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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. It is a fun, fun week and we've got a great show in store for you.

Before we dive in, I want to take a moment to share about one of our incredible partners, Cru. I can't get enough of thinking about the incredible work that Cru does. Y'all, I just know how much the Bible has meant in my life and how much it's changed me, I want that for everyone and so does Cru.

But imagine for a moment that you couldn't get a Bible and that you couldn't just pop on Amazon and have one sent to your house, that you couldn't afford one or that you weren't even allowed to have one. That's the reality for people all around the world. Believe it or not, there are many people who simply can't get a Bible. And that's why I feel so excited and honored to partner with Cru.

Cru is one of the largest evangelical organizations with over 25,000 missionaries in almost every country. Cru is giving Bibles around the world to people in their own heart language and sharing the hope of Jesus.

But here's why they need your help. For only \$21 a month, you can provide three people with Bibles each and every month. And when you sign up to provide three Bibles with a monthly gift of \$21, Cru will provide meals to five hungry families through their humanitarian aid ministry.

God, are they the best or what, y'all? And as a thank you, you'll receive a copy of my book, *That Sounds Fun*. Just text FUN to 71326 to help today. Imagine just how much this gift could change someone's life. So text FUN to 71326. That's FUN 271326 to help now, or visit give.cru.org/fun.

And it is quite a week around here at Downs Books and That Sounds Fun, you guys. I got to share with you last week the super fun announcement that we're doing at That Sounds Fun live stream on November 2. My pal, well, everyone's pal, Eddie Kaufholz is flying down for this very special event that will be coming at you right in your own home.

Be sure to grab your tickets at compassionlive.com. Make plans to join us that night on November 2. You can also get a VIP ticket where you'll get to do a little Q&A with me before the show starts. And you get that by sponsoring a kid through

Compassion which means a ton to me. So all that information, compassionlive.com, November 2. It's going to be such a fun night.

And if you're listening to this on the day it releases on Monday, then it is a book launch Eve for my first kids' book, *What Sounds Fun to You?* Y'all, I am thrilled to see this sweet book getting into the hands of my MiniBFF and the MiniBFFs in your life.

Since it releases tomorrow, today is the very last day to preorder. And you know, if you preorder today, it's going to leave tomorrow the warehouse and leave wherever you'll order from. So it's coming to you this week. But you can go ahead and pre-order today and get the fun bonuses: the coloring sheet, the sticker pages, and a personalized side bookplate that I will write, and then you stick it in the front of the book whenever it shows up from wherever you ordered the book from.

You can find all the info about that at whatsoundsfuntoyou.com. And of course, all the links to this are in the show notes if you need them. Happy book launch Eve, you guys. My first ever kid's book. I can't believe it. *What Sounds Fun to You?* comes out tomorrow. Comes out tomorrow. I have so many feelings.

Intro: Today on the show though I get to talk with my friend, Anne Wilson. Y'all know and love Anne. She's a singer/songwriter whose music career started from a painful place. But the story is just woven through and through with God's healing and redemption. You'll get to hear about that and her contagious hunger for Jesus in this episode. Y'all are going to adore her.

She released a live *EP My Jesus (Live In Nashville)* this fall, and her debut single, *My Jesus*, went number one on Radio just 14 weeks after add date. We're going to talk about it. It's unbelievable. It makes her the first female solo artist to hit number one with a debut song on the national Christian Airplay chart since the charts started in 2003. My girl, let's go, Anne. So here's my conversation with my friend and y'all better get ready to fall in love with this girl. Here is Anne Wilson.

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Annie: Okay, Anne, before I even start, let me tell you. If there's anything I ask you that you don't want to talk about... I mean, you've done a bazillion of these, but also if there is, just say, "I don't want to talk about that, Annie," and I'll be like, "Well, all right, not my business."

Anne: Okay, will do.

Annie: Just go however you want to go. Just boss me around as we go. I'm going to work real hard not to make you answer the exact same thing you've answered one thousand times.

Anne: Okay. Live it.

Annie: That's my life. That is my life goal today. Okay, Anne, first question, do you live in Nashville?

Anne: I do. Actually, I live in Franklin.

Annie: Ah, okay. Okay. When did you move here?

Anne: I used to live in Nashville. So I moved to Nashville February 2020 and then COVID hit.

Annie: No.

Anne: Then I went to Kentucky. It was horrible. And then moved to Franklin about six, seven months ago. So I love it here. It's a great place and good community, and so...

Annie: Wait, hold on. So you pack up everything, you move it all to Nashville February of 2020.

Anne: Yes. I signed my lease and we go, and my parents moved me in. And then probably like three and a half weeks later is when the world just shut down.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Anne: And we were like, "You got to be kidding me."

Annie: Right.

Anne: Then I moved back home because there was nothing going on in town. There was no anything for artists really, no rights, or anything. Everything was shut down. So I moved back home for a while. But yeah, it was like the perfect timing to pack up and move.

Annie: Yeah, perfect timing. Tell me about the day when you decided, "I need to move back home."

Anne: Oh, man. So I had just gotten back from Disney World for my very first time.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Anne: We left the day before they shut down. So we left March 9 and I think they shut down March 10.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Anne: And I got back and I remember-

Annie: Were you just there for fun or were you singing?

Anne: Me and my friends and my family we went on a big Disney trip because we've never been before, and I had always wanted to go as a little girl.

Annie: That's awesome.

