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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. We have got a great show in store. Y'all buckle up. This is such a good show.

But before we dive into today's conversation, I want to take a moment to share about one of our incredible partners, [Awana's Talk About](#) resource. What are your kids or the MiniBFFs in your life up to this summer? Are they headed to the pool, to summer camp, to grandma and grandpa's house? No matter where the adventure takes y'all, Talk About, the new family discipleship subscription from Awana was designed to go with you. This is so cool, y'all.

We've talked about time and God's Word with your family is simple and fun and engaging and always gospel-centered. It's the everyday moments of life that can become moments that make an eternal difference. These are the moments Talk About was created for.

So for just \$5.99 per month, you'll receive an email each week containing your talk about bundle. And here is what it includes. So first, it's guided conversations through selected scripture passages that allow families to engage in the Bible and answer big questions with the truth of God's Word. There are fun hands-on activities that take the guesswork out of child discipleship.

As kids color and create and sing and share, they remember what they've learned throughout the week. There are also helpful resources and videos and insights that provide parents and caregivers with deeper levels of biblical knowledge to help deepen your family's understanding of God's word each week. So bring the gospel home and help your kids form lasting faith, one conversation at a time with Talk About.

Try one month of Talk About for free with a special promo code TSF. Like That sounds fun. So start today at talkaboutdiscipleship.com.

Intro: Talk About discipleship. Listen, today on the show, I get to talk with my friend John Eldredge. Y'all know and love him. He's a New York Times bestselling author, a counselor, the president of Wild at Heart, a ministry devoted to helping people discover the heart of God and recover their own hearts too.

He's been here a couple of times before: [Episode 210](#), [Episode 281](#). And if you were at one of the That Sounds Fun tour stops last fall or this spring, you heard me share a little sneak peek into what his new book is all about. It's called *Resilient: Restoring Your Weary Soul in These Turbulent Times*.

It's seriously like a survival guide about resilience that's deeply grounded in God and how we can restore the depleted reserves of our souls. It's an awesome book, y'all. I am so grateful we get to have John on today as our guide. And that new book that we get to read, y'all are going to love it.

So here's my conversation with John Eldredge.

[00:02:48] <music>

Annie: John, thank you for joining us here again on That Sounds Fun.

John: Oh, I'm delighted to be with you, my friend.

Annie: It is such a treat. I need you at some point to say "gang." Gang, I need you to hear me because that's what you tell us all the time on your podcast. I'm always like, gang. Okay, I'm listening.

John: Gang. Okay. All right, gang.

Annie: Y'all been podcasting... Like right now you're rerunning a series from 2016. You've been podcasting a really long time.

John: Oh, yeah, way back. Golly, yeah.

Annie: How do you see this medium affecting people's lives in different ways that maybe books or live events?

John: This is where people go now. Right? I mean, especially because of the pandemic, we needed to get connected. Couldn't go to live events. Could even go to church. So people turn to podcasts, and audiobooks, and ways of nurturing and getting good content. So it's funny, because when we started, Annie, one of my guys came in and said, "We need to do this thing called podcasting." And I'm like, "Nah."

Annie: Yeah. "To what end?"

John: "That sounds dumb. I don't want to do it." But now it's our richest way of talking to our friends.

Annie: How do you lay out? Because I think of your podcast, the *Wild at Heart Podcast*. I think of it like sermon series. I mean, you really do disciple us every week. Will you talk a little bit about how you lay that out? How do you plan for the series?

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John: You are so good at this. You are so good at your show. Really. You have one of the best shows anywhere.

Annie: Aw, thank you.

John: And a lot of that has to do with you and your great heart. But your questions, Annie, I'm busted, we don't plan.

Annie: Oh my gosh, of course not. You make one of the best shows that you don't play on. Y'all just go, "Hey, next week we need to talk about this."

John: Yeah, we ask God.

Annie: Brilliant.

John: We're like, "Jesus where are people at? What do they need? Where are they at? What do they need?" And then of course there's things on our hearts. I told my wife Stasi, I said, "Look, if anybody writes my biography, call it God's Weathervane," because I feel like I pick stuff up first. Like He shows me things. I feel things. Like I can feel the human condition and then I write about it, talk about it, try and bring solace to it. Or most of it is like, "This is what's working for us, everybody. Here's what's helping us. We think it might help you."

Annie: I mean, talk about the week that y'all recorded your staff meeting and released that as the podcast.

John: Right. Because I wanted people to hear. Every Tuesday we gather for prayer. And I know, sure, every ministry does that churches do that kind of thing. But sometimes it's really rich. And I wanted, I wanted our listeners to hear that, to hear other voices, people that are not used to maybe listening, here's the gal that does correspondents for us, and here's our tech guy.

