

THE POWER OF AN ADMIRING WIFE

<https://fiercemarriage.com/the-power-of-an-admiring-wife>

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Ryan: If something happened and my heart stopped beating, they would have an immediate access to basically reboot it. Those wires from whatever they would connect it to my heart are exactly the power a wife has in her husband's life. You have the direct lines to my heart.

Selena: It's focusing on what's important to us and to you, what's more on your plate, how does that make you feel?

Ryan: A wife admiring her husband, you accomplish four very important things. Your husband will feel respected, your husband will feel encouraged, your husband will feel appreciated, and your husband will feel loved in one act of admiration.

Selena: An admiring wife honors God. As a wife should be one of my biggest desires is to honor my Lord and Savior.

Ryan: When a wife appreciates her husband, admires her husband, it shows him that she appreciates his worth. She recognizes his worth.

Selena: Your love to me, your devotion to me means so much more. There's no reason, there's no feeling, there's no lack for me to go seek it out elsewhere or to be vulnerable to it.

Ryan: Why does that dynamic of an admiring wife matter so much?

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Ryan: So if you don't know our story, early on in our marriage, we got married during college. We finished college, and then Selena promptly, I'd say providentially, found a job in Zurich, Switzerland, where Selena would be a groom on an amateur horse-riding facility there, hunter-jumpers, right?

Selena: Yeah, equestrian horse facility.

Ryan: And you're also an au pair for a five-year-old Swiss girl.

Selena: Swiss German girl.

Ryan: And I was like a tag-along hire to do construction, miscellaneous, like mucking the stalls, piling the manure.

Selena: Literally.

Ryan: Literally, like 20 feet high. Anyway, as part of that, I don't get into the whole story, I got very, very sick. I was actually sick when we got there. Had a congenital heart defect. I had bacterial endocarditis. I had to have open heart surgery. Well, yeah, long story short, if you want to hear that story in great detail, and the analog that it created for us in this ministry, go to fiercemarriagebook.com, just as a quick plug. You can buy the book called Fierce Marriage, tell that story in detail.

But after having heart surgery, I had four weeks as an inpatient in Zurich, and it was excruciating. It was very painful. I mean, anybody who's had heart surgery will tell you recovery is rough.

Selena: And you were in your 20s, and that was rough.

Ryan: Yeah, I can imagine doing it as an older guy, like lots of heart surgery patients. Anyway, as part of that, they had these wires they put through my stomach, I have scars on my stomach. And it goes through the stomach up between the sternum and the skin, whatever this is, the ribs, and then up over the clavicle, and then they were touching parts of my heart, and they were tied off, kind of like these leads. Remember that? They were tied off with sutures, just in case.

Selena: It seemed so barbaric.

Ryan: It seemed barbaric. It was pretty barbaric. Anyway, these leads were there because if something happened and my heart stopped beating, they would have an immediate access to basically reboot it. I share all of that just to share those wires from whatever they would connect it to, to my heart, are exactly the power a wife has in her husband's life.

You have the direct lines to my heart. The things that you say as a wife can either bring me to life in a moment of despair or even near death, you know, existentially speaking, or you could just really, you know, use those wires to my disadvantage and frankly, fry my heart.

So we're gonna talk about the power of an admiring wife today, and what exactly is happening if a wife is choosing to admire her husband, and what changes does it create in his heart, in her heart, and in the life of their marriage.

Selena: And why should we desire, as a wife, why should I be one that admires my husband? What's the value there? I think that's a good question for us to ask.

Ryan: So we'll do that on the other side.

Selena: On the other side.

[00:03:52] <music>

Ryan: Hello and welcome back to the Fierce Marriage podcast. That was a little bit of a longer intro this time around.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: But you know, sometimes you just gotta tell the stories.

Selena: Sometimes you gotta tell the stories. Yeah, share them.

Ryan: Yeah, if you don't know who we are, we are Ryan and Selena Frederick. We've been the voices, faces behind Fierce Marriage for, well the podcast, we're I think going on seven years now.

Selena: Yeah, Fierce Marriage has been around for 12 years?