Anne: So yeah, we get back. And I remember my manager calls me and he's like, "Anne, everything is shutting down. There's going to be no writing sessions, the tours are canceled left and right, everyone's coming back home off the road." And I remember being so scared at first because it was like, "What's happening with the world?" Like it was such a scary feeling.

Annie: Right.

Anne: But I just remember knowing like, "Okay, this must be time to move back and spend some extra time with my family before I officially make the big move." It was a really beautiful thing. I remember spending so much extra time with Jesus during that time and really getting to dive into the Lord and the word and having so much extra time on my hands. It was a beautiful thing just getting to spend time with my family. It was amazing.

Annie: So you didn't panic at all? You didn't have this like, "God, what are you doing?" moment when you had to pack everything back up?

Anne: Definitely did. There was definitely a moment, where-

Annie: I had like nine of those during COVID of like, "What am I supposed to do now?"

Anne: I definitely had a moment where it was like, "I just was called here and now I'm going back." You know, I felt like God had called me into this music thing and doing all the stuff. And then I finally moved and then it's like right back home.

Annie: Right.

Anne: There was definitely that moment of just like, "God, what are you doing here? Where are you right now? What is this?" But now I see why He did that. Now I see the beauty that has come out of it, so...

Annie: I think that so many of our friends listening have been in that spot. I mean, I feel that a little bit because we just postponed my tour for October. And I had this like, "Wait, God, what is this? This isn't how the story was going to go." And so you being on the other side of it, for our friends listening who were like right in the middle of the thing they thought was about to happen is not happening, what's the encouragement? What's the like "how do you survive this"?

Anne: I would just say in times like that it's so hard to let fear creep in and let the enemy creep in and try to make you question God. But in times like that, I found in my life, especially with what I've been through, that those are opportunities to just trust the Lord on a deeper level than anything else.

And so when we're walking through times like that, especially in this world right now, as dark as it is and there's so many questions right now, and there's so many things that are happening, I think the most important thing is just to trust God, to lean on Him in every way possible. To just give Him your all in those moments of where you don't have the answers to the questions and you don't know what tomorrow looks like but you're serving a God who does. And that to me is a really comforting feeling, a beautiful feeling.

I love when I'm in the middle of a storm and a really hard season, but yet I know that I'm serving a God who knows what tomorrow holds. He knows what my future holds. He has me in the palm of His hands. And I think that that's such a beautiful image in my mind to always remember. And then it takes all the pressure off of me. Like, I don't have to do anything. I don't have to care about my tomorrow because I know the one who does.

Annie: Wow. On like a Tuesday afternoon when there's nothing to do because you're sitting at home with your family or you're packing up your car, and you're headed back to Kentucky, how does that really play out? Do you just say to yourself over and over like, "Okay, God I trust you and I'll just drive?" Or is there like a mantra you say? What does it look like in day to day thing?

Anne: I actually just say "I trust you God."

Annie: Over and over.

Anne: And the reason why is because my big brother passed away four years ago in a car accident. And the moment I found out, the police told us in our downstairs living room that Jacob had passed away, I immediately turned around and I said to Jesus, "Jesus, I trust you."

Annie: Wow.

Anne: And it was within five seconds of finding out because I knew that I couldn't rely on myself, I couldn't rely on my own understanding. And I had to grow closer to Jesus through that time rather than farther apart. So ever since that June 2017 of saying, "Jesus, I trust you." it's like my response to everything.

When something doesn't go the way that I want it to go, it's "Jesus, I trust you." Because I know that when we put our trust in Him, He comes through every single time. Again, it takes that load off of us having to figure it out ourselves.

Annie: Yeah. So many of our friends listening have moved somewhere new like you have. And now you're back in Nashville or Franklin, which is, for everyone not living here, same, same. You're 20 minutes away. What has it been like getting a whole new community and finding a church and getting plugged in here? How have you done that when you're also on the road? Right?

Anne: Yeah. It's been craziness, especially since my songs came out in April of 2021, so this year. It's been a really cool season, though because God's been using it a lot of ways in my life. I've been able to connect with so many new people and just grow in a lot of ways that God is just... He's revealing a lot to me right now during this season.

But yeah, it's definitely been a hard thing leaving community. I've had my whole life and going to a brand new place with new people and a new church. But it's

been a really beautiful thing, too. And I think that God's using it to just grow me in a lot of ways.

Annie: And my question is, for our friends... You're 19, is that right? 19 or 20?

Anne: Yeah, 19.

Annie: So, so many of our friends listening are college students who've just moved to a new city, or who are in their college town, why did finding a church matter to you?

Anne: Oh, that's a really good question. I grew up in church my entire life with my parents and my family. I just remember there was something so special about having that church community that I really miss when I moved to Nashville. I missed having that every Sunday morning going and having an incredible place to worship God, but also having the community to worship Him with.

And so I just knew within my heart, I remember getting off with my parents one morning, and I was like, "Guys, I have to find a church. I have to find a church." Because I need that community. I need to have a place. Especially as a Christian artist, it is so hard when you give out at shows all the time, but you're not receiving for yourself.

And I remember there were so many moments in the beginning where I would get so just worn out. And then I would remember like, "Wait, I didn't watch church today because I was performing. And I need to receive that too. I need to listen to sermons too. I need to have that worship time as well." And so I just knew that, especially as an artist, I needed that time. And I prayed about it for a long time. It took probably seven, eight months to find a really good church that I felt at home.