But talking about... Because we had been, you know, we're all clobbered from two years of global trauma. And now we're in the cascade of that, right? Because we're back to normal life but we're not back to normal personally. So we've taken soul care really seriously with our team and really been intentional of times of rich prayer, healing prayer, being with Jesus, letting the Holy Spirit minister to us in the different ways he wants to do with our staff. And I'm like, "We actually have to air this. I want people to hear this." And it worked.

Annie: Oh, it was incredible. I think I've listened to it twice just hearing from a leadership perspective of hearing someone else run a company, and also from what is God saying to the staff at Wild at Heart ministry. I was like, "Oh, this is very cool." So

you don't plan, you just ask the Lord. And how do you gather up who on your staff is going to be in the conversation?

John: Well, most of the time it's me or Stasi, me and Allen who's our producer and kind of the co-host. And then Morgan, who is really one of our big disciple guys here. We only pull in the staff occasionally.

Annie: It's an excellent show. One of the things you've talked about that I've mentioned on here, and we had some feedback about it, so I would love for you to talk about it some more, is at one of the shows... We'll link to it so people can find it. But you talked about healing your relationship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and they kind of directly correlate with relationships in your life already with your father, your mother, and your siblings.

Annie: Yes.

Annie: Can you talk about that for a minute? Because that set me on a journey, John. John, an actual journey.

John: Oh, good, I'm glad. So we love a Triune God, right? And He expresses himself: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. And they have very unique personalities. Even in the scriptures you kind of hear there's almost a different tone of voice or a different approach that you get from the Holy Spirit than you get from Jesus than you get from the Father. But of course, God is one, I believe. I believe in God is one.

But what I realized many years ago, Annie, was that while I could relate to Jesus because I came to faith through Jesus, it was the 70s, it was the Jesus movement. You know, we were street people. We were part of the whole hippie conversion thing that went on. I didn't really relate to the father at all. And that was because I grew up in an alcoholic home, I had a really painful relationship with my father.

And I realized, wow, I don't like it. When other people in the room start saying things like, "Abba, Father, I love you." Like I'm like, "Whoa, John, you've got some problems here. You don't even like that kind of prayer." So that set me on a journey of saying, "I need to know you better, Father, and I need you to reframe Father for me."

Now, for some people, it's just the opposite. You know, they have got a great relationship with the Father but they're not quite sure what to do with Jesus. Maybe Jesus got messed up for them, you know, because of Sunday school or some weird person and then Holy Spirit. But it was someone else's insight, and I wish I could give them credit now. That the obvious one is we relate to God our Father like we do our earthly fathers. That Father shapes father.

But the interesting insight was that Jesus is shaped by our siblings, how we feel about our sibling relationships is often how we feel towards Jesus because He's our brother. And then the mind-blower is the Holy Spirit, right, is often affected deeply by how we do or don't relate to our moms. And I had a completely unattached mother. She left to work when I was about five years old and she retired when she was 85.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

John: Yeah. So I have no mother attachment. And I knew that's a problem. That's a problem.

Annie: That's a problem.

John: So I was not comfortable with the Holy Spirit for many years. And again, you know, it's because of the wacky. You know, people doing dumb stuff in the name of Jesus or the Holy Spirit. But over time as you can open your heart, there's just a richness to your life with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says, "I will not leave you as orphans, I will send the Spirit to you, and He will lead you into all truth." So even just to be able to pray in your day, "Holy Spirit, I'm making decisions right now. Would you lead me into truth? Holy Spirit, I'm navigating something in this relationship? Would you lead me into truth?" Let the Trinity be the Trinity with you.

Annie: Yeah. The thing I did after I listened to that episode, I've sat down and listed out in each of those relationships, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, some things that went really well for me in my natural relationships and some places and I'm like, "Oh, I..." I've written about this, and my sister lets me talk about this. But my sister got saved a lot later in life. So there's a lot of older brother, younger brother prodigal son stuff between us. And I was like, "Oh, I get annoyed with Jesus when he's nice to the bad guy. I know why? Because of my siblings." Right?

John: Yes.

Annie: So I've really gotten to work through, oh, sometimes I prickle into the Holy Spirit because I feel bossed around, because my mother was my mother, right? She mothered me. And so sometimes I get prickly about it with the Holy Spirit. So that teaching really helped me to appreciate and heal in all three relationships. So I was-

John: That's beautiful.

Annie: ...really thoughtful about that. So John, I'm thinking this whole month... This funny thing happened. We scheduled all the shows for the month and we finished and looked back and it's all dads. It's all dads the whole month of June. And we're like, Oh, my gosh, God is doing something." So we're hoping he's feeling something and doing something in our friends lives that are listening.

But even with your new book, *Resilient*, that comes out tomorrow, you talk about family devastation and really desolation is a word you use a lot. So will you talk to our friends who are in a hard place with their earthly father, with their earthly husband, with the Heavenly Father that makes a month of thinking about dads feel more painful than joyful?

