

## FIGHTING WELL AND LEARNING RESILIENCY

<https://fiercemarriage.com/fighting-well-and-learning-resiliency>

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**Selena:** We never fight in our marriage.

**Ryan:** Never. I can't remember the last time I've ever raised my voice other than in pure exaltation. Oh, the beauties of my wife. You know what? We do argue, people, believe it or not. Just in case you were wondering. It is very malfeasant, and I have to deal with that.

**Selena:** I don't even have to say anything.

**Ryan:** It's bad.

**Selena:** You can all see it already.

**Ryan:** It's so bad. Today we're talking about this topic of arguing.

**Selena:** When your husband is malfeasant.

**Ryan:** That's exactly what a malfeasant wife would say. They can do that for anything. Yeah, so we're talking about arguing, we're talking about maybe how to argue productively. But specifically we wanted to talk about the topic of resiliency.

And here's what we mean by that, just as a quick preview. If you've ever had... Okay, you've had an argument, you've had a tiff, you've maybe worked it out, but then you still feel yourself having to come around to the feelings of forgiveness or the feelings like you can still extend love even though you kind of feel frustrated. That's a resiliency question. And so today we're going to talk about that on the other side.

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**Selena:** You know, a good marriage needs some good conflict every now and then, right?

**Ryan:** Well, you know, that's what I kind of grew up being taught. My father, he's a psychologist, which that was fun, he always said, "You never know until you've had like a knockdown-dragout fight." And what he meant by that was just a

really important disagreement about something that really matters. Then you know you've made it through something.

But then I hear of these like couples that are in their 80s and they've been married for, you know, 60 years and they're like, "We've never once had a disagreement in the entirety of our marriage."

**Selena:** I think it's just memory loss at that point. It's like we've always loved each other. We've never fought. Or you've just done so much life together you know what each other's next step or word is going to be like.

**Ryan:** It's a culture thing too. I don't think it's unfathomable that a couple would go their whole marriage without having a significant disagreement.

**Selena:** Sure, of course Yes, we are all sinners.

**Ryan:** No, I think it's possible for couples to basically get along their entire lives. The question is, are you being fruitful and you're getting along and are you becoming... Because sometimes what can happen is guys just don't deal with stuff or wives kind of sweep stuff under the rug.

**Selena:** Yeah, he's just kind of-

**Ryan:** Anyway, this will be a good conversation. I'm Ryan. This is my lovely wife, Selena. We are the Fredericks. Welcome to the Fierce Marriage Podcast. If you're new here, we have a very simple mission and that is to put the gospel on full display in the area of family, specifically marriage. We do that by sharing transparently. We've been married 22 years, going on 22.

And friends, we've seen a lot. We've had four children. We have had a lot of ups and downs. We've had a lot of successes and also a lot of failures. And so we're just going to share with you based on that all always in light of not just our own thoughts, but scripture, the gospel, the goodness of Jesus Christ. So here you are. Thank you. Or here we are together.

**Selena:** Here we all are.

**Ryan:** Here we all are. Man, what episode is this, Selena? This is episode 389-ish.

**Selena:** Man.

**Ryan:** We've been doing this for a long time.

**Selena:** Long time.

**Ryan:** I think since 2016.

**Selena:** We had Emmy, right? Was it 2016?

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Selena:** Our second born was-

**Ryan:** So we're going on nine years of this.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** So before podcasting was cool. It was just starting to be cool we started doing it.

**Selena:** And we were going to just do it for a new book that we had written at the time. And here we are, 388 episodes.

**Ryan:** Seriously. People will say, well, how do you do that every week? You know, year after year. And I just think if it weren't fun, if I didn't enjoy doing this with you, it'd be a lot harder. I'll say that.

**Selena:** Yeah. And there's some call to duty on that. The Lord is so gracious to us, to bless us on so many levels. It helps us to work through some things as well and wrestle with our own faith and our own marriage and what that means and how we can reflect the Lord in it.

**Ryan:** Never. Never have we used the podcast as a way to get through something.

**Selena:** Oh, the fodder from our marriage.

**Ryan:** Okay. Fighting. So I guess we're going to start with this premise.

**Selena:** Conflict.

**Ryan:** That there is a version of conflict that is good and healthy and there are versions of conflict that are not good and are not healthy.

