

10 (SIMPLE) WAYS TO DE-ESCALATE ARGUMENTS AND FIGHTS

<https://fiercemarriage.com/10-simple-ways-to-de-escalate-arguments-and-fights>

[00:00:00]

Ryan: You know, Selena, one of the areas I feel like we've really grown in is the lack of escalation in our conflict. Because there are times when I'll say something and I kind of expect you to escalate because I'll be frustrated. Like yesterday I was complaining because I'm convinced, all right, I'm convinced that the ladies in my life, my wife and my four daughters, sometimes they set booby traps for me.

I open a cupboard and everything falls out of the cupboard when I open it. Or I grab one thing and everything else is like resting on that one thing.

Selena: If it's down low, I blame the younger children. If it's up high I blame myself.

Ryan: And so I was venting. I was complaining about this state of affairs.

Selena: Complaining.

Ryan: And you were... is that the right word?

Selena: I don't know. It's a sin, but-

Ryan: I was grumbling.

Selena: Also a sin.

Ryan: Lord forgive me.

Selena: Keep going.

Ryan: And you didn't escalate it. You just kind of explained why it happened and it didn't turn into something.

Selena: Yeah. I don't even hardly remember this. [laughs]

Ryan: It's like you stopped taking me so seriously. And I kind of need that when it comes to these things. So today, uh, you know, we're going to actually pull this one out. We're going to update. This is out of the archives. We recorded a version of this episode four years ago when we were preparing to launch See Through Marriage, a book that we wrote. And it's called 10 ways to de-escalate conflict.

Selena: I think it'll be a helpful topic. I'm surprised we haven't talked about it sooner. And hopefully we've grown in our knowledge and understanding of God's word and how it applies. And we can share that with you guys today. So we'll see you on the other side.

[00:01:43] <music>

Selena: So if you're married, you're going to deal with conflict. And if you're-

Ryan: It's inevitable.

Selena: Even on your wedding day, I think there's even like a little bit of conflict always, right?

Ryan: That's a pretty unique situation.

Selena: Little bit. Like there could be a little tension, frustration.

Ryan: Yeah. Well, it's high.

Selena: The fact of the matter is you can't live a conflict-free marriage. We don't teach that here. But we do teach you, we do share with you, we hope to share with you ways to fight faster, to reconcile quicker, to not let your emotions kind of run the show when it comes to conflict, because you can actually lead... it just leads to sin and hurtful-

Ryan: Yeah. Conflict is not a sin in itself.

Selena: No.

Ryan: There are ways to conflict-

Selena: That are healthy.

Ryan: ...and have disagreements that will actually make you better-

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: ...and make your marriage stronger. So a lot of times the tendency or I guess the unhealthiness is the difference between reacting and responding. And the reactions of our conflict are what tend to escalate it. And then when you get escalated, you start to act irrationally because you're starting to feel emotionally-

Selena: You get defensive or you feel vulnerable or... yeah. I'm excited to walk through these again because I feel like they're a good fresh reminder for my own heart and mind.

Ryan: So welcome. This will be a good conversation. My name is Ryan. This is my lovely wife Selena. We are the Fredericks. We do the Fierce Marriage Podcast on Tuesdays and sometimes Fierce Parenting on Thursdays. This episode... I wanted to mention something very special. So if you are in the Pacific Northwest, this is going to be one of those timely things that is... it's going to be timely for about three weeks and then it's going to be in the archives and people are going to wonder.

We are doing a date night. It's a couple's date night. So if you're in the Northwest, in Seattle, Tacoma area, maybe even as far as if you wanted to do like a hotel, you could do that. Come to church with us in the morning. It's a date night.

To find out more about that, I'm not going to give you much details other than it's on a Saturday night. It's from 6:00 to 9:00. You can go to [Fiercemarriage.com/datenight](https://fiercemarriage.com/datenight) to find out the cost. Actually, it's just \$20. It's really cheap. That covers dessert. That covers wine if you're a wine drinker. And also it covers a concert. And we're going to be doing a podcast recording with our friends, Chris and Stephanie Teague of Out of the Dust. We love them. They're awesome.

Selena: Yeah. We're hoping to be talking about how to build unity and then how to rebuild trust after it's been broken. You probably know that's part of their story. So they don't get to step into talking about that much outside of their concerts. So we're really excited to hear their hearts on that.

