

PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE AND NOT JUST THE WEDDING

<https://fiercemarriage.com/preparing-for-marriage-and-not-just-the-wedding>

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Ryan: Weddings are incredible but I think our culture has really commercialized weddings and so there's a lot of pressure.

Selena: Wedding is just the beginning celebration of two lives coming together, two hearts.

Ryan: And so if you're to picture a Venn diagram and there's three components to that Venn diagram, one of them is going to be your beliefs. You need to share your beliefs. Beliefs matter more than anything else in your marriage. They matter more than your compatibility. Your beliefs matter more than your attraction to each other. Beliefs matter more than even your friendship.

Selena: Don't underestimate the power of beliefs and belief in the Lord.

Ryan: Marriage counseling in this case is not about gaining knowledge. It's about gaining perspective. It's about gaining accountability.

Selena: Until you have that accountability with a pastor, with a church, you're going to be out and alone and it's not going to be great.

Ryan: The most important decision you can make right now is not the type of house you're going to build or how you're going to build it. The most important decision you can make right now is where you're going to place it.

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Ryan: Selena, it's that time of the year. Love is in the air. Spring is upon us. Birds are chirping and new lovers are planning their weddings.

Selena: It's like people are planning their weddings.

Ryan: So we actually got some questions coming through. There's a theme that's arising. Why are you laughing? Why are you snickering?

Selena: Nothing. Nothing. Antics over here.

Ryan: There's a theme that's cropping up, I'll say. And it is just simply people are headed into getting married. And so we thought it would be appropriate to

discuss how to prepare for marriage. Again, if you've been married for a while, there's going to be stuff here for you too. So don't shut it off. We're here to encourage you too. But specifically, how can a couple, I don't know, prepare to merge their lives? What can they be alerted to?

Selena: I think there's a lot out there that we are told we should pay attention to, but I think our conversation today is going to be a little bit different from that. So let's keep you-

Ryan: Just say it. You want to say it. Say it.

Selena: Titillates.

Ryan: There it is. See you on the other side.

[00:02:20] <music>

Ryan: Guys, okay, 400th episode is what I have in the rundown. Charles Minor looking down on us on the rundown. We've had more than 400 episodes, but on the rundowns, this is number 400. So yay for that. That's awesome. Good job, Selena. High five. Well done.

Selena: Praise God.

Ryan: Friends, my heart is warm. My heart is warm because we mentioned last week, I mentioned one of my longings is to know that there are gym bros who listened to the Fierce Marriage podcast while they're getting their gains, while gains are getting got. All right.

Selena: I don't know how you count. I just don't. I can't.

Ryan: Well, people wrote in and they said, "You know what? They do count."

Selena: Oh, okay.

Ryan: They do count. And so I just want to say hello to all the gym bros and the lifter sisters.

Selena: I was like, because it can't be...

Ryan: Just made that up. So Aaron, Ben, Taryn, Izzy, and Jonathan from Kentucky, I hope all your gains are got. I pray that the Lord uses every.

Selena: All your gains are got.

Ryan: And when you listen to the Fierce Marriage podcast while you're doing your thing or if you're running or whatever, I pray that you would just do it even better. Just do it even better.

Selena: More fierce tenacity.

Ryan: More fierceness. More fierceness. In light of that, we're actually going to answer a question from Izzy.

Selena: Let's do it.

Ryan: Izzy wrote in saying... I'll read her question. Or you'll read her question in a minute because it's a gal.

Selena: It's a lifter sister.

Ryan: It's a lifter sister. But first I want to mention this just because we have to do it to keep good form. This is provided by our lovely fierce patrons that are our partners, our fellows.

Selena: Fierce fellows.

Ryan: There it is. Selena just dropped a mighty update in the Fierce Fellowship.

Selena: It was a big one.

Ryan: How many words is that?

Selena: I don't count.

Ryan: 3,000 words?

Selena: I don't count these things.

Ryan: A lot of updates happening in the Fierce Fellowship. People that are complicit in this ministry. Not everyone there is what they would call a paid tier member and that's fine. We still give updates to people that are just part of that community and don't have the means or feel called to be a paid member. Still, go check it out.