John: Yeah. This is really good, Annie. We hadn't talked about this show. We hadn't planned on going this direction. So go to your place of love in your heart and identify how are you feeling about love these days, gang? How are you feeling about love? Because if you want to find your heart, find your longing for love. It's like the shortcut to it. You're like, boom, there you are. There's your heart. So how do you feel about father love? How do you feel about just male love? Just masculine love in any category? How do you feel towards that?

And our first step is always name it and invite Jesus into it. Because the soul is healed through the presence of Jesus in memories, relationships, emotions. He wants access to our emotional life. So loving Jesus come into my feelings towards masculine love. And it may feel like poverty, it may feel like famine. I need masculine love.

Or you might not be open to it. You're like, "No, thanks. Not interested in that. Stay away." You go, Okay. Okay, loving God, loving God. Merciful God, come into my emotions around love and particularly this month around father love, masculine love, man, the men in my life. I need healing here.

Annie: I would love for you to speak for one second as well. I'm putting you on the spot here a little bit. But as a single woman, Father's Day is actually a little bit harder for me than Mother's Day because I watch my female friends celebrate these men who are raising kids with them. So will you talk for a minute to our single women about it? A lot of people talk to us about how to celebrate Mother's Day. Like, "Look at the lives you're pouring into and blah, blah, blah." But how do we handle Father's Day for the men and the women that aren't married yet?

John: I have no idea.

Annie: I know. I don't either.

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John: But I need to ask you. Annie, you face it every year, how do you do it? How do you navigate that?

Annie: I mean, it's very similar to what you're saying I think, is every year I just tell myself the truth. I bet this does hurt. I bet it does. And that's about as far as I get. I don't try to solve it.

John: Is that okay?

Annie: It's really important not to fix things but rather to just invite the presence of God and just invite the presence of God. He knows what we need way beyond what we know.

John: Two nights ago I was asking Jesus, "I really feel very heavy laden right now." And he said, "You need to let your kids go." So we have adult children and so they have adult-sized problems. Right? The Lego days are long over. They have adult-size crises. They have adult size heartaches.

And I realized I was carrying their lives, worrying about them, feeling like I need to rescue them. And Jesus says, "John, you need to let that go. You need to let that go." And so just learning to lay that down so that Christ can come in and do His loving work in our souls, I think that's a big piece of it.

[00:16:15] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our incredible partners, [KiwiCo](#). Some of my best memories from when I was a kid or have summer adventures on the lake. Summertime could turn into a lifelong love of learning, especially when the whole family shares the joy and excitement of discovery.

KiwiCo delivers monthly crates of science and art projects for kids of all ages. And kids at heart. And they include everything you need to complete each project. So you can bring it wherever summer it takes you. Each crate is a seriously fun exploration of science and technology, engineering, math or art, through hands-on activities like creating giant bubbles and experimenting with ice cream. I'm interested.

So one of my MiniBFFs, she's nine, she got her doodle crate in the mail and she was so excited because it was an ice dye kit. It came with a bucket hat and a pair of socks to dye, and the bin it was packed in doubled as the container for doing the dyeing. That's brilliant. KiwiCo thinks of everything. It was sciency and creative. And she was so proud to get to wear the finished products.

You can cultivate your child's natural creativity and curiosity with new hands-on projects every month. They'll explore new worlds and rediscover familiar runs without ever even leaving home. Things like discovering the science of magic to engineering and domino machine and pretty much anything you can think of.

Packs summer full of memorable discoveries with KiwiCo. Get 50%, WowWee, 50% off your first month plus free shipping on any crate line with the code that sounds fun at [Kiwico.com](https://www.kiwico.com). That's 50% off your first month. It's [Kiwico.com](https://www.kiwico.com), promo code THATSOUNDSFUN.

Sponsor: And I've got one more amazing partner to tell you about, [Catalina Crunch](https://www.catalinacrunch.com). If you're like me and enjoy a fast and easy meal that doesn't involve cooking, then a bowl of cereal is the perfect solution, right? Only I got to watch out for sugary cardboard cereals because I want to be well-fueled for the day. I bet you get that. So good thing my friend Brian introduced me to Catalina Crunch cereal.

Catalina Crunch cereal has got all the good crunch without the added sugar. Since its low carb and high protein and zero sugar, it helps you feel fuller longer. It's made with clean ingredients. Y'all, literally there's nothing artificial in Catalina Crunch cereal.

Taste for yourself why over 10,000 customers rate Catalina Crunch five stars including everyone here at Downs Books and at That Sounds Fun Network offices. They've got eight amazing flavors to choose from: Cinnamon Toast dark chocolate, chocolate peanut butter, interested, chocolate banana, yes, please, honey grams, fruity, maple waffle, okay, mint chocolate, yes.

Every flavor is delicious on its own, but try mixing them together for some truly mouthwatering combos, like cinnamon toast and chocolate peanut butter or honey gram and fruity. That variety pack is our friend. So you can try all the combinations. The only caveat is that you can't blame me if you fall in love with all of them. The maple waffle is next on my to-try list.

