like, I'm so glad I didn't marry-

Selena: Someone like you.

Ryan: Truly.

Selena: Yeah. I think our differences make us stronger together. I don't wanna be like Yeah, we're stronger together, but a cord of three strands is stronger than one or two on their own.

Ryan: Absolutely. Think about Adam in the garden. When-

Selena: It's not good for man to be alone. [laughs]

Ryan: When God made Eve, God made Adam a helper fit for him. I always picture puzzle pieces. If you have two puzzle pieces that are exactly the same, they don't fit. It doesn't work.

Selena: It doesn't work.

Ryan: It'll never work. And so you need them to be different from one another so that you can actually have a marriage. That makes sense from the spiritual side of it, clear down to the physical side of it.

Selena: Well, and within marriage there's sanctification. Right. So if we are just the same in every way, there's never gonna be anybody questioning who we are or, you know, helping us through some of the weaknesses that we face. We would probably just be hermits and stay in our home and not do anything or deal with anyone. So it's like we need each other to draw the weaknesses out, to help us see where the Lord might be refining us. So differences are good and it's good to see those and treat them the way the Lord instructs us to.

Ryan: Yes. So there is a sense within which Christians are called to always honor one another in marriage. There's a special sense of that husbands are to love their wives as Christ love the church. We are to be gentle with them. In 1 Peter, it says this, Live with your wives in an understanding way as she's the weaker vessel. So is that just talking about, oh, you got weak arms.

Selena: I do have weak arms, so I can't do a pull-up.

Ryan: You're stronger than you're weak [both laughs].

Selena: Anyways.

Ryan: No, what he's saying is there are two vessels. John Piper had a piece on this that I watched... or I read it actually. There's a sense in which there are two vessels and one is weaker, one is stronger. So you're both vessels but you're different.

And as a husband, I am called to honor you with my strength, never to wield my strength in a way that is an advantage to me. But instead to use my strength to honor you as the weaker vessel whether in terms of stature. You know, we can talk about what Peter meant by weaker. But the point is, is that I wield my role as husband to the end of honoring you within marriage-

Selena: That's what God says to do.

Ryan: ...and even in our differences. Then wives on the other side-

Selena: Respect, submit.

Ryan: Respect, submit. Be the helper. And especially honoring in that role and not usurping and not nagging, not undermining. Some wives they need to pick the hills they're gonna die on and choose not to die on every single little hill. Just because your husband... he doesn't have to be the way you think he should be. Whoa. Mind-blowing moment. Like not everything is up for edits in your husband. Like you married a man, you probably married a man with some differences. He likes some things that you don't like, he prefers things you don't prefer. He's not your project-

Selena: That's good. It's good

Ryan: ...as the man you were called to help. So I just think maybe some wife need to hear that. [laughs]

Selena: We're just gonna dust that right there for a minute. [laughs]

Ryan: He's not obligated to do everything you want him to do. But in the spirit of love, this is the big, big caveat that hopefully is clear, you seek to honor one another. So a loving husband will see... You know, if you prefer a certain cologne-

Selena: I wish you would wear-

Ryan: Buy me some fancy cologne. Father's Day's coming up.

Selena: I forget the one that I liked on here.

Ryan: You're supposed to buy me that, that sweet pipe. [laughs] It looks like Lord of the Rings.

Selena: Just way out here.

Ryan: Gandalf pipe. So if I have a shirt that I know you like and I have a shirt that I know you don't like-

Selena: Why do you have shirts that I don't like? [both laughs] This is the question.

Ryan: You buy them.

Selena: No.

Ryan: I either get my shirts for free or my wife buys them. So in the spirit of honoring you, I'm not gonna pick the one that's gonna annoy you. I'm gonna try to pick the one that brings you joy.

Selena: Thank you.

Ryan: But am I obligated to do that?

Selena: No.

Ryan: No. But the spirit of love says like-

Selena: And should I feel entitled to the fact that you should wear the shirt that I picked out for you or I got for you? No, I shouldn't feel entitled about that.

Ryan: But you asked me about it and I think, well-

Selena: Sometimes, yeah.

Ryan: I like being a treat for Mama. [laughs] All right. Real briefly we can talk about the differences mentioned and then we'll get dive into the rule follower of rule bender thing because that to me is a very interesting conversation to have.