**Selena:** What qualifies a good conflict?

**Ryan:** Well, that's a good question. It depends. I'm actually going to skip all the way to the end of the conversation because we may not include this otherwise. But what makes a conflict good is that reconciliation is the goal.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Meaning that you are not just fighting to fight, to win, but you are actually dealing with whatever the conflict issue is with reconciliation as the goal.

**Selena:** Yeah. So I'm not just airing my frustrations and walking away. I'm not just venting and like just saying whatever I feel, whenever I feel it. That's not a healthy way to deal with conflict.

**Ryan:** And we're talking more about the degrees of conflict here in a second. But you asked what makes a conflict good versus bad. You just illustrated a bad version as opposed to reconciliation being the goal.

Also, conflict that is aimed toward not only reconciliation, but repentance and forgiveness. That there's a legitimate recognition if someone has sinned or been sinned against that. And then you're talking through that.

Then another, I think, qualifier for a good conflict would be that anger, though anger is natural. And in some cases, anger is not sin, but sometimes we can use our emotions of anger as an excuse or license to sin, to say things, to do things that are otherwise sinful. That's why scripture tells us explicitly, be angry, but do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger and give no opportunity to the devil. That's Ephesians 4:26 and following. That idea of not letting the sun go down on your anger is not, you know, if you go to bed and you're frustrated, then you've somehow sinned. So that is the idea. Don't let it stew.

**Selena:** Don't let it remain constant over the days, just to continue in your heart every day. If the sun goes down again, the sun goes down again. You need to deal with it. And the sooner you deal with it, the better.

**Ryan:** Deal with it. That's it. So those are some things that make conflict, I think, good and productive. And it's always going to look at the end of... like what's the end game in mind. So that being said, and we did mention this idea of resiliency, so let's talk quickly about what... We had this kind of concept that... we've talked about this in the past on the podcast it's this called fight me. Like, I love you, fight me. And what do we mean by that?

So we have good friends, John and Becca. John was in the army. He was a ranger. He's a, you know, hero. Hoorah. That's the Marines actually. Hoorah thing I think it's a Marine.

**Selena:** [inaudible 00:07:41] Frederick.

**Ryan:** I think when he shared this with me, he was in an ambush at one point. He was being ambushed and he's kind of telling me the story. And the first thing he said is they've fought through it because that's one of the big things is when you're ambushed and you imagine you're going through a valley and you've got a caravan of hummers and you are going from A to B and the enemy is upon you and they're firing down on you. They've set up some sort of ambush. We never stop there.

**Selena:** You push through the other side.

**Ryan:** Then once you get through the ambush away from enemy fire, then you turn around and deal with it from that to the other side. But the worst thing you can do is stop in the middle. And so similar to that is this call to, Hey, I love you, fight me. Let's get this out. Let's go push through this enemy territory and begin to deal with it from the other side.

That is kind of the underlying idea here is that one of the worst things you can do as a couple is fail to deal with your conflict in a healthy way. And that is essentially you're stopping in the middle of an ambush and you're just going to take on more and more enemy fire and you're going to suffer casualties. And the analogy goes on.

In light of that, there are some kind of ideas behind this "I love you, fight me" concept. What are those?

**Selena:** Yeah. We've always been about, you know, let's keep communicating through the conflict. Let's keep talking. Let's keep going through this. And some of the tools that I think can help us through an ambush that are tangible tools is if you need to walk away and cool off, take a time out as you call it, that's okay. But the thing about a timeout is that it's a time that you're out. It's not the whole time. You don't walk away forever. This is a path towards reconciliation is in my emotions are too hot. I can't think clearly. All I feel is, you know, I'm being attacked or maybe you feel you're being attacked or whatever. We need to stop. We need to pause the conversation and cool off. Get the pause clause that we called it.

**Ryan:** Sure.

**Selena:** People call it. Anyways. Just taking some time to cool off, I think is wisdom. It's foolish, though, to just walk away, throw your hands up and say, we're not going to deal with this.

**Ryan:** And that's the contrast because early on that was my tendency is I'd get frustrated. We'd be, you know, obviously having conflict and I'd say, you know what, screw it. Whatever. I'm out. I'm going to go outside, make myself busy in the yard or I'm going to leave and not tell you where I'm going.