Just go to catalinacrunch.com/thatoundsfun for 15% off your first order, plus free shipping. That's catalinacrunch.com/thatoundsfun. If you're not sure which flavor to start with, try that variety pack. And check out their delicious cookies and snack mixes while you're at it. Again, that's catalinacrunch.com/thatoundsfun for 15% off your first order plus free shipping.

And we try to make these links really easy for you to remember but they're also always in our show notes below and we'll even deliver them right to your inbox on

Friday if you sign up for the AFD Week in Review email. That link is in the show notes too.

So now back to our conversation with John Eldredge.

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Annie: Why *Resilient*? Why is that the next book? Why is that the topic of the conversation for you right now on the podcast? I mean, why is that what we need after the last two years?

John: Human beings have a phenomenal capacity for denial? Honestly-

Annie: Present company included.

John: Oh, okay. I have permission to tell the story. Stasi's father was dying of colon cancer. And it was so far advanced that doctor said to him, "You need to change your diet, and you need to stop eating Twinkies and Ho Hos." And he said, "No, I don't want to do that." Now, there's a lot more to the story. But the human capacity to just say, "No, I don't want to hear that. I don't want to hear that information. I don't want to change. I don't want to change my life. I don't want to..."

Okay, so why *Resilient*? Because now we're in the cascade effects of the last two years. So after you get out of a car accident, you know, it's months later that your body reacts, and you realize, whoa, "I need to go to a chiropractor. My neck is killing me." You know, it's weeks later, months later.

So we all rallied for the pandemic and way to go, everybody, you know, good job, you rally. But when you rally for something, even if it's good thing, you rally for the birth of a child, you rally for grad school, you rally for a new job, in order to rally you tap into your reserves.

But at some point, we've got to replenish those reserves, folks. And if I can name some of the symptoms. I'm curious if your audience will recognize this. How about the short-term memory loss, everyone? You pick up your phone, you don't remember who you were going to call or text. You open email, you can't remember why. You go to the store going, "Oh, I've gotta go get that thing." And you go there and you don't remember what that thing was that you went to the store? Okay.

Why are we all going to bed so early? Why is everybody wanting to go to sleep like 8 p.m.? Okay, what's the exhaustion at the end of your day? And then I got nothing left for irritating people.

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Annie: Yeah, nothing.

John: I got nothing. I used to have a little something, I used to have a little bit of buffer and you're like, "I can let that go. I can overlook that." But nowadays, nothing. And that's because our reserves are all depleted. And we're back to normal life but we're not back to normal in terms of our own humanity.

So *Resilient, Get Your Life Back* is a conversation you and I had a couple years ago about just the rhythms that build into a healthy life and beauty and pauses and allowing for transition and that kind of thing.

Annie: Who could have known how prophetic that was, John?

John: That book came out one month before the pandemic. I know.

Annie: Yes! Wild-

John: That was just Jesus and His kindness.

Annie: ...to all of us.

John: Yeah, yeah, totally. Well, resilient is like part two. *Get Your Life Back* kind of tapped into maybe some of the natural world for the care of the soul. This taps more into the kingdom of God and His presence in our lives and cultivating Eden within our own hearts. So I am offering this now because I need it and everyone I know needs it.

Annie: In the book where you talk about when we get frustrated that we see these pictures, and like when we start to feel that desire come up, in essence, it actually makes us angry, that that is when we're supposed to like, "God's trying to do something in us." You said over and over in the book God has provisioned for us.

John: Yes, yes, He does. You were born in Eden. You were created for Eden, everyone. You have an Eden heart. And our destiny is Eden. Eden is coming back. Jesus is bringing Eden back. He restores the heavens on the earth. In the meantime, your famished heart needs that kind of lush, provision, care, life, just life in us.

And it can come to us through a number of sources, but it primarily comes to us through the presence of God working in our humanity. So *Resilient* is like a series of practices and prayers that help people enter into, I need more than that. I need...

Like, for example, in John 7, Jesus says, "For you who believe in me, rivers of living water will flow from your heart from your inmost being." And I'm like, "What? Rivers? Man, I'll take a trickle."

Annie: Right. Right.

John: "I'll go for a half a glass of water right now." So I just began to ask for it. I said, "Jesus, I don't experience that right now but I would love to." I'm asking that the river of life I would flow more freely in my heart. And then I asked Him, "What's in the way." And he said, "Fear." For me, it was fear. I'm like, "Holy cow, I do have a lot of fear around letting you in in new ways," right?

We were talking about the Trinity. Some people fear the Holy Spirit. Some people fear the Father. They're not sure what will happen if we give Him more access in our life. And I'm like, "I want that. I want the river of life flowing in my being." So I just began to ask for it and began to experience it more.

Annie: One of the parts of the book that I... Oh, I love the whole thing. I think it is the word for the day. I mean, I'm like, This is what... I hear it stirring in a lot of people. Will you tell that story about asking your staff what if it started again? Because I think one of the problems is we don't know that our reserves are empty. I didn't know my reserves were empty until I listened to you tell this story.