Ryan: I think so, 12 years. This podcast exists solely to point you to Christ, particularly in the area of marriage. We also have the Fierce Parenting podcast, you can check that out. As a quick reminder, what you see, we're in what we call the forge here, is made possible by our Fierce Fellows. Those individuals who would say, Yes, I want to get behind what Ryan and Selena are doing. I believe in the mission of Fierce Marriage. That actually, that is about 30% of our family's monthly income, is just from people who are on mission with us. I can tell you what, it is such a relief to know that there is every month that's spoken for. The Lord has been so faithful to provide through His church in that way.

So if you feel led to do that, go to fiercemarriage.com/partner. We'd be honored and thankful. Let's get into this week's topic.

Selena: Yeah. You came to me, you're like, "Hey babe, I got this video I want to show you."

Ryan: That's exactly what I sound like. "Hey babe."

Selena: You're so good at that. No. But I'm so grateful that you show me funny videos because I think I get to see on the serious side of the internet. Serious. Is there

even one? And so he kind of reigns me and he's always sending me funny stuff. We're definitely the marriage that sends each other funny memes and videos.

Ryan: Like while we're in bed next to each other. Don't judge us.

Selena: We're working on it. Okay. As are you all, I'm sure. Building marital unity. Anyways, no, you sent me this video or showed me this video and I think we had some very similar reactions. I mean, we'd get into it. Let's watch it. And I think you'll just kind of hear some of our candid responses.

Ryan: All right, here we go. Let's watch this video.

<video starts>

Woman: Hey, would you be up to going out to eat tonight?

Man: Oh, not tonight. I really want to finish this stuff up.

Woman: Okay. No problem. Wait, are those your welds?

Man: Yeah. Yeah. Why?

Woman: Those are really nice.

Man: Thank, thank you.

Woman: That's really impressive.

Man: I mean, I'm just, it's solid. Shielding with C25.

Woman: That's so technical. I don't even know what that means. I'm impressed.

Man: Well, I mean, you know, there's different ways to do it. I mean, I don't think they're that bad.

Woman: They're not bad at all. I think they're amazing.

Man: I mean, you know, I do what I can, you know.

Woman: Well, we'll figure out something for dinner. I'll let you get back to work.

Man: Well, you know, I could, I could probably stop for a little while. We could go to town and grab something to eat.

Woman: Yeah, that's a good idea. Glad you thought of that. I'll go get ready.

<video ends>

Selena: Okay, two different responses here though. I mean, it could look somewhat manipulative. It could look manipulative. But it also, you saw it as, it's so sweet that she's really admiring her husband. Right?

Ryan: Yeah.

Selena: Genuinely.

Ryan: It's the power of an admiring wife. She knew that he was busy, he was head down getting the work done.

Selena: She was resigning to go make food.

Ryan: She wanna go get dinner. She probably would have been okay either way, but she just decided to, you know, wield the power of an admiring wife. And you know what, frankly, I don't think that husband's going to be like, Yeah, you manipulate. No. I think she was being genuine.

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: I would say that it was an act.

Selena: Scripted.

Ryan: Scripted. But they're illustrating something that's really powerful in that... you know, it's a complete tone shift. He went from "I'm just getting this work done. I want to get it done tonight" to "I want to spend time with my wife." So what changed?

Selena: She admired his weld.

Ryan: And why was that so powerful? So we've kind of put together an outline here. Why is wife to husband... we're going to focus on wives admiring husbands. So I don't want the viewer, the listener to say, well, what about husbands?

Selena: No Mr. And Mrs. Whatabouts are welcome here today.

Ryan: We're just not going to talk about that today. We're gonna talk about wives admiring their husbands today. Trust me. We can talk about that another time

and we probably will. But why does that dynamic of an admiring wife matter so much? Let's get into it.

All right. So the first one, the first reason is how it affects the man. And you can start with how it affects the woman first, but we're going to say-

Selena: How does it affect you? And I'm like, thank you for working so hard to provide for us, or man, I can tell that you're really wanting to, you know, hang out with us as a family, but I know you've got some seminary stuff. I know you got some book editing. I know stuff's kind of down to the wire. I appreciate that. I wish you could be a part of this or something. And that's not an everyday thing for us, but-

Ryan: Oh, absolutely. I mean, it's exactly the same reaction that this guy had in the video.

