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Annie: Hi friends, welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host, Annie F. Downs, I'm really happy to be here with you today. Oh, we've had such a great week of shows, it continues today. I'm so excited, I can't wait for y'all to hear today's episode. And before we get started, I want to tell you about one of our incredible partners, Prep Dish. Y'all know Prep Dish, they've been around forever. My friend, Allison, the owner is just awesome. And what's better than having someone else, a registered dietician and chef map out your meals each week? Here's the answer, nothing's better.

I admit though, sometimes it's hard to fit in time to meal prep on the weekends, and sometimes I've got a lot to get done, and some fun plans on a weekend day, and I'm practicing Sabbath on the other. I need meal prep that fits in a different time slot. You guys this why I'm so excited to tell you about Prep Dish's latest offering.

All Prep Dish subscribers now receive a weekly, super-fast menu, in addition to the normal gluten-free, paleo, and low-carb menus. Super-fast menus take only one hour to prep, and that means I can easily fit the prep in on a weeknight if I don't manage it on the weekend. Prep Dish creates these super-fast menus based on what people are asking for saving time and their subscribers are absolutely loving them.

I mean, with baked salmon, with creamy lime sauce, roasted asparagus and mushrooms, yes. And Moroccan pork quinoa bowls with roasted cauliflower and chickpeas, what's not to love? And on weeks I feel like spending a little more time in the kitchen, I still have the other three menus to choose from. If you've thought about trying Prep Dish but worried you wouldn't have time to do the prep, now is a great time to check out their free trial.

Allison, our friend is offering my friends a free two-week trial. Check out prepdish.com/annie for this amazing deal. Again, that's prepdish.com/annie for your first two weeks free, and let me know how you like it. Today, on the show, we get to welcome back one of our very favorites, Pastor Jon Tyson. Jon is an author, a pastor, and a church planter in New York city, pastoring at Church of the City, New York.

He's originally from Australia, but Jon moved to the States two decades ago with a passion to seek and cultivate renewal in the Western church. You've heard him before on the pod on Episode 213 and Episode 232, because, boy, did we need some pastoring in 2020. He's back with us today because he's got a new book out called *The Intentional Father: A Practical Guide to Raise Sons of Courage and*

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Character. I cannot wait for y'all to hear from him. So here's my conversation with our friend Jon Tyson.

[00:02:34] <Music>

Annie: Jon Tyson, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Jon: Hello, what an absolute joy to be here-

Annie: Ah, I hope you really mean it.

Jon: ...in person-

Annie: It feels that way to me.

Jon: ...I'm having the time of my life in Green Hills, Nashville.

Annie: Welcome. We've been here four minutes and you already had me crying.

Jon: We're talking about stuff that matters.

Annie: Yeah. We're talking about, I mean, I just think, you and I are both experiencing with God, Him ordering our steps.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: I mean, a couple of days ago I just was back in Psalm 37 where it says, "He cares about every detail of your life."

Jon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: Do you feel that? Do you always feel that or do you have to re tell yourself that?

Jon: You know, it's very, very interesting, I felt a conscious shift in my walk with God a couple of months ago. And you know, I come from a Pentecostal tradition.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: So I'm fire-tongues, glory-slaying in the spirit miracles. And that just felt it's very hard to describe it, like a deepening, like God basically saying no dramatics, no big dramatics, it's just deepening, it's about meaning and wonder.

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Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And so I've been really pressing into that. So I do feel it, but it often at this point in my life, doesn't feel dramatic, it feels deep but not dramatic.

Annie: Yeah. I'm okay with that. I'm okay with it not feeling dramatic. I think life hands me enough dramatic that I don't need to like go ask the Lord for it, you know?

Jon: Yes. Yes.

Annie: But I find that we're talking about walking by faith and not by sight. I find that I walk by faith better, if I pay attention to the little moments where it feels like God is ordering my steps.

Jon: Yes, it is absolutely about awareness. It's...awareness is the whole key.

Annie: Really?

Jon: Yeah. We're just sleepwalking through life most of the time. Rushing from one place to the next, distracted, stressed, and I think that the still small voice is there if we are paying attention.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: I remember Dallas Willard would spend 20 minutes or half an hour a day just sitting with Jesus doing nothing.

Annie: Really?

Jon: Just sit in the silence and see if anything came. Present with Christ by faith regardless of the outcome, if you can say that.

Annie: Ah, present with Christ by faith regardless of the outcome.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: How do we do that when the world looks like this?

Jon: Well, number one, you can't start your day by gazing on the world or your heart will block, your heart will fail before coffee.

Annie: Yeah.

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Jon: So I think you've got to set your heart early in the morning. Our little C-Rock Crew has a no-phones for the first two hours of the day rule or whatever. So that you don't just get drawn into the drama.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: So you got to still the heart, get your eyes on Jesus.

Annie: Two hours of day? The first two?

Jon: Well, just, the first two it's like, "Hey, look, don't wake up and reach for your phone and let the bleeding trauma of the world touch your heart first thing."

Annie: Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: It's very, very hard to discipline yourself to like get you gaze on Jesus and set your heart. I was meditating this morning, "In this world you will have many problems, but take heart I've overcome the world."

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: Just thinking about that world, "Take heart, take heart." Well, I have to take heart because the problems are crushing and overwhelming. And so yeah, you just get these little nuggets of hope, and perspective, and peace, and that's where I get it anyway.

Annie: Yeah. I think one of the problems is that I often will have my phone with me too soon, and I will start dealing... Because for you and I, and for a lot of people listening, as soon as we open our phones we're actually at work, work is started.

Jon: Oh, no one's ever put it like that, but that is the truest thing ever.

Annie: Yeah. And so I'd start work at 7:00 a.m. if I'm not careful and not thoughtful. What do you know about God, today, and we're actually talking on the day your book launches, on the day of the *Intentional Father* launches. Thank you for making time on launch day, bless your heart.

Jon: This is the highlight of my launch day, are you kidding?

Annie: Wow, I hope so.

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Jon: This is good as it gets for me.

Annie: Well, it is the highlight of my day.

Jon: I'm in the launch-day heaven.

Annie: Yeah. Well thank you. But tell me what you know about God today, I mean, you just dropped your daughter off at college.

Jon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: Empty nester.

Jon: Mh-hmm, gosh.

Annie: You and I are like five-years apart in age.

Jon: I'm 44.

Annie: I'm 41, so we're three-years apart and I have no children, and you're an empty-nester, I love it. What do you know about God today that you didn't know before the weekend?

Jon: Oh, gosh, I mean, I think we struggle to comprehend how much God loves us.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: So in 1 John 3, it's "Oh, what manner of love the Father has lavished on us."

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And I think it's very hard for us to receive the lavishing love of God, and, gosh, I mean, I did everything I knew how to do for my kids, I did it, I gave it my best shot.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: I mean, gosh, I just put my heart and soul into it. And it's probably still wasn't enough, but I just had a sense, I think of my kids reciprocating love to me.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: And it was like, "Wow, my kids genuinely feel loved by me."

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Annie: Yeah.

Jon: My kids feel loved by me. I sat my kids down and I was like, "Hey guys, I've got a book out called *The Intentional Father*. And, I don't, yeah, number one, be aware satan's going to want to destroy our relationship-

Annie: Wow.

Jon: ...because I've put this out here. But number two, "I don't know if I was a good dad but I did my best to be intentional." And they were like, "What are you talking about? You're a great dad." Just like my kids were reciprocating love to me. And I think as my daughter was walking off in slow motion through the tears, I felt the emotional heart of God towards me. Like, "This is how I feel about you."

Annie: Wow.

