

## **12 TACTICS OF THE DEVIL TO DESTROY YOUR MARRIAGE (PART 2 OF 2)**

<https://fiercemarriage.com/12-tactics-of-the-devil-to-destroy-your-marriage-part-2-of-2>

[00:00:00]

**Ryan:** Hello friends! Welcome back to the Fierce Marriage podcast. Today, we get the joy of continuing what we started last week. Selena, what did we start last week?

**Selena:** We talked to the chat GPT.

**Ryan:** The devil in the machine.

**Selena:** We talked to the devil in the machine.

**Ryan:** We didn't speak to the devil. We asked the machine to speak as if it were plotting against marriages, against families.

**Selena:** Yes. So we asked, if you were the devil, how would you destroy the family, marriage, all of those? So it gave us 12 ways. We made it through... six?

**Ryan:** Yes. Can you just say six like that from now on?

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** Okay.

**Selena:** We made it through six and we also combated them with biblical truths that we shared. And I think it was definitely worth listening to if you haven't already, because we're just going to continue on from there. So we're going to do that on the other side.

[00:00:57] <music>

**Ryan:** It never ceases to be hilarious and cute to me that you always are very uncertain about throwing it to the other side.

**Selena:** Always.

**Ryan:** That's like our thing. It's like Tom Brokaw.

**Selena:** We're not as famous as Tom Brokaw. Nobody can.

- Ryan:** You're more famous to me than Tom Brokaw ever was. Yes, here we are. If you don't know who we are, I'm Ryan, this is my wife-
- Selena:** Here we are.
- Ryan:** ...Selena. We're the Fredericks. We're the voices, faces, founders of Fierce Marriage, which is an online marriage ministry community. You can find us, all that good stuff that is available to you at [fiercemarriage.com](http://fiercemarriage.com). There's lots of blog posts that go back many, many years.
- Selena:** A lot, yes.
- Ryan:** Yeah. And we've written a ton. So we do primarily the podcast today because it's like, how much can you write? Well, we can have conversations. This is fun. We also do Fierce Parenting and Fierce Families. You can look those up at their respective websites.
- Given that, we actually have a way for you, if you feel compelled. You don't have to. We ask you to pray about this, but the Lord would lead you to partner with us. That's one of the ways that He has seen fit to provide for our family. I'm very grateful for our patrons. Also, I'm just amazed at how much joy there is to be had by kind of asking God to provide through His people. And boy, has it been fun. I actually have made some friends in there.
- Selena:** Surprise, surprise.
- Ryan:** Big surprise. Not.
- Selena:** No.
- Ryan:** All right. It's the Fierce Fellowship.
- Selena:** It is. And we do share a little bit more about our personal lives there, just because it's with people that are clearly more like-minded.
- Ryan:** And not everyone cares about, you know, the haps.
- Selena:** Social webs, yeah.
- Ryan:** So we give the haps on that side. So go to [fiercemarriage.com/partner](http://fiercemarriage.com/partner) to join.
- Selena:** The haps. That seems like a new term. I feel old.

**Ryan:** Happenings. I know.

**Selena:** I gathered. I gathered.

**Ryan:** Okay. Yeah. Real quick, I want to check in before we get down to business.

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** I know you like getting down to business.

**Selena:** I do.

**Ryan:** Very, very efficient. How are you doing? How are you feeling?

**Selena:** I'm feeling pretty good. I'm cold. It's very cold in here. It's about 20 degrees in here. But overall, I'm doing good. How are you doing?

**Ryan:** Thanks for asking. The whole reason I asked-

**Selena:** Deflection.

**Ryan:** The whole reason I asked you is so you would ask me.

**Selena:** This works.

**Ryan:** No, I met with some guys today. I meet with... well, it was actually me and three other guys today. It was a business and discipleship group. And it occurred to me two things. I have too much on my plate, but that's how I operate best. I feel like if there's a heavy load, then I can kind of grow under the load. But if there's not a heavy load, I turn into a fatty. Diligently speaking. Diligence speaking. Does that make sense?

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** I get stronger when there's more to do.