Annie: Really?

Anne: Yeah. It was crazy.

Annie: Did you like try a bunch of different ones?

Anne: I did. My parents came in town a few times for it, too. We went around and with some friends to different places. It was just a hard thing because it's one of those things where it's like you want to, you know... all churches are beautiful and incredible but you want to feel at home wherever you're supposed to be at. And so

for me, it took a little while but it's such a beautiful thing now that I have that community.

And I think that it's so important for college-age students like me to be plugged into a community like that that has their focus on the Lord. It's really, really important.

Annie: I went to University of Georgia. Go Dawgs!

Anne: Oh, that's cool.

Annie: I actually ended up living in Athens for seven years.

Anne: Wow.

Annie: And after I finished school, I wanted to stay because of the local church. Like because they have been a church where I knew families. I didn't just know students my own age. So what are you experiencing multi generationally in your church? Are you in a church that's all people your own age or is it a lot of generations?

Anne: A lot of generations, which I actually love. I love little kids. I used to do a ton of church camps and babysitting and all that kind of stuff. And so then just a lot of families, a lot of kids my age, young kids. It's really very wide age range, which to me is a really beautiful thing.

Annie: And you're in a career that I am too. We're in the same space except that you do not want me to sing. But we're surrounded by Christians for our work all the time.

Anne: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: And it gets really easy to get cynical about things. Like I was at dinner with friends the other night and I made a joke and they're like, "Hahaha, you are so cynical." And I was like, "Oh, am I? Wait, what did I say? I didn't mean it. I love everything." But who is mentoring you in this? Who's speaking into growing up in CCM world? Are there people that are walking with you in this?

Anne: There's definitely been quite a few people that have really helped me and taken my hand. Actually, you might know one of them, Jeff Pardo.

Annie: Do you know how well I know Jeff Pardo?

Anne: Yes. Yes.

Annie: I love him and Marisa.

Anne: Oh my goodness. They love you so much. They talk about you all the time. But Jeff is just such a... he was my second co-write ever in town almost three years ago. And we used to meet and it's like became brother-sister. And ever since then he's just been walking with me through all the questions and all the ups and downs and all the things, decisions, and things that have happened. So he's been a really, really important person.

I've also found having just my mentors outside of the CCM world is also very helpful for me. Because sometimes it's like my mind wants to not escape the music thing but just kind of like step away from that-

Annie: Of course, it does. You should. Yeah.

Anne: ...and just be present again as Anne.

Annie: As a person. Right.

Anne: Exactly. And so a lot of the time I'll just go back home to Kentucky and meet with my mentor there. And those are always, to me, the most beautiful moments.

Annie: I have found having people kind of ahead of us in life and in career helps so much. But having both of those.

Anne: Definitely.

Annie: Like having both of those relationships where you can go, "Hey, I know you don't know anything about this job, but you know me. And so help me figure out me in this." Okay, I want to read some stats that you probably already know. Particularly our friends listening probably know the song *My Jesus*, which is beautiful.

Anne: Oh, thank you so much.

Annie: Okay, so *My Jesus* is on 49 stations on add date. Will you explain to people what that means? Because that is a huge deal but not all of our friends speak in add date.

Anne: So there's basically like 50 big stations across the country that play Christian... This is Christian radio station. And so you have KLove, which is obviously huge radio station and then you have just different radio stations.

Annie: Everybody knows KLove because I lost the Fan Award twice.

Anne: Oh, no.

Annie: I keep losing in the Fan Awards.

Anne: Oh my gosh.

Annie: It will not be your story, but it is my story.

Anne: Oh man, that's hard. That's tough.

Annie: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted. It'll be all right. It'll be all right.

Anne: Amen.

Annie: So KLove the fish.

Anne: Yeah, exactly.

Annie: You're with them.

Anne: So got these big stations that you're probably familiar with, those who are listening. So normally an artist... I don't even know what the average would be. But add day is the day that the song goes to radio. So like my song came out April 16 of 2021 and it didn't go to add date for radio until May 21. So it was out for the public for us to listen to it, stream it but not on radio stations across the country. And 49 stations out of the 50 added it on its first day, which is insane.

Annie: It's unbelievable. Yeah, it's insane.

Anne: It's really insane.

Annie: It's insane.

Anne: Normally I think the number would be around 25 or something like that.

Annie: On a good day. On a good day.

Anne: Exactly. And then over time radio stations will pick it up over the next few months and stuff like that just because they have so many songs they're playing at once and all that. It was so insane when I found out. I was like, "This has to be a joke. There's no way there can be 49 on add date. So that was amazing.

Annie: I mean has your summer just been like bananas?

Anne: It's been really crazy. Yeah. It's been really beautiful, also really hard at the same time. A lot of changes in my life. In six months I've gone from like, you know, these daily schedules and hanging out with friends on the weekend and all these different things to literally every day now I'm gone or I'm working of some sort and figuring out the balance between my life and still having time with family.

And because I'm so young it's also different because I don't have kids, don't have a family in that way, but also just like allowing myself to say no to things which is really hard for me, and spend time with my family and then also just balancing the touring aspect of it all. In six months, I had like a few shows for the summer and then all this, to having shows every weekend.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Anne: Just crazy stuff like that. But it's been such a beautiful season because I've been witnessing God just work in all these different aspects of my life. And it's truly been absolutely beautiful. It was also I think, to anything that comes like that, that big and at once, there's a lot of hard things as well that come with it. But it's been a really, really beautiful season.