Jon: "This level of connection." And so that's one of those deep internal, personal experiences that you're like, "Yeah, yeah, I get it on paper." But when you're in it you're like, "This is life itself." "Your love is better than life." Says the Psalmist. And so when you're standing there in that parking lot and she's walking off, and you're crying like a baby, and you're trying to be strong. I'm just like hearing and the Father, "This is how I feel about you, this is my heart towards you." So that was like a fresh encounter with God's love, and His tender affection.

Annie: I wonder if, I mean, was your wife having a similar experience?

Jon: So my wife had to go home the day before, that was like mega, major trauma. So I mean, my kids are used to me filming everything. So like the footage of my wife and daughter just holding each other hugging, which is like heartbreaking.

Annie: Ah.

Jon: So she had like one round of emotional release. So my son and her drove back to New York, and then I was coming over here to do this, so I had another day with her and then it was just me and her. And so we went out, went to church, and then had lunch and then dropped her off.

Annie: Did that feel strategic of the Lord that you got that extra afternoon?

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Jon: Oh, I don't know if it was strategic of the Lord. It was like it gave me a space to cry and it was so weird, it was such a fascinating experience because I'm a profoundly thoughtful person, and I'm very nostalgic. But it's not pain for a long for past, I think it's like an awareness of gratitude and I want to be present. And like it says in the book of Deuteronomy, "Do not let these things fade from your heart as long as you live." And I'm trying to keep it alive in my spirit. So I'm looking at a photo in my hotel room after I drop her off, of me at 20 moving to America to come to college.

Annie: My gosh.

Jon: And then I see myself in my room almost out of body at 44 dropping my daughter off. And I'd probably spent three hours sitting there thinking what is 65-year-old going to say to 45-year-old Jon.

Annie: Wow.

Jon: So it was like what would I say to my 20-year-old self about everything I've been through, everything I've learned, and then what do I need to get right the next 20 years.

Annie: Wow.

Jon: In this sort of like my second adulthood, like, what do I need to get right in these years, so that when I'm sitting here at 65, after some other thing, dropping a grandkid at college, I don't know, what do I need to get right? So it was like a profoundly moving time, grateful for the space to reflect and not to just rush through it. I try and sit in the emotions and process them properly.

Annie: A lot of our friends listening probably have high schoolers or are taking kids to college this week.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: And I mean, I have another friend here whose twins are going off to college this weekend. What's the advice you, from what you've experienced, your son's already launched.

Jon: Yeah he is 21, wild.

Annie: And now your daughter's launched. What is your advice? How do we go home and be okay?

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Jon: Oh, gosh, I haven't gone home yet.

Annie: Fair.

Jon: I mean, it's like, you've got to, I was talking with my wife, I mean, there's a void in your life. Okay, so there's a giant space that was filled with your kids, time, attention, energy, I think the big question is what are you going to fill it with? So I'm spending a lot of time reading, sort of like second-half of life literature or whatever. They talk about the second adulthood. So the first adulthood, sort of 20 to 40 it's all inevitably filled with personal scripts, cultural expectations, ambition, shadow-side discovery.

And then you hit that midlife point where many of those things are stripped away. And then what you're left with is, he talks about in this book, which is like, meaning and wonder, the pursuit of meaning and wonder.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: So I think, you have to really ask yourself what gives me meaning outside of my roles. So if like you get tremendous meaning from being a parent or the workplace, but where's my true meaning? And then how do I cultivate wonder in its place? Because the kids bring us wonder.

Annie: Right.

Jon: They're in touch with stuff we're not in touch with, they're experiencing for the first time things. It's a true and authentic, and alive for them. So I think we have to find ways to replace those things that are brought to us as gifts and cultivate in our own lives.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: So that's different for everybody but for me, I think, it's like reading a lot less books more slowly and twice, as opposed to just cramming content. Being really honest with some of the suppressed desires that have no space to breathe because of duty. Not bad duty, good duty, godly duty, but now there's this space. What in my heart feels suppressed that needs to be explored and let out and looked into? And so, my wife and I are looking at each other going like, "Who do we become now?"

Annie: Yeah.

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Jon: What do we do with every single free night of the week that we have?

Annie: Right. Right.

Jon: So we're trying to reboot our rhythms and practices and do stuff that gives us life.

Annie: A lot of our friends also listening have little people, they have one-year-olds, four-year-olds, elementary. And to me your book, *The Intentional Father*, is kind of helping us. You almost are doing what your 65-year-old self wants to do to your 40-year-old self in this book. For the rest of us of like, "Hey, if you're brand new at raising people, let me tell you some things." Can moms read this book?

Jon: 100%.

Annie: Okay.

Jon: Yeah, I mean, so this book is, because I've got a lot of thoughts about like what I tried to get, right when my kids were little. This book is really designed for sort of teenagers, from adolescence into adulthood.

Annie: Aha.

Jon: So I've got a lot of thoughts about early life, what needs to happen. Moms can read this, but I would just say like one of the challenges, so I did this, it took six years with my son and you could probably do this in a year if you wanted. However, I was like, "I'm going to have this kid for the next six years, so let's just do it for six years. Make it lifestyle not program."

Annie: Right.

Jon: And my wife would often mock, unintentionally, my daughter and my wife would mock we, when we do it.

Annie: Aha.

Jon: So we'd get up at 5:30, the kids had to take the train to school, they went to school in Queens. And they would say, "Oh, you walk doing your man time? Are you up self-actualizing as men?" They were just, and I actually had to pull our son and be like, "You know men deal with insecurity and shame in ways that you probably are not aware of."

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Annie: We do not know, right.

Jon: And it's like hard to try and figure out what it is. How do you deal as a young man with all the new energies filling your body? You've got testosterone in there, you've got sexual energy, you've got insecurity about your identity, other guys are testing your strength. You've got academics, wrestling with stuff online, there's so much pressure. And here you are making a noble step forward to get your act together.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And then people are mocking you when you're doing that.

Annie: In your own home.

Jon: Yes, I was like you need every ounce of encouragement. So I would just say to moms, like, "Hey, just be gracious." Give them a little space to sort of like, but reading it'll give you insights as to sort of, I think the psychological journey. The book is based on, basically there's a guy named James Hollis, who a lot of the, he's a PhD in psychology, Jungian analyst. He basically is the guy that, so Rolheiser and Richard Rohr sort of get a lot of their mid-life stuff from. And he basically said, "Every society, except late-modern society has had a six-step process to form people from adolescence into adulthood."

Annie: Oh wow.

Jon: Number one is like conscious separation. Number two is visceral death to the childhood experience. Number three is the impartation of the tribes story, religious identity, and then roles required to serve the larger community. Then there's what he calls the ordeal where all of these things have to be tested on your own to see if the inner strength and lessons have arrived. There's recognition amongst the community who have initiated you, and then there's return and participation in society to serve the common good. So, no one's like, which parents do you know are like, "Hey, I'm just thinking through these six stages you need to go through."

Annie: Ah right.

Jon: So the book is based on that, it's like a modern Christian version of that. But mom's reading it, I think, can see how interesting this is the psychological and emotional formative journey teenage boys need to go through. And it may explain some of the tensions and behavior that they have. So my wife read it and she was

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like, "Hey, this is actually really helpful. It helps me understand my son better in some of the stuff he's wrestling with."

So, yeah, it's definitely like a good guide for moms. And then my wife challenged me with something I didn't like, she's like, "So I've read all the stuff, and half the stuff is true for women." And I was like, "Yeah, like a large degree of it is for human beings."

Annie: Right.

Jon: I said, "But you're not going to motivate a 13-year-old boy by going, 'Hey, just so you know half of this is for girls too.'" It's like, you're trying to win their hearts into a journey.

Annie: Right.