Ryan: So as a listener, if you're not in the area, you'll get the benefit of that podcast recording because they're awesome. By the way, we hope to do more of these date nights with them around the country. So just stay tuned for that. Keep listening to the podcast. We'd love to meet some of you in person in that context.

So let's dive into this. All right. This is very practical. And maybe, I'm just going to say this, if you're listening in your car or you're listening while you're working out or you're whatever, doing chores and you're not with your spouse, this might be one of those episodes that you listen to together.

Selena: Yeah, absolutely.

- Ryan:** Anf you turn it into your own little date night.
- Selena:** Your own little date night. There you go.
- Ryan:** How to de-escalate.
- Selena:** De-escalating date nights.
- Ryan:** Because it's that practical and then something you can put to work right now.
- Selena:** Well, and the Bible talks about reconciliation, right? Christ is our great reconciler, bringing us back into communion with God. We really only bring sin to the equation here, right? And so with Christ as our model of reconciling, bringing us back, calling us out on our sin, well, lovingly, you know, I think the Holy Spirit convicts. This more tangible episode is really rooted in the fact that Christ... He brings us back to God and He doesn't leave us the way that we are.
- So being good, like adding this tool belt of adding this tool to your tool belt of marriage, reconciliation, of learning to deal and love one another, you know, genuinely is I think the mark of a true Christian. And somebody who wants to I guess live in the light of that.
- Ryan:** Good. So let's go to scripture real fast. And just to kind of reinforce what you've already said, I looked this up really fast. This is Romans 12:9. This will be kind of our foundation, but... yeah, every one of these principles will kind of be building on this idea of letting our love be genuine for each other and actually loving each other the way that God has shown us, not the way we think we should or the way we, you know-
- Selena:** Or we want to be loved.
- Ryan:** ... in our own wisdom. We want to use God's wisdom. So this is Romans 12:9-13. Actually, let's go through verse 12. "Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.
- So I feel like rejoicing in hope, being patient in tribulation, being constant in prayer, these are all... those behaviors precipitate what we're going to talk about today. They create the ability to do what we're talking about today.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** All right. Without further ado.

Selena: Yeah. And you may not be able to remember all 10 in this order, which is fine.

Ryan: Find one and latch on to it. [Selena laughs] Okay. Number one. We're de-escalating. First, let's talk about what de-escalation means. I mentioned it in the intro. But if ever you have a conflict in marriage, it's up to somebody to de-escalate it, whether they do it intentionally or they do it on accident. Like you did it on accident yesterday.

Selena: Unintentional. It's flowing from a fountain that has already-

Ryan: All of the credit and none of the blame.

Selena: Well, no, because it's like whatever you're filling yourself with, you know, that's going to flow out of you. So if I've been trying to, you know, be in the word, study the word, be in prayer and like have the Lord soften my heart, give me more patience and responsiveness to things... Fine. You think I'm just tooting my own horn here.

Ryan: No. If ever you do escalate it, I can just say, Hmm, who's not in the word?

Selena: Somebody's not been reading their Bible.

Ryan: Somebody's not been reading their Bible.

Selena: Yes, you can.

Ryan: Sometimes, and depending on the nature of your relationship, there have been times in our marriage where I feel like we are walking on eggshells. Or another analogy is it's a minefield. And so to take the minefield analogy is to deescalate is to refuse to step on the mines. Now, obviously, you don't always know where the mines are. But you actually dismantle the mines, diffuse the bombs before they have a chance to even be lit. And so de-escalating does that.

Now, if you don't do that, that's where it just gets worse and worse. And pretty soon that's where we start to sin in our anger when we've allowed some... we've forsaken wisdom. You know, it's not that we're just getting close to the edge of the cliff, but-

Selena: We're acting a fool. [laughs]

Ryan: So if you think about a conflict as if... you know, failing to be de-escalated, it's as if you're getting closer and closer to the edge of a cliff. Well, wisdom says,

Hey, there's a cliff there. Let's stop because if we fall off the cliff we're going to die. Everyone's going to get hurt. Let's back off. But instead, you keep edging each other forward until inevitably you fall to your death or the argument brings you some level of pain. So that's what escalation is. So de-escalating is avoiding that.