[00:20:25] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about another one of our incredible partners, [Ritual](#). No matter how intentional we try to be to get balanced nutrition from what we eat, there are still some gaps sometimes, aren't there?

Well over 97% of women between the ages of 19 and 50 are not getting enough vitamin D from their food and 95% are not getting their recommended daily intake of key Omega 3s. That's not great, you guys. But here's the good news. Rituals

Essential for Women Multivitamin 18+ was formulated using exhaustive research to help fill nutrient gaps in the diets of women ages 18 and up. It's formulated with nutrients to help support brain health, bone health, blood health, and provide antioxidant support.

But Ritual didn't stop there. They invested in a gold standard University-led clinical trial to prove the impact of Essential for Women Multivitamin 18+ multivitamin, which means we have results we can rely on. Published in the leading scientific journal, *Frontiers in Nutrition*, Rituals Essential for Women Multivitamin 18+ was shown to increase vitamin D levels by 43% and Omega 3 DHA levels by 41% in just 12 weeks.

Ritual is committed to third-party testing from USP and the non-GMO project, traceable and vegan-friendly ingredients, and always clear communication. No shady stuff, which I love. I just love it when companies are this intentional about providing quality for their customers. And a published clinical study is a big deal and reveals Ritual's serious commitment to a first-of-its-kind standard in the industry.

But the bottom line is that I love taking my Ritual vitamins. They're easy on my stomach, are consistently and conveniently delivered to me. And I just really appreciate knowing I could trust the quality of the ingredients to help me with the gaps in my nutritional needs.

Right now Ritual is offering my friends 10% off your first three months. So visit ritual.com/thatsoundsfun and turn healthy habits into a ritual. See what I did there? That's 10% off at ritual.com/thatsoundsfun.

And now back to it.

[00:22:21] <music>

Annie: Of all the people you've gotten to tour with this summer, is there one or two that you're like, "Oh my gosh!" I mean they've all been awesome. I'm sure they've all been awesome. But there's ones that you are naturally more connected with or naturally already a huge fan of? Was there anybody that you're like, "How was I listening to you in February and now we're on the same bus in July?"

Anne: Yeah. Matthew West definitely. He is one of my best friends now. He's probably one of the main artists that I remember being a little girl and listening to his songs.

I've seen him in concert like 15, 20 times. I was a big fan. We played a show together in the beginning of June and we sang *My Jesus* together which was actually a really, really, really beautiful thing.

Annie: He co-wrote it with you, right?

Anne: He did, yeah. I just remember it like sitting there and I was like, "This is literally insane. I am performing right now with Matthew West, one of my favorite artists." And truly it was insane.

Annie: You're like in your body and out of your body at the same time.

Anne: Exactly.

Annie: Like, "I am here because I have to sing. But also, is everyone seeing this? Are we all seeing what's happening right now?" This is big sister question that I'm inserting myself into your life. How are you resting? How are you finding any time to rest? Are you getting that at all?

Anne: That's been hard. I'm an Enneagram t2 and I'm not sure-

Annie: Oh, yes girl. With a three wing?

Anne: With a one wing actually.

Annie: One wing. Okay.

Anne: So my three comes out when I'm in music for sure, not in my normal life.

Annie: Yeah, got it.

Anne: But when I'm performing and stuff, definitely want to achieve all that kind of stuff. But it's really hard for me to say no, because I want to please people. And that's been really difficult for me. I've had to really just pray about that and ask God to just come into those areas of my life. But it's really just been setting major boundaries for myself.

If I wake up one day and I'm just feeling that feeling of like overwhelming or sometimes I'll have really bad panic attacks, which it's been a really bad struggle for me-

Annie: For a long time or since all this kicked off?

Anne: Actually just since this kicked off-

Annie: I know, yeah.

Anne: ...I've had all this coming. But I just have had these moments where I just sit in the midst of everything and then I'll just come in and going to be like, "Hey, I think I need a little bit of a break, and I think I'm going to have to take some time." And then it's always like I'm fully refreshed and ready to go again.

Someone told me this probably like a year ago, but it was one of the best pieces of advice I've ever received. And they said, "You cannot pour yourself out on stage every night if you're not filled yourself." That's kind of been one of those things where it's like, if I can't fill myself up with Jesus and His word and worshiping Him and living my life with Him, then I can't go and give out and do that on a stage or that kind of thing.

That's been really helpful for me to know, like, if I don't have this time to myself, how am I going to give out to all these people? How am I going to love on people who've lost their siblings or their parents at these concerts? How am I going to love on these people who are walking through really hard times if I haven't been filled up myself? And so that's pretty much like, if I can see signs of that, that normally I take action and go, "Okay, I need a little bit of a break."

Annie: It's one of the reasons you're... all of ours. I'm not bossing your life. But it's one of the reasons your road rhythms matter so much is when I'm out on the road, it is like I wake up and... because our job doesn't start in the morning, all the crew guys' jobs starts in the morning, you and I's job doesn't start until the afternoon. My mornings are reading and praying and exercising. Like you just have to. Or if I can't do that in the morning, I can't do my job at night.

Anne: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: So finding those rhythms that work for you. Also, do you feel like you're seeing in new ways your own light gas tank, and what is full, and what is medium, and what is starting to go to empty?