Go to fiercemarriage.com/partner. You'll get the inside track, if you will, on what's happening with this ministry, with our family, the things that the Lord is leading us to do and Lord willing, allowing us to get completed.

Fiercemarriage.com/partner. And of course, if you do feel led to partner with us there, that's a huge part of how God has provided for this ministry.

Selena: Amen. All right. We have a question from our listener, our lifter sister, Izzy. "Not a gym bro, but I do listen to your podcast at the gym while I'm working out. I appreciate you guys, your ministry very much." Thank you, Izzy.

Ryan: Thank you.

Selena: "My boyfriend and I are just about to be ready to get engaged and Lord willing, be married quickly after that. What are some things that we can do to prepare us as much as possible for the transition from being single to be married?"

Ryan: I mentioned this as a theme. I actually had a conversation with a good friend yesterday. He's been asked to officiate his niece's wedding. And he just was mentioning it and didn't really ask for any of my advice, but he's a good friend, so I told him what I think he should do because he asked... he was more just wondering, like, he's a little nervous for their relationship. And I said, "Well, are they believers?" I think nominally so, but they're living together, which to be honest, it never bodes well if a couple's living together.

Selena: Check out the cohabitation episode.

Ryan: We have episodes on cohabitation. Biblically speaking, cohabiting is wrong, but it's also empirically and statistically. It does not-

Selena: Not do what it says it's set out to do, which is to see if it works. It actually works worse. It doesn't work.

Ryan: It works worse. It does. Lots of data to back that up. So I just said to him, "Hey, man, if I were you, here's what I would do." And they were asking me to officiate their wedding. What an honor to officiate someone's wedding. But I said, "I can't officiate your wedding until you commit to going through pre-marriage counseling with your pastor." That'll put a lot of couples on blast right away because a lot of couples will be like, "Well, I don't really have a pastor," or if I do have a pastor, I don't have a close relationship.

Selena: I don't know that we need to do marriage counseling. That's kind of the, well, we're already living together. We're already kind of doing marriage, right?

Ryan: "Can't we just read a book?"

Selena: Acting married at minimum. Can we read a book or watch a video quick?

Ryan: Anyway, that was the advice that I gave to him that part of... That's what I'll say if anyone asks me to officiate their wedding. And I have officiated weddings in the past and haven't asked this, but I'll say, "Yeah, you got to go through pre-marriage counseling." A lot of pastors I know do that.

Selena: Yeah, absolutely.

Ryan: I think there's obviously good wisdom there.

Selena: So it's a good place to start because it begs two questions, a, if you don't have a pastor, then by all means, you need to find a church and find a pastor before you get married. Like that needs to be a priority for your marriage. I think it's just a foundational piece.

Ryan: We're gonna get into that.

Selena: I know.

Ryan: So that's what I'd say. It puts them on blast because with that one kind of assertion, it immediately assumes all these things that need to be dealt with if they're not there. So that's the recommendation that we would have. So what can these couples do? As I mentioned, there's a theme from what Izzy is writing in, but also couples that are kind of gearing up for this transition.

Izzy's maybe not getting married this summer. That'd be really cool if she got engaged and married. Fast engagements are awesome. Weddings are incredible, but I think our culture has really commercialized weddings. And so there's a lot of pressure, especially if you want to have the Instagram photos and all that and have the videos.

Selena: Marriage is just the beginning, the wedding is just the beginning celebration of two lives coming together, two hearts. So anyways, what can you do?

Ryan: What can they do? So when people typically hear this question, and I'm tempted to go there too, sometimes you can start immediately thinking about, okay, what are all the skills? What's the tool set? What's the knowledge you need?

Selena: How can we not fight too much, how can we keep our sex life healthy and fun, and how do we have a good marriage, I feel like it's kind of the expectation.

Ryan: All that stuff is good. All that stuff is good. All that stuff is important. Skills are a large part of-

Selena: There's an order to it.

