

### **3 WAYS TO KEEP A CLEAN HOUSE**

[3 Ways to Keep a Clean House - Fierce Marriage](#)

[00:00:00]

**Ryan:** Keeping a clean house. Selena-

**Selena:** No, that's impossible. We cannot all be clean at the same time. Parts of it can be clean.

**Ryan:** Tell me, how do we keep the house clean?

**Selena:** Why does it matter? [both laughs]

**Ryan:** Well, so I can find my underpants. [both laughs]

**Selena:** We've talked about this. Are you talking about the house, Ryan? Are you talking about something else?

**Ryan:** Are we talking about the house? Are we talking about The House?

**Selena:** We're talking about our marriage house.

**Ryan:** We're talking about the marriage house. That's right.

**Selena:** Marriage house, yes.

**Ryan:** So today we're talking about this practice, the discipline, if you will, of keeping a clean house. And yes or no, we are not talking about sweeping the floors, vacuuming, you know, cleaning the bathrooms, doing dishes.

**Selena:** Or are we?

**Ryan:** I don't know anymore. Anyway, we'll see you on the other side.

[00:00:46] <music>

**Selena:** Howdy and hello.

**Ryan:** Howdy and hello. Welcome to the Fierce Marriage Podcast. My name is Ryan. This is my lovely wife, Selena. You are here in The Forge. If you're watching, if you're listening to it, you're in the Forge, too, just only audioly.

- Selena:** You just can't see it.
- Ryan:** You can't see it. Oh, this is made possible by our Fierce Fellows in the Fierce Fellowship. If you'd like to be a part of that, I like to say it's a cornucopia of delights.
- Selena:** Oh my goodness. We should get T-shirts made. Fierce Fellow.
- Ryan:** Oh, yeah, that's a great idea. I'd rock it. I'd rock it.
- Selena:** I know, right?
- Ryan:** Let's get that done, Freddie. Go to [FierceMarriage.com/partner](https://FierceMarriage.com/partner). At some point in the future, Selena's new shirts about Fierce Fellows might be available to you.
- Selena:** Stay salty. It'll stay on the back.
- Ryan:** Stay salty. Stay lit, as you say. You have a sweatshirt that says that. Lit as in light and salt.
- Selena:** Yeah, there's a Bible verse underneath it. So hopefully it's not saying the wrong message. Anyways.
- Ryan:** You're promoting marriage you want to use.
- Selena:** No, I am not. I'm officially not.
- Ryan:** Yeah. Don't do drugs, kids.
- Selena:** We just started our Gospel Centered Marriage cohort and I just want to share that because I think it's there's still some time to jump on. They're only a couple of weeks in. If you want to do it, great. If you don't want to do it and you still want to get your marriage on center, on point-
- Ryan:** It's as they say, asynchronous. In other words, you can do whatever you want, people.
- Selena:** Who's "they"?
- Ryan:** They. You know, they say a lot of stuff.
- Selena:** Who say asynchronous? I've never said that.

- Ryan:** They say it where I come from.
- Selena:** Okay. So you're with different "theys" than I am. My "theys" are different.
- Ryan:** Don't go there. That's a nicer theys. [both laughs]
- Selena:** Oh, my goodness. Okay, well, today we are talking about keeping a clean house and it's not in the way you think. Yes, dishes and laundry pile up and you should be, you know, on it. Sometimes there's some marriage stressors in there. But we're talking about it somewhat allegorically.
- We were at a Bible education night — they call it BEN at our church — kind of every other Wednesdays. And you were kind of leading the discussion on it. We watched a video and he had talked about marriage and how there's a clean house, then there's a messy house, right? If you're not kind of keeping short accounts and identifying kind of where's the mess in our marriage, where's the stink coming from in the back corner-
- Ryan:** Put some stank on it.
- Selena:** Then-
- Ryan:** I mean, let me jump in because specifically he's talking about sin. He's specifically talking about sin. You glossed right over the analogy like you do. There are two houses.
- Selena:** This is why you're here.
- Ryan:** One is a huge success in that it's clean, it's tidy, there's not screaming coming from the house. And then right next door, you've got the same house, same architecture, but it's it smells like death. It's dirty. The kids are running around with their diapers on their heads.
- Selena:** Clearly nothing's been done there for a long while.
- Ryan:** What is the difference between those two houses? They both make dirty dishes. They both make dirty laundry. The one difference is one household picks those things up, cleans those things up. The other household does not. And so the analogy, as it goes, is about sin. You know, everyone sins. Every marriage has sin in their lives.
- Selena:** I miss that. I was getting to it. I just didn't give it enough time.