So number one to de-escalate a situation is simply this. Breathe. Breathe. There's a reason why James tells us to be slow to speak, quick to listen. I mean, we hear that a lot, so we tend to gloss over that. Here's how that works. At least I'll just talk about us here and then I'll let you respond because I've been talking.

When you say something I get defensive. When I'm slow to speak and I'm quick to listen, I'll try to think, okay, she didn't mean to say the way that I'm hearing it. She meant something that I might be missing. I'm going to slow down and try to listen, even though you're done talking, cause you've said the thing and maybe rehash it and understand.

Now, if I don't understand, now here's the slow-to-speak part. I'm not going to just react. Instead, I'm going to try to seek deeper understanding. That's what breathing does. It gives you that chance to wait, breathe, then speak.

Selena: I'm so glad this is recorded just in case you need to hear that again.

Ryan: I hope you learned something.

Selena: I'm hoping you'll learn something. [laughs]

Ryan: Clearly, I already know it. [Selena laughs] So what is it that our friend John... or we learned this when we did some training for Weekend to Remember. They said that the difference between a reaction and a response is three seconds. So yeah, take the three seconds. Breathe. That's number one. Very simple. Number two, what do you got?

Selena: Remember your big perspective. Your spouse is loved by God. You actually do love your spouse [laughs] in the moment that you may not feel like you want to be loving towards them. You know, your marriage is a covenant. It's made before God. Sin will break it if we allow it to.

But this is the big perspective. The whole part of de-escalating is remembering that we're not just de-escalating to then sweep it under the carpet or ignore, but we're de-escalating in order to reconcile, in order to step back into unity. And so keeping that big perspective. You know, why are things falling out of the cupboard when, you know, I open them every time it feels like it... you

know, okay, what's the big perspective here? Okay. I've got little people in the house and things just kind of go everywhere sometimes. How can I be gracious in my response towards my spouse, my husband and me speaking? But you don't put things away. You put them away, but you move other things to like put them away, throw other things out.

Ryan: That was me getting thrown under the bus. I put things away.

Selena: Sorry. I didn't mean to pause there. I was trying to think of where you put them away. That was unintentional. Sorry. You sometimes put things away though.

Ryan: [inaudible 00:12:11] can go there.

Selena: Things just come out.

Ryan: We can escalate this sucker right now. Yeah. We say the big perspective. We didn't-

Selena: It's kind of keeps things into perspective.

Ryan: It's the idea that you're not just another person. You're my wife. You're not just my wife. You are made in the image of God. You're not just my wife made in the image of God, but I am called and be... I am called to love you the way Christ has loved the church. That is no small thing right now. If I pause and remember that perspective, you better be sure that I'm going to be careful in how-

Selena: Yeah. That truth should-

Ryan: ...what I say, how it [inaudible].

Selena: ...yeah, it should bear weight on your response.

Ryan: Right. And a wife's position wanting to honor and respect and-

Selena: Yeah, my tongue will slow down for sure. Knowing that, okay, you're my husband, I love and respect you and I want to love and respect you still. So I'm going to slow this role. [laughs]

Ryan: So I will say that takes a mature person. Right. If you can't do this, I'm just going to say you're immature and you need to grow. You need to grow in your ability to recognize and your ability to tell you your mind where to go and not just let your tongue do whatever it's going to do.

- Selena:** Self-control.
- Ryan:** Self-control.
- Selena:** Controlling those thoughts too. Making them obedient to Christ. All right. We got to move along here.
- Ryan:** Because we have seven more of these or eight more. Number three. I really liked this one. It's to lovingly call out the escalation. Meaning that when you notice it's starting to heat up, you can say that. Say, Hey, I know this is heating up. Now you don't say to your wife, "Calm down." [laughs]
- Selena:** Hey, calm down. All right.
- Ryan:** Hey, just calm down. That never goes well.
- Selena:** Escalation.
- Ryan:** You lovingly call it out. So consciously say-
- Selena:** It's acknowledging it.
- Ryan:** "...we've been here before. I don't want to do this. I'm sorry." Own your part. I think that's the quickest way to do this in a loving way is owning your part.
- Selena:** It's very diffusing when you own your part. Yes.
- Ryan:** I shouldn't have said it like that: I'm sorry.
- Selena:** I will affirm that. Yes.
- Ryan:** I don't want this to go further because I love you. And by the way, big perspective, let's breathe. [both laughs]
- Selena:** I just go backwards. I think it's great.
- Ryan:** Lovingly call it out. Now, of course, I could go sideways, but try to do it as lovingly as possible.
- Selena:** Be mature about it. [both laughs]
- Ryan:** Okay. Number four. Number four. What do you got?