Ryan: And so if you were to picture a Venn diagram, so circles that kind of overlap each other, and there's three components to that Venn diagram. So ideally you'll have all three of these circles in the overlapping part. One of them is going to be your beliefs. You need to share your beliefs. You need tools to how to actually... just because you believe in the gospel and you believe in all the Bible says, doesn't mean you're good at communicating. So you need tools.

And every couple wants the third thing, which is connection. It's not just cold, calculated belief and tools. There's connection, there's a shared purpose, there's the human aspects, not just the ideal aspects, but the human aspects of it. So you would want all three of those things.

As we go through this, keep that in mind, but a lot of folks want to focus on those tangible things, but instead I want to focus on setting the stage. So it's not so much about the tools themselves, but the plane upon which the tools will be used and put to work.

So imagine this. You're going to build a house. So your marriage is a house that you've yet to build and you are engaged or in Izzy's case, you're headed into engagement, which is pretty cool to know that obviously that's what courtship is for. You're heading into engagement, you know, that you're going to build this house together.

A lot of couples want to just figure out what lumber they're going to use, what kind of house they're going to make, what kind of tools they're going to use to build it, proverbially speaking. And we're here to say the most important decision you can make right now is not the type of house you're going to build or how you're going to build it. The most important decision you can make right now is where you're going to place it. Are you going to site your house well? Are you going to place it near the streams of water so you have access to clean water? Are you going to place it near fields where you can produce food? I'm using an analogy still; I'm not talking literally.

So we want to focus on where you're going to place it. We want to focus on the soil, if you will, where you're going to be growing, to use another analogy, where you're going to be growing this thing, this marriage tree, if you will. And how will you get water? How will that soil...?

Selena: Well, is it a good place to lay the foundation of your house?

Ryan: Yeah. And this is not our concept. This is a Bible concept. We're going to read from Psalm, actually. I just love this passage. This is the opening passage to

the Psalms. Psalm 1:1-3 says this, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the council of the wicked. Notice how immediately it's talking about not what he does, but where he is and who he is with. "Who walks not in the council of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners." Again, talking about where he is. "Nor sits in the seat of scoffers..." Same thing. "...but his delight is in the law of the Lord. That's in direct contrast.

He goes on. "And his delight is in the law of the Lord and on His law he meditates day and night." Here's the key part. "He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither and all that he does, he prospers." The Psalm goes on, but we'll end it there.

Notice the emphasis placed on where the tree is planted to what end so that in every season you will yield fruit, your leaves will be green. They don't wither. In all you do you prosper. All of this has to do with where you're planted. And in this case, planted by streams of water. And what are the streams of water? Well, it's the law of the Lord. It's meditating on His word day and night.

So where are you planting your tree? Where are you building your house? We'll say you have a hundred acres. Where's the river that's going to allow you to be flourishing? And the river in the Christian life is God's word. The river is the church. The river is God's people. The river is clearly the Holy Spirit working in you. And so we're going to focus our efforts there. And toward the end, we'll get to kind of the more obvious ones.

The first thing you can do with all of that in mind, the first thing you can do as you're headed into engagement, headed into marriage, you said it earlier, and it might sound like I'm contradicting myself, but go to marriage counseling. Now, what am I trying to accomplish here?

Selena: What exactly is this? Yeah.

Ryan: Marriage counseling in this case is not about gaining knowledge. The reason we're bringing it up here, it's not because we think you need to learn the new things. It's not about that. It's about gaining perspective. It's about gaining accountability. It's about gaining the ability to be known by your shepherd. That's what marriage counseling is all about in this case.

Selena: This is the difference between putting your house way out in the middle of nowhere and having no water versus putting your house somewhere where you can dig a well or it can flow by the river of God's word, His church. Because if you're out there and you have... if you think, well, we're not really religious or we don't really, you know, need to go to church or we'll go to church as we

can, and it's just kind of this nominal thing, that's like building your house way out in the middle of nowhere with no electricity, no water. And then you wonder why you're cold, why you are thirsty, why things are so hard. And we're here to tell you friends, build your house on the rock, quite literally and spiritually speaking.