**Selena:** You didn't do that.

**Ryan:** I mean, a handful of times I would just go for a drive.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** But that's was the early tendency, but that's in contrast to what you're saying is, Hey, this is heating up. I'm pretty frustrated right now. I need to take a break and cool off.

**Selena:** Yeah. We're being ambushed. The only way to push through this is to pause, not literally pause and don't stay in the ambush, but in order to get out of it, we need to separate. We need to stop, clear our heads for a short time to mount.

**Ryan:** Yeah. It's not bad as long as you promise to return and actually deal with it. Don't just say whatever and then come back and then act like nothing happened.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Ryan:** What else?

**Selena:** So the key is to re-engage. Another thing is don't... I think this goes with it, but not cowering away from the hard conversations. We are Christians. We don't need to be afraid of conversations. We don't need to be afraid of hard, awkward, frustrating, whatever you fill in the blank with what you feel like that conversation is that you never want to have.

And you need to have it. Like God has given you the strength and ability to have this conversation and sometimes words you fumble over them, but this is part of being married to one another is to fumble through the words, to get it out, to start kind of the fight in order to get through that ambush, in order to get on the other side, to look back and say, okay, here's where I could have grown maybe in this, in this instance, here's where I could have grown.

And I think we're not saying like, fight me all the time. Like whatever is irritating you, let's fight. That's not what we're saying. I just want to be clear in what we're saying.

**Ryan:** Yeah. Not everything needs to be to the nth degree, which I think it leads into the next part of this talk is, what are the various scales or what's the scale of conflict look like?

**Selena:** Yeah. Because one conflict, us arguing or bickering is a different type of conflict than when a bomb has been dropped and trust has been broken. There's been, you know, infidelity or an addiction or some sort of huge breaking of trust.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So if we put them in three kind of three categories on the spectrum, yes, the most intense one is an atomic bomb. There's a deep hurt, breaking of the trust somehow. It's as if there's just devastation.

**Selena:** Yeah. Betrayal.

**Ryan:** And it's time to begin rebuilding. But, you know, obviously, before you can start rebuilding, the devastation has to stop. The explosion has to stop. It has to cool down. And that's a long process and it's very involved. It's going to take a lot of perseverance. It's going to take some help from your pastors, some godly friends, some counsel from your pastors, and godly friends. That's biblical. And a lot of forgiveness and a lot of conversations and a lot of rebuilding trust.

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** So that's the biggest version of conflict. These are the types of things that can end a marriage. And aside from the grace of God and the ability to be forgiven and to forgive, it's likely that that deep hurt would end your marriage.

The next one I think is probably the most common. I would classify this as unresolved conflict or a degradation of your unity or your relationship over spans of time. If the first category is an atomic bomb, this category would be someone is leaking toxic waste into the river.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** Right. It's not readily apparent. Kind of know something's off, you know, the life around this river is dying, it's creating sickness. Just carry the analogy through, but it's a slow, steady, ongoing dysfunction that is allowed to remain in the marriage. So what might this look like?

**Selena:** I think, you know, living contrary to truth. Like, you know what is good and healthy in a marriage, you know what is the healthy thing to do and then you

choose not to do it. It's just passivity, right? There's no neutrality here. You are just choosing to function around the dysfunction. You know what I mean? Like here's the dysfunction. We don't really want to deal with it, but we found really good ways to kind of avoid it and function around the dysfunction.

**Ryan:** Here's the clearest example that I can think of. It's intimacy. You know that there is a level of intimacy that is healthy in your marriage. You know that you need it. You know you need one another, you know that you need that connection, that all the benefits of intimacy. You know you need those things, but you don't pursue it. Why? Even though you know it's healthy. Instead, you would rather not... because maybe you've grown frustrated in that area, maybe you're in a season of young kids and so it's very kind of inconvenient and difficult. It could be that you're finding satisfaction elsewhere in things like pornography, obviously. But you know that you need health in this area. You know that it's a warning light on the dash and it's been blinking red and you're not paying attention to it.

Another one could be, you know, your schedules, you're perpetually overwhelmed. You know it's healthy to take a look at your schedule, to say no to things. Maybe you don't. If you don't know, then this is maybe your wake-up call.