So dreamer/practical, we have talked about that a little bit. How do you work through that? How do you honor one another? Well, the answer is you regard one another. Like if you're a dreamer and you're always blowing up your spouse saying big dream, big dream, big dream and all they're feeling is pressure-

Selena: Yeah. From all the details.

Ryan: Like, if you were a dreamer, you are a dreamer in some ways, but if you were like, "Hey, it'd be great if, and it's some big grand thing, as a husband, I'm gonna feel pressure because I wanna provide for you a life that you want. I

think how we can have regard for one another on that is tone it down a little bit or like don't just be quick-

Selena: You said it.

Ryan: Don't be quick to jump to the details and, you know, cut me off your knees.

Selena: And I've learned that as well, to like, you know what, there's no harm in just listening. There's harm in that I get fatigued [laughs] listening sometimes.

Ryan: I know. It's like start talking, like within 30 seconds she's yawning. [both laughs] Okay, I'll talk to Charlie, the dog. He'll listen to me.

Selena: He'll listen to me.

Ryan: And he'll look my face afterward.

Selena: No, it's good.

Ryan: The listener and talker piece, this is, I kind of-

Selena: This is communication thing.

Ryan: Men and women are different and that's good. In some ways, broadly speaking, men are less prone to emotional expression needing to process things verbally. They're more prone to action. They're more prone to decisiveness. They're more prone to not necessarily needing to hash out every detail or every option. But in the books that we wrote, *How a Husband Speaks*, which I wrote, I tried to help men understand like, you're not a victim of your predispositions. Meaning that you can become a talker-

Selena: You can grow.

Ryan: Because by the way, we have a God who talks, He communicates, He gives words. He says what He means. He means what He says. So you can grow in that. So some of those differences you can embrace and say, okay, he'll never be, you know, this whatever, but he can still communicate.

Selena: There's always a good side to those types of things. Right? And I think you just gotta fight and search and pray that "God, would just gimme clarity to like... well, why is my husband the dreamer? Because if we were all like me and, you know, drowning in details, then I would never experience some of the great moments and adventures that we've had together because I would not have

allowed that. I just wouldn't have thought of it. I just would never have gone down that path.

Ryan: Recently we went... so I went to Focus on the family, they gave us a gift card to go to a restaurant locally that we like. I was like, "We're gonna go on the date. We're gonna use this thing. We're not gonna let it sit in the drawer for three months. We're gonna use this thing." And you were like, "You know, we could've just sat in at home and had fun." And I'm like, "No." And we went on the fancy date with the gift card.

Selena: That's totally great.

Ryan: And you're like, "I'm really glad we did that. That was a special thing."

Selena: There are things that I'm really glad that we did.

Ryan: Anyway. So let's dive into this following rules thing.

Selena: Well, because it seems to be maybe where the heat is for Christian couples because you can get... I mean, you can get really legalistic with this kind of stuff and just really, like, you follow the speed limit, you don't go over... if anything you go under to be a, a better Christian. [laughs]

Ryan: Well, that's to be debated.

Selena: I'm kidding. I know. I'm joking.

Ryan: So I think this question is, what rules are we talking about? Someone's bending rules.

Selena: Right. This is clearly where her issues are.

Ryan: Breaking rule. Keeping rules is a big deal. Whatever she has in her mind it's worth feeling dishonor over if he disregards the rules? Well, the fact that she wrote in, and then the fact that she says, I'm going to follow the rules in this and then he's just not, it just-

Ryan: Right. It sounds like a child dynamic to be honest that like, here's the rules, here's the boundaries, and then-

Ryan: Because it-

Selena: But-

Ryan: It echoes with us because I am of the mindset that not all rules are intrinsically good or should be followed. That some rules are arbitrary. Some rules are even anti-Christ in they're important and what they're trying to accomplish. Of course, those are a little more cut and dry. I would put them in these categories and I could probably change these categories right now and it wouldn't make a huge difference. So it was basically righteous rules. And they're righteous because God has put the rules or the rule givers in place or the rules themselves in place and they uphold what God has already said. Those are righteous rules. Do not murder, do not steal, those sorts of things.