Because it's like you said, we can give you all the knowledge and tools, but until you, until you have that accountability with a pastor, with a church, you're going to be out and alone and it's not gonna be great. It is a blessing to be known. It is a blessing to be seen, to not struggle alone and to know that you're not the only one. That's where we get picked off by the enemy.

Ryan: And a lot of couples will hear this and they'll just write it off. Please don't do that. That's what I said to my good friend. I said, brother, I've seen it time and time again. Young couples, they're in a great spot. Health is good. Life is good. Prospects are up. Like you're on a high because you're in this newish relationship and everything is a blue horizon. That's great. And they go through the marriage and they go through the wedding ceremony, I'll say, and then they're married, the honeymoon period begins. That eventually fades, you know, six months or so. All natural, whatever.

But then year one goes by, suddenly our communication is growing a little bit colder. Year two goes by. Career's not really going the way we thought. Life's a grind, you know, houses are expensive, politics are weighing on us, church is kind of on the periphery of our lives.

Selena: Yeah. And we're falling into the deeper ruts of who we are as broken people, right?

Ryan: Maybe throw a baby in the mix and that's challenging in all the best ways, but challenging. So now maybe she's spending a little bit more time on Instagram comparing to people, he's maybe addicted to pornography. Hasn't really dealt with it. Alcohol maybe enters the equation. Workaholism enters the equation. You're five years down the line and you've got a dry marriage. It's winter all the time. You have no access to clean water, so to speak. That couple now feels hopeless.

Selena: There's kids.

Ryan: And they're looking and they're the ones, friends... and if this is you, no condemnation, right? We're here to be encouraging to you. But they're the ones that go now searching for a marriage podcast to help because they can't find hope. And they want to know, how do I get my husband to care and engage again? Or how do I get my wife to respect me again? How do I get our

love to be rekindled again? And we're telling you, you built your house in the wrong place.

Selena: Right.

Ryan: So if you're young or even if you're not, you're headed into marriage, this is the one thing we want to tell you to do. Go get marriage counseling. From a pastor, not just from the internet. Not from an online coach. Get marriage counseling from a pastor who's accountable for your eternal soul. And that's the first step. Each one of these things is going to be kind of in this vein.

The second one is find a guide couple. So we have an online course called Gospel Centered Marriage. We'll make that available at the end. Well, it's the website's gospelcenteredmarriage.com. They're going to give you, I think, a hundred dollars off the price. It's like 50 bucks out the door. It's the price for that. That is not to be a replacement-

Selena: That's supplemental to marriage counseling.

Ryan: I don't want to bury the lead there. So that's where that is. In that we have, from the outset, an encouragement to get a guide couple. Now, we don't use the term marriage mentors on purpose because for a lot of people, if you go to a couple and they're busy or something, you say, "Hey, will you be our marriage mentor, they're going to be intimidated. They're going to think, "I don't have the time for this and I'm not qualified for this." You say, "Hey, will you be my guide couple," they think, "what the heck is that?"

And basically it's just a couple that you find that you respect. They've got a marriage. Ideally they've got two decades under their belt, got a couple kids or more maybe out of the house.

Selena: I think it gives you the chance to kind of lay out the expectations here. "Hey, we're just looking like maybe you guys could come over for dinner once a month or we could just make dinner happen. Could I text you occasionally, or can I talk with you about questions about marriage that maybe I wouldn't talk to other people about that I can get some... are you accessible kind of via text or on the phone?

You and your spouse are going to go in with this commitment to be honest with them when they ask you questions about things. You're going to go in with this commitment to pursue them as the guide couple, but also allowing them... you're committed to what they say to you and allowing them to speak into your life knowing that it might not always be what you want to hear, but it's what you need to hear.

Ryan: And there's a fixed time period. It's finite. It's not indefinite. You say, "Just for the first year of our marriage, will you be our guide couple for the first six months of that?" Let's have dinner each month. Let me talk about it after that." But like Selena said, texting and checking in. And they're committed to you. You're committed to them. Honesty is out in the open. You commit to be honest on both sides.