**Selena:** Yeah. Well, and you can know and have the permission to say no to certain things in order to spend time together, whatever that looks like. It may be at home with a meal and kids are at grandma and grandpa's, but you need some time together that's undistracted. Take it. Make it happen.

**Ryan:** You know, you've been avoiding hard conversations is another one. You know that your phones are distracting you from one another. You've been countless nights where you're both next to each other in bed. We're not immune to this. Both of you are in bed and you've got your screens and you're not talking, you're not connecting, you're not getting sleep. You know that this is causing a problem and it's causing... that can turn into toxic waste in your stream.

**Selena:** Absolutely. Absolutely.

**Ryan:** And so what that does is it starts to, like Selina said, you start to get used to living contrary to truth. And when we live contrary to truth long enough, we shouldn't be surprised when we begin to die. We now begin to die contrary to truth.

**Selena:** There's no free being born.



**Ryan:** Right. Right. The Family Life, they do these conferences. And their big thing is, is that couples don't naturally gravitate toward one another. You always gravitate away from each other. Your default is not closeness, your default is isolation.

**Selena:** And drifting.

**Ryan:** Drifting. And so that's what this is, is that we have this low-lying conflict, we have this frustration, we have this culture within our marriage that is a drifting culture. And that doesn't always bubble to the surface, but it kind of tends to bubble to the surface once in a while.

**Selena:** Right. And the enemy would love to keep us there, right? The enemy would love to just like not have too many big bombs go off, but just enough to kind of waste your marriage and waste your life away, where you're looking back saying, man, all those nights that we were looking at our phones we could have been reading together, having a conversation, having sex. I mean, doing-

**Ryan:** Well, we could have been dealing with this thing that is now looking like it's going to end us.

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** And here we are and we're beyond repair. Now we're here to tell you that we don't believe you're beyond repair. You just need to get to work repairing.

**Selena:** Yeah. You're not beyond God's repair.

**Ryan:** And doing the work of faith that we're going to talk about here in a second. The final on the scale of conflict. So we've talked about deep hurt. We've talked about degradation. The final one is just kind of the most surfacy. I've got here bickering/nagging. Or the way to put that would be verbalized irritation.

**Selena:** Yeah. Kind of the grumbling, complaining, the vocabulary that is not... clearly there's no joy, contentment, delight, gratefulness in your marriage or in your life if this is a constant pouring out of your mouth, right? Whatever's inside of you will come out. We see this as kind of like the weeds in the garden. They're everywhere.

**Ryan:** We have a little bit of land. We're in Washington state. And in Washington state, there are these things called Scotch broom. Come to find out in other places of the country it's called cow killers. This is yellow-

- Selena:** Big yellow bushes. You see them on the sides of freeways and all that kind of stuff.
- Ryan:** Yeah. So they're an invasive species here. If you don't get in and actually get rid of that stuff, it will take over all of the life of a pasture. It will make it so no grasses can grow. Cows can't eat them. You know, they do nothing. All they do is take over more and more land. Bickering and nagging is like that. Bickering nagging is the cow killer.
- Selena:** It's the joy killer. It'll kill your joy. And God has given us-
- Ryan:** It'll choke out life. It'll choke out the pasture. That is your marriage.
- Selena:** Yeah. The Lord has given us so much joy to be... there's joy to be had in our marriages. And if-
- Ryan:** Sorry, go ahead.
- Selena:** Oh, I was going to say, yeah, if you let that Scotch broom dwell there, it'll kill it. It'll take it. It'll ring its neck, just slowly take that joy out of your marriage.
- Ryan:** One key thing about that analogy is that it's never the root cause. It's always the symptom, right? So it's always the symptom of a lack of maintenance, a lack of saying, no, we don't allow that here. This is not the type of marriage, type of people we want to be. Complainers, naggers, always verbalizing our irritation, sloppy in our communication, bickering with one another, poking at one another, being sarcastic. You need to pluck those things out and say, that's not who we want to be.
- Selena:** The Bible shows us who we are supposed to be, what, who, what we're supposed to dwell on, all this good and pure and praiseworthy, right, to dwell on these things and to pursue... 1 Timothy 6:11-12, to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness. And he's saying this, but as for you, O man of God, flee these things.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** Flee these things? Oh, he said the first couple of verses, I'm sorry. The verses before that talk about I think lust of the flesh and all of that. He's saying flee them. And then Paul continues to Timothy in verse 12 saying, fight the good fight of faith, take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about what you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. So pursuing righteousness, pursuing godliness, pursuing faith, love,

steadfastness, gentleness. Allowing the Scotch broom will kill all of these things.