John: Yes. Okay. So several times over the last couple of years, I was checking with our staff, and just say, "Give me your operating capacity right now. Are you at 100%? Are you at 70%?" So back during the height of the pandemic, people are like, "Oh, no, I'm at 30. I'm at 25." It was good. We were honest with "I am not myself these days."

But then we began to get restaurants back and movies back and we don't have to wear masks anymore, and that kind of thing. But I knew that the human soul doesn't just bounce back. So I asked my staff, you know, "Recently, how are you doing?" And everyone's like, "Oh, doing so much better. Doing great. I mean, 80%, 75%."

And then I said, "Okay, what if it was to happen again tomorrow? What if a new pandemic rolls through the world tomorrow and we are starting all over again? You're back at home, you're working at home, you know, all that? There was silence.

Annie: Yes!

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John: Silence in the room and went, "No, I don't have the capacity for that. I have the capacity right now to go get tacos but I do not have the capacity to handle..." And I said, "Well, just think about what if your house burns down? What if your French tells you they have cancer? Do you have the reserves to rally to that now?" And that was kind of a wake-up of "Oh, no, my reserves are pretty low. I'm glad to have the whole COVID thing behind me. But could I handle it again tomorrow? Whoa I'd really rather not, please."

Annie: I mean, when you asked me that question via the podcast, I thought I wouldn't do it. I just wouldn't do it. I'm not gonna do it. And I felt the Holy Spirit being like, "Settled down. He's not making you. What's the deeper question?" And then I thought, "Well, what if I got sick? Or what if something else happened and I alone had to be home?" And I thought, "Oh, I don't have the reserves I used to have, I don't have them."

One of the things in the book, John, that I was really moved by is when we're talking about getting resilient and getting these building back up our reserves, you talked about this title was the sweet safety of holiness and how actually aligning our lives with God will actually be part of what does that. But will you talk about holiness? We don't probably talk about that enough around here.

John: Yeah, it's a creepy word. Most people don't have good association with that word.

Annie: And at *That Sounds Fun Podcast*, you'd be shocked how little we talk about holiness.

John: Yeah.

Annie: But we should.

John: Well, let's talk about it this way. I call it the unconverted places in me. They are these unconverted places in me that are so embarrassing and exasperating. And these are the places where I get taken out. So like the unconverted place in me of anger, of like, "Man, I can still just get triggered. Especially in a compromised state of my humanity, you know, low reserves, I just get triggered at things."

And I'm like, "Whoa, Jesus, I actually need you to save me here in this place or fear of intimacy, or our little comforters. Because the pandemic was really, really exposing everybody. Can we all just admit it? You found out real quick what you do for comfort and what you do for security?"

And a lot of that is just completely unconverted places in me. This has nothing to do with God or His provision. So the idea of bringing all of our humanity into

union with Jesus, I found myself praying, Jesus, I pray for the salvation that is really salvation. And that is to have your humanity inhabited by His holiness, His goodness, His love, His resilience, His playfulness, His kindness.

Just everything that Jesus is, is meant to permeate our humanity. But we have places that are kind of holdouts, that are the unconverted places in us. And it's like, you can have everything Jesus except for my media choices.

Annie: Right. Right.

John: You can have everything but these few relationships. No, seriously, Lord, I give you everything except my finances. And the thing is those unconverted places are where you're gonna get taken out then because they're not in the protection of God, they're not in the provision and the resilience of God. I'm seeking for more of me. Dallas Willard phrase, he said that more of me belongs to more of God. He said that's the goal: more of me belongs to more of God.

Annie: You have prayers all throughout the book, and one of them that I just love... I can't wait to get the audiobook, as you said, there's music behind the prayers-

John: Yeah, I get to riff in the audiobook. It's really fun. I asked the publisher permission. I said, "Look, can I go off script?" And they're like, "Sure." So I riff, I tell stories. And then in the prayers, we play some music and I'm able to lead people in prayer.

Annie: One of them says, "Your glory, your love, your kingdom."

John: Yeah.

Annie: And I was like, "That's it. I want that to be just the ticker tape across my forehead on my day is like, 'what am I doing right now with God's love, with His glory, with His kingdom?'" How am I helping those things come to earth?

When we have you read us prayers, whether it's through the Pause App... You know, I think I've told you this, but we use the Pause App every Monday morning here at work, our whole team does it together. Big Pause App people. When you're reading us these prayers... We just did the whole month of April was about prayer but we didn't really talk about when someone else is praying and we're in agreement. Why does it matter to have a voice through our phone, through our car, in the office reading a prayer that we agree with?

John: You know, it's the old forest for the trees thing. Your whole inner life... For most people, their inner world is pretty chaotic. And when they try and get quiet for prayer, all kinds of stuff start showing up.

Annie: It is a circus. As soon as you try to get quiet.