Then there's unrighteous rules, things that are antithetical and dishonor Christ, like I mentioned. For instance, as of this recording, the Congress just passed something about antisemitism because they're reacting to the unrest on the university campuses. In the language of the bill, it says it will be considered a hate speech if you say the Jews killed Jesus. What are we told in God's word?

Well, people say, no, the Romans killed Jesus. Well, why? Because the Jews made them. That's the whole scandal of it. So am I gonna honor a government that says, you can't say Christ is King. You can't say the Jews killed Jesus. Well, sorry, you're outside of your lane, Government. I answer to God for what He said. And I'm not gonna obey those rules. So those are pretty cut and dry.

But then there's these situational rules and morays. So a moray is like a social norm that everyone kind of just understands to be the way we do things. And if you break those rules, it can make for an awkward situation. It can make for your wife feeling like you're a clueless... your husband feeling like you're clueless. And then-

Selena: I think it can also play into just a lack of maturity. Like if you're just going around breaking rules all the time because you feel like it, it's just like, Man, I wish my husband was more mature. Like, that's probably where some of that frustration might be coming from, from that wife of just like, not only do I feel dishonored, but I'm also embarrassed and like, you're not-

Ryan: Then go back up to the beginning of this conversation. Are you doing that thing in love, or are you just trying to be right or you just don't care at all what your wife feels? Now if you have a wife who is demanding the letter of the law according to what she's, you know-

Selena: Why are you looking at me?

- Ryan:** Then that gonna be on the other end of that. So we can talk about the situational rules and morays. Then there's what I call dumb rules. And I always say this-
- Selena:** Dumb rules,
- Ryan:** Dumb rules and dumb laws. We could have a debate on this, but I am of the mind that stupid laws are for stupid people. I'm sorry. And so-
- Selena:** Such as. [both laughs]
- Ryan:** Such as when you're at a stoplight and it's red and there's not a soul around, there's no reason on earth that I should stay stopped. This drives you nuts. [laughs]
- Selena:** Except for the cameras that are gonna catch your license plate and then send you a ticket in the mail.
- Ryan:** My other follow-up to that is I feel like you can break stupid rules. Now, with the caveat, you never wanna endanger anyone. You never want to... Because that would be outside of Go's law. Obviously, speed limits exist. Like you shouldn't be driving a hundred miles an hour because you think the rules are stupid. That's not what we're saying. The speed limits are there for a reason. Right. But if you're willing to pay the ticket without endangering people's lives, you can turn that left and just deal with-
- Selena:** Ryan says he's willing to pay the ticket. I'm like, I'm gonna test this now. I'm gonna see if he's willing to pay my ticket.
- Ryan:** So we have this road by our house. If you were of the mind that you should drive the speed limit to the T and that speed limit is 40 miles an hour, and everybody is driving 50, 55, and it's a straight four-lane road, 40 miles an hour, but you can safely drive 50, you're not endangering anyone, there's not even any cross traffic, there's sidewalks, so people aren't like riding bikes in the lanes-
- Selena:** Ryan's like, "I'm gonna go 60." [both laughs]
- Ryan:** No. Is that okay to speed in that instance? You said, well, in our pregame, you're like, well, I mean, the question is, is it a sin to speed? Is it a sin to speed? This is where it gets really interesting.
- Selena:** I know. It's where it is. It's just like-