**Ryan:** Well, here we are. So the difference is, are you dealing with that sin or are you letting it pile up and start to smell the high heaven and start to-

**Selena:** Because it's going to smell. You're going to smell it someday.

**Ryan:** It's just a matter of time until the little tiny sins turn into piles of sins that are unrepented of, unforgiven, undealt with. And Lord forbid they turn into even bigger, smellier things. So in the name of keeping clean house, quote-unquote, in your marriage, we have a few things that we want to talk through today.

**Selena:** Right. Three ways to kind of keep your marriage house clean and picked up. So the first one is to keep short accounts. In other words, be quick to repent, be fast to forgive, quick to confess that sin that you know you did or you can sense that you did. No, I'm kidding.

**Ryan:** Ephesians 4:23 says this: "Be kind to one another, tender, hard, forgiving one another as God and Christ forgave you."

**Selena:** Yeah. 4:32.

**Ryan:** So this is for the person who's receiving the repentance.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right. We are to be kind in offering forgiveness. Now, here's where it gets really sticky, because not all sins are equal. If I've had a grumpy morning and I've been mean with my words or I've been impatient, that's a little bit easier to repent of than say, you know, if you're addicted to pornography and you've just fallen to that or you've lied for many years, that's going to be hard. Now, they all need-

**Selena:** It's gonna be a deep clean right there.

**Ryan:** You're going to need a deep clean. Exactly. The dark, stinky, messy stuff needs to be dealt with. But here's the good news is that this verse still stands, is that we are forgiving one another as God and Christ forgave you.

And so when you say keep short accounts, if you've not cleaned up in a while, we're not talking about... that's not a short account. That's a long account. Assuming you've shored up the accounts and you've gotten back to where all of it is out and the accounts are clear, again, meaning that there's no unconfessed sin lurking about in the darkness, that's when you can begin to keep short accounts. So I just want to be-

**Selena:** That's good. No, I appreciate that. Yeah.

**Ryan:** And so that's when you identify the sin quickly and you're quick to repent of it.

**Selena:** Right. Right. So when all the accounts are shored up, I think the next step is to have high regard for one another and to grow into that. And what do we mean by high regard? It's the difference between like thoughtfulness and loving one another or loving one another in a way that communicates love to you, not projecting the way I want to be loved, but actually being thoughtful.

It's the difference between, you know, walking in the door and being like, after work, "Hey, you know, you're on your phone" versus phones down, squaring up, giving a little smooch, saying, "Hey, babe, how was your day? How was this, that went on? I know you had a hard conversation going on." That's the difference of a high regard.

Ephesians talks about having high regard in your speech. Ephesians 4:29. We like Ephesians 4 apparently. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up as fits the occasion that it may give grace to those who hear. And I think that type of conversation absolutely begins within your marriage and absolutely begins between you and your spouse.

**Ryan:** I would summarize this as just being nice to your spouse.

**Selena:** Consciously nice.

**Ryan:** And thoughtful.

**Selena:** Because I feel like I can be nice to you. But if I'm thoughtful, it's like touching you or something. You like that. When I touch your leg.

[Video clip from Dumb & Dumber begins]

Yesterday was one of the greatest days of my life. Mary and I went skiing. We made a snowman. She touched my leg. Okay...

[Video clip from Dumb and Dumber ends]

**Selena:** Versus like, "Yep. Love you. Bye." It's being nice, but it's being intentional and connecting the dots of you're my spouse, not just my friend.