John: Oh, yeah. You start having conversations with people who aren't in the room and you start telling people off or you start... You know, okay. So to have someone Shepherd you and guide you in prayer, it helps to settle your inner world if you are in agreement with it. Like you start coming into alignment with it.

So you go into some churches, they get this really good. They are, "Yes! Amen!" I'm with you. Yes! More of that! More of that!" Well, they're coming into agreement with it. Your being is able to participate in someone else's prayer because you are giving a scent to it. You are coming into alignment with it in your interior world. It's very helpful. I listen to the Pause App.

Annie: Do you listen to yourself?

John: Yes, I do. It's very helpful.

Annie: I'll tell you. There's one of the Pause App that says "My life belongs to Jesus, my story is in his hands," or something like that. And man, just saying that over and over again, I'm going like, "Hey, my story is in your hands. My story is in your hands." Because just when someone else can get me started often, it sets me to... A psalm will do it or a proverb will do it too. It just set me on the path of what God has.

Annie: That's why I love listening to Bible podcasts where they're just reading scripture. I love those because I just need someone else to just read the scripture out loud to me so that I can go, Yes. Okay. Yes, that's really good. Thank you for reminding me."

Annie: Yes, that's it.

[00:34:14] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting one more time to tell you about another amazing partner, [Third Love](#). So Mandy that works with us and I actually had this exact conversation in the office the other day. She asked which of the Third Love bras I've tried in which is my favorite. And without hesitation, I said it's the Third Love 24/7 classic t-shirt bra. Yeah, it just flat out delivers on style and comfort.

When I start my day from a foundation of feeling comfortable and confident, the entire rest of the day turns out better. And if hearing from your pal AFD isn't enough, millions of women agree. Millions. That's why it's Third Love's number one bra. It comes in sizes A through H and they literally invented half cups so you

can always get the right fit, forms to your body, plus, the straps won't slip and there's no pinching or digging.

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Anchor even has ways that you can monetize your podcast with no minimum number of listeners. It's everything you need to create a podcast in one place. We hear from people all the time who have great ideas and are looking for how to get their podcast started. Well, Anchor is what we use all across the That Sounds Fun Network. And we are just huge fans of how easy they make it to create a great podcast.

So just download the free Anchor app or go to anchor.fm to get started. Again, that's anchor.fm or you could download the free Anchor app.

And now back to finish up our conversation with John Eldredge.

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Annie: Summer is your favorite season, summer is my favorite season. Best summer ever. I've got a list on my wall, John, of best summer ever, all the things I'm doing: concerts, trips, weddings. It's all on the wall. So I'm thinking about our friends as they're reading *Resilient*—comes out tomorrow—they're gonna get the book,

audiobook or get it in their hands or both. I'm going for both. How do we do the summer? How do we get resilient over this summer when we've got a little more time, when we're having vacations? How does it look like to partner with God well in the summer?

John: The math is really simple. So let's come back to replenishing your reserves. Most of us are pretty low in the reserve tank. So your reserves are replenished when more is coming in than is going out. Okay, that's why people like vacations. Because typically on a vacation, if you plan it well, more is coming in. There's joy, there's rest, there's play. You're getting nourished, right? And you're not on email all day, you're not in meetings, you're not having to make calls. But that's only a week or two.

So you should look at the whole summer and say how can I orchestrate my life this summer so that more is coming in than is going out? That's the math. So try and look at the big draining things and go, "Do we really need to go to that family reunion? Like really? Really? Are we just going out of guilt? Are we going out of...? Will we be in better condition if we don't?"

You look at some of the big draining things, you go, I've got a big project to take on at the house. I'm actually not going to take it on this summer because you know how home projects go, it takes four times longer. Then you think, that's four times more money than you think it's gonna take. So I look at that. And it's really fun.

I was asking Jesus about this little pond, and I wanted to do some work on this pond. And He said, "No, no, don't do that." I'm like, "No, no, no, no, you don't understand. I need to do that this summer." He just has the word over it, draining.

Annie: Wow.

John: You know, John, that's going to... that is not more coming in than is going out. And then take the going out coming in. What are you going to do to nourish your soul this summer? What brings joy? What brings life? What brings the presence of God? You know, primarily, how do you restore and renew your union with God so that more of his resilience is pouring into you?

Because the good news is, folks, there's a lot of... You know, I'm bringing the book *Resilient* out right now in a world that's full of this stuff. And it's adventure camps and wilderness training and all the paramilitary schooling stuff you can go to. That's very different than the gospel.

Biblical resilience is imparted to you by the presence of God in your life. It is something that is imbued, bestowed, breathed into you. This is Paul's prayer in

Ephesians 3 where he says, "Pray that the God of all creation which strengthen you by His Spirit in your inmost being." Do you hear the kindness of that? He's not saying, "Okay, people, I bought you all a gym membership."

Annie: "Go work it out."