Selena: Yeah. It's focusing on what's important to us and to you, you know, what's more on your plate, I think. How does that make you feel, Ryan?

Ryan: So we're going to get into why you can't really fake true admiration. You're either manipulating or you are lying or you are patronizing. In the moments of our marriage when I feel your genuine admiration, just yesterday, I was... we're working on a few different things and I wanted to show you some of what I've been working on. You don't have to see it. Like you don't need to know the details of what I want to show you but for some reason I want to show you because I want... it's like I've killed a deer and I'm bringing it home and now I want you to enjoy this deer. You didn't have to kill it. You didn't have to gut it. You didn't have to do that stuff. But I want to see that look on your face.

So I showed you yesterday. Why do I do that? Because... well, I can't really explain it. But when I get your genuine admiration, it has a very real effect on my heart as a husband. And it's not just, oh, you made me feel good about myself. You made me want to love you more.

So I'll just say it like this. In one act of admiration of a wife admiring her husband, you accomplish four really important things. Your husband will feel respected, your husband will feel encouraged, your husband will feel appreciated and your husband will feel loved in one act of admiration. By the way, that's an acronym, REAL. R-E-A-L.

So he'll feel respected in that you acknowledge his potency and his power. Okay. So what do I mean by that? When Adam was in the garden and God had given him his assignment, I want you to work the garden and I want you to

name the animals. When Adam called something a name, that was it. That was its name. When he set forth to do an action, the action was completed. When he pruned a tree, the tree was pruned. When he opened the ground, put, you know, seed in to plant the tree, that fruitfulness happened when he worked the ground.

We are wired to be potent. And by potent, I don't just mean being able to do a lot of powerful things. But when you try to enact a thing, the thing is enacted. That's what potency is. And so when a wife admires her husband, he will feel respected because you're acknowledging the potency, the power that I think is... I just know is baked in to creation.

So the second one, he'll feel encouraged. It's pretty obvious, but the way I want to articulate it here is that you literally will fill your husband with courage.

Selena: I mean, just to back up a little bit, when you feel respected, I think it definitely has an overflow effect into making me feel loved. You know, like she was admiring his welds and then he's like, "You know what, maybe we should go out to dinner," you know? And it's just kind of like... You like to see it as an overflow. Again, you can't fake the admiration of your husband. Like you both will know it.

Ryan: It's on the video. The guy's welds were legit.

Selena: Yeah. Sure.

Ryan: It's not like she was just-

Selena: I don't know anything about it. I assumed they looked amazing. They are pretty straight. But the fact that you feel respected, which is the currency in which men trade and understand and like deal with one another. But then even the Lord commands in Ephesians 5, like wives, respect your husbands. That is how you know that you're loved, you feel that you're loved and that you're filled with the courage, right, and to do even more, to bring home more, to work harder, to work more diligently, to give to me, you know, in the areas where if I'm... which we'll get to in a minute of just a posture of an admiring wife, there's something to be said for that.

Ryan: I'll just use a quick example. I'm in seminary and recently have ramped up to get it done faster to more full-time. So I'm in currently taking four classes. Well, at one point I was not doing the MDiv degree. This is at Westminster. So it's very kind of rigorous. There's a lot of classes.

I was doing a slightly less intensive degree. And I had gotten advice from fellow colleagues, people that are maybe pastors or whatever, they said, "You should go for the MDiv. And I'm like, man, that's like another year of hard work and we're already working too hard. I came to you. And one of the ways that you show me admiration is you trust me with my theological insights, you know, the truths that I uncovered from scripture. You basically said, "Yeah, you need to go for it," knowing full well that as a wife, you're going to bear some of that weight.

Selena: Yeah. It was not a naive response.

Ryan: It was the 300 moment. I say this a lot, but I love it when Leonidas goes off to war and he's saying farewell to his wife and she looks at him and says, "Come back with your shield or on it." You know, like you either win or die trying. That's kind of what you said to me at seminary. It's like, if you're going to do the thing, do the thing.

Selena: Yeah. It's not-

Ryan: Like don't have half it. This is a G-rated podcast. We're all adults here. Can you speak in this farm language?

Selena: No.