**Selena:** Does everybody around you get stronger?

**Ryan:** Why don't you tell me?

**Selena:** I think so.

**Ryan:** Does that sound like a pointed question?

- Selena:** I think there's a lot. And sometimes I'm like, when is it too much? I don't know where that line is. I don't think either of us do.
- Ryan:** I think it's there. I think the epiphany was that's kind of a happy place. Now, too, too much is what you don't want. So I guess-
- Selena:** But where's the line? Where's the too, too much?
- Ryan:** Somewhere.
- Selena:** No, we're in a season.
- Ryan:** Yeah, we're in a season.
- Selena:** We're in a season and it's fine. God is good. And we've talked about this in many episodes.
- Ryan:** But I'm also not without stern, I would say, I'm just being honest on the podcast, you're wasting a little bit of time. But remember last week, it was the evening time and I said, "You know what? I just need to go pray right now. Do you remember that?"
- Selena:** Mm-hmm.
- Ryan:** And the reason for that was I had received from the Lord, I believe, a stern kind of "you're trying to do this on your own strength."
- Selena:** You needed to be unburdened.
- Ryan:** By what has been. No, what can be unburdened by what has been? No. I needed to be... yeah. The word I was in my mind just now was offloaded.
- Selena:** Yeah.
- Ryan:** But I was trying to operate in the flesh, in my own strength. In that moment, I think, I was lacking faith. And in that sense, it was sin. And I needed to go to God and give it to Him and repent of that self-strength, if you will. It doesn't mean we don't try. It doesn't mean we don't apply, you know, ourselves.
- Selena:** No.
- Ryan:** I'm just saying. And it took about 10 minutes, not even. And then we were good.

**Selena:** God is faithful.

**Ryan:** God was good. And I was like, okay, that needed to happen. It happened. And now we're good. Let's go. So yeah, there we are.

Okay. So today we are, like Selena said in the intro, finishing up the final six of 12 tactics, if you will, the devil, according to chat GPT, would deploy to destroy the family, the idea of the family, the, I think, the vision of family that the culture has, the potency of the family. And in doing so you see in these tactics... and go back if you haven't listened to the previous episode or watched it on YouTube, and you'll see how these all kind of interconnect, but they always have to do with, of course, degrading the marriage, degrading manhood, womanhood, degrading the parent-child relationship.

**Selena:** Putting self at the center.

**Ryan:** Yes, you nailed it. At the center is always the self because that is, and Selena, you nailed this on the last episode, that's the trope as old as time. That's always how the enemy goes about. It's like, did God really say? Don't you want, don't you want to be God?

As we're talking to Christians, also some non-Christians will watch this, but especially in Christian circles, no one will say, yeah, I'm getting there. I want to be like God. I want to be God. But we do it subtly. And we do it subtly by discounting the things that He has said are true.

Of course, we're talking about marriage. That has to do with what is love? Like, you know, love is love and love is not what God defines, but it's kind of whatever feels right. That's love. That's not what God says love is.

**Selena:** Mm-hmm.

**Ryan:** Or what is covenant or what is marriage? Marriage is kind of just a... it's just a thing that should work if you want it to work. But you can if you need to get out of it. Like really, if you want to, you can get out of it. That's how we try to be God.

So go back, listen to that previous episode. We'll get into the first six. We're not going to recap those here. But what we're going to do is go through them. And after we go through them, we're going to reverse them or rather replace the lie with God's truth. So make sure you listen through, watch through to the end, because that's the important part.

So Selena, what is the first one for today? Number seven on our list.

**Selena:** Number seven on our list is destigmatize and encourage pornography and addictions. So making pornography easily accessible, leading to intimacy issues and distorted expectations, normalizing substance abuse or other addictive behaviors that strain family relationships.

Pornography is an addiction. The actions go hand in hand, right? Never... I mean, I can't say never, but we've had so much access to so much evil. And I'm not saying that it's never been like that before, but just the... what is it? What do you call those? Infinity pools. It's like an infinity pool of darkness and evil. And what do we say about sin? Like it takes you further than you want to go, it costs you more than you want to pay, and it does something like that.

So we've been written into so many times about intimacy issues. And they're a lot of times rooted in this addiction to pornography.

**Ryan:** Yeah. And here we are again talking to Christian couples and most Christian couples won't try to say pornography is okay.

**Selena:** Right. Right.

**Ryan:** But culturally speaking, this is where it becomes a real problem is because it's so destigmatized. Think about how wild it is that you... okay, if you have a child, if you have a son or daughter, frankly, it doesn't matter and they have access to the internet, there's virtually nothing stopping them from seeing the most depraved, hardcore pornographic content that the human sin nature has to offer.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Virtually nothing. My dad's a psychologist. He deals a lot with victims of sexual abuse, depression, anxiety. So when we've talked about this stuff in the past, he has been on the podcast before, a long time ago, he said one of the biggest dangers with regard to the kids is on the bus where, you know, all it takes, all it takes is one kid with one phone to say, Oh, have you seen this?

So why am I talking about that? It's the destigmatization of it. It used to be that if you wanted to consume pornography, you had to go in your car, go to a store, pick it off the shelf, or talk to a clerk.

**Selena:** Pay for it.

**Ryan:** Pay for it. With your face, your name. And then you had to take that home or you had to go to some shady part of town, you know, and go to whatever the place is.