John: Instead it is learning to put ourselves in situations to receive that impartation. "I need you to replenish my reserves this summer. How do you want to do that, Lord?"

Annie: Yeah, that's the question. I mean, that sentence will be the top of my journal tomorrow. How do you want to replenish my reserves this summer? I have taken your advice of always asking Jesus about trips and what we should do and I find my feathers get ruffled when he says no. I'm always like, "It's not that big of a deal. Just let me go do that weekend thing." And I just feel a little no on my insides, I'm like, "Oh, okay, you're gonna know... You know what? I don't know. I don't love it but-

John: Or on the positive side, He will tell you to do something you think you don't have the energy for? Our oldest son and his family are going to Hawaii this summer and they invited us to come with them. And internally my immediate answer was no way. That's a week of babysitting.

Annie: As grandparents.

John: That does not sound restorative to me. But I asked Jesus about it. He's like, "No, it's going to be really good. You're actually going to be really replenished by it." I'm like, "Really?" Okay, so it's on the positive side, too. There are things that God has for you that you might not naturally do this summer that He says, "No, trust me on this. Trust me. I've got something for you.

Annie: For our friends listening who that's a new practice, it is for me too, of kind of go in and into the daily like, "Hey, I'm making plans on my calendar. What do you say, Jesus?" How do we start that practice and trust that we're really hearing Jesus and not just making up an answer ourselves?

John: Well, you know immediately if He tells you something that you would not have said to yourself. I mean, like as simple as the level of "I really love you." You go, "Oh, I would never say that to myself. No, that had to have been God. That's not my self-talk." Right.

Okay. So I would start at that level. Do you love me, God? Are you with me? Are you here? You start with very simple questions. You don't start with really difficult

questions? "Is now the time for a career change?" That's double black diamond stuff. It's hard to hear because there's so much drama in it. Bring the drama down, ask simple questions.

But summer is perfect for that. Because you can just say, "Lord, what do you have for us this summer?" And He's gonna say, "Stand up paddleboards." And you're like, "What?" Like, no, it's a gas. You're gonna love it. The lake is 30 minutes away. You can do it. You can do this every weekend. So simple questions I would say. Keep it simple. And you can trust it when it's counterintuitive especially-

Annie: How often do you run it by Stasi? I mean, well, I guess it's her calendar, too, so it matters every time. But I have a friend here at work that I pretty much come in and I go, "I heard a weird thing. Would you think this through with me?" I mean, is that okay to invite people in with us?

John: Yes. It's really helpful. Really helpful. In fact, the fascinating thing about listening prayer, it's easier to hear for other people than it is to hear for yourself. So it's really fun. If you want to get better at listening to prayer and hearing the voice of Jesus, do it for other people. Because you're not in their drama. You're not in their story. Yeah, you don't have a dog in the fight.

Annie: Right.

John: So it's really easy to hear, like, "Oh, my gosh, I just heard something for you. He's really proud of you," or "Yes, now is the time to take that vacation." So yes, invite other people in the process. And if you're in a serious relationship, you better invite that other person in.

Annie: Yeah. They better know. I had an option to teach at our church on a Sunday or... and that was my plan. And then I got an invitation to go to Disney World with a family that is really close to me. And I just went, "Jesus, I feel a lot of pressure because I know I want to honor your church, and I want to dah, dah, dah." And it was so clear I just felt Jesus is like, "Go to Disney. Go to Disney. These people love you, and you love being with them." So as I came out of that decision in my heart and mind and started expressing it to people, everything was able to fall into place. And I went, That's my confirmation.

John: Oh, good for you.

Annie: Someone agree. I mean, it's such a sweet thing. It felt like an invitation from Jesus to be like, "Just go do that. Just see what I've got for you in that."

John: And do you see how it ran against the grain?

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Annie: Oh, the guilt in me!

John: Yeah, exactly. Your high level of responsibility would have kept you into that one obligation. But Jesus is like, "The church you will always have with you."

Annie: Yeah, that's right. You can switch Sundays. Is it the only Sunday?

John: Good for you.

Annie: Well, thank you for your leadership in that. I don't know that I'd have known how to process that opportunity without the like, "Okay, let me ask Jesus and see because this is his church. So let me ask Him what he feels.

One last thing I'd love for you to talk into that I thought was so moving from the book is you said, the battle is always for your attention.

John: Right.

Annie: I mean, just always. My phone is battling me constantly. Even in these conversations, I have my phone turned over so I can't have my attention battled for.

John: I know. I know. Right now I want to text my son my Chipotle order.

Annie: You totally can. Don't miss out on lunch.

John: Oh, my gosh. It's really true. Because it's attention and affection.

Annie: Wow,.

John: I give you my attention and my affection. So don't you like it when you're with people... Don't you like it when they look you in the eye? I don't like it when people are talking to me and don't look me in the eye. It's weird. It's creepy. It's like, look me in the eye. I'm here. I'm here with you. Well, see, that's attention. It's the gift of you have my attention right now, you have my affection right now.