Ryan: Okay. He'll feel respected. He'll feel encouraged. He'll feel appreciated. What I mean by that is when a wife appreciates her husband, admires her husband, it shows him that she appreciates his worth. She recognizes his worth.

You did that. Well, that was amazing. Oh, you use that, I think, it's C25 gas or something. It's a gas, I think you use to help so it doesn't oxidize the flame. And she's like, "I don't even know what that means, but wow.

Selena: Sound technical-

Ryan: But it's awesome.

Selena: But it's awesome. Yes.

Ryan: She's recognizing like, you have a skillset-

Selena: Clearly.

Ryan: ...that brings value. It brings worth.

Selena: Yes.

Ryan: If you're a guy watching and listening to this, again, it goes back to potency. You don't want to feel worthless. You don't want to feel like you can't bring value if you're on a team, if you're in a circle of friends. Like you want to have kind of your thing. This is what I like.

If you think about superhero movies or I'll use heist movies, you've got like the leader, you've got the grease guy, you've got the tech guy, you've got the driver, you've got the explosives guy. Like everybody wants to be a guy, like one of the guys. Frankly, I could be in like Ocean's Eleven. I could be any one of those characters. I'd be happy just to be part of it and have my way of bringing worth and being like one of the elite, you know?

But when a wife shows admiration to her husband, she's telling him, I appreciate your worth, that you fill a role here. I can't fix the car. We're currently with the kids for better or worse. I've got them watching a Home Improvement. I grew up watching Home Improvement, Tim the Toolman Taylor. And I just love it because there's some of those like 90s...

Selena: Yeah.

Ryan: Like it's still kind of innocent in a way. And it's very clear that Tim is a man's man. He can pull out the engine, totally refit the engine and Jill has no appreciation for his like skills. In every episode, it's kind of like them appreciating one another in some way. So by showing admiration, you're showing appreciation.

Selena: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Ryan: And finally by a wife showing it admiration — and then I want you to kind of speak to the wife side of this — she will prove to her husband that she has eyes and a heart. In other words, he will feel loved. I see the value you bring to our household. You are the one I'm looking at. You are the one that I have eyes for, I have a heart for. It just makes you feel loved. Admiration makes a man feel loved.

So the power of an admiring wife is very clear. If you want to know what that power is in one act of admiration, the wife will make a husband feel respected, encouraged, appreciated, and loved.

Selena: Make you feel real.

Ryan: Make you feel real. That's not corny at all. So we've covered why the wife to husband admiration dynamic is so important because of how it affects the husband. How does it affect the wife?

Selena: Well, again, a wife can't just pretend and conjure this up. I can't just throw out, "Oh, that's cool you did that." Where in my soul, I'm just so bitter and I'm so angry and frustrated with the things that you're not doing.

I think that you have to have a posture of humility. There's gotta be a posture of submission. Submission, respect, those are the buzzwords that just seem to... everybody can't hear anything now. I'm saying something and nobody can hear it because all they're like submission, respect. Anyways, we're talking about submission here, talking about respect.

So I think her posture, you know, it's changed towards him when she's looking to his skill, she gains an eye for his worth. The genuine admiration, again, it has to come from a place of authenticity. And if it doesn't, it's clear to both of you and you need to try again.

I might go a little off-script with this in that the whole REAL acronym, that is where I would start as a wife. If your husband is... if it's hard for you to be his biggest fan, if it's hard for you to appreciate and love him and admire him, like start with the REAL acronym "respected". Where in your lives and your marriage is he-

Ryan: Effective?

Selena: Yeah, effective. Showing his potency, his power? Where is he effective? What is he really good at? And that you're really grateful for that he does. Maybe it's as simple as he consistently takes the garbage out every single day and you're so grateful for it, or maybe you've overlooked that. Maybe it's time to go back and revisit that. How can you encourage him? So we have respected, encouraged. How can you encourage him? Do you know what's going on at his job? Do you know how he's been dealing with certain things? Maybe there's some pressures at work. Maybe there's things that are just on his heart because of his family or your family, whatever's happening, stuff with the kids.