**Selena:** It took a lot more effort.

**Ryan:** Now all it is is you have just an inkling of a curiosity and you've got this window into the world in your pocket. So the destigmatization of it will contribute to young kids getting access, which means, tragically, you have people entering marriage with pre-established addictions to pornography or predilections or desensitizations to it. Gosh, the enemy has succeeded in destigmatizing and encouraging pornography use and addiction behavior.

So let's go through the solutions as we go through these just to kind of save us some time. So we don't have to rehash these again.

So what is the biblical reverse of this and what do we have as a biblical kind of answer to this? Well, we know God's standard of purity says whatever is true, whatever is pure, whatever is right, basically, whatever is good, think about such things where you say, well, that doesn't help me with my pornography addiction.

Well, okay. The first step is acknowledging that it's wrong and it's a sin and that just a little bit contaminates the whole thing. I can't help it. I have to share the analogy. I talked about sin with the girls and our daughters and I'm talking about, you know, the potency of a sin to contaminate the whole. Because when we send, we don't just send kind of... like we're still kind of good. And so I'll have two glasses of water and I say, here's one glass of water. They're both pure, but I'm gonna take the other glass. I'm just going to put a little bit of poop in there, a little bit of poop and you can't see it. It dissolves. It's whatever. It's still pretty clean. Right. And they're like... it's hilarious. Right.

**Selena:** But kids get it.

**Ryan:** They get it. There's no way they're going to drink it. I don't want them to, obviously. I don't literally do this.

**Selena:** We don't literally do this. This is purely theoretical. Just the thought of it is like kids just can't.

**Ryan:** Yeah. Well, I think the sooner you can recognize that just a little bit of this perversion is incipient and wrong.

**Selena:** A lie here and there, a cover up here and there, a change of your phone history here and there.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So call it what it is. It's sin. It's a sin against your wife or your husband. It's a sin against God Himself. It's a sin against those people who are in it. Yes, they're sinning too. But the point is that it is a sin. It's an affront to their being made in the image of God. It's a sin against marriage, if you can even do such, like against the marriage covenant. It is sin. That's the first step.

Where do we go to get rid of our sin? We go to the foot of the cross. We go to the arms of a loving God. We repent. We believe the gospel. What do you do with the addiction? The physiological effects of it? Well, you start working through that. You start asking God to free you.

I had an hour-long conversation with the gentleman last night who has said he had struggled with pornography since he was 13 years old. This man's 45. He said for the three-quarters of his life, he has had this addiction and nothing, nothing, nothing worked. And he had talked to his wife. He had talked to... he always found himself going back to the vomit. And he knew. It wasn't like he didn't know.

And so he just kept going to God. And by the Lord's grace, he was listening to some sermons that were talking about fasting. So he felt the Lord prompt him to fast in order to be free. He didn't really know of what, well, through his fasting. That's a spiritual discipline. That's not a crazy charismatic thing to talk about. It's in scripture. Fasting is real. Fasting is a spiritual discipline.

He did it, God freed him. And he said he's never had even the inkling of desire. Can you explain that aside from the sanctifying work of Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit?

**Selena:** No.

**Ryan:** No. So the hope there is that the Lord will lead you as you go to Him and you bring this to Him.

**Selena:** He's the one that blots out our sin. He's the one that makes it right.

**Ryan:** And He's the one who frees us from our sin.

**Selena:** Yeah. So normalizing any sort of addictive behaviors, normalizing substance abuse. I think most of us have that in our stories in our past. It's another tactic of the enemy to (a) not repent, just let it be. Like, don't repent immediately.



You know, just maybe it's not as wrong as you think it is, right? Or maybe it's not affecting people the way you think it is.

So repent immediately and turn and go to God and be honest and be seen, be known, and, and begin walking out of these traps that the enemies set in order for you and your marriage to crumble. Number eight.

**Ryan:** Our number eight is if you were the devil, ChatGPT, you would create financial strain and economic pressure in such a way that it makes it difficult for a single income to support a family, encourage consumerism and debt, increasing stress and tension in family life.

This one to me feels like it's the most read into... like the one that's most read into the list. Like

**Selena:** Sure.

**Ryan:** Like ChatGPT said, yeah, they'll like this one. I'll put this one because the economy is really bad right now. That's what it feels like to me. But I'm not going to say it's wrong. I'm just saying that, yes, we have created this. But when was this created?

So think about how Luther used to formulate the enemy. We have the devil, the world, and our flesh. All right. So the enemy is working against us in these three ways, these three avenues, including in financial strain.

Well, how have we worked against ourselves? Well, if we have a lifestyle that is unsustainable. You know, marketing has gotten really good and they target you and you buy things that you spend a hundred dollars one day, you didn't even think you needed the thing you bought the day before, but there was an impulse buy or somebody... you know what I mean?