Jon: So I did a whole separate process for my daughter called *50 Pieces of My Heart*, and that was like the 50 things I wanted her to have in her spirit before she left home. And yeah, there was definitely some overlap, but there was some nuance.

Annie: Is that book coming too?

Jon: Oh, at some point. I just dropped her off.

Annie: Right. Like Annie, slow down.

Jon: I need the heart to heal.

Annie: Before I share these 50 pieces.

Jon: Yes. Yes.

Annie: When I think about the two halves of life. I mean, as we are the same age, I'm entering that too, it looks different, but I'm entering that too. I'm reading about that, I'm interested in that. What is it look like for us to be thinking spiritually about the two halves of life as adults?

Jon: Well, one of the things they've often pointed out, which people talk about but I don't think we believe, is success has nothing to teach us in the second-half of life. It's enjoyable, but it doesn't teach us anything. All of the learning comes through pain.

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Annie: It's awful.

Jon: It's so terrible-

Annie: I hate it.

Jon: ...but that's so true. So, I mean, you think about it like so what do you learn? How were you formed through success? It was like it's fun. I've done some cool stuff, and I'm like, "this is good times right here, I appreciate this."

But, and you'd say, "God is gracious, and God is kind, and joy is a gift, yeah great." But the deep, deep formative stuff comes through the struggle. And so they tend to say, "God has a way of bringing things that we haven't dealt with up in the second-half, and helping us walk through it. So that we become-"

Annie: I'm not interested in that. Jon!

Jon: The thing about God-

Annie: Lord have mercy.

Jon: ...is like if you're not interested in it, He's so interested in you.

Annie: Doesn't matter.

Jon: He's just going to bring it up.

Annie: I know.

Jon: It's like a video game until you like learn the lessons of a particular stage, you just keep repeating them in different circumstances.

Annie: Oh, you need to know that is one of the things that when I feel something repeating, I'll say to the Lord, "I thought we covered this, what did I not? I thought I went through this?" And then what ends up happening, I'm in it right now, what ends up happening is the Lord goes, "This isn't the same, it's different."

Jon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: "This is the next level of the same game, but I'm making you play the same game for a reason, but this is the next level of the same game." I only get tattoos when something has hurt me so much, I've learned from it.

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Jon: Mh-hmm, wow.

Annie: And I was on the phone with one of our mutual friends-

Jon: And like he's got a full sleeve right here.

Annie: Yeah. Yeah. I get them in white. Do you know that about me?

Jon: No.

Annie: I have white tattoos.

Jon: Oh, that's amazing.

Annie: So there it's just words, but no one ever sees them because they're white and I'm very pale. But I was on a phone with a mutual friend of ours yesterday, Matt Chandler. And I said, "I think I got to get a tattoo about this." And he was like, "I think you do." But you're right, it's only in pain.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: That's awful. Why did the Lord set it up like that, Jon? Pastor us.

Jon: Why did the Lord set it up like that? I don't know if the Lord set it up like that, as opposed to God redeems the brokenness of the human experience through that. I mean, I don't think God's like plan A desire for humanity was pain and suffering, but it's like, He's got to redeem those things.

Annie: Yeah. Do you know that more profoundly as a parent than I do?

Jon: I mean, I don't think you can compare experiences, like I have no idea like you are a woman, what you've been through-

Annie: I know. I know.

Jon: But I will say this, your kids have a capacity to wound you in ways that you can never wound yourself.

Annie: More than a spouse?

Jon: Yes.

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Annie: Really?

Jon: I've been married 23 years, I tell people, without getting in trouble. 17 great years, two years of health, three pretty good years.

Annie: Wow.

Jon: So, I mean, we're in a very good spot right now. Got a one-week deep dive counseling session to like tune up next week, it's a tune up for our empty-nest case.

Annie: That's brilliant, people need to hear that.

Jon: Yeah, but I mean, gosh, my wife has hurt me so deeply, I'm sure I've hurt her so deeply. But your kids wound you in different, like in a deep and a different ways.

Annie: Really?

Jon: Oh my gosh! Yes. Oh, the deepest pain I've ever experienced it's my kids rebellion.

Annie: Really?

Jon: Yes. Yes. I've never, I mean, like there's a couple of moments where I've thought, "I just want to walk outside and vomit." Like of just visceral heartache and pain. And my kids are great.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: Like I didn't deal with a lot.

[00:22:01] <Music>

Annie: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about another one of our incredible partners, Olive & June. If we've been friends for any length of time, you know this about me, but it is a major rarity that my nails aren't painted. I do my best to always have a mani and the challenge is that I would definitely call myself an amateur at painting my own nails. I do my best, but they end up looking not great and chipping within a day. But the alternative is forking over a lot of money to get regular salon manis.

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So enter Olive & June's Mani System. It is our new best friend at this office, y'all. Do-it-yourself manis that looks salon perfect and last over seven days are actually possible. Olive & June's Mani System comes with everything you need for beautiful DIY manis, all-in-one box, and even better it's only five steps. It comes with a Poppy, this like flexible, easy-to-grip brush handle that you can change out on all the bottles of polish. It's comfortable to hold so it steadies your hands and makes it so easy to paint with both of them. That means both hands end up with smooth, perfectly manicured nails instead of one looking great, and the other looking not great.

The Mani System has six polishes, breaks down to like \$2 a manicure. I mean, y'all, I used to spend more than that, more than \$35 for just one gel mani, and Olive & June polish is amazing. I love the color options, their glitter polish options, and their polish is so shiny it looks just like gel and it doesn't chip. It lasts like a week, y'all, we could not believe it here at the office, this never happens with polish. My nails look great and I did them myself. The Olive & June Mani System is the secret behind salon-perfect nails at home, all-in-one, no guessing, no messy nails, no salon price tags.

And as one of my friends you get 20% off your first Mani System at oliveandjune.com, using the code THATSOUNDSFUN. Your new nail life is here, so get 20% off your first Mani System, when you use promo code THATSOUNDSFUN at oliveandjune.com. We're done with expensive, bad manicures, okay, this is the new us you guys. And now back to our conversation with Jon Tyson.

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Annie: And so your experience with the Lord, does that mirror things for you? I mean, the easy mirror is when we rebel against God, it breaks His heart, that's not what I mean. I mean, like, are there times where God hurts your feelings like that too? Because I don't know that anyone's hurt me as much as God has hurt me.

Jon: Yeah. I mean...

Annie: Should I not say that on the podcast?

Jon: I mean, you've got to be honest, I mean the Psalms are there for a reason. Yeah I think it's different, I don't doubt God's heart.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

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Jon: So I don't have a naive theology that says this, "Here's the factors of my life, God and me." That's not my life.

Annie: All right.

Jon: I'm talking like angels, principalities, broken cultures, human systems, thousand personalities I'm interacting with daily, time, space, physical dimensions, fallen world, like there's many, many factors. Occasionally God's just like, "Let me just be God directly for a moment, and just like fully intervene dramatically."

For the most part, there's a lot of pieces to the puzzle. It doesn't mean God's not sovereign, it's just that He's chosen to set things up that include large doses of human freedom of decisions. And so, yeah, I think, I don't doubt the goodness of God, I doubt the methodology of God, yes.

Annie: That's right. That's right. That's a beautiful way to say it.

Jon: As a part of this counseling intake, there has to like, you do this intake, and one of the most awful things was like, it was really hard. You have all the relationships in your life and they say, "What are three things you don't like about each person?"

Annie: Oh, wow.

Jon: I'm like, "Why are you filling this out? I don't want to dig this stuff up?" They're like, "We're here to dig it up."

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: So anyway that you had to write, "What don't you like about God?" All right, I thought about this for so long, and like literally stumbled, and I just wrote one thing that I don't like about God, "His nebulous communication." That's what I don't like. I'm reading the book of Acts and like Paul who's seen Jesus is trying to do mission, the Holy Spirit forbids him.