Anne: Yeah. Actually, I've been praying about that. I'm like, "God, can you reveal to me signs of when I'm starting to struggle and going down that path." And so for me, it's like I've been able to really see like, "Okay, by how many days of not having full rest or good time with Jesus this is what happens?" And it's not a pretty sign to see. I turned in to something you don't want to see. I go to an eight as a 2 and stress. So it's pretty bad.

And then I'm able to go, Okay, well, next time when I have these moments of, you know, I'm overwhelmed, instead of letting it pile on me, I need to take it to Go, I need to take it to Him, let that go, and then start again. Thankfully, I'm able to see some of those signs. But that took a long time to get to that point of realizing, "Oh, wait, this is going to happen if I don't stop this right here."

Annie: You have to pay attention to that.

Anne: Absolutely.

Annie: You have to pay attention. I think it's honestly more important to pay attention to when my gas tank is half full than when it's empty. Because if we pay attention to what our half-full line is, then we go, "Oh, I'm already at half."

Anne: Absolutely.

Annie: In my life, my gas tank drains from half to zero significantly faster than full to half.

Anne: Yes, absolutely.

Annie: Right. Anne, I think it's really kind of you and generous of you and honest of you to say that when you're labeled kind of the shooting star right now of Christian music, you're also having panic attacks. You're also overwhelmed by the emotional weight of what this career is giving you.

Anne: Absolutely. Yeah.

Annie: And my guess is based on your content, because this whole thing started at the loss of your brother, the majority of people who are talking to you at VIP lines are telling you heavy stories.

Anne: Yes, absolutely. And that can be hard too. That's where if I'm not filled before those shows, that's when things happen for me. So hearing those stories is hard. But it's

also really beautiful because I'm like, "Wait, God used my story of losing my brother and then turned it into *My Jesus*, the song, and then now is using *My Jesus* to impact these people who are walking through loss."

Those are really encouraging stories for me to hear. But like I said, they're also sometimes hard because it's like, you're reliving a little bit of that pain that I walked through with my brother and-

Annie: Yes, every single time.

Anne: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: Every single time.

Anne: But it's definitely a bittersweet thing for me.

Annie: It's so generous when people share their stories with us.

Anne: It really is.

Annie: And also at the end of the show or the end of the VIP you have to go, "Okay, Jesus, I hand you back all those people. You have big things going on." Or when you get on the... I keep saying "you." This may not be you. When I get on the bus and I'm trying to go to sleep, if I haven't handed all those people back to Jesus, that is what I can't get out of my head when I need to be asleep. Right?

Anne: Absolutely.

Annie: It is a heavy thing to carry.

Anne: Truly is.

Annie: Okay. I know *My Jesus* is about your brother. But do you know that one that I love is *No Place Like Home*. That was awesome. Will you talk about writing *No Place Like Home*?

Anne: Yeah. That one's actually about my brother and our memories at our farm together. My granddad owns a farm in Kentucky and is my heaven. And me and my brother spent pretty much the majority of our memories together at the farm just growing

up as a little girl. And then the last two years before he passed away, we were there all the time. And so it's definitely a really good-

Annie: And what was y'all's age difference, Anne? He passed away at 23?

Anne: He was eight years older. He was 23 and he was eight years older. So he would be 28 right now. So he was driving when I was eight years old and something like that. So he was always able to take us on road trips and all that kind of stuff. So that song was actually written the same day as *My Jesus*.

Annie: Oh my gosh. Y'all wrote them both on the same day with Jeff and Matthew?

Anne: Them both. And Matthew West. We finished the song up at like 4 pm. And normally that's when writers go home for the day.

Annie: Yes. That's when everybody goes home for the day.

Anne: I know. And Matthew was like, "Hey, I have this melody I can't get out of my head." And I was like, "Well, just sing it. We can work on another day or something." And he played the melody. And then we started talking about Jacob, and all three of us were just weeping and weeping.

And I started telling Matthew and Jeff about my memories with Jacob. And they just wanted to know, they just wanted to hear about him. They wanted to know about Jacob. And we just ended up writing the song in 45 minutes.

Annie: Oh, gosh.

Anne: And we were finished. We did a little work tape on our phone. We couldn't even really say anything at the end of the day. We were undone by the song. We had cried so much at that point that we were like, "We know that this song is a gift from God." And God just gave us this like a gift.

But yeah, that day was crazy. Because we had just written *My Jesus*, didn't know that would have been the single at that time. And then wrote *No Place Like Home* afterwards. That's truly one of my favorite songs. And it really just captures the heart also of just home here on earth being special, but also like home in heaven being our final home.

But I think it's easy sometimes in my life to think like, "Oh, well, this lifetime doesn't matter" in the sense of like, you know, because we have our eternal home. But someone told me a few weeks ago—it was just really powerful to me—is like, This part of our life right now on earth is actually really powerful part of our story. And these years on earth, even though they're hard and they're filled with sin in the world and the devastation of things, they're also filled with beautiful moments of you've grown closer to Jesus, you're telling people about the Lord. Like you having a family, you having these beautiful moments.

And so kind of just that song captures like home being a really beautiful place that holds a lot of beautiful memories, but also our heavenly home is our final home. And that's where we know that there's no more pain and no more suffering and no more tears. So *No Place Like Home* really captures both elements of that.

Annie: I mean, the understanding of that had to change so drastically when you lost Jacob?