**Selena:** Yeah. Oh yeah.

**Ryan:** So you can create that situation for yourself. How else? I mean, anything come to your mind?

**Selena:** I think, you know, as a mom, you want to present yourself well. And so, you know, keeping up. You don't want to... we are uncomfortable with lack being shown in our lives. And I think as Christians, we need to embrace that and not be so afraid of not having something. And we need to find joy in the circumstances that He's given us to find contentment. Our contentment and delight and joy and peace does not depend on the things that we own. 1 Timothy 6:6-10.

**Ryan:** So you're going to read that first?

**Selena:** I was gonna.

**Ryan:** You were gonna. Before you read it, I want to draw this out. Because we need to be clear on this. It's not being able to afford a home that is the affront to marriage. It's not high prices for eggs that is the affront to marriage. It's the Christian response to those things. You can't control the price of housing. Now you can vote and you can be responsible.

**Selena:** Be a good steward and do what you can do.

**Ryan:** Be a citizen.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** But don't look at the housing crisis and say, that's the reason I want a divorce. Or that's the reason our marriage is hard. Don't do that. Yeah. Instead, look at it and say, why am I responding in such a way that I can't have peace and contentment in the middle of this storm? Because last I checked, Christ is still here in a bad economy.

**Selena:** Absolutely. We had a couple of years when we first had our firstborn where we had one car and we had a moving truck. We bought this old moving truck because it was cheaper than renting it to drive from California to here. We stored all our stuff in it. People at the apartment we lived in knew that that was ours. We had a parking space with it.

I had to battle a lot of just kind of embarrassment of it and I had to battle kind of like, we have one car and it's pretty great. It's all right. Like it's nothing fancy. There was a lot of, apparently that I did not know about, a lot of just kind of discontent in my own heart. I just wanted to fly under the radar. And I felt like we were just flopping above it like a seagull about to die or something. It was just embarrassing. It felt embarrassing.

**Ryan:** Because of the truck.

**Selena:** Because of the truck. Because of like, you know, oh... I don't know. We were paying off a lot of debt. We wanted to get out of debt. And it was a season of not having and not saying yes to all the things. God's goodness is like, well, you're going to be dealt with this until you learn to be content in it. You're going to be in this season until you can submit and say, Lord, what are you teaching me here? Why is my response to this, like you said, why is my

response just raging instead of trusting that God is allowing you to go through this fire for some sanctifying reason that you can't see right now, but you will see it and it will last you a lifetime. It will bless you for a lifetime.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So being a Christian doesn't mean you get rid of all storms.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** It just means you now have the anchor in the storm.

**Selena:** Yes. You don't do everything to avoid the storm either.

**Ryan:** And you know the man in the belly of the boat who is asleep, Christ, during the storm. And He says, basically, why don't you get it yet? I am God. I am the Lord of this, even this storm. Be still storm. And boom. So the big thing we want to draw out here is, yeah, it creates stress for marriage, just like any other storm does. How do you respond to it? So why don't you read just briefly from 1 Timothy 6?

**Selena:** "But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs."

**Ryan:** Man, much can be said about what Paul is saying to Timothy here, but really this desire is what he's talking to, right, the coveting as opposed to the contentment. He's saying, Don't desire these things because it will lead to ruin.

**Selena:** Right. And it's their desires that cause us to sin. The desires they wage war within you and they cause you to walk away. Money and priorities and finances have been one of the... wasn't that one of the top three things when people wrote into us about why, about the stresses of their marriage? It was the economies of the home, I thought-

**Ryan:** Yeah, it was chores, economies of the home, which has to do, I think, with priorities, which has to do with lifestyle and a lot of things.

**Selena:** And our lifestyles reflect our values.

**Ryan:** Yeah. Yeah. I also want to mention this because it's just so succinct. It's Hebrews 13:5. "Keep your life free from love of money..." If you have a

problem, friend, with loving money, pray that the Lord... give that to the Lord, I'll say. Repent of it.

And then it says, "Let your life be free from the love of money and be content with what you have, for He has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'". And by the way, in the Greek on that, it is like a triple emphasis or maybe even a quadruple emphasis. It's like, I will never, ever, ever leave you.

**Selena:** It's His presence over the things that we have. It's Him over the pieces of plastic and glass and things that will break away. I was reading today in Morning by... was it New Mornings? Morning by Morning by Spurgeon. Anyways, he was talking about drawing near to God or being drawn near in hard times and how true happiness is being near or in the presence of God. That's where happiness is found, not in what we consume.

**Ryan:** Excellent. All right. We'll keep going through. This is number nine on the list of 12. Again, we're doing the last six today. It's devalue. So if you want to destroy the family, create a culture or the environment in which you devalue parenthood and domestic roles. And it says here, it says, promote the idea that homemaking and parenting are lesser compared to professional success. Discourage large families by highlighting the financial and personal sacrifices involved.