- Selena:** I don't like this one, but name your emotions. I mean-
- Ryan:** Why don't you like it?
- Selena:** Well, because it feels so like introspective.
- Ryan:** I am feeling very... The Fredericks are not fans of self-analysis. Now, we are fans... Like we do need to know ourselves, but biblically speaking, we need to know the heart is foolish above all else. Like my heart is inclined toward destruction and I need to be corrected by the word of... as opposed to, you know what, let's put words to our emotions. That's not something that we typically...
- Selena:** Not really, but I think it is good to know how to communicate what you're feeling in the moment and why maybe it makes you feel that way. But I don't think we need to sit for hours and hours and diagnose what's happening for all of life. Because scripture bears weight on true... it's the truth of the situation.
- So if we're feeling like things are escalating and I'm crying or something and you're like just cold and can't figure out what's going on, we both just want to like walk away. How can naming our emotions help us like stay in the game? I can say, "Hey, my feelings are really hurt right now because... And you may not mean to do this, but when you say this, this is how I understand it. This is how I hear it. This is how I take it. And I'm probably not right in this, but how can we reconcile this?" Right?
- Ryan:** Right.
- Selena:** So just having that clarity around maybe what's kind of going on in your own heart so that you can kind of bring it to your spouse and say like, Here I am-
- Ryan:** The key with this is you're focusing on... you're not blaming. It can be really tempting to be like, You always make me feel... Well, that's not really productive. Instead, when you said that, I felt this. I'll use an example without being specific. Yesterday we talked and you had made some plans, not thinking about the other plans that we had. And that made me feel like-
- Selena:** You were hurt.
- Ryan:** ...you didn't care. Yeah. My tendency is to just be like, "Whatever. I don't care.
- Selena:** You take a deep dive into, wow, she hates me. [laughs]

- Ryan:** I don't do that. I didn't.
- Selena:** Like rejected. You felt rejected. You said your feelings were hurt.
- Ryan:** Also, I was irritated at our daughters with their malfeasance. Trying to do family worship. Hello. It's this transparent moment here. I was trying to lead family worship and it's like they couldn't care less.
- Selena:** It happens in the Frederick household. And he said-
- Ryan:** And I was just like, you know what? No one's listening. And I said... and this is the end of the Psalm. I was like, Praise the Lord. I shut it and left. He stood up and left. Hallelujah.
- Selena:** They were like, Daddy was serious.
- Ryan:** Where's the Tylenol? Yeah. That was in the middle of kind of that emotional melee that happened. And I was just like... yeah, I felt this way. But honestly, here's the thing. When I said that, it helped me not feel that way anymore because we could talk... and you love me so well in it. So thank you.
- Selena:** You're welcome.
- Ryan:** We communicate-
- Selena:** I feel like I'm growing in that too. You do. You do. You become a better Ninja.
- Ryan:** No. You specifically. It's like you're an emotional Ninja. Just healing all my wounds. Well done. Okay. So naming your emotions. And we don't mean to make it sound like you can't do that or somehow it's bad. That's just not something that we typically do.
- Selena:** Just don't dwell on it. The point is not to just like find your emotions. The point is to say, here's where I'm at. Let's move forward.
- Ryan:** Right. Okay. Don't stew in them. All right, number five. This one we kind of talked about a little bit, but assume less, try to listen more. Emotionally mature people with an emotional intellect, okay, I mean that you're aware of how these things work, you need to understand that when you are emotionally revved up, you don't see clearly.
- Selena:** Right. Right. And you have to sometimes trust your spouse to know that about you. Like, for example, we've had this point of contention about a board that you sit on and we've been working through lots of stuff. And I kind of get

emotionally ramped up. And you're like, Babe, you're not seeing the whole picture here. You're not seeing things clearly. You haven't been in the meetings. And I'm like, what do you know? You know? [laughs]

I'm assuming that I see the whole picture. There are a lot of assumptions there. But then I have to trust you. So I've submitted to you and said, you know what? You're right. My emotions are high. I probably don't see things clearly. I'm trying to see things clearly, but like I'm going to take this lesson of I don't see the whole picture. My emotions are blinding me. I need to take a step back and reassess.