**Ryan:** Yeah. There's another verse in 1 Corinthians 9, where Paul is talking about running the race as Christians. And this is not directly related to marriage per se, but it's related to the Christian life, which then translates into how we live within our marriage. And he says this starting in verse 24 of chapter 9. It says, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control and all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly. I do not box as one beating the air, but I disciplined my body and keep it under control lest after preaching to others, I myself should be disqualified."

Of course, there's a whole bunch of context there, but I'm looking at broad themes of the Christian life that we do not run aimlessly. We do not box as one beat beating the air.

**Selena:** We don't live without boundaries or self-control.

**Ryan:** And we don't fight in our marriage without this end game in mind.

**Selena:** Of resolution.

**Ryan:** Of doing it unto our own sanctification of one another under the greater glory of Christ. This is why it's worth fighting for. This is why we don't accept anything, any type of default speech in our marriage. This is why we have boundaries around certain behaviors and even thinking and thought patterns and attitudes toward one another. Like we're not free to feel and act however we want to feel and act. And why? Because we don't run the race as if we don't care. We run so as to win the prize. And the prize of course is Christ himself and seeing Him at that finish line saying, well done, good and faithful servants. That's the prize.

So to that end, resiliency. We've talked about conflict in general. We've talked about three types of conflict on the scale of conflict, if you will. But what about after you've had a conflict? Again, we have had fights, believe it or not. But there's many times when I've felt a conviction or Selena has come to me and expressed... and you can feel free to say your version of this as well, but you've expressed, you've repented, you've asked for forgiveness, but I'm still mad.

**Selena:** Oh, yeah.

**Ryan:** I'm still frustrated. I'm still hurt.

- Selena:** Like all the time.
- Ryan:** It happened an hour ago.
- Selena:** No, he tends... I'm not gonna throw you under the bus, but at the same time, I'm pretty resilient and like, okay, we made up, it's okay, we're good now. It takes a long time for the temperature to go up. And so when it's up, it takes a long time for it to come back down.
- Ryan:** I'm like a cast iron skillet.
- Selena:** Yes. And that's okay. I love you. You have many purposes.
- Ryan:** You have a very patient, long-suffering, but if something gets in there, and it heats up, it takes a long time.
- Selena:** It can be abusive in like... yeah, you could ride it out longer than you do. And you don't. I generally do think that you try to not let it linger. But we are always having a conversation of like, how are you doing? Is this still bothering you?
- Ryan:** Not always.
- Selena:** Not always, but I do try to like... I've learned that I can't always fix it. Sometimes I just have to let the time pass and like, we've resolved things are okay but you're just... you need some time to cool off.
- Ryan:** Here's where it's hard to be resilient is if you feel justified in your hurt or in your frustration and you want to turn the screws even more. You want them to know that you're frustrated. I'm just testifying here. And we've already had the conversation.
- Selena:** Yeah. You've gone through the actions, but the feelings are not quite there yet all the way.
- Ryan:** Yeah. And there is a sense in which there might be more to talk through. So you need to be discerning in this. But there also is a sense in which I've had it to where I've been frustrated and I think it's frustrated because of you, but really I just was frustrated around you. And now my frustration is directed at you, but it's really all these other things that are happening in life. And I think about it objectively, I think, Selena actually didn't do anything that warrants... I need to just let this go.

And that's a time to be resilient and say, That's not even your fault. We're using resilience in the sense that you are able to overcome your own emotions and adapt and basically tell yourself how to feel. And that's not a biblically foreign concept. We see that all throughout the Psalms when he says, why are you downcast, O my soul? Rejoice in the Lord.

**Selena:** We fix our eyes and our hearts on the virtues of and the promises and the goodness of God. So we have these loud geese that my husband decided to get, but they like me because he got them and then he left and so they bonded with me. Anyways, they don't hiss at me, they hiss at him. But anyways, it's pretty cool to watch them. Like when they go in the water, the water just falls right off of them. But they love it. They go in and they're just dancing all around. It's really crazy.