**Selena:** How the Lord has brought us around on so many of those things.

**Ryan:** This lie is so pervasive that kids are somehow this massive financial commitment. I just want to debunk it. Kids aren't cheap. They require sacrifice. You're going to have to sacrifice.

**Selena:** God calls them a blessing. The sacrifice is part of the blessing.

**Ryan:** This is just a hypothesis, but I think there's something about having kids that makes a man more effective in his craft. It's like if you're a hunter, you kind of just hunt when you get hungry and you eat and you're full. But if you've got to take a big game home for the family-

**Selena:** To survive.

**Ryan:** ...like you're going to be looking for bigger game.

**Selena:** And you're going to up your skills.

**Ryan:** And you're going to up your skills. You're going to get a sharper set of tools.

**Selena:** I mean, this started, you know, in the waves of feminism and all of that, of just promoting this idea that homemaking and parenting are just... they're lesser. And we laugh about it now. It's like, well, am I just going to go to work for another man, different man, and make and bring home what? Money? And miss the growth of the little souls that God has placed in our home? It's no way. And I'm not saying... again, I know it's a big can of worms. Like women can't what? Women can't work. They can't... Yes, women can work. Okay? I've been on the internet too much apparently.

**Ryan:** You have been, yeah. You get what about it to death, people.

**Selena:** But what about it to death?

**Selena:** Oh my goodness.

**Ryan:** So we're not saying women can't work.

**Selena:** No, but their heart orientation and their attention is towards the home. It's towards their husband, the roles that God has set our primary. And then the discouragement of large families. I mean, that's just a culture thing. I mean, the more larger families that we are around and see, the more children we would have loved to have and maybe we will at some point, I don't know, adopt or whatever the leads, but the blessing far outweighs the financial burden. And we're not saying everyone's perfect. We're not going to answer all the whatabouts, but family, children, God's idea.

**Ryan:** Yeah. What I want to maybe make sure we get from this.

**Selena:** God's idea for blessing and flourishing.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** It's a great commission. Fruitfulness.

**Ryan:** It's just kind of demystifying of it because-

**Selena:** I think it's a lie. I think they're trying to promote... I think the enemy is just like, you'll be more fruitful in a professional setting. It'll be more fruitful if you don't have as many kids. You'll get to do all the things you want to do, all the time. And it's like, that's not fruitfulness. That's just selfishness dressed up as fruitfulness.

**Ryan:** You want more parenting content, go to Fierce Parenting.

**Selena:** Sorry.

**Ryan:** That's okay. Point is, yeah, kids are a blessing. The three tenets of Fierce Parenting. Kids are a blessing, family is God's idea, and all of parenting is discipleship. That's what this is. Family is God's idea. It's not just a, oh, we've gotten married, so now the step is to have kids. And by the way, we can make that decision just whenever, or we can... it's a lifestyle choice. It's not a lifestyle choice. It is the thing that God gave Adam and Eve to do: to be fruitful and multiply. And, you know, we should take it seriously.

And for good reason, because man, I can't imagine, I can't imagine a more wonderful... you know, I'll get off it now, but the idea that you can make a child blows my mind.

**Selena:** Yeah. The ability to create.

**Ryan:** And having children now and seeing the kids come into the... and seeing all the wonderful things that God uses them for and how they create and just bring beauty into the world and bring wonder into the world, man, it blows my mind.

**Selena:** God is so good.

**Ryan:** So yeah.

**Selena:** All right.

**Ryan:** Smack that devil in the face. All right.

**Selena:** Smack him with the truth. Kids are good. Number 10, erode community and support networks.

**Ryan:** Yeah. Okay. Yeah.

**Selena:** Talk about this.

**Ryan:** We talked about this a little bit last week when we talked about kind of the individual-

**Selena:** Yes, the atomization of individuals.

**Ryan:** The way this word is, under eroding community and social support networks is that you would encourage isolation from extended family, local communities.

**Selena:** See how that went? Remember how that went in COVID? Remember. Remember how terribly that went. Excuse me. Terribly held.

**Ryan:** Ooh. And then it says this. Shift focus from community-based problem-solving. To what? To individual or autonomous problem-solving or government problem-solving. So in other words, if there's a problem, if I can't fix it, the only other solution is for the government to step in. That is not a biblical concept, folks.

**Selena:** It's not a biblical model or anything for conflict.

**Ryan:** And so if we start living like that's normal, which we already have started living like that's normal in a lot of contexts. Of course, if you start to push back on that, you know, people will push back on you. But I do want to spend just a moment on this encouraging... So what's the tactic of encouraging isolation from extended family and local communities? Just think about, okay, when you were a teenager... and then we can talk about this because when we were 17, 18, getting ready to graduate, go off to college, what was the predominant question? Where are you going to go to college? How little did play into the decision being close to home for most kids?