Where is a place that you can encourage that he's shared with you or that you kind of know and sense as his wife? Again, you have those direct lines. So how can I encourage you in these hard times? Or maybe it's, everything's great and you can just love on him and say, "Man, I'm just so grateful for you. I'm so encouraged. I hope you feel encouraged by what you're doing right now." Like we're finally hitting the stride, doing the thing, right?

Appreciated. How can I appreciate him? I so appreciate you taking the garbage out every day. I so appreciate the fact that you wake up at four in the morning, drive an hour, go to work all day, and then come home and still have some energy for the kids and I. Like, I'm so grateful for those things. I'm going to appreciate that in you.

Ryan: What I hear you saying is that a wife's posture has changed toward her husband when she's intentionally seeking out admiration opportunities. And that creates the genuine admiration that comes from genuine appreciation. And genuine admiration will build over time, genuine appreciation as well.

Selena: Well, and it comes from being grateful, right? God has commanded me to respect my husband. God has commanded wives to respect their husbands. If I can't respect my husband, then I need to bring that to the Lord and ask Him to help me down this path of respect because yes, I mean, we're going to... let's talk about the scenario. Because maybe the realities haven't changed, you know, maybe-

Ryan: And that's what you hear. I hear wives saying, well, you don't know my husband. You don't know the situation we're in. Okay, let's do a thought experiment.

Selena: Let's go there.

Ryan: If you've got a husband, a wife staying at home, she's taking care of the kids, doing work at home, like real work of home life-

Selena: Homemaking.

Ryan: Homemaking. And the husband is supporting the household and the day and age we live in, he's leaving, right, so he's driving an hour, spending 50 hours a week-

Selena: At work and then...

Ryan: He's commuting each day in our home. So you've got two households that this is the same scenario. Now, one household, you've got a wife who's saying, I can't believe that. He can't seem to get his act together and get a better job. He's gone 60 hours a week. Kids never see him. It's not enough. Whatever it is, they're earning the same income, like these scenarios versus the wife who says when her husband gets home, it's so good to see you.

Selena: We missed you all day. Like we're so grateful you're home.

Ryan: Thank you for the hard work you're putting in every day. I see you. I know that it's not ideal. Because clearly you're trying to get maybe to a better situation.

Selena: Right. And wives, if you've been wife, you know, complaining wife, number one, we'll call her wife number one, then you're going to have to practice this. It's not just going to come easily. You're going to have to practice, uh, gratefulness, appreciation, recognition for where you're at. Ideally, there's a lot of things wrong with the scenario in our just vision.

Ryan: It's not the ideal.

Selena: It's not the ideal to have husbands away 60 hours a week because of a job. However, if the husband is, you know, working hard, coming home, doesn't have a lot of energy, isn't acting in a way that is admirable, it's like I can still as a wife, find those little moments and little items that I can start... I can ask the Lord to help me see my husband rightly and to help me see him with better eyes.

Ryan: Let's assume the husband loves his family and his wanting-

Selena: I'm just saying that she can take the initiative because if he's not acting that way and she takes the initiative, that could change the whole culture of the home eventually.

Ryan: So we're assuming that the husband is loving his family in this. He's not just escaping to work. He's getting home. He's doing the duties of being a father and husband as well. Now take these two wives. You've got one wife who is out talking about how much she loves her husband, about how much she is his biggest fan, how thankful she is for the life that they have. Now you're one of the people in her vicinity. You're hearing that. What do you think about that wife? She used to be admired. She is a woman that is clearly filled with joy.

Selena: Yeah. And she's bearing a hard load.

Ryan: And she has a household that is the result of her attitude toward this reality. Versus another wife who has the same reality is out and about disparaging your husband to her friends, you know, complaining about the life and the season that they're in. That woman is miserable. And the only thing that changed is the attitude.

Selena: It's true. And if we assume that the husband is loving in this case and not... like withholding and not being, you know-

Ryan: We are assuming that.

Selena: The best, yes. Again, if the best is not what's happening in your household, wife, that's one area you can take the initiative in to change the culture of the home, of learning how to see your husband, how to admire him, how to respect him, encourage.

Ryan: Another story comes to mind. Our friends, Kenny and Linda. He was kind of a ruffle, you know, farm boy, wasn't a believer. She was a believer. She would go to church every Sunday. He would stay home and watch football. And she would always Bible-thump him. You should come to church. You're such a bad husband. You're an enemy of God, this sort of thing.