So marriage counseling from your pastor, identify and recruit a guide couple. This stuff's not easy, guys, but I'm telling you, if you do these things, man, you'll be so set up for success.

Selena: If you feel like you're like, "Ryan and Selena, I don't have any of this," pray, ask the Lord to bring a church family into your lives. God is so faithful to answer prayers in crazy ways that we don't always know. So pray, ask the Lord for a guide couple. Ask Him to help you find a church if you don't know of a church. You have Christian friends, no doubt, ask them where they go and start there.

Ryan: Third one, your community. What I mean by that, specifically, your local church community, your local church commitment, involvement, and accountability to that body. Each one of these has a relational aspect to it. So we've got pastor, mentor and now your community. I mean, specifically a cohort of peers. Who are the couples that you're going to grow alongside the nearly weds and newlyweds that you already know that, you know, you don't have it figured out, but you're committed to being Christian together. You're committed to asking hard questions and going through discipleship together, maybe opening the word.

And ideally you have a weekly rhythm where you are meeting. That's not something you have to think about all the time, but it's just that, you know, every Wednesday evening we're over at the Jones's house and we've maybe switch every week or maybe there's three couples and you each-

Selena: Rotate homes.

Ryan: Rotate.

Selena: There's definite ways to create these weekly rhythms of knowing one another, being known, praying for one another, coming alongside, knowing that, "Hey, these are some things we're struggling with. We're kind of in the same age and situation and season of life. How can I be praying for you?" "Here's how you can be praying for us," not to be too bold, but... and what are you reading in scripture? How has the Lord been training your heart in some of these harder areas that you're struggling with.

Or praise. What is going right right now? How is the Lord just blessing you. And being happy for them genuinely, not just because things aren't going your way, it doesn't mean we can't. I think that's a distinctive of a Christian is being securely and confidently able to be happy for someone even if you might be struggling with something. An example of that would be having a baby or fertility. I think that's one of the big things that happens with kind of the younger couples.

Ryan: You see how you're building in to your rhythms of your life from the outset, the watering mechanism. That you're planting your tree near the water. You're not planting it in the desert and expecting rain all the time. It doesn't rain in the desert. Wisdom doesn't say plant your tree in the desert. Wisdom says, plant your tree by the water. This is what that looks like.

The fourth one is expectations. Now we're getting away from the relational side. Now we're getting into the tool side. So talk about your expectations around everything, but in particular about the spiritual climate dynamic of your home. Beliefs matter more than anything else in your marriage. They matter more than your compatibility. Your beliefs matter more than your attraction to each other. Beliefs matter more than even your friendship. All of those things matter. All those are important, all those things, but your beliefs matter infinitely more.

Selena: Right. Well, because your beliefs inform your behavior in all of those relationships and all of those areas. And so what you believe about the climate of your home, the spiritual climate of your home should be is going to dictate how you live and the choices you make. And those choices are going to have repercussions down the road. And so, yes, what do we expect?

I mean, there's all this family of origin that comes into the equation, right, of how you were raised, how I was raised, the experiences we had. And what do we believe about those experiences that we had and how do those... will those carry or bear weight in how we live going forward as a married couple?

Ryan: Yeah. And at a minimum, Christian, you want to believe on the core tenets of Christianity, right? Jesus Christ, the gospel, our God is a triune God. These are important weighty things. I actually was reading with my discipleship group, we were reading about R.C. Sproul. He got saved when he was engaged. I don't know if you knew that. They were engaged. He got saved in college, maybe grad school or something. Well, his fiancé was not Christian. He invited her to church and he was like praying all day on his knees, praying that she would be saved, like the Lord would save her.

So he's telling the story and I'm on... It's like three sentences, but I'm on pins and needles for these three sentences. I'm like, "This is R.C. Sproul," you know? She got saved and they got married and that was his wife.

Selena: Praise God.

Ryan: What a beautiful thing. The reason why he shares that, because if that hadn't happened, I can guarantee you that he would have broke it off. I like to think he would. I think he should have, if that wouldn't have happened, because how can you?