And if we're going to go on this ship that is sinking, we're going on it together, baby. Because I'm going with you. I'm going to follow you blindly.

Ryan: Honestly, that felt like a turning point in that situation in our marriage. Do you remember I said something to you? I'm like, I can't believe I just said that, but I'm glad I did. Because I said, "You know, sometimes I just wish you would hold your tongue."

Selena: You did. And I was like, Okay. Well, that triggered to me. I might not be submitting right now.

Ryan: Well, because... we don't get into it, but yeah, you're right there. I can't bring you up to speed on everything. So there are things that just... there's no way for you to understand. It doesn't mean that I-

Selena: And my motivation was not to be insubordinate. It was to be protective of you and your heart. And I'm like, maybe you don't see things that I see because I'm not in that mud. I'm outside the mud, you know? Anyways, assume less, listen more. Well, number six, ask lots of questions.

Ryan: Okay. As you can see, they all kind of... what is it?

Selena: They compound off each other.

Ryan: They build on each other. Ask lots of questions. So we've talked about this on the communication side a lot. But there's a podcast episode we recorded. I think it's the art of asking questions or why asking questions is actually a grace of God. In our books, *How a Husband Speaks*, *How a Wife Speaks*, we talked about we have a God who has asked questions of us. Now, He knows everything yet He sees fit at times throughout Scripture to ask questions. Why? Because He's trying to find information? No, because he's trying to draw something out of His people. He's illustrating something about Himself.

So sometimes even in the marriage relationship, we ask questions. We're not God. So we need to actually learn new things. But it's also a way of opening up and keeping the conversation going in a way that... again, we're disarming. We're de-escalating.

Selena: We're diffusing.

Ryan: Yes, all the D words. And asking questions is very... it's a humble posture.

Selena: Yeah. I was just going to say, you have to be in a posture of humility in order to ask genuine questions.

Ryan: I have a question.

Selena: How dare you?

Ryan: Don't ask that question: "Who do you think you are?"

Selena: These are not actual questions. They're escalating statements.

Ryan: So questions like, what do you mean when you said (blank)? Or I hear that you said this, is this what you meant by that?

Selena: Get clarification.

Ryan: That's number six. Number seven. Number seven is vacate.

Selena: Just leave. [both laughs] If it's going bad, just split. No, that's not at all what we're saying.

Ryan: Great. People are going to write in for that. No. But here's the caveat. It's okay to leave a situation if you're not able to deescalate it with the clear intent that you will return and resolve.

Selena: Yeah. "Hey, we're not getting through this this morning. Clearly, we're at war disconnect. We can't just... so after work, we're going to set aside some time. We need to come back to this and reconcile. Like, let's pray about it. Let's give it some room to breathe." But you're not going to let it just be out there without resolve.

Ryan: Ephesians 4:26 says, "In your anger do not sin." So what do you do if anger is an emotion... What do you do if you're to that place of anger and you feel like you're at risk of sinning? It's okay to-

- Selena:** One of the best things you could do.
- Ryan:** ...with the intent of returning. And you need to communicate that. It needs to be a standing understanding that you have.
- Selena:** I would say another word for vacate would just be like a timeout. Like you guys are taking a timeout.
- Ryan:** Pause clause.
- Selena:** A pause clause. Take that timeout. Take the pause clause.
- Ryan:** Go for a walk.
- Selena:** Because you can't think clearly when your emotions are going high.
- Ryan:** When I'm in a funk... I'll just say this. When I'm in a funk, I know for a fact that if I go do anything physical, whether it's working around the yard... what are you smirking at?
- Selena:** Nothing. I'm listening.
- Ryan:** Or it's going to the gym. For the gym. It's like our garage. Or go for a run, which who runs, right? Only the unrighteous run when no one pursues. Anyway. So I know without a shadow of doubt, if I do something physical that it will change how I'm thinking about whatever the situation is.
- Selena:** I'm like, is that a boy thing? Because, you know, boys need to like jump off things and like... I don't know if physical stuff for boys is like-
- Ryan:** Clarifying.
- Selena:** Clarifying. Yeah. Women are just like, ouch, you hurt my feelings.
- Ryan:** When our daughters are riled up we make them run around the house a few times.
- Selena:** Like literally outside. But anyways, yes, in your anger do not sin. So in your anger, take a timeout, take a pause, vacate with the intention to resolve.
- Number eight, take responsibility. You said this before, but own your parts. I think until you can really... because when you get too focused on your spouse and their flaws and what they're not seeing, what they're not hearing, and why they're so mean or whatever, you're really not seeing anything clearly.