And then he has a dream and in the dream, and I'm like there's so many ways that are so nebulous. Like I just wish the communication was clearer. And so I do get pain around the lack of clarity. That's where I feel like hurt, but I think, I'm living with such profound levels of gratitude. That's like, "Look, I'm a high school dropout from a meat factory in Australia. How did I get here? How did we get to have be on the sounding fun? This does sound fun."

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I don't know, this is just all mercy. And, so, I do cultivate a lot of gratitude, so I'm not mad at God too much. I've experienced like, gosh, I mean, name human trauma. I mean, like I have not had an easy life and my marriage is, like, my wife's family is filled with like horrific, horrific pain.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: But I'm still not mad at God about that. So I get frustrated, sure, but I'm like, I think I've like been through enough to trust His heart.

Annie: I mean, that is the pinnacle might not be the right word, I don't know what the right word is. That is the truthiest true for me about the difference between God and humans and the hurt there is that in the end, I always know whether I like it or not, the problem is not God, the problem is Annie. The problem is the circumstances or whatever, but in the end He, there's a song it's called "Catch Me Singing." And the whole idea is like when the spring comes, I hope God catches me singing.

Jon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: And one of the lines is, "You've been God for a long time."

Jon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: And as I think about that and seeing that, I often go like, "Oh, all the things I'm bringing to you. The things my friends are bringing to you, the things that matter to me, you've been God a long time."

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: A lot of people have raised humans. A lot of people have been single in their lives. A lot of people have had trauma, but you've been God a long time.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: And that is hopeful to me that He knows what He's doing.

Jon: Yes, I mean, it's how we frame ourselves. So I do an exercise every morning where it's like, I read this biography of Bonhoeffer, which basically like fueled my whole last book-

Annie: Oh really?

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Jon: ...that's called *A Strange Glory*.

Annie: That fueled *The Intentional Father* or?

Jon: No. It fueled *Beautiful Resistance*.

Annie: *Beautiful Resistance*.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: Man, you know how much we love Beautiful Resistance around here.

Jon: Well that was very kind, thank you.

Annie: Such a good book.

Jon: But, Bonhoeffer, the book starts with Bonhoeffer as a child contemplating eternity, as he's going to sleep-

Annie: As a kid?

Jon: Yeah. Eternity, eternity, eternity. And so I have an eternity exercise I do every morning and it's basically, I try and think through like the genealogies of the Bible. I try and think through like the big arc of human history, and I try and position myself as a tiny, like misten peon. And I realized that all the people that lived before and everybody who'll live after I've gone, and I try and like be pretty humble. And then I was just in Iceland with my daughter, and you're looking at stuff that was like, look, I don't know how old the earth is. It's old, old.

Annie: it's old.

Jon: It's old, old.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And I was like, they're telling stories a thousand years old, and how many waves crashed over these rocks to smooth the stones and all of this, and was like, "We are just a mist."

Annie: A blink.

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Jon: This is so quick. So be profoundly grateful.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: Remember eternal life that we will live forever and ever, in the new heavens and a new earth.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And so like, you got to get that stuff in your spirit as a part of your operating system, otherwise you'll be overwhelmed with the momentary.

Annie: Wow.

Jon: And it's just like, it's a default setting to be completely overwhelmed by the moment. So spend a lot of time just trying to get the right perspective of what's actually happening in the human story.

Annie: And we haven't, honestly, so much better than like the Noahs of the world, because he lived like hundreds of years, us at best, 100. Like we got to do this 100 years and then it's eternity.

Jon: Unless the singularity comes or unless they clone it out [**Crosstalk 00:30:12**] dystopian nightmare.

Annie: Right, right, right, and let science help.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: I don't know if it would help or hurt, honestly. I think my hope, and my faith, and my perseverance needs to know we do this for a hundred-ish years.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: At best, I hope we get to, I hope I get to go that long at doing this.

Jon: I think part of my challenge too, is like, and it's part of my wiring and my spiritual gifting or whatever, we all process a lot through our spiritual gifts. But like I fundamentally view my life as I'm in a spiritual war.

Annie: Oh wow.

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Jon: Like the Bible is filled with-

Annie: That's like the baseline of how you think about everyday?

Jon: Oh, yeah.

Annie: Jon!

Jon: I mean, like, I'm on the front line of like-

Annie: Like parenting, pastoring-

Jon: ...yeah but it's like it's-

Annie: ...husbandry, friendship.

Jon: ...it's a beautiful war, it's a war of love, it's a war of peace, it's a war of the fruit of the spirit, but I'm fundamentally in a spiritual war. So I honestly believe most of the bad things happen in my life is like spiritual resistance to trying to advance the kingdom.

Annie: Okay, we're going to talk about that, keep going.

Jon: So I'm not mad at God.

Annie: Sure.

Jon: When I'm pressing in, I spend a lot of time walking around the streets of New York saying, "Jesus, I welcome you into this city. I welcome you here. Your ministry is wanted here. Your person is wanted here." Like, do you think that like, millennial-old principalities, who have strongholds in New York city, mammon, exploitation of the poor. Do you think those things are excited about Christians walking around inviting Jesus ministry into the streets? No.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: So I don't, I'm not like, again, it's not like, "Well, God, why are you doing this? There's probably like the so much resistance in my world." And I just acknowledged that comes with the territory. So like when you read Paul he's talking about-

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Annie: Have you and I ever talked about Paul by the way? Do you know how I feel about Paul?

Jon: No.

Annie: Okay, you tell me about Paul and then I'll tell you about Paul.

Jon: Well, no, just like Paul, on his missionary journeys, he's like "Alexander the metalworker who did me great harm." And then all his mates are deserting him at the end of his life, and what does he say? "May the Lord not hold it against them." Because he realizes they're in a war.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And so you all have sort of a framing metaphor, but that's basically how I view it. Now, again, I don't try and have a militancy, I'm not living out of fear or anxiety or panic, I'm living out of deep peace. But I realize I'm in a deep, spiritual struggle and so I anticipate like staggering amounts of resistance.

Annie: Gosh, I like you so much Jon Tyson. Okay, so being intentional, the intentional father, I mean, what you're saying to me is every day, this is relating in my life too. But, every day when you're praying and when things aren't going, when you're not seeing revival the way you want to see it. When things aren't going quite like they should, if something goes sideways, even today, our timing was off. We both thought we were supposed to be here at two different times. When that kind of stuff happens, you just go, "All right, Lord, I'm coming." When do you let life just be life? And when do you press in for God to change and win a spiritual battle?

Jon: Well, I mean, it's a dominant metaphor, it's not the only metaphor. But, yeah, it's like under the leading of the Spirit. Like I was telling you, I can't share the details of what we talked about earlier. But like I experienced what I describe as the provenance of God, like the legitimate, I think for that guy this morning, that is going to be a God moment in his story, whatever he does-

Annie: For the rest of his life, yeah.

Jon: Yeah, whatever he does, he's going to be like, "Gosh, you can't make that up."

Annie: Yep.

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Jon: And so I just put that down, how God's working in ways that I'm unaware of larger than me.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: So I have trust like a lot of things happening, like I don't know how God's working it out.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: His promise is to work all things together for our good, that the idea of synergy. So I don't know how that works, but like mainly it's the leading of the Spirit. Do you know I'm married to a woman whose discernment is like a thousand X, and she will often say, "Hey, we need to pray about this. We need fast about this. We got to rebuke this why are you tolerating this? This is like an attack." And I have that internally too, but my mode is like, I mean, I default to dealing with it in the secret place.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: Like yeah, I can like gear up for war if I have to, I hate that. It's not like a pretty like childlike spirit. But most of it is like dealt with through prayer. A lot of like secret binding and loosing and renouncing, and all of that. I'm like the greatest fear in my life is that one day I'll get caught on a tape interceding.