Anne: Absolutely. I remember losing Jacob and then a few weeks later, my mom was gifted all of these heaven books. I remember we would read them all night long.

Annie: Was it helpful?

Anne: It was very helpful. We just wanted to know, like, Where is Jacob? Like, we want to know. He's not here, he's in heaven. So we want to know all about heaven. We want to know everything that the Bible can tell us about heaven. And so we would read these books and just cling to every ounce of hope.

But definitely was one of the things like losing a loved one really does shift your perspective. It just reminds you that this lifetime is very short, and our final home is heaven. And we need to be spending every day on this earth telling people about Jesus and growing closer to Him and taking as many people with us to heaven as we can because that's our final home. And so heaven was like a huge comfort for our family after losing Jacob.

Annie: Gosh, I imagine. And then, I mean, just to see this whole thing turn that God used you singing at Jacobs funeral to now four years later. Is that right?

Anne: Yeah.

[00:34:31] <music>

Sponsor: Hey, friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Prose](#). You've heard me say before, but Prose is the most personalized hair care. Y'all ask me a lot about my hair. And the truth is its Prose. They take natural ingredients and combine them in innovative ways, giving you clean haircare and impeccable results.

Prose formulas offer new answers to individual hair needs, not the same old math solutions. My personalized Prose shampoo and conditioner have worked wonders for my hair. It's what makes us so shiny and smooth. And they smell so good and deliver the exact results I was looking for, making my hair shiny, full, and strong.

The way Prose comes up with a formula that's right for you is through a brief online quiz you take. Which you know I love a quiz. It's super simple to fill out, answering questions about the climate where you live, like here for me it was in Nashville, and my eating habits and what hair concerns I was dealing with. By analyzing over 85 personal factors, Prose determined a unique blend of ingredients to treat my exact concerns. And they'll do the same for you.

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And now back to finish our conversation with Anne.

[00:36:38] <music>

Annie: So what is it like when you're on stage singing *My Jesus*? Does it still feel like it's about Jacob or has it become something else now on stage, now that you've sung it a gazillion times probably?

Anne: That's a really great question. A lot of it feels like it's for Jacob, in the sense of like all of this story has come from losing him. And so whenever I'm on stage, it's definitely like, okay, I'm looking out into the crowd and I'm seeing everyone's singing every word to *My Jesus* and tears streaming down, and hand in the air praising God. And I'm like, "That won't have happened if it wasn't for this." As hard as it is to say, but this is all come out of losing Jacob and the story that God's written.

But it's also turned into something where it's like this is a ministry now that I never dreamed of having or being a part of. I'm also preaching the gospel every night. And so it's kind of like this thing of it's all for Jesus, obviously and His glory, but a lot of it is that memory of Jacob within my heart, for sure.

Annie: So when you look to the fall and you look to the rest of this year, are you going back out on tour?

Anne: I am. I actually just got back yesterday from my first run with Big Daddy Weave.

Annie: Oh my gosh, that's so fun. I love Mike so much.

Anne: Oh my goodness.

Annie: Oh my gosh they're the best.

Anne: On my very first bus tour... I've been on a couple of things but that was on my first real run of being on tour.

Annie: Are you on a bus with all of them?

Anne: I am, yeah. It's amazing. I'm the only girl.

Annie: Okay. I was going to say it's you and a bunch of you dudes. All guys.

Anne: It's amazing.

Annie: Oh my gosh, Anne. That is so fun.

Anne: Even in just five, six days that we were out together, we've already become close friends. I've actually just been blown away by Big Daddy Weave's... their ministry and the way that they minister to people through the Lord is insane.

Annie: Yeah, they are not playing out there. They really care about the ministry. I love it.

Anne: It's amazing. So that's been a really cool experience. Then I'm going out with-

Annie: How many weekends do y'all have?

Anne: We have three weekends left. And it's like five, six days at a time.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Anne: So we still got a little left. And then I go out with Zach Williams. I'm opening for him for his Christmas tour.

Annie: With Kane?

Anne: Yes. Actually, no. That one's with We the Kingdom this fall.

Annie: Oh, yeah, sorry. That's right. That's right. That's right.

Anne: And that one, I'm like, "I wish I could go see that because I know that's an insane show." We the Kingdom and Zach Williams. That's insane.

Annie: Okay, so Christmas is you, Zach Williams, and...? Anybody else? No?

Anne: Blake Neesmith as a... I think he speaks a little on the tour. But just the two of us as far as the music side of it.

Annie: I love Zach Williams so much. He's one of my favorite artists.

Anne: Yeah. he's amazing.

Annie: I love his music. He's so funny.

Anne: He is.

- Annie:** I love that. That is so fun you get to be out with all of them.
- Anne:** I know. I'm so excited. It's going to be so fun. Next year we have tons of other tours coming up which I'm really grateful for. But for the rest of this year it's just going to be so fun. I'm so looking forward to all that God's going to do through these shows.
- Annie:** Who do you get to take with you? Who goes on the road with you?
- Anne:** I have my full band actually. Some really great, great guys, and my mum.
- Annie:** Wait, so your band and Big Daddy Weave and all their crew are on one bus?
- Anne:** So this tour for Big Daddy Weave is just my guitar player actually.
- Annie:** Got it.
- Anne:** But my next tour with Zach will be my full band.
- Annie:** Oh my gosh.
- Anne:** I know.
- Annie:** How many are they? They need to spread y'all out.
- Anne:** I know.
- Annie:** Okay, so when everybody sees you at Christmas with Zach, you'll have a full band with you then?
- Anne:** Full band, yeah.
- Annie:** Wow. How did you find your band?
- Anne:** God did all that for me.
- Annie:** I believe it.
- Anne:** I met my guitar player through Matt Podesta. I don't know if you've ever heard of him.