You pick up a feather and you dip it in the water and their oils are so-

**Ryan:** Hydrophobic.

**Selena:** Hydrophobic. There it is. That the water just comes right off of them. And I feel like that is just such a good illustration of how the Lord grows our hydrophobic abilities with each other with sin. Not hydrophobic. That's the wrong word. But how can our resiliency grow to where maybe we do get sprayed with the hose of sin or we give into our emotional, you know, rage and we sin again? How are we allowing resiliency to either take its place or are we just ignoring it completely? Does that make sense?

**Ryan:** Yeah. We gotta be careful here because we're not saying ignore the processing and dealing with this stuff internally because there's a very real sense you need to reconcile being sinned against or having been a sinner.

**Selena:** And I think we grow in that. Like our resiliency should grow in that.

**Ryan:** So you're dealing with it. But here's the definition. I was going to use this definition because I think it gets us off the hook here. Definition of resiliency is this. It's the ability to bounce back from conflict/hurt, both individually and as a couple. Here's the caveat. In a timely, healthy way. So in a timely, healthy way, meaning that you've had a conflict, it may have been legitimate, you may have been sinned against, you've dealt with it. Now obviously we're assuming that you've dealt with it. If you've not dealt with it, this is not something that you can't be resilient because there's nothing to get past. You have to be able to get past the thing.

But now you're able to conform your emotions according to God's word in a timely, healthy way. And so what's this look like? How do we actually pursue

resiliency? We have some tangible things here. Number one, acknowledge or verbalize what it is you're dealing with.

**Selena:** Yeah. I said this to you. That I'm like, there'll be many times when we've had a conflict or we've gotten through it again. It's kind of the same old, same old ruts here and there. And I'm just like, I'm still feeling really frustrated about this. And I'm sorry. Here's just where I'm at. I'm informing. It's more of a mode of informing you. It's not me trying to throw it back at your face in your face or, you know, pile it back onto you or tighten the screws, as you said. It's just more me informing you, this is where I'm at. Can we pray together or can you pray for me? Can we read scripture about this? I'm having a hard time bouncing back. I'm having a hard time being resilient about this.

Again, not sweeping things under the rug, but bringing them out saying, this is where we're at. I'm not letting it, you know, run my heart and attitude, but inside it feels like it's really challenging right now and I'm kind of at a loss of what to do.

**Ryan:** This is most often with stuff that's outside of our marriage. Like there's, you know, family stuff. You know, we're part of the body of Christ. It's not perfect. There's friendships that are imperfect. And so sometimes you have to sort through that stuff and the supply is there as well.

So how do you pursue resilience? Resiliency is acknowledge it, verbalize it, talk about it. Now that's so basic, but so hard for a lot of couples.

**Selena:** Well, in talking about it, I think, again, there's parameters on that. It's not just rehashing, rehashing, rehashing, rehashing, right? Again, the point is resolution. The point is oneness. The point is unity, is resolving again, bouncing back to that place of unity.

**Ryan:** So as a part of that, the second thing is forgive truly. It's possible to say I forgive you without actually extending forgiveness.

**Selena:** Oh, yeah.

**Ryan:** You know an attitude of forgiveness. How do we forgive truly? The only way we can forgive truly is by beholding how we are forgiven in Christ truly. And so what that means is we need to have a clear idea of God's character, His holiness, as much as we can.

**Selena:** Yeah, if we don't understand, we're not gonna fully understand I think the forgiveness of Christ this side of heaven because I feel like it's a hundred-gallon idea still for a five-gallon head. Not even that.