We have to own our part in it. A biblical premise, of course, is all have sinned, right? We've all fallen short. We are all in need of God's grace. We are all in desperate need of his forgiveness and for the blood of Christ to reconcile us to God.

And we've been given that pardon of assurance. And so how can we not own our part? You know, like Christ took our sin, he took what we should have been given. And so I think as Christians, the only way we really can live in the light and we can get to a place of reconciliation is by taking that first step and being the first in your marriage to take responsibility and ownership of where you've sinned or where... "Hey, I didn't use a good tone. I'm sorry." Or, "Hey, I just kind of threw something at you and like walked away." Like vocally, not physically threw something at you. But I just kind of dropped a bomb and walked away. And I'm sorry about that. Or I treated you without the respect and love that you deserve. Please forgive me. You know, I was-

Ryan: Gosh. It's amazing how attached we are by nature to those little mistakes that we make as if because we did it somehow it's legitimate. When in reality, if we could see clearly and realize, I've just communicated or done something in an illegitimate way, in an unhelpful way, in an unloving way-

Selena: I've sinned.

Ryan: And just because I did it doesn't mean I need to defend it. Like don't defend it if it's wrong. You notice in all of these there's one theme that I see interwoven in them. And it's humility. And where do we get our humility? Well, it's from the gospel. Realizing that we, in our death, have been brought to life, in our sin we were loved and brought out of our sin, not just by a good person, but by-

Selena: Christ.

Ryan: ...God Himself.

Selena: God Himself. Truly how can you stand in a place of self-righteousness when you've just committed a sin, if that's really what your heart's posture is? And so if you find yourself getting into these kerfuffles and they keep escalating, frankly, friend, that's the clearest call we can make to you right now is stand before God and humble yourself before God. Because that's the key to unlock all of these, I'll say, superpowers.

Okay, number nine. Ditch the tit for tat. What do I mean by that? It's this idea that if she takes a jab, I should take a jab.

Selena: Or while you're talking, I'm thinking of my response already and not even actually listening genuinely to you.

Ryan: Right. Because when you're doing that, okay, we have this written down, it deflects in two different ways. You're not really listening because you're defensive and you're also distracting from what your spouse was trying to say, whether or not they're successfully saying it is another conversation. So I'm not listening, now I'm defensive and I'm not actually hearing what you're saying. So I'm just thinking about what I can say because I have to get the next shot in.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: Well, what if you didn't do that? What if you just let the cards fall and lay where they fall? So like you say something and I don't react. Right?

Selena: Well, yes.

Ryan: Now, if you never stop saying things and it's a berating thing, well, that's not necessarily... it's already escalated at that point.

Selena: Right, right, right, right.

Ryan: So that might be the time to go back up to number seven, I think is the pause clause piece. But yeah, you just have to ditch this thing. And I think this goes for all of marriage. Living your life in marriage on a tit-for-tat basis it flies in the face of marital charity, marital unity, marital generosity. The idea that if you get yours I have to get mine.

Selena: Yeah. I mean, that's so antithetical to what God has defined love as, right? Like love is patient. Love is kind. Love is, you know-

Ryan: It keep no record of wrong.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Tit for tat by definition is you're keeping a record. Like you have a T account. I hated accounting in college. It was the worst class. But they had T accounts and you balance the T account by putting the opposite number on the other side of the account. Well, that's what tit for tat is. You got a plus-five on yours, now I need a plus-five on mine so I can zero out yours. Now that's not biblical covenantal marriage.

Selena: Christ zeroed out all of our sin.

Ryan: Amen. You were just waiting for that, weren't you?

Selena: No. That was a big word.

Ryan: Big word. Propitiation. Okay, number 10. Finally, their way to deescalate conflict is to get help as needed. Now, if you realize that you continually go down this path and you contend it's a broken record, you need some outside perspective. Now this is where a lot of couples really trip up.