Basically, in her immaturity... you know, there's a time, you need to share the gospel with your unbelieving spouse. Absolutely. But it wasn't working for Kenny. He was not responding to it. And so she was at church one day and kind of felt this conviction saying, I just need to go home and love my husband right where he's at and quit trying to bash him in the submission-

Selena: Making him be what I want him to be.

Ryan: I'm going to just love him the way he is. Well, she went home that day, he was sitting down watching football, he was drinking a beer, she walks to the door, she goes to the fridge, cracks open a beer, sits down next to him and says, "Who's winning? Who's playing?"

Selena: What's the score?

Ryan: And Kenny looked at her like cross-eyed, like, who are you? You're not going to nag me. You're not going to...? Well, he said that was the day he began to soften. Now he's a wonderful believer and a patriarch of a wonderful family, but that's how somehow God works. She is not necessarily admiring him in that case, but she's-

Selena: She's on the path.

Ryan: She's on the path.

Selena: She's definitely. Yeah, absolutely on the path.

Ryan: So we talked about how it affects the husband. We've talked about how it affects the wife. Now, how does this sort of admiration from a wife to a husband affect the marriage? And I'll just say a few brief things. It obviously bonds you closer together, right? You're building deep devotion and

commitment toward one another. You're building a friendship, mutual appreciation. If this is the currency that you're using and you're exchanging-

Selena: Constantly and consistently.

Ryan: ...it has a way of multiplying.

Selena: Absolutely.

Ryan: It's not a "I gave you an admiration, therefore now I am-

Selena: Now you take me out to dinner.

Ryan: It multiplies and it grows between us. And the laughter grows and the encouragement grows. Everything grows as a result of this sort of posture toward one another. I'll say this. It also shields you or it go... this can go both ways. Because if a wife doesn't feel adored or loved, then she could maybe go outside the home, theoretically.

Selena: They're more vulnerable to feeling that.

Ryan: Nothing would justify going outside the marriage for any reason-

Selena: Anything that a husband or wife should be giving to one another.

Ryan: ...and committing adultery. Right? Nothing would justify that. However, this is a way of shielding because you're creating a boundary around it and saying, We are in this together. I admire you because of all the reasons we've already explained. You know, you have a place here. You're needed here. Necessary. You're loved here. You're wanted here.

So it shields from the need for external admiration. It creates strong bonds. This one should probably be the first one. It just straight-up honors God.

Selena: An admiring wife honors God. And I think that as a wife should be one of my biggest desires is to honor my Lord and Savior. And so if I can do that and flowing downstream from that, it means our devotion and commitment is built, our friendship is more mutual, it's deeper, we have more fun together. We are protected at some level because I'm looking to you for, you know, my... not affirmation. But your admiration means, or your love to me, your devotion to me means so much more. That there's no reason, there's no feeling, there's no lack for me to go seek it out elsewhere or to be vulnerable to it outside the home.

Ryan: A wife admiring her husband builds a marriage in that it honors God. That's going to strengthen the marriage just intrinsically. A wife admiring her husband models health to the children in the marriage in that how you communicate in your marriage will set the standard by which your children communicate within their own marriages and/or it will establish what they're willing to tolerate or not tolerate in their own marriage.

Selena: Yeah. How we speak to each other or in what we say to each other is going to be reflected in our children. And they're going to start picking up and being familiar with that type of communication and the subjects and the topics and things that we talk about that we value. It's going to trickle down into them, whether they are able to say this or not. I mean, just look at your own family of origin.

Ryan: I have a friend who is a gold panner and he loves... that's like his fishing. He goes up into the mountains and he pans for gold. And he once took me and I cannot see this stuff. It's like microscopic. And he has an eye for it. Well, his kids are growing up going with him gold panning and you better believe they're going to have an eye for it by the time they get to... they can go on their own. They're going to have an eye for it. They're gonna be able to see the gold through all the muck, through the silt, through the dirt, through the water, and they're going to pick it out and find the gold.