Annie: And [Crosstalk 00:34:35] will be like that's what he would say?

Jon: They'd be like, "Dang!"

Annie: Jon I-

Jon: I know prayer is a fun, but that stuff is like, that's secret place stuff is [Inaudible 00:34:43].

Annie: I've been walking and praying, because it helps lower the anxiety I feel about the situations. If I'm moving, like you were saying, walking around New York and I live close to here.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: And I've been like the beauty, I just posted about this yesterday, the beauty of wearing AirPods is people don't know if you're on the phone or not.

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Jon: Totally.

Annie: So I just let a [**Inaudible 00:35:03**], I mean, I just I'm out there really giving it a go around my neighborhood. And I'm like, "These people either think I'm incredibly unkind to whoever..." I'm not being unkind to God, I'm just very seriously praying. I'm breaking off things and I'm opening up doors and saying to God, like "You say, if you open doors nobody shuts them. So I'm calling this door open, and I'm calling this one open go." You know, like I'm going.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: And I've always worried, like my neighbors have got to think I have lost my mind, but I'm also like I've got to walk and own this situation.

Jon: Yeah, totally. I just read a book, a wonderful book, not super user-friendly but it was called *Calling on the Name of the Lord* and it's a biblical theology of prayer. And that God basically-

Annie: *Calling on the Name of the Lord.*

Jon: ...yeah he basically just goes like, I'll give you the book-

Annie: You just tell me how I'm going to write it down.

Jon: ...it's a great book, it's worth buying. but his essence is like, here's what prayer is, "Calling on the name of the Lord to fulfill His covenant promises." That's what biblical prayer is. So he goes through every section of the Bible and comments on all the prayer in all the books of the Bible.

Annie: Oh, that's cool, though.

Jon: Yeah. And it's essence is it is calling on the name of the Lord to fulfill His covenant promises. And I read all of, I finished stuff on prayer, like Homeboy saw some fruit. Like what was happening behind the scenes that sort of produced the public outcomes.

And he's very, very similar. So like all advancement of the kingdom of God, a lot of the advancement of the kingdom of God comes with people holding up to God His covenant promises and making the case for His kingdom in intercession.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

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Jon: And so a lot of my prayers it's sort of, it's more like, "Lord, you said in your Word."

Annie: Yes.

Jon: So this is up to you. I mean, the Hebrides Revival, like the breakthrough came when they basically prayed, "Lord, are you a covenant keeping God or not? This is your reputation, not ours. We're happy just hanging out here in the Hebrides. Are you going to do what you said or not?" Is calling God to account. But there's got to be covenant because otherwise it's arrogance, and God doesn't like respect the prideful heart.

So it's like when you know the relationship you're in. So I tell people all the time, my wife comes from sort of like hillbilly elegies, like, she read that book, wept, and said, "This contains more explanatory power than anything I've read about in my life."

Annie: Wow.

Jon: So very like sort of like Mountain Dew in the bottle as the Appalachian sort of a dynamic.

Annie: In Australia though?

Jon: No, no.

Annie: She's American?

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, sorry.

Jon: From Maggie Valley, North Carolina.

Annie: I love Maggie Valley, I know exactly where that is, and I know exactly what you mean.

Jon: Yes, so, anyways, so like that sort of a background and we would wrestle, talk through these things, and try to figure this stuff out. She's got a communication dynamic that is like strong, she's an alpha apex predator eight on the enneagram, and I'm from Australia. I was like formed as a man in a meat factory with godless

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butchers, so her communication style is like very strong. If you've ever heard, sort of like Arabic people fight, you're just like, "Whoa." So like very, I used to work with some Arabic friends and just like the tone, the sentence structure, it feels very guttural and visceral.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And like people often look at us and like, "Gosh, you guys getting into it." We're like, "Oh, what are you talking about now?" Now, we actually explain to people that are joining our team, "Hey, here's a little bit of her background.

Annie: Yeah, you need to know.

Jon: That'd be intimidating. But my point is, if you try and talk to my wife like that, we're going to have a problem. Because we've got 23 years in the game here, we've walked through some stuff. So we can speak to one another based on our relational history, that in ways that other people can't. And I think so often our prayers are ineffective because they are formal and distant. We don't really know Him, so we're not praying with authority. We're not wrestling with God. Philip Yancey says that, "Prayer is like bargaining with God in a market." That's what the true meaning of prayer is like, "How much is this?" "\$8? I'll give you \$6." "7.50." "Nah, \$6.20."

Annie: Very recently last week Bethany Barnard and I talked about this on the podcast last week, but I had this moment with the Lord where I said, "I feel like you're being mean." And I've never said that before in my 40 years. I mean, I've been a Christian since I was five, so 36 years of being a believer, I've never said that. And in the end it drew us closer together.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: And it made me, He is not mean, I often say, "Your feelings can ride, but they cannot drive." So I was saying to Him, here's what the Bible say, You are, let me tell you my experience of what I'm feeling, and it brought us closer together. But I think you're giving me words for it that I didn't have. That there's a covenant relationship we have that 35 years in, I can approach Him with awe. I mean, I'm not being disrespectful-

Jon: And as the Bible says, "Boldness and confidence to obtain mercy and help in your time of need." I have a lot of pressure, I'm like, "You're up, God. You are up."

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Annie: That's it, Jon, that's it.

Jon: It's like, I need mercy and help right now.

Annie: Yes, I mean, I often say, "You started this story, not me. So if You wanted me to start this story," if I got bit by a snake because I picked up a snake, that's not me, but I got bit by snake I didn't pick up.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: So you got to handle this, right?

Jon: And I think, I'm telling you, I think back through my life, my most sincere prayers, the truest prayers of my spirit, I had very few of those unanswered in my life. Prayed from that biblical place, claiming the promises of God, covenantly focused-

Annie: Those unanswered?

Jon: Very few of those are unanswered.

Annie: Unanswered, yes. Yes.

Jon: Yes, like some of them have taken a long time, but they've those ones you kind of know like, "God, this is the truest prayer. This is my spirit to your spirit. This is not for me to have a good life, this is about your kingdom, I'm just asking you to step in."

Annie: Yes.

Jon: A lot of those are, I think the other thing is we tend to pray through our area of anointing and gift. And so it's like, if you asked me to pray for your healing, you're going to get, like, you're going to feel loved but you probably won't be healed.

Annie: Mh-hmm. Because it's not just like your thing [**Crosstalk 00:40:55**]

Jon: It's just like, it's not my thing. But if you need provision, you need faith for something, I can impart faith.

Annie: yeah.

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Jon: You know, like I can give you the capacity to believe my number one gift is a gift of faith.

Annie: But then in your life do you have to wrestle? Like, does that feel like one of the places that you have to stand up the most? Because I think I can impart hope, I think it's one of the gifts God's given me. But I also have to fight for it at times too, for me.

Jon: You know, something, yes, so I tell you coming out of this last COVID season, it was very hard. We did a podcast I remember in the middle of the pandemic, and it was like so heavy, the city was so heavy, and listen, that was rough.

Annie: And your wife was still sick?

Jon: Yes, she's a lot better now. But anyway, that was a wild season.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: One of the challenges that was connected to that, I think, I was in a prayer meeting, one of our church's prayer meeting, and I'm just sitting there and it's hot. I'm leading the prayer meeting and I'm like, "This prayer meeting sucks, I don't even want to be here." But I'm being faithful, I'm just being faithful.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And I just feel God say to me, "I have not called you to operate out of faithfulness. I've given you the gift of faith and it's time to move in faith again." I felt like a physical filling of the holy spirit. I can't even put it into words, it was like the day of Pentecost.