- Ryan:** I mean, yeah. You mentioned this example. So you get home from work, put your keys on the hook or whatever, and your spouse is on the couch as you roll in and she's watching-
- Selena:** Or chasing children and doing all the things.
- Ryan:** Oh, yeah. Or anything. Or working. Imagine the contrast between "Oh, yeah. Hey" versus like you describe. I just want to make that more clear where you're treating your spouse like they're the most important person.
- Selena:** Well, they're the first and foremost because they should be.
- Ryan:** Yeah. But you're taking the time to acknowledge that. And that's what we call just showing a consistent high regard for one another.
- Selena:** Right.
- Ryan:** You are not just another person. You're not just a friend. You are my wife. You are my crown of glory, the gift of God, the help mate fit for me. I'm going to stop what I'm doing, I'm going to close my computer, my laptop, I'm going to put my phone down, I'm going to look you in the eye and I say, "Good to see you. How are you doing?"
- Selena:** Right. Or if I'm in the midst of chaos and you come home, it doesn't have to be a long drawn-out thing. But I think just eye contact connection and saying, "Hey, I love you. How is your day? The baby's got a poopy diaper. Could you take care of her and love on her while I finish this? And then let's connect." Like there's kind of like a touch point. For me anyways. Because I can be very task-oriented and be like, "She's dirty. Go take care of her." And like there's no-
- Ryan:** How many diapers?
- Selena:** There's no like, "Hi, how are you? How is your day?" Right? We can get very task-oriented. And so having a high regard for one another puts that into right perspective. We're talking about speech, like loving one another, action, putting one another ahead of each other, thinking about one another, acts of service, being thoughtful, being mindful of each other, what makes each other feel loved and feel appreciated.
- Ryan:** One really quick tangible way to put this to work is what we call the 15-second kiss. Frankly, anything over six seconds, like truly, but 15 is like you want to go the distance. Just kiss. Kiss for 15 seconds. It's really hard to ignore or not have high regard for each other when you're kissing for 15 seconds. And if you put

that... you know, you can gross the kids out, whatever. They need to be grossed out. They need to figure it out. All right. They need to figure this thing out. This is what mom and dad do.

**Selena:** Yeah. Mom and Dad love each other.

**Ryan:** We love each other. And you know, don't do a gross kiss. All right? You know what I'm talking about. But just having that contact for 15 seconds, you can't hold your breath the whole time and you might be able to, but there's this sense that you are close. That's a really tangible way to get in the habit of showing high regard, especially upon first seeing each other after you've been away for a time. Okay. You have life here. What's up?

**Selena:** Yeah, life. Again, acknowledging... Lord, help me see opportunities where I can connect with you and show you that I love you. Like, what do I know about you that would be meaningful? You know, the simple act of like making coffee for you in the morning or putting your underwear away. Because I know that means a lot to you.

**Ryan:** It's huge. It's huge for me. There's nothing worse getting out of the shower and trying to find underwear.

**Selena:** Clean underwear.

**Ryan:** Clean underwear. And it's like, I see there's laundry there, but for some reason, I'm laundry blind. You know what I'm talking about? I can't see things.

**Selena:** I'm saying like sending you a message in between schedules or whatever's happening. I can still tag on a personal touch of, I really love you and I'm grateful for how hard you work for us. Like there's little things that you can do-

**Ryan:** Ladies, if you want to put wind in your man sales right now, just send that text. Nothing fills a man sales like...

**Selena:** Thank you for working so hard?

**Ryan:** "Thank you for what you provide for us." Because I will tell you that your husband most likely if he's red-blooded, that's one thing he lives for is providing for you and loving you. And to hear that back is just about the clearest ace in the hole that you have every single time.

**Selena:** Right. So I'm going to skip this, what you're missing out on because I think it's... you don't need it.

**Ryan:** Okay.

**Selena:** We're just going to go to number three. Stay centered on Christ. So three ways to keep our marriage house clean: keep short accounts — recap — have high regard for one another. And all of this is made possible when we are-

**Ryan:** By viewers like you.

**Selena:** Stayed, we are on, we are the Christ... the Christ. The gospel.

**Ryan:** He is the Christ.

**Selena:** Christ is at the center of all we do, all we say, all we think, all we feel. All of those things flow out of us being anchored, centered on, submitted to, under the authority of Christ. Husbands can lead. I said, husbands can and should lead this. Would you agree?