Annie: Yeah.

Anne: He's been in the industry for a while now, currently plays for [unintelligible 00:41:00]. But we met each other through my booking agency, actually. And then he introduced me to the rest of my band, which is a really beautiful thing. And my other guitar player, he's on the Big Daddy Weave tour right now. We actually met through my manager. And a lot of really cool things.

But they've all just immediately turned into my big brothers. And it's been such a cool... We have such a sweet relationship of just like, you know, picking on each other all the time. It's really fun being on the road with godly guys like that, who are focused on Jesus, but they're also just really good people and have really good hearts.

And I think that's a really important part of being on the road is like you're literally technically living with these people on this bus. You're with them every day. You wake up in the morning, and they're the first people you see. And you go to bed at night and it's like... So it's really important to surround yourself with people who are godly like that, who are going to lead you and guide you in really hard times of being on the road and stuff like that. And so they're just like, the most incredible band I could ever ask for, for guys.

Annie: Tell me what you know about God today that you didn't know in like, January?

Anne: That's actually really, really great question. I would say that I think I've learned since January this year, specifically, that God... I felt like growing up as a kid that God was... like it was hard to hear his voice. And sometimes it would be hard to... I would hear Him sometimes audibly. Like when I lost my brother, I heard Him all the time. And then there would be seasons I'm not hearing-

Annie: Audibly? Like in your ears out loud?

Anne: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Annie: Oh, my gosh, Anne.

Anne: I mean, like when my brother passed away, and I was sharing this earlier, but when I said, "Jesus, I trust you," I didn't mention this part, but what he said before that

was, "Anne, are you going to trust me? Or are you not?" Like right before that moment. And then that's when I turned around and I said, "Jesus, I trust you."

Anyway, I think I've learned that God sometimes will speak really quietly, and sometimes really loudly. And then sometimes it's like you have to kind of search a little, or you just have to be still. And I've had some moments of like I'll be in the car and I will be weeping or just talking to God or praying and being like, "God, what's the answer to this?" Where do I go in this part of my life, with decisions in my life? And then literally, I'll have this thing and it'll be like, "Turn on the radio." And I'll turn on the radio, and it will be *My Jesus* playing.

It's always a confirmation to me through these prayers of like, God is still working through that song. God is still working through my life, God is still working through the story. And so that's been really cool to see, like in these moments of not having answers from God, or having to just be so impatient, which is really hard for me to do, I know that I'll turn on the radio and God will reveal something or He'll reveal something through another song on the radio and then I'm like, "Okay, God is still working." I might not have answers to this ever until I get to heaven, but I know within my heart that He's still working through these moments and He's still showing Himself faithful.

I would say that that's been a really big learning curve for me since January this year of learning that you just sometimes have to be really still impatient. It's been hard for me to remember that God's still faithful during those times, which shouldn't be because I've seen His faithfulness all the time in my life.

Annie: Through the journey of being a person is seeing God be faithful and remember that He's faithful. That is the actual whole thing.

Anne: Absolutely.

Annie: That's the whole thing. That is seeing Him do it and then so quickly, forgetting that He did it and that He will do it again.

Anne: Absolutely.

Annie: I wish I could tell you 20 years down the road it gets easier. It just doesn't. It just is. You have more stories, but you also have more everything, right?

Anne: Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

Annie: So it just keeps being true that that is the journey of being a person. Okay, we have a couple of questions that are... we tell people in our AFD Weekend Review emails that I send on Fridays who I'm interviewing the next week. And so people have some questions for you. I'm going to ask you some of those.

Anne: Oh, that's awesome. I love that.

Annie: I know. I love it too. It's very fun. One of the questions is, how do you recommend getting into songwriting but the music as well as the words? I thought that was really interesting. How do you do that?

Anne: That's a good question.

Annie: I know.

Anne: I think it just starts with you just starting to write and starting to do things. I remember I used to try to write... Right after my brother passed away and I started getting into music, I tried to write by myself. And it was always like I forced these melodies. I'll be like, "Okay, let me come up with a melody or let me come up with a song title or lyric."

Annie: Yeah, yeah.

Anne: And eventually I realized that you kind of just have to let God speak to you in terms of songwriting. Because music was created by God, and music is such a beautiful and powerful thing. So sometimes I'll just give it to God, and I'll just be like, "God, show me a melody that's on your heart that you want me to sing."

Annie: Oh, wow. Oh, that's awesome.

Anne: "Show me a lyric or a title that you want me to write about so that I can send this out to the world and this can help your children."

Annie: Oh, that's great.

Anne: I think that that's really where to start. It's not even about trying to force things and trying to do that. I think it's just about pulling out an instrument, you know, guitar, piano, whatever, opening your Bible, and just letting him speak to you through

music, and letting Him just tell you what He wants you to write about or what melodies He wants you to write.

Because sometimes that's a lot of pressure is like, Okay, how do you come up with this and that? And in our earthly minds, it's really hard to do that sometimes.

Annie: Right.