Annie: Aha.

Jon: I'm just sitting at the table, leading a prayer and no one knows this is happening, and I have been radically different. My leadership has been different, my preaching has been different, my prayers has been different and it was God's trying to remind me that the gifts of the spirit are a part of our prayer life and ministry as well.

And so faithfulness is a great concept that is biblical and true. But if you have the gift of faith, you have to operate out of the gift, because there's power in the gift, there's anointing in the gift, there's energy in the gift. And so, do I have to

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fight for it? I do think so. But I think in that particular category, it's a gift of the spirit, so there's like a little extra juice in it.

Annie: Yeah. Where do we find the list of the gifts of the spirit? If we're listening to you and we're going like, "Yeah, what do I have to offer the world? And what can I be?" Where do we find that?

Jon: Everybody's trying to pass up the spiritual gifts in a way that makes sense. So we've when I've taught on that, we've talked about three kinds of gifts. We've talked about the motive gifts in Romans 12, which is almost like any grand personalities. These are like very, very deep to heart. So in Romans 12, there's the gift of exhortation. It's like, I feel like I was put on planet earth to walk alongside you, to encourage you to reach your redemptive potential. Well, that is like, I'm at my happiest. So I hear weird when people say like, "I really appreciate your preaching." And I'm like, "Oh, I'm not a teacher. I'm only teaching to encourage."

Annie: Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: So I'm not a teacher. Suzie, who's outside, she's a teacher.

Annie: She is so good.

Jon: She's teaching the Bible. I'm encouraging you with a Bible, different gifts. And so you've got the motivation gift. Then you've got other ministry gifts in Ephesians 4, which is sort of like APEST, apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, whatever. And then you've got the manifestation gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, and these are sort of like the dramatic ones.

Annie: The dramatic ones?

Jon: Yeah, I mean it's-

Annie: They are, yeah, I love it.

Jon: ...like signs, wonders, gifts of healing, miracles, ability to do miracles, prophecy, all of that sort of stuff. So I basically say those motivation gifts you have to know sort of like, this is my calling in the world, I'm an encourager. The mode that I do that is primarily apostolic, I'm about driving the mission forward.

Annie: Yeah.

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Jon: And then the manifestation gifts, I believe pretty close to what women believe that these are available at any time at any place. God owns the gifts, you don't own the gifts.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And so you can be in a meeting and have access to this divine toolkit of ministry at any moment, if you're sensible and available. So, yeah, that's been really helpful for the way we think about it.

Annie: I need to tell you how I feel about Paul, I almost forgot.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: Because I'm currently in Corinthians and the Bible, I'm reading, the Bible in a Year, has me in Job and Corinthians at the same time, and I am loving it. And I've never loved either of these characters, oh that humans, they're not characters, they're real people that walked the earth. But you know what I mean in Bible characters. These have never been two that I've like leaned into, because Job, as an enneagram seven, not interested.

Jon: Yeah that's-

Annie: Not interested.

Jon: So just to kind of, one thing I always think about Job though, so, and this is highlighted in the book of James about perseverance.

Annie: Aha.

Jon: It's says, "Remember what the Lord wrote for Job at the end of his life." And it's like we forget that Job's life ended with double portion blessing-

Annie: Double portion.

Jon: No, we all cut it off with like, "I put my hand over my mouth, I'm silent before God." It's not how it ends. It actually ends with God, like rewarding him two fold and blessing him, and his greatest days are at the end of his life.

Annie: Yes.

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Jon: You always put that in, because everyone is like, "It's just a tale, like of just have woe and despair and it ends." And it's like, God works it out in the end, and James reminds us when we're struggling.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: Anyway, so you're in Job and Paul?

Annie: Yeah, and I'm enjoying, I'm actually, for the first time, my life is not hard, I have a very easy life the Lord has been kinder to me than I ever deserve. But I'm really enjoying listening to Job and his friends. His friends be so like, "What have you done?" And Job being like, "I'm telling you I've done nothing."

Jon: Yes.

Annie: "I have been near to God and He's doing this to me." I've just really enjoyed Job's honesty around like, "I don't have to listen to you guys. Y'all don't know, but I know God, I know my Redeemer lives and in the end I'm going see Him."

Jon: Phillip Monte says the key to understanding the book of Job, is that in the book of Job, Job's the only one who talks to God, everybody else talks about God."

Annie: Ah, it's great.

Jon: They all have theories, and then Job is wrestling it out.

Annie: I'm currently in the young guy who says, "I've been waiting because these friends are older and I wanted them, now I've got to say my piece." And I'm like, "Guy, shut up." Paul I've, and not even because of what he says about women teaching and all that. A lot of people assume I don't love Paul because of stuff he says about women. But the honest truth is I've always felt like his personality was too harsh. I wanted him to be kinder. I feel like every time I read him, it feels like he's bossing me versus inviting me.

And the Corinthians have kind of, I mean, I read, N.T. Wright's book about Paul, which helped a ton. Put him in context, taught me about his personality, and so I've softened to him significantly. Peter is still my guy, but I've softened to Paul significantly. But I find him in Corinthians, when you're talking about 12 and 14 in 1 Corinthians, he really is a caring teacher.

Jon: Yes.

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Annie: And I didn't think he was. So that's when you bring up Paul, everybody listening is going, "But Annie doesn't like Paul." But I'm coming around to him so much.

Jon: Well, I mean, Paul's got a father's heart, is like he literally says like everyone's like, "Give us letters of commendation." And he's like, "You're the letter, the story of God is written through the pen of my life and your heart, you're my letter."

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: He's like, "Make room in your hearts for me." What a phrase! This really says, "Make room in your hearts for me." And he's always like dealing with these people getting seduced by the super apostles. And he's like, is he... I got a soft spot for Paul, but I got the apostolic sort of like framework of life.

Annie: Aha.

Jon: But it can be harsh, he was a driver.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And we always have to remember that the Bible is God's Word, Paul is a human in the Bible, he's not the Bible.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

[00:48:14] <Music>

Annie: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about one of our amazing partners, Trust and Will. So I have some questions for you; do you own any property? Do you have kids or pets? Do you have specific ideas of how you want to be cared for in a medical emergency? If you've answered yes to any of these, you need to have a will or a trust. No matter your age, it is just the responsible thing to do. At trustandwill.com, setting up an estate plan is simple, convenient, and secure. For as little as \$39, you can nominate guardians for your children, determine who receives your belongings, and plan for future medical care all from the comfort of your home.

Here's the real reel about being a grownup hiring a traditional estate attorney can cost thousands and using a one-size-fits-all template that's not merely specialized enough. Trust and Will documents are designed by estate planning experts, and they've customized them to be specific to the state where you live. And with live

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customer support seven-days a week, trustandwill.com's team is available to answer any questions you have while setting up your plan.

I know it may not sound fun to think about things like this, but you know what it is fun? Having peace of mind about your future plans, you guys. That's what motivated me to use Trust and Will to make sure that my estate planning is up-to-date. Trust and Will is the most trusted name in online estate planning, the category leader on TrustPilot, and they've helped hundreds of thousands of people protect their family's assets and legacy.

Gain peace of mind at trustandwill.com/thatsoundsfun and get 10%, plus, free shipping of your customized legal documents, don't wait, go right now. This is really important, you guys, get 10% off, plus free shipping at trustandwill.com/thatsoundsfun. Again, that's trustandwill.com/thatsoundsfun. And now back to the rest of my conversation with Jon Tyson.