- Ryan:** Well, if you say that it is a sin to speed, okay, now... Okay. So every Christian should drive the speed limit. Exactly. Well, what happens if the government says, you know, the speed limit's now 35. Okay, well it's a little bit less reasonable. Clearly, we can drive safely at 50. Everyone thinks that. Everyone does it functionally.
- Selena:** Everyone thinks that.
- Ryan:** And they're like, well, the government... we wanna keep you safe. You know what, 25 is a better speed limit for that zone. In fact-
- Selena:** A slippery slope.
- Ryan:** Let's just do 20, let's do 15. Fifteen's good. At what point are you like, listen, you are overreaching. Just because you're-
- Selena:** Overstepping, yeah.
- Ryan:** ...write law doesn't-
- Selena:** ...mean that I have to follow it because...
- Ryan:** But some would say, Well, Romans 13, you know, give on to Caesar what is Caesar's. You know, you have to honor the civil magistrate. Well, at some point that breaks down and I think it warrants a deeper conversation. Back up to the surface here because we don't have time to go any further into that. I can see you beginning to... I'm losing you. [laughs] You're doing this. [both laughs]
- Selena:** Excuse my fake yawns, my yawns trying to stay in. I don't mean to. I feel so relaxed and safe around you. It's like, ah,
- Ryan:** So how do you honor one another in this? Selena, you had mentioned that you just turn a blind eye. Is that good advice?
- Selena:** Probably not [Ryan laughs] but it keeps me from worrying about it too much. And he is his own individual and he's gonna have to suffer the consequences of it. I probably worry too much about certain things that I shouldn't care about. And so I'm just like, you know what? If he doesn't care and I am... I know that he has my best interest in mind and the best interest of our children, he too does not want them to be hurt.
- I'm thinking of things like, you know, dad's kind of pushed them outta the nest to do things that are a bit more physically challenging. It kind of makes me nervous, but he's like, no, they need to do these things. And I'm like, okay. So

I have to trust him on that. I don't feel like he's dishonoring me when he's telling me to do these things and like let him do these things. I don't think you feel dishonored when I argue with you about that, but maybe you do.

Ryan: I think there's always a line that you can cross either way where... because here's the deal. I don't wanna always just disregard how my actions make my wife feel.

Selena: Right. And it depends on the activity. Right?

Ryan: Here's a good example. We have a trampoline. It's got the net around it. The net got beat up pretty bad in the windstorm. We were gonna get rid of the trampoline, but as kind of a last ditch effort, I took the net off. I just cut everything off. You didn't really have much to say about it, but I could see a mother being like, "That's unsafe. You shouldn't let the kids play on that without the net." And I'm thinking, I fell off-

Selena: How many years did we jump on a trampoline that had no net?

Ryan: I know. If you're our generation, the nets are new as of like 10 years ago.

Selena: There's probably a reason though, right, Ryan?

Ryan: Right. Well, they are objectively safer. But is safety always the ultimate as opposed to convenience? [both laughs]

Selena: Safety, convenience.

Ryan: That's an instance where I think you could be maybe a rule bender because, you know, trampoline rules are you put a net around the thing. You put the pad on the springs so kids don't go through the springs, [laughs] which happened yesterday.

Selena: Although when a kid did,

Ryan: And they were fine.

Selena: ...they were laughing about it. So-

Ryan: They loved it.

Selena: ...it was a great... Yeah.

- Selena:** We're honoring one another in marriage or we're trying to. She says that she doesn't feel honored when he breaks the rules. So again, the question is what rules is he breaking? How consistently is this happening? And for what reason is he breaking the rules? So what is the rule? How often is it happening and why is he doing that?
- Ryan:** It has to do with discernment. I think you have to be discerning, you have to be gracious toward each other. This isn't, wife, just let loosen up, let him do whatever he wants. That's not what we're saying.
- Selena:** Well, no.
- Ryan:** It's also not husband start falling in line with every nitpicky thing that your wife is asking you to do. It's like, well, maybe if she feels bad, because you always smuggle candy into the theater.
- Selena:** I do feel bad sometimes about that, but
- Ryan:** I do not.
- Selena:** I don't go to movies that often. And now what they're charging you, these days. I'm like, take all the candy you want.
- Ryan:** Okay. But then that's one thing. Another one is you're, you know, somebody who's smuggling beer into a football game.
- Selena:** Sure.
- Ryan:** Like see how those are different things. They need to be dealt with differently. Or you know, maybe you want to go swim, you want to go fish-
- Selena:** Well, the punishment should reflect the crime. Right? Or it should be... What's that? What's that rule? The punishment should-
- Ryan:** Fit the crime.
- Selena:** Fit the crime. You're just saying this may not be crime.
- Ryan:** But I'm saying I don't there is a crime. [both laughs] So no punishment.
- Selena:** No punishment.
- Ryan:** Another example is like, you like fishing in a certain swimming hole or fishing hole. Well, maybe it's, you know-

Selena: Not your fishing hole.