Selena: Don't underestimate the power of beliefs and belief in the Lord and His sovereignty and your requirement of submission to Him because the battle's going to rage even more. But having the Lord as your stronghold, your strength, your anchor, there's nothing you can't get through.

Ryan: Yeah. If you don't have the same beliefs, it's like gravity is not the same for both of you. Like for one of you, you throw a rock and it goes up. The other one, you throw the rock down. It's like your beliefs are not the same. So that's a big one. Getting on the expectations, same page when it comes to that, that fleshes itself out into other very tangible things. Like, as a couple, what's your ideal rhythm for reading your Bibles together and apart and praying together?

Selena: Do you read your Bibles together?

Ryan: I'm shocked how many Christians don't read their Bibles.

Selena: Or pray together.

Ryan: Or pray together. So make that expectation known. Talk about it now, decide now your church priority. We've talked about being members of churches. That's a big thing that we always talk about. What's that actually going to look like? Meaning we're not going to decide every Sunday morning whether or not we're going to join a fellowship of believers. Decide that now once.

So every Sunday it's already decided. That's the default. The exception to the rule is to, Oh, we're sick or we're out of town or... and even then you're still making your way to a church where you're out of town. So be clear about that.

The other one, big one, and we're just going to drop this bomb and leave it there is be clear about biblical roles in your marriage. Biblical headship is real. Ephesians 5 is real. The biblical model for marriage is real. So what does biblical headship look like? What does head helper dynamic look like? What does biblical submission look like? Biblical leadership and submission in

concert with each other. Friends, it's one of the most beautiful truths in scripture and our culture hates it, the idea that there is a head in the home.

Selena: It's distorted. They don't understand. A husband is a head for better or worse. He can't get away from it. That's just what he is. And so if he relinquishes it or she usurps it, he is still held accountable to the Lord for embracing it or not.

Ryan: So talk about that. Get on the same page, wrestle with it. It's good. Go to the word. Let the word tell you what to think. Don't let the Frederick's tell you what to think. Go to the word, read the scriptures and let it tell you, and then model your life after it and watch as you flourish.

The final one, build some skills.

Selena: Well, you said family worship too. I don't know if you meant to gloss over that-

Ryan: I didn't.

Selena: But I wish that was something that we would have done early on. We were heavily involved in church and it was just a different season and it was not healthy, but I do wish that we would have had more intentional family worship. And it was just us, but like we can sing together, we can pray together and we can read our Bibles together. And that is a beautiful, simple thing that bonds us deeper than... you know.

Ryan: If you need help with family worship, we are very passionate about family worship because it's changed our lives. It's changed our family dynamics.

Selena: It's a good practice even before you have children.

Ryan: Actually there's a family worship guide that we created. It's on the Fierce Parenting website. So go to fierceparenting.com. I think it's under the tools. Just look for a family worship guide. It's either a download or a longer kind of page. It's designed to help you with that.

Just read, sing, and pray. Very simple. Singing is the one that people get stuck on. Just put on a song, make it loud, and just sing with it. It gets easier.

The final one is build skills. They're kind of the main areas that you want to be aware of in marriage. Communication is the biggest one. If you can get communication right, the other ones tend to take care of themselves. This is again with the underlying belief bedrock that we're talking about. Communication and conflict, those go together.

Selena: Almost.

Ryan: I think. Priorities, sex and intimacy, money. Those are the five. Talk through those. That's where you can kind of get into, okay, we don't know anything about this stuff. I don't know how to merge our finances. I don't know how... how do we set a budget? How should a budget work? Not just in general, but for a Christian? These are questions that you should be asking. And they're great questions. And you don't have to know the answers, but we do need to be asking the questions and seeking the answers.

Selena: Yeah. From your mentor. Not mentor. Your guide couple or-

Ryan: Your pastor. We mentioned Gospel Centered Marriage, which is a resource that we've created. It's a six- or eight-week course, depending on how long you take. The variable is the expectations assessment. People that have gone through it... We've had thousands of couples go through this and every one of them tells you like... so if you join the military, you've got bootcamp. And then if you go into the special forces, you've got like ranger school if you're in the army, I'd say the expectations assessment is ranger school.