**Selena:** I don't think it played much of a role. It played a huge role for us.

**Ryan:** Right. Frankly, I was like, I'm not going to go pay \$60,000 a year at some state school in another state or 40,000, however much it was.

**Selena:** No pull to draw us away.

**Ryan:** Yeah. I didn't want to be away. I think we're unique in that. But the thing that I want to touch on is how little weight can be placed in saying to your kids, You shouldn't go far. You should stay close. Why? Not because we're codependent, but because you need community. And it's not wise at your age, your level... maybe some kids can do this and certainly kids do it all the time. But you can't even say those things as a parent, because it's so baked into our minds that like they should be able to go and pursue the best possible opportunity and pursue their dream or whatever the... and you shouldn't ask them-

**Selena:** You shouldn't question that. You shouldn't question that.

**Ryan:** That is a very, very new thing. And then the idea of family, like you have to kind of leave and cleave. That's a thing. Yes. But you have to be out of the household, building your own thing, starting basically from scratch, as

opposed to we're going to build a life together. We're going to build it together as a family, as an extended family.

**Selena:** Well, and we're putting, you know, family, old family members in homes and they're almost dying alone. This was never the case in human history. Tribes were together. You know what, we have all kinds of episodes on in-laws and extended family. They're hard to deal with. But God...

**Ryan:** But hard things are not bad.

**Selena:** Hard things are not bad and they can be a blessing. Sometimes we just need to walk through it and face it head-on. God has not given us a spirit of fear. So let's rise up and live the way He's called us to live with one another and level with each other.

So I think that one of the tactics of how he keeps us, the enemy likes to keep us isolated is through guilt and shame and through selfishness of just, yeah, go pursue your dreams, go pursue what you want to do. You'll meet new friends along the way, you'll... you know?

**Ryan:** Well, this also comes down to one of the earlier ones of kind of devaluing the parent-child relationship and normalizing dishonoring your parents, you know? You find always all the kinds of ways to justify it. And of course we're not talking about the what abouts. If your parent is, you know, there's special care needed, that's a different consideration and advanced age, all that. But it's gotten so normal to be like, yeah, you have your life, we have ours and we cross paths when it's convenient and everyone gets along. That's just not the ideal, you guys. It's just not the ideal.

**Selena:** We need to get comfortable and normalize the generational kind of ties. And if you don't have that, I mean, you can find that in the church. And I would encourage you to do that in the bride of Christ.

So number 11, foster gender role confusion.

**Ryan:** This doesn't happen. This hasn't happened.

**Selena:** Challenge those traditional roles to the point where mutual respect and cooperation in marriage break down, promote competition between genders instead of partnership. We joke about this all the time, but I win. He doesn't like it. He's very competitive.



**Ryan:** I mean, if you are breathing and you can read and you have ears to hear things and you have eyes to see things, you know that our culture is very confused around men and women.

**Selena:** For now. It won't always be this way.

**Ryan:** Amen. And that's why we're doing a podcast. But not just the recent stuff. I'm talking about like all the feminism stuff and all that, and just in general, there's this idea that men and women should be able to do the exact same things in the exact same ways and that's what equality is. That's not a biblical idea. So let's check it out the door.

What's the biblical idea? That we have a man and woman created each in God's image. I'm not half of God's image and you are not half of God's. Like we are both different, but completely made in God's image.

**Selena:** I think I've been surprised about the result or the blessings that have come when I've stepped into the roles and the positions that God has asked me to as a mom, as a wife, as a sister in Christ, as someone serving in the church and whatnot. It's not always the things I want to do. It's not always fun and joyful and exciting. There's a dutiful part of being a Christian. And that is good.

Sometimes those roles and the purposes that we fulfill, there's a part that requires duty. Like emotion doesn't always happen or follow or lead. There's a part of us that just has to obey. And there's goodness in that. There's goodness to be had. I've learned to embrace it and then to pursue clarity in it so that I can be more clear with others in what it means to be a woman, to be a wife, to be a mother. It's not all the things that culture assumes and thinks.

**Ryan:** Yeah. We could talk. And we have done episodes on biblical roles. So look those up. Again, [fiercemarriage.com](http://fiercemarriage.com). Use the old search bar. I think we have even some videos on it, like this podcast episodes. Yeah, a hundred percent.

If you go back to what Paul said, husbands love your wives, wives respect your husbands, "love" and "respect" are different verbs and they accomplish different things and they land on different targets, different reasons and in different ways.

God didn't say wives or wives love your husbands or husbands respect your wives. No. That doesn't mean we don't love each other. We don't respect each other mutually. That's not what I'm saying. But there is a currency in which women deal and there's a currency in which men deal. And it's respect and love. That is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of understanding what these differences are.