Well, it's the same thing with this. If kids are growing up... we have four daughters. So if our daughters are growing up with a mother who is good at sifting through all the muck and admiring the gold, they're going to know how to find that. They're going to have eyes for it. They're going to have a radar for it. They're going to be able to see it. And so if we model it for them... And this is not just about admiration, it's about so many other things, just the Christian life. But in this specific area with daughters, they're going to be able to see gold and that's going to help them in their own marriages.

Finally, a wife admiring her husband strengthens your marriage in that it creates a culture in your marriage that is far better. You can say why it's better. But it's just far better. Again, a genuine admiration born out of genuine appreciation, but it has to make its way to surface and out into your mind and out your mouth, into the ears of your husband. It's going to create a culture that will build the strength of your marriage.

Okay, so we have a few practical considerations finally. So what if your husband is a legitimate deadbeat? This is a thing I can hear some wives really struggling with, right? And they're hoping that we get to this point.

I'll just say this, that's a legitimate concern, but by and large, you married an imperfect man. No husband's going to be perfect. So yeah, if you want to focus on the negatives, you're going to have stuff to focus on. But most married men aren't deadbeats. They married you because they wanted to marry you. Hopefully, you know, it wasn't because they were just pressured by you because you were dating for eight years or whatever. But, hopefully they asked you to marry him because they wanted to marry you because they wanted to build a life with you.

Selena: That's very motivating, ideally.

Ryan: That's how we're wired. We want that. We want to build a family. And so chances are if your husband is having a hard time, he might be down and out. He might be feeling beat up. Life is tough. Out on the front, so to speak, sometimes you feel like, you know... I remember feeling this way so often in our early years of marriage. I was like, does it ever feel like you've arrived as an adult?

Every adult growing up seemed like they had it together? And now you realize that no adult has it together.

Selena: No adult has it together.

Ryan: So it could be that your husband is just not displaying his most admirable qualities because he's having a hard time. And maybe it's because there's a culture at home that is not conducive to encouragement and those sorts of things.

However, there are deadbeat husbands. It does happen. So if it feels like you can't admire him, what advice do you have for that wife?

Selena: Well, it's like you said, most men who got married are not deadbeats. But I think beginning with prayer is always a good place to start. Ask the Lord to help. Maybe to help you have clear eyes to see the gold in the midst of the buck. Also, pray for your husband. And also you got married to him, so there's gotta be something. Right? So I would go back to the real thing and look for the gold, the respect. How can I respect him? God opened my eyes to encourage him in these areas. Help me to know where and how to encourage him. God helped me to appreciate him.

As a Christian woman, I would hope that there's a conviction there and a desire to want to appreciate their husband, to want to love him in the way that he feels love, that he is filled with encouragement, that he would continue to work valiantly for our family. Right? So that's where I begin.

Ryan: Good. So start with prayer, and then just look for practical ways to begin kinda breaking that ice. Straight out of Genesis 2. Adam... it was not good. Everything was good, but there was no woman. That was not good, God said, so he created Eve as the helpmate fit for him.

So, wives, if you could be the way God breaks your husband out of his funk as his helper, as the helper fit for him. You're not fit for any old man, you know, and he's not married to any woman, he's married to you. So this could be the, oh, you know, I need to stop being reactive maybe. And this is not to let the husbands off the hook. Men are responsible for their own stuff. Right? I'm not saying that. But this could be the thing that breaks the ice.

Some practical steps forward. We said this early on. You can't fake genuine admiration, but you can learn it. You can learn genuine admiration. A guy will like... he can sniff it a mile away if you're giving fake encouragement.

Selena: I mean, just say what it is. "Hey, I feel like I haven't been very grateful for you, husband, and I wanna practice admiring you and being grateful for you." Maybe that's awkward for at the moment, but guess what? It won't be awkward after that.

Ryan: It is so disarming.

Selena: It's very disarming.

Ryan: It's the same thing for a husband.

Selena: Say where you're at.

Ryan: If a husband came to his wife and said, "I have not loved you well. Yeah. I'm so sorry. Help me love you. I want to love you well." A wife can say something. I want to be your biggest fan, husband.

Selena: Right. That just changes you.

Ryan: We want the same thing.

Selena: We want the same thing.