Selena: Okay. So be prepared.

Ryan: Be prepared. It is like you get through it, you should get a badge of honor because it's long. It's very in-depth. You're asking questions about every little nitty gritty thing in your life together. It's so worth it. And it forces you to have conversations that you probably never even thought you needed to have, but will inevitably affect you if you don't have them.

So just go to gospelcenteredmarriage.com, like I mentioned earlier. I think with the videos and with the course and with the books, it's normally like 150 bucks. Right now it's on sale for 50 and I'll get you the books as well. So you'll get immediate access to the course and the books will ship same day. Usually is when Carrie's shipping those out. Our team is very fast at shipping things. Thank God. They're awesome. But yeah, check that out.

Again, that's not meant to be a replacement for any of this other stuff. If anything, it's meant to be, I'll say this, the icing on the pastor cake. And maybe take it to your pastor too and say, Hey, this couple I listened to, they created this resource, I'd like to go through it. I would be willing to say that your pastor might even put the bill for you. I know our pastor would if you didn't have cash for that. So anyway, did I miss anything?

Selena: Nope.

Ryan: Okay. We've talked about beliefs a lot, and we always like to end our episodes with a reminder of the gospel, what it is. If you don't know who Jesus is, you've never heard the gospel, the gospel is simply this. It's just good news that Jesus Christ, God, became flesh. That's what Christmas is when Jesus Christ became flesh as a baby.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: At Christmas, we celebrate that. He lived a perfect life. He grew up, never sinned. He completely fulfilled the law of God. And then on Easter, which we just celebrated, Christ was resurrected because He was crucified. Why was He crucified? Because of us. On our behalf. He bore our sin on a tree, on the cross, so that we wouldn't have to, so that we could be made right with God. And not only that, we could have all the blessings of His perfection when we are in Christ.

And what's the good news? That all you have to do is believe. Frankly, the lord is the one who gives you the belief. So this could be the way, and we pray that this is the way the lord, if you don't believe, that He uses this call, this proclamation of the gospel to save your eternal soul, by you placing your belief in Him.

So we want that for you. We pray for that for you. We have a resource, a website set up for you, if you have more questions, thenewsisgood.com. That's thenewsisgood.com. There's a church finder there that will lead you, I believe, to a biblical church that preaches out of the word. And we always say ask a friend. If you have a friend who's a Christian, say, Hey, will you read the Bible with me? You'll find that Christians love that sort of thing, and they'd love to read the Bible with you and grow alongside you.

Let's pray. Father God, thank you for your word and what we read in Psalms today, about being planted by your streams of water and flourishing in and out of season. I pray that that would be the case for couples who listen to this, for the husbands and wives listening to this. Lord, I pray they would flourish, and you would, lead them to that place if they're not by the streams. I pray that you would plant them by the streams of water, they would delight themselves in your word.

I pray for the husbands who are discouraged, or that you would encourage them, the wives who feel hopeless, that you would give them hope. Lord, you are the source of our courage. You're the source of our hope. You're the source of life itself. We love you. We need you. Help us to know you, obey you, walk with you, honor you, and have marriages that flourish because of you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Selena: Amen.

Ryan: Amen. Thank you again for joining us. This has been a great episode. I love talking to newlyweds and newlyweds. I think that they are the future. Marriage is so much more important. Friends, we do this every week. We've been doing it for 400 episodes plus. Marriage is massively important. I mean, we're here to remind you, we're willing we'll be here again next week to remind you of that.

So if you would like to partner with us in this mission, go to fiercemarriage.com/partner. We would be honored. Either way, as long as the Lord allows, we'll keep showing up. And I'll keep goofing off with my wife in front of a camera. Frankly, it's a lot of fun.

So, yeah, 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

- **Recommended resource**
 - thenewsisgood.com
 - [Gospel Centered Marriage](#)

FIERCE MARRIAGE RESOURCES

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