- Ryan:** 100%.
- Selena:** 0.1 gallon head.
- Ryan:** But we are able to experience it to some degree and to understand it to some degree.
- Selena:** By God's grace. Yes.
- Ryan:** So how can I, a man forgiven of my multitude of sins against the creator of the universe, the perfect thrice Holy God of all, how can I, a sinner who's been forgiven by Him, look at you and say, how dare you sin against me? Again, we're not saying don't deal with it. We're saying I have no moral high ground by which to hold you unforgiven.
- Selena:** Yes, you need to see it.
- Ryan:** We are called to forgive as we are forgiven in Christ. This is a command. And this is a dire one. I believe it's in Matthew 18. It's seared in my brain. It's the guy who his debts were forgiven and then he went and demanded the debts of his debtors. It was like a billion dollars of debt that he had been forgiven and he was choking some guy over \$100, right? And the guy who forgave him that found out and was like, You wicked servant, go to prison until your debt is paid off. Your family as well, right? So we are called, commanded. It is a sin to not forgive. Whoa.
- Selena:** Harboring unforgiveness.
- Ryan:** It is a sin to not forgive That does not mean that you overlook or you don't deal with the consequences of being sinned against.
- Selena:** Right. It doesn't mean trust is automatically where it was before. There's a rebuilding and that's a whole process.
- Ryan:** So acknowledge, verbalize what you're feeling, forgive truly, seek out to the Lord in terms of what that means. Be conformed to the word and the renewing of your mind, meaning that if I am just stewing on my frustration and letting that keep me from extending the olive branch and actually Regaining oneness with you, and we've had the conversation and I've we've extended forgiveness, that's time for me to tell my brain what to think. It doesn't get to think whatever it decides to think. I tell it what to think.

Who am I? I am made in the image of God, body and soul. I have this consciousness and my mind is an organ. I can tell it what to think. It's a muscle you have to practice. I'm not perfect at it.

**Selena:** And I think that part of renewing our mind is knowing scripture, being in scripture, memorizing scripture. Because when it's in our hearts, that's what my head needs to hear a lot of times, right? Do not be conformed by the world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Okay, what does that mean? God, what do you say about forgiveness? What does your word say about love and patience and kindness?

I feel angry, but your word says that I need to be patient. I need to be kind I need to extend that olive branch because we have reconciled and even though I don't feel the peace of that yet, I got to trust that it's gonna come because you've said I need to do these things, Lord. So I submit, I will do these things and I'll trust that the feelings will follow. And even if they don't, I still obey, right, we still obey.

**Ryan:** That's good. Another tangible way to build resilience is to remember that you're not fighting each other, you're fighting the enemy. Who's the enemy? The enemy is your flesh. The enemy is the devil. The enemy is the world and the attitudes the world would have us believe. Which go back two and three weeks ago, we talked about if ChatGPT were the devil, how would he destroy family, about family. Check out the attitudes there. Are those attitudes working their way into my own heart and into our marriage? I have to remember that I am NOT fighting a battle that is flesh and blood. I'm not fighting on worldly terms. I'm fighting on God's terms and spiritual forces. And you're not the enemy. You'd be amazed how that disarms that inclination to be slow to forgive.

**Selena:** Absolutely.

**Ryan:** What's the last one here?

**Selena:** So last one is let the truth of Christ stand. Standing on God's promises. Standing on the truth of Christ. The truth about the situation even if I don't will feel like being resilient or bouncing back, the truth is that I've been forgiven. We have resolved this and I need to find my way to bounce back into the peace and the unity and the oneness that is us.

We need to pray. We need to come together. We need to ask for prayer. And we need to do the hard things and say the hard things. Whatever it is that we know we need to do to let Christ's truth reign in the situation, we need to do it.



**Ryan:** And the friends that is the Christian life. So here we are saying it like it's this easy thing. That is the extent of the Christian life is letting Christ reign as Christ in every aspect of our heart soul, mind, strength, relationships, marriage, family in every way. So how do we let the truth of Christ stand?

Well, again, going back to forgiving as the Lord forgave, Jesus does not lack emotional resiliency when we sin against Him. We ask Him for forgiveness. He extends forgiveness freely and without price and says, yes, come. Forgiven. It's gone. As far as the east is from the west, I've removed your transgressions from you.

We are so slow to remove transgressions from each other. We do it in word but do we do it with our whole self, with our mind, and with our hearts toward each other And so here's the freedom in this. If you've been through this, you know what we're talking about. You've had a hard time being resilient with one another, you've let conflict have this extended half-life in your marriage, if you will. You don't have to sit in it. Don't have to sit in it. You do not have to grow bitter. You do not have to let it stew. You don't need to stew in it. You don't have to bring your emotional urges to their desired resolution.