Here's going to be a loving point of challenge for you our fierce marriage listeners. If you are not in the body of Christ, if you're not part of a church and that church does not preach, if you're not part of a church that preaches out of the word, you're not part of a church that has a healthy pastoral people in it, pastors and elders, then you will have a hard time.

Now, a lot of people will write in and say, we need help. And we've tried to go... you know, we've asked people for help. And I ask, Are you in a church? Are you submitted to pastoral leadership? Are you correct... And usually more often than not, it's either the husband or the wife or both, one of them or both of them are not part of the body of Christ.

So here's my challenge to the Christians. If you call yourself a Christian and you've placed your faith in Christ, you cannot neglect Christ's bride. That's the church. We are His bride. And so many times Christians say, yeah, I love Jesus so much, but yeah, the church is not for me. Well, then you've rejected what Christ has said.

Selena: Yeah, you can't take pieces of it.

Ryan: And so that's the big underlying thing to this very practical thing, which is get help. Now, we are of the mind that that first and ultimate line of help is going to be through the body of Christ, through pastoral care. Now, not all pastoral care is helpful. Unfortunately, we don't have perfect pastors. Pastors are not infallible. But still they are in charge of your soul. They should be able to help you see things you're not seeing, connect the dysfunction to areas of disbelief and sin, and then call you to repentance from that. That's what pastoral care is.

Here's why you're arguing. Your heart is bound up with pride. And as a loving shepherd, I can see that. And I want you to see that. And I want you to reject that. I want you to turn away from it and embrace Christ in that.

Or here's why you continually have this fight. Because you're living unwisely. You have bought the lie that if you work 80 hours a week you'll have the lifestyle you want and realize you're failing to find satisfaction in Jesus. And that's causing you to strive in your work. And your wife feels neglected, brother. You bought a lie. Repent and believe the gospel. That's what pastoral care will do. And so sometimes you need others to help you see that.

Or if you see that in your spouse but they're no longer listening to you when it comes to the escalations, another voice will be there to hopefully open that up for you. Well, there you have it. 10 ways to deescalate conflict. And you know what, if we had another half hour, you might even think of 10 more, but we'll leave it at that.

You've heard us talk about Jesus a lot. That is our goal because everything revolves around Him. It is by Him and through Him and for Him that all things created are created. And there is not one thing that was created that was created aside from Him. We read that in John 1. Marriage is included in that. And friend, your eternal soul is included in that.

And so we want you to know Jesus. We want you to place your trust in him. If you haven't done that yet, find a friend who's a Christian, say, I want to know Jesus. I want to place my trust in Him. Start reading your Bible with that friend. Hopefully, that friend has a church like we described that preaches out of the Bible. Go to that church.

If they don't have a church that preaches out of the Bible, find one. If you don't have a friend like that, or a church like that that you know of, we have a website that might help you to those ends. And it's this: thenewsisgood.com. And we pray that you go there and you would find Christ. And then we will call you brother or sister and see you in glory someday. All right. Is that it?

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Yeah, that's it. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we love You. Father, thank You for the gift of marriage. I pray for the couples, the husbands and wives listening to this, that they would understand the ability that they have to deescalate conflict, that their conflict might be more glorifying to You, more productive in their marriage, it might bear even good fruit by learning to conflict well in a way that is aligned with your word, in a way that is aligned with biblical love. We love You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: Okay. That's it for this episode of the Fierce Marriage Podcast. This was a fun one. Very practical.

Selena: Very practical.

Ryan: Okay. Okay.

Selena: I hope it helped you.

Ryan: I hope it helped you. I kind of knew everything. [Selena laughs] I've been there, done that.

Selena: Do you have? Okay. So tell me. I have so many questions for you.

Ryan: I'll have to answer offline. Anyway, 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**
 - Romans 12:9-12
 - Ephesians 4:26

- **Recommended resource**
 - thenewsisgood.com

FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

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

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

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

Podcast: <https://fiercemarriage.com/podcast>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/fiercemarriage>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/fiercemarriage>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/fiercemarriage>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/fiercemarriage>

Pinterest: <https://pinterest.com/fiercemarriage>

Ask Us Anything: <https://fiercemarriage.com/ask>