**Selena:** Well, you feel the most loved when I respect you. You feel the most unloved when I disrespect you.

**Ryan:** A hundred percent. I know a friendship with another guy is going nowhere if I can't respect him or he doesn't respect me. You can talk about the reasons for that lack of respect, but I'm just saying like if I earnestly want to have a friendship with a guy and I'm trying to have conversations with him and it's clear that he doesn't respect my opinion, I have no friendship potential with that guy.

Now, if he doesn't respect me because I'm being an idiot, that's my problem. If he doesn't respect me because he's an arrogant jerk, that's his problem. But I'm just saying that that's... so we're getting a little bit off on the side. That to me is the tip of this iceberg. It's the first step on this path of understanding the differences between men and women. And there is more biblical evidence for it, of course.

But the point is that the devil would have us be confused and would have us take these differences and fuse them somehow or try to blur the differences to a point where we're confused and-

**Selena:** Well, and compete against one another to find quote-unquote "equality", right?

**Ryan:** Right. George Hayworth, he... I was just on there. It's the Present Father's podcast. I think the episode would have released yesterday, before this one releases. So check that out. We're talking about fatherhood, manhood, husband-ness-

**Selena:** Husbandry.

**Ryan:** That's a different thing. Animal husbandry is raising like cows and stuff.

**Selena:** Sorry.

**Ryan:** So I was talking to George or... no, he just posted, he's like, you really like... have a healthy marriage. It's really simple. Husbands love your wives. Wives respect your husbands, submit to your husbands. Quit complicating it. Don't try to complicate it. And you know what? That goes down a gravel for our culture and I'm here for it. All right. Number 12.

**Selena:** Yep.

**Ryan:** Number 12.

**Selena:** Number 12.

**Ryan:** Last one.

**Selena:** Last one here.

**Ryan:** Increase exposure to harmful ideologies in education. So, again, marriage podcast, but we asked the question, how would the devil destroy family? Well, he's going to start with young minds, young hearts and minds, and he's going to introduce ideas that conflict with family values. You don't actually need to get married.

**Selena:** And normalize them.

**Ryan:** Marriage is actually not that important. Also, marriage is maybe a little disadvantageous for you.

**Selena:** Yeah. Are you sure you want to do that? Are you sure? I mean, maybe your parents were wrong.

**Ryan:** By the way, promiscuity, there's nothing wrong with it. Like you do it-

**Selena:** You've seen your friends. They're fine.

**Ryan:** Man, the devil's a jerk.

**Selena:** Dirty, rotten liar.

**Ryan:** So he would introduce these ideas in schools. We have these things called government schools and they have these programs where they are literally normalizing this stuff. They say kids are going to have sex anyway, so let's give them condoms because the sex is normal. Instead of saying, kids, don't do that.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** But that's like unheard of.

**Selena:** Oh yeah.

**Ryan:** You know, there's no way they could because all the reasons.

**Selena:** Yeah. Discourage critical thinking about family roles, faith, and tradition, but let's have critical thinking about other things.

**Ryan:** Well, you don't have to be critical, but it's always got to be one way.

**Selena:** It's one way.

**Ryan:** You've always got to be critical in the deconstruction way because everything that was old is bad. Everything that comes from, you know, history or especially Christian history, all that stuff should be deconstructed because they're the mechanisms of oppression. Isn't he clever? So yeah. Yeah.

**Selena:** Clever to those who follow.

**Ryan:** I think he's an idiot.

**Selena:** He's been covered. Devil bashing.

**Ryan:** But this is how it happens. And then again, we're talking about destroying a family and it comes from all these different angles.

**Selena:** Well, and I think your marriage has to be that first line of defense for your kids. If you don't talk about what is our family value in terms of sex and intimacy, what do we believe, what do we know to be true, if you don't do that, they will hear it somewhere else. We know this to be true.

If you don't live out your faith-filled values, if you are not committed to a local church and you are not reading the scriptures daily, I would challenge you friend to... do you know where you stand on these issues? Because your kids are going to find their own place without you.

**Ryan:** And they can smell a counterfeit.

**Selena:** Yes. And so don't try to be something you're not. But also if you don't know where you stand on some of these things, kids, let's read God's word together and find out what it says. Let's do this together. There's a million other resources that you can supplement, but start with God's word. Start with what He says and go from there. You're not a stupid person. You don't need a theology degree to read God's word. He has made it for you. It is alive. It is written for us to read, to know God. And so lead your kids in that. Husbands, lead your marriages in that. Can I say that?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Like lead your marriages in scripture reading and family worship. These are why these things are important because there's all these holes to be poked into the family, into the marriage. Like get kids angry and young people angry about the roles that they need to fulfill. I took feminism classes in college. I'm not immune to this. I was like, I don't have to go home and make dinner for you. You can make your own dinner. That was where-

**Ryan:** I'm not paying your auto insurance.

**Selena:** We laugh about this now because it was totally a thing. It was totally the lie that I believed during that time. And this is why our marriage has to be the first line of defense for our family.