**Ryan:** 100%. The reality is the husband is the head of the household.

**Selena:** For better for worse.

**Ryan:** For better or worse. Whether he acknowledges it or not, he's the head and he needs to lead. Now this doesn't mean the wife doesn't continue living in a gospel-centered way even if he's kind of not living as a good head in that sense. But yes, husband, lead this charge.

In other words, I have a group of men that I disciple and as the year has kind of rolled over, one of my encouragements to them was just this: figure out what this looks like. Take this plan, conjure the plan yourself, based on God's word, based on this talking here, take it to your wife, and cast that vision. "Hey wife, this is what I feel like the Lord is leading us as a family. I feel like he's leading me to do family worship. I feel like he's leading us to make these decisions or to think in these ways." And so he's leading the charge to keep it centered on Christ. "Wife, I felt convicted that this last year we weren't quite as centered on Christ on the gospel as we need to be. My communication has fallen short or our finances, our finances reflect misordered priorities."

So having that conversation, having those cards on the table, setting that as your standard becomes now the foundation by which you keep the short accounts. It becomes the foundation by which you love each other with high regard, you know. And yes, I think the husband should lead that, for sure.



**Selena:** Right. I mean, you say this all the time as Christians, you know, who are centered on Christ, Sundays are non-negotiable. We meet with and we gather consistently with the body that we are a part of. We are in our scripture daily. We are teaching and training our children how to read scripture and understand it daily.

**Ryan:** So this is where... go back a week and listen to the gospel-centered marriage episode if you hadn't. And I jumped in because this is where people will either bristle against this or they'll say, okay, yeah. And they'll bristle against it because they'll think we're saying you have to go to church in order to be a true Christian or to be saved. And you have to read your Bible. And they'll say, you're getting away from the gospel. The gospel means I'm saved by grace.

That's not what we're saying. We're saying that because of the gospel, because of this reality, there's these outworkings of it. And these outworkings aren't just there arbitrarily. They're not just there because God is a rule guy or because we're adding rules and things. No, He's given us His body because we're not designed to live aside from the body. Like we can't be detached from the body of Christ and expect to flourish any more than I can expect to cut off my left hand and expect it just to walk off the table and to not be rotten a week later.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right. But we lop ourselves off from the body of Christ and we wonder why we're rotting from the inside out. We need to be connected to the vine. We need to be connected to the body.

**Selena:** We're protected by the shepherd.

**Ryan:** We're protected by the shepherd.

**Selena:** He's the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords. So are we living out these disciplines because of what Christ has done for us, because of our devotion to Him? You know, attending church, reading our Bibles, praying together. We did a whole episode on prayer I think one or two episodes back. Go check that out.

And as a married couple, the biggest part of our marriage has been our spiritual growth through some of these spiritual disciplines and constantly talking about what God is doing in our hearts, how He's leading us, what stuck out at the sermon on Sunday, what are we struggling with, how can we love each other better, and then are we modeling this and teaching these things to our children?

I mean, we started off as very spiritual at 16-year-olds, but asking what is the Lord doing in your heart? Like what are you learning? I think my favorite things about some of the conversations we had early on our marriage were, you know, what is God doing in your heart? What have you been learning in scriptures? That just becomes so normal for our conversation now. And if it's not for you, like start. Start building that skill. There's so much to talk about. Trust me.

**Ryan:** We talked about this in the prayer episode where there might be times too, where you're just feeling depleted and weak and your faith is weak, and so you go to each other. And that's what God is doing is that, God, I feel like my faith is weak. Lord, help me. And by the way, you've given me a wife to help me.

A quick, very tangible thing on how to keep the connection in the right place. We do check-ins. We don't do them as much anymore. When we started the podcast, we used to do this on the podcast together, but we have the three kind of questions. What voice is in your ear-

**Selena:** Voice in your ear, what book is in your hand-

**Ryan:** And what is God doing in your heart? In other words, what's convicting you right now? And I would even add to that, what sins are there that need to be confessed? That's how you keep it clean folks. That's how you keep that floor from getting cluttered. And you know what? You're going to have a healthy, functional marriage. You're going to have a more joy-filled marriage. It's going to bring fruitfulness all around.