[00:50:05] <Music>

Annie: So you say he has a father's heart. I think one of the things that is interesting for people with your book, *Intentional Father*, I mean, I have a lot of guy friends who are helping parent other kids that are not their kids.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: A lot of community. I mean, we have a real like village that I'm a part of, that I'm the only unmarried one in the village that is helping raise each other's kids.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: But when it comes to being an intentional father or an intentional mother, like I hope I am, even though I haven't birthed anyone or adopted anyone.

Jon: But you've got like a billion spiritual kids?

Annie: Right. So when we see a book like *Intentional Father*, how to raise sons in courage and character, talk for a minute to the men and women listening, who aren't physical parents yet, but are parenting like Paul, and many of us. How do we work on our parenting when we aren't parents?

Jon: Well, I tell you it's called *The Intentional Father*, there's a lot of unintentional parents doing a lot of damage.

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Annie: Ah! Say that.

Jon: I mean, I opened by talking about five kinds of parents and the best kind is their aspiration is to be an intentional parent. You know, I've mentored a lot of kids, I was a youth pastor here in Nashville for a lot of years.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And you can play a tremendous role being a mentor. Like here's the thing, young people are desperate for older people to take them by the hand and walk them through these complex agonizing pain-filled years.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: They're looking for a guide, and that guide can be a father. If a father is not around, it can be a mentor, it could be a coach, it could be a youth pastor, it could be someone in the community group or whatever, and it actually happens best in partnership. Like, so I was always trying to outsource or supplement, compliment, my parenting with Nate with like other mentors and other friends.

I was always trying to expose him, "You got to meet with them, hang out with them, go on that thing." Because I wanted him to see a community of men. So the book is, like my whole point is like, you need a cohort period.

Annie: Yes.

Jon: You need to be surrounded. I read a wonderful book, my gosh, it was just such a great book called "The Council of Dads." And it was about a guy who walked the whole world, he walked through the Bible. I think he's a secular Jew, but this was what he did and then he got cancer in his leg. And he's going to die, and he had these two newborn girls. And so he's like, "I'm not going to be around, I need to build a council of dads." And I don't want to wreck the book, he ends up living he's fine, and he lives in Brooklyn.

Annie: Are you friends with the guy?

Jon: No, but I went back into a walk, it's a long story, anyway, it's a great book. But I love that vision, I was like, "This is what we need. We need council of dads or father figures."

Annie: Yeah.

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Jon: And there's actually several other books one of them I read by an African-American woman talking about her son, his father was not in the picture. So she basically made, same thing, made a community of mentors to help play these roles in the son. So I've got a thing on archetypes, which like any male formation has in it.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And I think one practical way is to sit down and say like, "Who's the best person to teach this kid, these particular things?"

Annie: This thing. Yeah, that's so great.

Jon: So I've got friends in New York who are really good with money. And I was like, "You need to learn from them. They know about it a lot better than I do. I can talk to you about the heart, the spirit, walking with Jesus." So there's multiple ways that a mentor could speak in and bring their unique gifts to bear. The ultimate vision is like a community of people creating a shared pathway for young people.

Annie: Yeah. I think that's really helpful for our, I would imagine for our parents listening, the reminder you don't have to be everything for your kids.

Jon: You can't-

Annie: You can't.

Jon: ...what crushing weight?

Annie: Right, I would imagine.

Jon: Crushing weight. The other thing I will say, I just watched Anthony Bourdain, that Anthony Bourdain documentary.

Annie: I saw you tweeting, were you tweeting about it? I saw you talking about it-

Jon: I probably did. I mean, I was like really conflicted. So he's got that famous episode on Waffle House and I stayed at a waffle house, that's what I thought about it. And, so he ends up having a kid late in life with his second wife. And he's like the footage, he just looks like an incredible dad, who's doing everything he can, but he's just torn, torn with personal ambition.

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And then one of his friends says, he said, "Anthony has this vision of being the ideal dad, the romantic dad? And he could never live up to it. So he always felt guilty, and paralyzed." And I was like, "Yeah, that's the thing." Because there's a difference, I've been thinking about this a lot, talking about this a lot, it's possible to be great in our culture and a horrible parent. Like how many famous people did it at the cost of their children's formation and themselves.

Annie: Yes.

Jon: But there's, so greatness is actually about other-centered sacrifice in the Bible. And so it's possible to be a great dad, which means basically you get up early, you're sacrificing on behalf of your family. You're doing things that they'll never appreciate and never know.

And then on your death bed it's possible that your kids will say, "He was a great dad." And greatness is about sacrifice; it's not idolize, it's not Instagram moments, it's not hype, it's like showing up every day to love to guide. It's micro formations, it's the right word at the right time. It's the gift of presence, it's screwing up and asking for forgiveness. It's a modeling a God-honoring humanity in front of your kids. And so take the pressure off. You don't have to be this idealized parent. You don't have to go to a conference and feel like crap because you can't wield the stuff, be present.

Annie: Right.

Jon: Do what you can, express love, repent when you screw up, be honest. And that's what I think, parenting greatness really is.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: Get the pressure off your back.

Annie: That's right. I mean, I love my role in my friend's parenting lives.

Jon: Yeah. Yeah.

Annie: Like because I'm the one who can come over at five o'clock when they've done all day, and I can just play for an hour. Because I've had tons of energy, I've been at work all day I want to play. And I love throwing kids from here to there, I think it's like incredibly fun, and so I love my role in that. And if I can't imagine, if my family, if my little village didn't let me be a part of the parenting.

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Jon: Yes.

Annie: I can see them at times when something goes sideways with me and the kid, where they hold back, to let me and the kid work it out.

Jon: Yeah. And when we're talking about family, we're not, so we've got the modern obsession with a nuclear family, as opposed to like the biblical concept. Which is extended family, 50 to 70 people, what was like way bigger than **[Crosstalk 00:56:35]**

Annie: Jeff Bethke has written about this a ton and it's awesome.

Jon: Yeah, mom, dad, and two kids, is like, that's not it.

Annie: Right, it's not it.

Jon: That was like, it's a tribe.

Annie: Yeah. I think it would help, I think so many single people would feel less lonely if they could find their way into a tribe.

Jon: Yeah. Amen.

Annie: And even though it's like, "Well, yeah, I'm around a lot of married people, which is fine, they have single friends we'll be fine." But it's one of the greatest gifts in my life is being a part of those, that particular tribe. Okay, one last thing.

Jon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: Well, for starters, Jon, is there's anything we didn't talk about you want to make sure we cover. We did a lot.

Jon: I know this is great. You are like the most wonderful conversationalist, just effortless-

Annie: Thank you.

Jon: ...effortless. I've done some other wonderful podcasts, where I'm just like, "Water from a stone." This is just like flowing like the River Jordan for you.

Annie: I'll receive that. The thing I have to hold back is I want to tell you all the things, and I'm like, no, A, you're on a microphone. B, we want everyone to know about

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Jon. So thank you, that means a lot, because there's required a lot of self-control today. I would love for you, will you give us a little spiritual direction going into the rest of 2021. I love seasons. I think God works in seasons all the time, so I'm always marking dates.

I'm pretty charismatic, I hide it a lot, but I'm pretty charismatic. So I'm like when is there been 40 days? What is there, like I'm looking at seasons. So we're going into the fall, ending a year that seems for a lot of us has gone by incredibly fast, because we still feel 2020.

Jon: It has gone fast-

Annie: So fast. How we're in almost to Quarter Four is beyond me.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: Where's God want us to go for the rest of this year? What should we, if we studied one thing, if we read one book, if we besides *The Intentional Father*, if we read one book of the Bible, where do you think we should go next? What's God doing?

Jon: Well, I mean, this is what we've been talking about as a staff. It's like we've done a lot of spiritual bypassing. Like we've sprinkled like magic God's sauce over the trauma of the last 18 months, and a lot of it's unacknowledged in their hearts.