Anne: But just letting God just do that is a really cool thing. And that's exactly what He's done with *My Jesus* and *No Place Like Home* and all the songs that have been released is like God is the one who wrote those songs and gifted the lyrics and the melodies to us writers to then put into a song and then put out to the world.

Annie: One of our other friends asked, "What is your favorite instrument to play? And what do you wish that you had started learning when you were younger to play?" How many things do you play now?

Anne: I play the piano and guitar pretty much full-time. And then I used to play the cello.

Annie: Yes, girl.

Anne: I wish that I could still... if I had time I would definitely still take cello lessons today. I only took it for two and a half years. But I remember just having this deep connection with the cello. And I love the sound of it. And I loved getting to play it. And then basically everything happened with my brother and things changed in life. But if I had time on my hands, I would 100% play the cello again.

Annie: I mean, bring it back. The guy is in for king play. Right? One of them plays it.

Anne: I know. What a cool thing.

Annie: See, it's all for you. You could do it. I'm trying to think of everything else I want to know. I just want to know a lot more things. Can you just come back sometime?

Anne: Yes, absolutely.

Annie: And we're neighbors. You should come in here. One day when you have time, just come to the studio.

Anne: I would love that.

Annie: It'll be way more fun.

Anne: Absolutely.

Annie: I want to tell you how much I appreciate you using your voice and your pain to make music for us.

Anne: Oh, thank you.

Annie: That really matters. And also I hope you're still doing it in 20 years. And I hope you keep knowing how to rest and how to draw boundaries and how to take care of yourself in this so that your tank doesn't empty.

Anne: Thank you so much.

Annie: That is my real hope. Is there anything we didn't talk about that you want to make sure we say?

Anne: I don't think so. No, that was awesome. Because it was like you didn't ask me the same questions and everything was-

Annie: Goal is achieved.

Anne: That was actually really a different interview thing or podcast that I've ever done.

Annie: Yes. Great. Just because I want to be your real friend. It's because we share real people-

Anne: I know.

Annie: ...and I'm like, "Anne, I'm right here. What do you need?" Okay, the last question we always ask, because the show is called *That Sounds Fun*, I'm dying to know this answer, *What Sounds Fun to You?* What do you do for fun?

Anne: I love that question. I listen to your podcast all the time. So I'm always waiting for that question.

Annie: You're like, "I will do this. I know this answer. "

Anne: Yes. I love that. So what sounds fun to me especially in this season is going to my granddad's farm in Kentucky and spending time outside. We have a side by side, which is just basically utility vehicle. And we take it all up down the big hills at the farm.

I just love being outside. I love being in God's creation, especially at the farm. And just exploring, going hiking. Like anything to do with outside and just listening to the sounds of nature is always a really important thing for me, especially at the farm. The farm is where my heart is. I'm just like, "It's too much to handle." It's a beautiful place. So that's definitely my fun if I need a break or if I just want to go have fun is I definitely go to the farm, so...

Annie: That's why Franklin is a good fit for you.

Anne: Yes, it totally is. It's so much-

Annie: Because you just got to Leiper's Fork and be like minute away.

Anne: Exactly.

Annie: Yes. Anytime you want to go to Leiper's Fork, you just call me and we will get-

Anne: Oh my goodness, I would love that.

Annie: Girl, I love that place so much.

Anne: Leiper's Fork is the cutest town I've ever been to.

Annie: I love it. And you know Justin Timberlake owns a house there. That's why he owns a house there.

Anne: Are you serious?

Annie: Yes, girl.

Anne: I didn't know that. You need to look for him.

Anne: Wow.

Annie: Look for him and Jessica Biel. They gotta be somewhere. They gotta be somewhere. Maybe it's for taxes. Maybe it's because it's the greatest place in the world. I don't know. Does your grandfather's farm have horses?

Anne: Actually, we just transitioned out of the animal season of things. But we did. We had 12 horses.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Anne: My uncle and my cousin had them. We had tons of cows and piglets and all sorts of animals. So it was very sweet.

Annie: When do you get to go home again?

Anne: I think like Halloween I'll be home so I'm really excited.

Annie: Every other weekend we can find you and every other city.

Anne: Yes, exactly.

Annie: I cannot wait to keep being friends and keep watching what God does with your story-

Anne: Aw, thank you so much.

Annie: ...and come to a show and all the things. So thanks for making time to do this today, Anne.

Anne: Thank you so much for having me. It's such an honor to be here truly.

Annie: Anytime.

[00:51:38] <music>

Outro: Oh, y'all, don't you love her? Don't you love her? Okay, be sure to check out her new album, *My Jesus (Live In Nashville)*, and make sure you're following her on Instagram, all the places, tell her thanks for being on the show.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. It's true. I just am Annie F. Downs on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#). All the places you

may need me, that is how you can find me. And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same.

And today what sounds fun to me, y'all know I say this every time an author is on the show, is that the night before a book comes out is the night that you celebrate. So what sounds fun to me is celebrate with my people tonight that *What Sounds Fun to You?* releases into the world tomorrow. I just can't believe it. I can't believe it. So that's what sounds fun to me.

Have a great couple of days. And we'll see you back here on Wednesday you guys with a very special episode of the podcast celebrating the release of the kids' book, *What Sounds Fun to You?* Remember today is very last day to get it on those pre-order bonuses at whatsoundsfuntoyou.com. But we'll see you back here on Wednesday with about 10 guests on the podcast. Get ready, you guys. MiniBFF Galore. We'll see y'all on Wednesday.