**Selena:** There is so much more joy to be had and so much sin to be avoided if we can just... I laugh at myself how many times I trip over toys in our home or cardboard or whatever. We've recently had cardboard because of many boxes and things from books and stuff and kids play with them. Anyways, the mess is there. I'm tripping over it and I'm getting frustrated and yet I still don't pick up the mess, right? It's like, well, I just have to do all these other things before I... No. If you just stop and deal with the mess that's there, everything else is gonna come, I think easier and with a more joyful attitude.

Drift will set in between you two if we are not cleaning the home of our marriage, the sin will pile up, you'll be cut off from one another. You will feel as if you're cut off, maybe, hearts are going to be hardened. They say an idle mind, and I would say idle hands are the devil's playground. Like if you're not putting your hand to the till of cleaning your marriage home of repenting of your sins, they're just going to pile up and at some point they might be irrecoverable in terms of there could be some serious breakage.

**Ryan:** But the beauty is, is that when you do put your hand to that cleaning, if you will, if you are kind to one another, like Ephesians says, you're tenderhearted, you're forgiving one another, not in any way, but you're forgiving as God in Christ forgave you. And how did He forgive you? Freely.

**Selena:** As far as the East is from the West

**Ryan:** And threw your sin as far as the East is from the West, it's removed from you. When you start doing that, that's when your marriage begins to thrive again, begins to be fruitful once again.

In that vein, that's the gospel, right? And we always end these episodes with a reminder of what that is. If you are a Christian, praise God. If you're not a Christian, or you feel like maybe you haven't quite yet grasped it, well I have good news for you. It's not about your grasp on the gospel. It's about God's grasp on you. And He is here maybe prompting you to respond in faith to the good news that Christ died. He didn't stay dead. He rose again. And if you place your faith in Him, you can be risen with Him in His life. You die with Him in his death, you die to your flesh, but then you're risen to new life in the spirit. That's the good news of the gospel. And it only comes by faith. And by the way, that faith is a gift of God who gives it.

And our prayer is that that faith would be enlivened through these episodes and through the reminders in scripture and through the Holy Spirit Himself. So if you don't know Jesus, we recommend you find a friend who does. Text him, call him, say, "I want to talk about Jesus." And then hopefully out of that, that would lead you to their church. You would go to their church, you'd be under the care of a shepherd — somebody who's preaching the word. If you don't have a friend or you can't think of a church in your area, we have a church finder and we have a few other things available to you at this website. It's [thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com). That should help you point you in the right direction. Sound good?

**Selena:** Mm-hmm.

**Ryan:** All right, let's pray. Father, thank you for the gift of cleaning house. Lord, we don't have to have a perfect house, a perfect marriage, Lord. We can't. We're still being sanctified. We still sin. Lord, but your forgiveness is never exhausted. And the type of forgiveness that you've given us means that we can forgive each other and our forgiveness for one another can never be exhausted, Lord, because it's as you forgave us in Christ. Thank you, Father, for that gift.

Help these couples to clean house, help them identify the things that are piling up in the corner or behind the refrigerator, so to speak, or under the bed, those things that they've hidden away. Lord, I pray that they would, those things would be identified, that you would embolden them, that you'd fill these couples with faith to deal with those things and to ask for forgiveness, to bring them to one another, to bring them to you, that they might be cleansed of it.

Lord Jesus, thank you that your gospel is pure, that it saves us completely, that all of these things that we are striving for, they don't make us saved. Jesus, you save us. So ultimately you are our hope, not our actions. Lord, help us to live out that hope in reality. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Selena:** Amen.

**Ryan:** Amen. All right. Once again, if you want to partner with us, we'd be honored. Either way, we will be here Lord willing week after week. But if you want to partner, you can go to this website, [fiercemarriage.com/partner](http://fiercemarriage.com/partner). That'll take you to the Fierce Fellowship, a smorgasbord of delights awaits.

**Selena:** Cornucopias and smorgasbords, that's all that awaits you.

**Ryan:** It awaits. All right. Well, this episode of the Fierce Marriage Podcast is—

**Selena:** In the can.

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

**Selena:** Stay fierce.

## PODCAST NOTES

- **Recommended resource**
  - [thenewsisgood.com](https://thenewsisgood.com)

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