Annie: Right.

Jon: And so we've sort of white-knuckled our way through it. It's like, "Okay, I think we're going to make it, okay. Oh." And I think it's probably really, really wise to spend some time, like sitting with and going back over and say like, "What actually happened to me in the previous year that I haven't really gotten to yet." And my desire for normalcy and my desire to get through this. Even in my awareness of like, you're looking at Afghanistan, looking at those people trying to get on a plane. You're looking at Haiti and you're just like, "There's so much global trauma, but have we really dealt with our own?"

Because I know I shared this when we talked a while back or whatever, I was like, "I'm so haunted by this, by what Tim Keller said." So after 9/11 Christians tend to have a heroic response to crisis. We're like, "We were born for this, we love, we've got social capital. We have an invisible network of connections across the city. We rally resources, we give, we're God's people." And he said that, "Most of the people rallied after 9/11, who didn't deal with their trauma were

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gone two years later." He was like, "The consequences are never felt in real time." And I can say I'm seeing a lot of people walking around with tiredness, loss of hope, deep discouragement, and they're not quite sure why.

Annie: Yes.

Jon: And it's like, because you haven't dealt with that stuff, when you were bleeding out, you haven't dealt with it.

Annie: Yes.

Jon: And so I would say like, if you don't deal with 2020, it'll be here in 2022.

Annie: Wow.

Jon: Let's like bring it to God and really process it, sit with it, get it out, be honest with it, name it, see what's been exposed. Like what is the book? Oh, I don't know, it's probably the book of Psalms, I'm always the Gospel, I'm a never-leave-the-Gospels person, but I've been getting so much life from the Psalms.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And so it's just being able to like turn these into cries of the heart, writing your own Psalms, "Lord, here's how I really felt about that."

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: You know, you might, like you said, you said like being frustrated at God or mad at God or whatever it is, there is like, there's a lot of people mad at God.

Annie: Yes.

Jon: There's a lot of people that had friends die.

Annie: Yes.

Jon: There's a lot of people that like lost jobs and they question the goodness of God.

Annie: And it feels like with a resurgence of COVID being a conversation, and seeing people get sick, it feels like in my conversations, there are a lot of people who feel like, "I can't do this again."

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Jon: I was about to say, like, "We do not have the willpower as a culture to revert."

Annie: Yes.

Jon: We can't like, even if you want to, you're like, "I can't go back there, we must go forward." And even that is like a subtle form of repression, like, "I must bury that deeper to get through."

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: And it's like just deep honesty with our hearts.

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: People are like, "A lot of subconscious stuff and I would like to dig it out, and sit with it, and be honest with it."

Annie: Yeah, what could God do if we lament in what we've experienced?

Jon: There's just grief, grieving loss, grieving it like this hurt.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: Oh gosh, I mean, oh man, I was so disillusioned with pastoring, just like in total utter disillusionment. Like, "Am I pastoring the internet, which is not even a thing."

Annie: Right.

Jon: Like, "Where are my people?" I was just so disoriented and I had to just like, acknowledge this, like, "Okay, I need to just grieve this thing out."

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: And I went into the woods and I was walking around, and I was angry, I was mad that this has happened.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

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Jon: We're on the verge of a move of God, I'd been praying for three years, we had momentum, and I was like, "Okay, this is all gone. Okay, I got to get it out." So I think it's space to grieve and then it's space to heal.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: And so I think like healed people can help people.

Annie: Yes.

Jon: And so it's like, I think if we can come out of this in a place of restoration and health, we'd be able to give a lot, because I think our culture is going to go there. I think our culture is going to deal with this, and it's going to be a lot of sideways energy. And we're going to be able to say, "Hey, let me walk you through that. This is what I learned from following Jesus."

Annie: That's why the gospels will matter to us every day.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: Is that as we continue to move towards whatever is coming next, there are a lot of people who are going to give help that is not gospel help.

Jon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: And we have the actual gospel help.

Jon: And that's just totally... Yes.

Annie: Okay, Jon, the last question we always ask, you know it because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you?

Jon: Oh, let me tell you. I am getting like, can I tell you a quick story?

Annie: Yes.

Jon: Okay.

Annie: I'm in no rush, I'm thrilled you're here, this is the highlight.

Jon: Okay. So, I did the revival tour with my family.

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Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jon: And I was going to see this place where Bonhoeffer ran thinking fold in the middle of the night. We're in Poland, I'm in a European micro car, there's five of us. We go to this hotel and it's locked out and it was like, we can't get in, cannot get in. Call, call, call. So my wife, 10 seconds in, my wife is like, "I'm not dealing with this." She's breaking the European microcar-

Annie: Oh I love her so much.

Jon: ...into a bedroom. She's got the back down, she's like literally forcing my kids into human, like pretzel-ing we can do this. We can do this. And it's a long story, about an hour later, a drunk guy shows up, and we get in, and it's like as I'm getting ready to sleep on top of the European microcar. I was just like, "I love this."

Annie: Yeah.

Jon: An adventure is a journey with no determined outcome. And I was just like, "I didn't know it was going to happen." And I was like so fully alive, getting ready to camp with a European microcar. And I said to my wife, I was like, "We've got to do, we just have to explore, we've got to do fun stuff where we don't know the outcome." So that's our great quest as empty-nesters, there's is like one thing a week that we don't know how it's going to-

Annie: One thing a week?

Jon: Yes, come on, pleasure-stacking Sabbath-

Annie: That's awesome, yeah.

Jon: Let's go somewhere, let's explore something, let's do something, let's like strategically plan it out. Plan the thing without knowing how it's going to end, that sounds fun. Adventure in midlife.

Annie: Ah! Brilliant.

Jon: Yeah.

Annie: And you'll do it on your Sabbath.

Jon: Yes Friday night.

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Annie: Okay.

Jon: Yep.

Annie: Man, we need to do, at some point, I would love for you to come back. Maybe you and John Mark and I, all three do a Q&A about Sabbath. People ask all the time how to do it with kids? How to do you...?

Jon: I've been in John Mark's house when he's doing Sabbath with his kids, you know Sabbath meal. He, man, he is one of my dearest friend, I love him so much, he's like the truest soul and very different personalities. So like watching him with his kids on Sabbath versus what I did with my kids., i's like, it's the same principles with radically different expressions in them.

Annie: Sometimes I feel like when he's around me, he feels like I am a confetti cannon that's going to shoot off at any second. But he doesn't know quite what to do with me.

Jon: He's drawing from a deep well.

Annie: Because yeah, and I could not adore him more, I just think the world of him. So, okay, we need to do a Sabbath talk at some point.

Jon: Yes.

Annie: Thanks for doing this. I'm always grateful [**Crosstalk 01:05:40**]

Jon: Yes, what a joy and this was wonderful, thank you for having me.

Annie: That was a treat.

[01:05:44] <Music>

Annie: Oh you guys, isn't he the best? I just learn so much every time, every time I'm so thankful for him. Hey, be sure to grab a copy of his new book, The Intentional Father and make sure you're following him on social media, tell him thanks so much for being on the show.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find, Annie F. Downs on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), all the places you may need me, that's how you can find me and out on tour in October. I hope you've already

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got your ticket, go ahead to anniefdowns.com/events. We cannot wait to see you. Oh my gosh, we're so excited to do this again.

And I think that's it for me today. Friends go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you, I'll do the same. Have a great weekend. We'll see you back here on Monday with you guys, you're not even ready, the former football coach from the University of Georgia Coach Mark Richt , y'all, yeah, I can't believe I get to talk to Coach Richt, you're going to love it. "Go dawgs, sic 'em." We'll see you guys on Monday.

[01:06:44] <Music>