Ryan: Right. Or it's, you know, somehow off limits. And thinking, well, why is God's property off limits? It's if it's not owned by somebody, if it's owned by, you know, maybe the state or something versus poaching in a state park. Right. This is a marriage podcast, so we can't really get into the underpinnings in that whole conversation, although that would be fun. The point I wanna draw out here is that in terms of honor, grace, that governs both ways. So as a husband, I'm not going to antagonize my wife.

Selena: Right. And as a wife, I'm not gonna nitpick you about everything.

Ryan: So you have to be just wise. The problems arise when couples stop talking about this stuff. If it's really bothering you, if there's something... like he always wears a hat in church and that bugs you-

Selena: Why does it bug you?

Ryan: Why does it bug you? Talk about it? Why does he feel okay to wear a hat in church? There's something to be talked about there. Instead of just, I've said it a hundred times, I'm just gonna give up. And he knows I don't like that hat and I'm an old-

Selena: I love when you go wife on it-

Ryan: And I'm just done and I'm gonna grow bitter over the years and I'm gonna see him as a lesser, lesser of a man. No, that's not the way you need to honor one another in it. Talk through it. Outdo one another in love.

Selena: Well, and keep talking, like you said, through the discomfort. I mean, our last episode that we recorded, I was like, I don't know the reasons why. And you're like, No, we need to keep diving into this conversation where I feel like I'm at a dead end and I can't give a good example. He's like, no, let's press into it. And I'm like, I don't see anything.

It's once you keep talking and trusting one another and having faith that you'll find clarity and you'll find agreement and you'll find I think a path forward in how to honor one another biblically, then you're on your way. Just keep talking, keep talking through it. You know, uproot the bitterness. Go to scripture for instruction on how to love your husband well and focus on those ways of loving Him and helping Him and encouraging Him.

Ryan: And husbands keep having those conversation too. Because I could see what, what could happen is the wife says, earnestly, I really wanna talk about this way that I feel dishonored and he blows her off. So that's not a loving way to respond to your wife. So it does take two. So the prayer is that you both would have that sense of wanting to outdo one another in love and find-

Selena: Agreement.

Ryan: Agreement and the holy thing to do. Right?

Selena: Like God honoring thing to do.

Ryan: Wish we can talk about rules and laws and things like that. But we're gonna have to shut down this episode. [laughs]

Selena: Aw shucks.

Ryan: I think laws are good. And some laws-

Selena: There are some laws, yes.

Ryan: ...are good. But I don't think every law deserves blind-

Selena: Obedience?

Ryan: Cold obedience.

Selena: Agreed.

Ryan: ...in the name of the Romans 13. We don't like to end these episodes without presenting the gospel. If you've not heard the good news of Jesus Christ, here it is. God became flesh in the Son and He lived the perfect life that we couldn't live and He died the sinner's death that we should have died so that we could place our faith in Him. He didn't stay dead. He actually resurrected from the grave into, and He promises us when we place our faith in Him, we'll be resurrected spiritually here in this life, be made new, a new creation., your sins will be forgiven.

He has already paid the price for those sins when you're in Christ. And not only that, you're given His right standing with God, His righteousness. So you go from having a negative balance up to zero and then up to a positive infinity when you place your faith in Christ. That is the good news of the gospel. And it is free of charge because Christ has paid the price.

So if you want to know more about that, we say find a friend who is a Christian, talk to them, and say, Tell me the gospel. Talk to me about Jesus. Read your Bible with them. Find a church that preaches outta the Bible. If you don't have either of those things readily available, go to thenewsisgood.com. There is a church finder there. There's also a brief description of what it all means.

So let's pray. Lord God, I pray that this was a helpful conversation. I pray that we honored You, Lord and I pray that we would help couples honor one another, husbands and wives honor one another in the name of outdoing one another in love, because you've given us this gift of covenant. I pray that you'd help them to press into it. If they're struggling, may this be the hope they needed to see. In Jesus name, amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: All right, ladies and gentlemen, this episode of Fierce Marriage is—

Selena: In the can.

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

Selena: Stay fierce.

PODCAST NOTES

- **Referenced scripture**
 - Romans 12:10
 - 1 Peter 1:22

- **Recommended resource**
 - thenewsisgood.com

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