So the war is to try and keep that utterly fragmented. Just scattered in a thousand directions so that you cannot give it to God. Because as the psalm says, they look to Him and were radiant. Or Paul in 2 Corinthians, I love this passage, he says, "But we all be holding the face of Jesus are transformed with ever increasing glory." What has your attention, who has your affection will change who you are, it will shape who you are.

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Have you noticed how old people start looking like their dogs? That is one of the wildest things in the human race. Well, it's really sweet. They have their attention and their affection.

Annie: Yeah.

John: Right. Okay. So, of course, the worry is going to be there, right? You know, the world, the enemy trying to come in and just steal your attention, steal your affection. So you can't just settle it on God and receive his care.

Annie: The challenges of holding both of, yeah, we do want to care about what's going on globally and we have tragedies in our own lives. I mean, even you said this in the book, you said this earlier, that there's heavy things in your life, there's heavy things in my life today, and also best summer ever. And so is the solution to holding all of this well how we start the day?

John: Yes.

Annie: Okay.

John: And how you end it. How you start the day and how you end the day actually really does frame some of the structure of your brain. So yeah, that's just absolutely huge. You don't want to start the day with drama and you don't want to end the day with drama. You don't want to start it with heartache and you don't want to end it with heartache.

So yeah, don't take your phone in your bedroom at night. Don't look at your phone first thing in the morning. Create a DMZ around your evening and your morning, create a DMZ that how you end your day, the mood in which you end your day. This is a fascinating thing about working with horses. People who are horse people know this. The condition that you put a horse away in is the condition you will find him in the next morning.

Annie: Oh, wow.

John: So if you have a bad session or a bad ride and you leave that horse mad at you, when you come back in the barn in that morning, still mad. Okay, well, the same thing is true, actually the human soul. The condition you go to bed in, you will probably wake up in. And the condition you go into your day in, you're carrying that into your day now.

Annie: So yeah, create a DMZ, create a buffer zone, create a quiet space that allows you to give God your attention and your affection.

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Annie: Adding that in the evenings, that feels pretty profound choice to end a little bit differently than like jumping off the cliff. I feel like a little bit I run to the edge of the cliff and then just jump to sleep.

John: And then to fall into bed.

Annie: That's right. Okay, is there anything we didn't say about *Resilient* you want to make sure we say?

John: Oh, gosh, you and I could go for hours and hours.

Annie: I know.

John: I think we gave people a good taste of it.

Annie: Okay, great. Well, John, the last question we always ask, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

John: So during the pandemic, I built a whitewater raft for fly fishing.

Annie: You built your own raft?

John: Well, no, no. You buy a kit. It's a kit.

Annie: You just tie together logs?

John: No, no, no, no. But this thing is so much joy. There's a really fun story. During the pandemic, we smuggled it out of town in a closed trailer, because we weren't supposed to leave, all that, went to the Colorado River, jumped in the night, did an overnight float, and it was utterly life-giving.

Annie: Wow.

John: Talk about social distancing. We weren't near anybody.

Annie: Right, right.

John: Okay. This summer, that raft is high on my agenda. I want to get on the water. I want to be on rivers.

Annie: Yes, me too. A friend of mine gifted me an inflatable kayak and I was like, "Oh, I'm all summer long. Let's go."

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John: Come on.

Annie: Inflatable Kayak. Never done it before.

John: So fun?

Annie: Yeah, I can't wait. I think it'd be so fun. I think.

John: You're going to love it. You're going to love it.

Annie: Well, you know how I feel about you but thank you so much for your work. I'm just so thankful. I'm so thankful.

John: You are a gem. You are an absolute gem. I love the way you are nurturing a whole community of people. Well done, Annie. Well done.

Annie: Thank you. That means a lot. That means a lot.

[00:51:24] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't he the best? Gosh, I just love talking to John Eldredge. It makes me feel teary and thankful. Listen, be sure to grab your copy of his new book *Resilient*. It is out tomorrow. Follow him on social media, thank him for being on the show, and subscribe to his podcast. I'm telling y'all. I have a small handful of shows that I do not miss outside of our That Sounds Fun Network shows. And that is one of them. John's show is absolutely one of them.

And will you guys do me a favor? Think about who in your life could use the encouragement that John provided in this conversation? I bet you can think of a few, I have two in mind, and share it with them. It means so much when you pass along episodes to your friends.

And if you haven't rated or reviewed the show before, today would be a good day to do that. Wherever you're listening, just hit five stars and tell your friends on the other side a little something about why you love the show.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, or 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. What a good Monday! Yes! So go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same.

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Today what sounds fun to me is I'm going to a surprise party tonight. I cannot wait. I love surprises. So that sounds really fun to me. Y'all have a great week. We'll see you back here on Thursday with the voice singing in our podcast theme song one of my favorite artists in the world and our good friend, Tauren Wells. We'll see y'all then. Have a great week.