**Ryan:** One of the best legacies you can leave, one of the greatest gifts you can give to your children is a healthy and thriving marriage. So if you want to show them the wonders of marriage, you want to show them the wonders of the gospel, be that marriage that is reliant on the gospel, the one that visibly is imperfect, yet you acknowledge this and you take that to Christ. You take it to one another and you... like just be a consistent believer.

Because where the problems happen is, especially in this number 12 with kids, is we tell them, yeah, we're Christian. We're Christian. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. We totally believe that stuff. But it has no real effect on your life. It has no real effect on your family. It is lip service. And kids can smell it. And they want truth. They don't want fakeness. They want something that's substantive.

**Selena:** And they want to be able to go to you as their parents. There's only a small window, I think, until kids start looking outward for information, for leading and direction. And as parents, we want to be the place that they go to, the safe place that they ask the questions.

**Ryan:** We want to present the feast. We want to usher them to the feast that they will then partake of the feast. So they're not so hungry. They're leaving to find a feast somewhere else.

**Selena:** Not even a feast, a garbage, a garbage can.

**Ryan:** Well said. They're finding a dumpster.

**Selena:** That's on fire. A little spicy today, huh?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** I'm feeling a little truthful and spicy. I think that's-

**Ryan:** It's cold in the forge.

**Selena:** You gotta heat it up in the conversation.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So we hope something in here has, I don't know, got you thinking about maybe lies that you potentially believed about family, about marriage. And we hope that you would take this to your spouse and you can use us as always as the scapegoat to be the reason you start the conversation. "Hey, I was listening to this podcast today, and here's what Selena said. What do you think?" Or "here's what Ryan said. I kind of think he didn't have a point. Did he have a point?" I don't know. Use us to start that conversation.

As we do with these episodes, if you don't know who Jesus is, we want to make sure that you hear the gospel at least one very clear time. So here's the good news of the gospel. Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, who is God Himself, who became flesh, He lived a perfect life, died the death that is deserved by all of us as sinners. He died bearing our sin on that cross and putting it to death with Him because in His imperfection, it was... the fancy words, our sin was imputed to Him. It was credited to Him.

And then He didn't stay dead. He arose from the grave conquering death. So He's conquered sin. He's conquered death. He's ascended and He reigns in heaven. And He says, "If you put your faith in me, if you say, I need your grace, I need you to bear my sin, you will be saved. He will bear it. He has borne it and you will have everlasting life. That's the news of the gospel. It's not cheap, but it's free. There is a cost. You didn't pay it. Christ paid the cost for you to be saved. And that's a free gift for those who will have faith, humble themselves, go to God, and say, save me. We want that for you if you're not saved.

So to that end, we say, talk to a friend. If you know a friend who's a Christian, ask them to read the Bible with you. Ask them to explain the gospel to you. Just start asking questions.

Also, we recommend you find a church. If you don't know where a good church is, we have a website that has a church finder on it and also some more information about what it means to believe in Jesus Christ. And the website is this, [thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com). We pray that that helps you.

Let's pray. Father God, you are good. Thank you for your word. I thank you that you've made us aware of the wiles of the devil. I pray that you would make us wise in how we combat them in our own lives, but also in the culture in which we live. Lord, I pray that you continue the work that you're doing in the marriages, listening to this, that they would have hope and courage. And

Lord, that you give them breakthrough. You know where they are. You know who they are. You know the circumstances. You know how far or how close they are to breakthrough. I pray that in that, that they would know without a doubt, you have not left them. You are with them and you are helping them and that they would trust you. In Jesus' name we ask these things. Amen.

**Selena:** Amen.

**Ryan:** Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Okay. By way of reminder, if this episode has helped you, if our ministry has helped you and you feel compelled, you feel led by the Lord to partner with us, you can join what's called the Fierce Fellowship. Go to [fiercemarriage.com/partner](https://fiercemarriage.com/partner). There are benefits, things like books. I think there's even some free rings in there at a certain level. We have these silicone rings that I designed like five years ago. I still wear one every day. They don't make your finger all soggy and itchy and sweaty because of the special patented design. It's not patented. I don't have time for that. But you might get some of those.

Anyway, the whole point of the fellowship is to help sustain this ministry, to help more people. So if you feel called, [fiercemarriage.com/partner](https://fiercemarriage.com/partner).

And that's it for today. This episode of the Fierce Marriage Podcast is—

**Selena:** In the can.

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

**Selena:** Stay fierce.

**PODCAST NOTES**

- **Referenced scripture**
  - 1 Timothy 6:6-10.
  - Hebrews 13:5
- **Recommended resource**
  - [thenewsisgood.com](https://thenewsisgood.com)

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