Whoa, that's counterculture to think that these emotions actually don't have to be-

**Selena:** Run the show. They don't have to be like-

**Ryan:** Everything I feel is valid.

**Selena:** Knowledge, yes.

**Ryan:** Just because you feel it doesn't mean it's valid. It just means you feel it. And you choose what to do with it. So there's freedom there that you can forgive as you are forgiven in Christ.

**Selena:** There is an emotional maturity that it takes. Resiliency is like a muscle growing into it building it up.

**Ryan:** 100%.

**Selena:** That's our prayer, I think, for the marriages and even for ourselves. You know, we're always in need of some emotional resiliency with each other. Because we're gonna irritate each other. We're gonna get on each other's nerves. We're gonna sin against one another.

The mark of a Christian relationship and the body of Christ even is the unity, the forgiveness that is offered there, the fact that we can still come together even though we've been sinned against and say, we've forgiven each other and now it's time to look ahead and move forward because Christ has forgiven us and we live in that grace.

**Ryan:** And you have the same savior in the end and the same righteousness in you that is already but also being worked out in your life. So yeah, there it is. Conflict. What? What did I say? Spectrum of conflict?

**Selena:** No. Scale of conflict.

**Ryan:** I had to come up with something better for that. I've talked about resiliency. Conflict is okay as long as it's done unto the right ends, with the right ends in mind. And so we pray this helps you wherever you're at.

We haven't shared it explicitly yet, but we always like to share the gospel. If you don't know who Jesus is Here's who Jesus is. He's the Son of God. He is Truly God truly man. He became flesh so that we might... actually He lived a sinless life, even though He was truly man. He could have sinned. He didn't. Lived a sinless life. He died a sinner's death.

Why? Because of us. Because of our sin. To take on our sin and instead give us His righteousness when we place our faith in Him. And He ascended into heaven and He reigns at the right hand of the Father to this day. And He will come again, friends. He will come to judge the quick and the dead again.

So we want you to be on the right side of that judgment. And how do you get there? Place your faith in Christ to say I am NOT good enough to satisfy the law. I need someone to satisfy it on my behalf. I need forgiveness. I need someone to pay the price of my sin on my behalf. Jesus has done that. And when you say Christ, I trust you and you are saying that you want His forgiveness and you want to become a Christian, that's what it means to follow Christ.

So to that end, we always recommend you talk to a friend who's a Christian. You know who they are. Call them up. You'll make their day. Go to a church that preaches out of the Bible. If you have a hard time finding a church, we have a church finder at this website. It also gives you some steps or some various ways to process what the gospel is. It's [thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com) is the website we have set up for you.

**Selena:** Mm-hmm.

**Ryan:** Let's pray. Lord God, thank you for your wisdom and your word that shows us how to forgive and how to deal with conflict, which is inevitable when two sinners enter into a covenantal marriage. Lord, I pray for the marriages that are dealing with conflict right now, that they would take something away from this that would help them break the logjam, if you will, that is keeping their rivers from flowing, the communication from flowing. I pray that you would encourage them in the sense that they feel like there's hope but also fill them with courage to have hard conversations if needed. Also help them to understand what it means to be resilient and not just to get past bad feelings Lord, but to really submit our flesh to you to live by the Spirit and to live in unity in their marriages. We love you, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Selena:** Amen.

**Ryan:** Amen. We didn't mention at the beginning but this podcast is largely possible because of our Patrons or the Fierce fellowship. We had a few new people join over the last week.

**Selena:** Praise God.

**Ryan:** So welcome to the Fierce Fellowship. I should have looked up your names, but welcome to the Fierce Fellowship. If you want to join that and be a part of what God is doing through Fierce Marriage, through Fierce Families, you can check out [fiercemarriage.com/partner](https://fiercemarriage.com/partner). There's options there to be complicit in this mission.

Otherwise, it's okay. If you want to pray for us, that's great, too. But we will certainly come back and keep offering whatever the Lord allows us to offer free of charge week in week out. Just about. We're not every week. We missed last week. It's because we were very sick. We were very very sick as a household. Anyway.

That being said, this episode of the Fierce Marriage podcast is—

**Selena:** In the can.

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

**Selena:** Stay fierce.

**PODCAST NOTES**

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

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