Ryan: Sometimes you have to come out and say it. And if you just come out and say stuff like that, it really has a way of disarming and putting you on the same page immediately. And you can get to the hard work of it. So you can't fake

admiration, but you can make it intentional. And like we said earlier, it does start with gratitude.

Selena: Make an intentional effort.

Ryan: Again, it doesn't mean you don't see the flaws. Everybody can see the flaws. It just means that you're-

Selena: You're married.

Ryan: Wives, admiring your husbands doesn't mean you don't see his flaws. It just means you don't major on his flaws. You major on his strengths. You major on the things you can encourage him on. Major on his victories, not his failures. Again, it's not because they're not there. It's just you're choosing what to major on. Doesn't mean you don't have to deal with stuff. Deal with the stuff. But don't major on it.

And so I would ask this question to that wife. What is it you love about your husband? That's your starting point. Now just tell him. Just tell him. That's it. That's his weld. That's his welding.

Selena: That's his weld. Tell him how you love his weld.

Ryan: There are benefits to the power of an admiring wife. Sometimes you convince your husband to go out to dinner, and maybe he didn't want to or planned to that night. Anyway, that's our episode. We hope it was helpful to you, this week. We always like to end these episodes with a clear articulation of the gospel.

We haven't brought any verses into this. I think they're kind of interspersed in our conversation. But all the wisdom that we have, if we have any, is not Ryan and Selena wisdom. It's purely the Lord working in our marriage and does that by His grace.

Now, what is the gospel? It's the idea, the reality, I should say, that Jesus walked the earth. Jesus was not just a regular man. He was God who adorned flesh. He was truly God, truly man. He lived a sinless life. He died on behalf of sinners. He died the sinner's death on the cross. He didn't stay dead. He defeated death. On the third day He arose from the grave, and then He walked the earth, had all sorts of witnesses who saw Him, and then He ascended into heaven. Now He reigns at the right hand of the Father.

He's saying, Repent and believe in Me, and you will have salvation, and you will be saved. If you hear the voice of your shepherd, then you are one of his

sheep. And we're hoping that this maybe... for some of you could be the call of the voice of your shepherd saying, go find your Christian friend, talk to them about Jesus. Go to a church that preaches out of the Bible. Sit there under the teaching of God's word, and be a sheep of the good shepherd. That could be you. We're praying that it's you. If you have questions or you wanna find a good church, go to this website. It's thenewsisgood.com. That should prove helpful for you.

Let's pray. Lord, I thank you for this time we have spent together. Thank you for the power of admiring wives. I pray that today was encouraging to wives to go and admire their husbands, not just in a patronizing way or in a fake way, but I pray that it would come from a place of genuine gratitude that's ultimately terminated in you. That we're ultimately grateful for all you've done for us so that we might know you. We might experience salvation. We might know that we're loved by you, that we might in turn glorify you.

I pray for those couples who are struggling, the husbands, the wives who are trying to find a way forward. I pray that you would help them, and they would feel you, and they would follow you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: Amen. All right, well, this has been a good episode. I feel rather-

Selena: You're feeling encouraged and admired?

Ryan: Always. Now you're good at that. I feel-

Selena: Respected, encouraged, admired, and loved. Feeling real.

Ryan: I'm just needy. After you go to the gym... I did this yesterday. Yesterday was arm day. I came in, and I got the pump. I said, you gotta feel that.

Selena: Feel it. Feel it.

Ryan: And you're like, okay. Okay. Wow.

Selena: Not genuine admiration, but you could tell that I cared.

Ryan: Anyway, I'll keep trying. I'll keep trying.

Selena: Never stop.

Ryan: As a quick reminder, if you want to support this podcast, you can do that by going to fiercemarriage.com/partner. We'd be honored and overjoyed to have you as part of the Fierce Fellowship, if you will. Like we always say, it is the internet's finest. The most elite couples around the world are part of the Fierce Fellowship. And one day we will cast the ring into the into the fires of Mount Doom as the fellowships usually do. Anyway, thank you so much for joining us.

This episode of the Fierce Marriage Podcast is—

Selena: In the can.

Ryan: See you again in about seven days, Lord willing. So until next time—

Selena: Stay fierce.

PODCAST NOTES

- **Recommended resource**
 - thenewsisgood.com

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