

[00:00:00] <music>

Annie: So I've been podcasting since 2014. And let me tell you, things are definitely changing and have definitely changed and grown in the podcast world. From the technology to the variety of options to the number of people listening to podcasts. It's part of the reason we grew from the That Sounds Fun podcast to the That Sounds Fun Network.

All that growth, experience, and learning leads us to refine the tools we use for bringing you all of these great shows. And one that we absolutely cannot live without is Anchor. You've probably heard me say before, but Anchor is seriously the easiest way to make a podcast.

It's free, as in it costs you zero dollars. It has simple-to-use creation tools that allow you to record and edit your podcast right from your phone or computer. Anchor will distribute your podcast for you as well, helping you get your content to so many people on Spotify, Apple Podcast, and all the other platforms where people love to listen to shows.

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 all 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 across the That Sounds Fun Network. And we are just huge fans of how easy they make it to create great-sounding, far-reaching podcast episodes.

Just download the free Anchor app or go to [Anchor.fm](https://anchor.fm) to get started. Again, that's Anchor.fm or you can download the free Anchor app today.

[00:01:26] <music>

Intro: Hi friends! Welcome to a very special Friday episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm really happy to be here with you today.

Okay, so sometimes we just have too many fun friends passing through Nashville, they get to sit down with me in the studio to fit them on our regular Monday, Thursday schedule. So get ready for some fall Fridays, where we're going to have some surprises like this.

You know, Friday is when new music releases anyway. So just start watching for some of our favorite musicians, and who knows who else. They're gonna be

popping up on Fridays. But since this is a holiday weekend in the US, this is a great way to start the holiday. You'll see why, exactly why we made room for this one.

So today on the show, I get to talk with my friends Bryan and Katie Torwalt who are artists, songwriters, worship leaders based in the Sacramento area where they've been part of Jesus Culture Music since 2010. If you don't already know them, you very possibly worshiped along with one of their songs like the Grammy-winning song *Holy Spirit*, whether at your church or on the radio.

And truly, I am saying this truly, I think they're my favorite worship artists. All their albums... you'll hear us go back and talk about... I mean, pretty much I just made them sit through my enjoyment of their greatest hits. But they're just incredible.

Their newest album is called *I've Got Good News*. It is all about the Gospels, which you know we love. I've got it on repeat. We love reading the gospels around here. If you have not read the gospels with us, reread them every month. And you can get that plan off of shop Anniefdowns.com. We've got the whole Gospel reading plan for you there.

That new album, *I've Got Good News*, it's just so good. Y'all, it goes along beautifully as we sing about the gospels while we're reading the gospels. It came out in May. We'll get to talk all about it. I've been such a fan of these friends for so long. I'm just thrilled to finally get to have them on the show.

So here is my conversation with Bryan and Katie Torwalt.

[00:03:37] <music>

Annie: Katie and Bryan Torwalt, welcome to That Sounds Fun.

Katie: Thank you.

Bryan: Thank you.

Annie: What an absolute treat! Katie, the world needs to know you and I are pre-friends. Bryan, we're brand new friends.

Bryan: Brand new friends.

Annie: Eight minutes maybe.

Bryan: Yeah.

Annie: But I'm into it. I knew when I picked Katie that I was also picking you. That's how I do friendship. But I like you independently as well so far.

Bryan: That's a very big compliment. Thank you so much.

Annie: Katie, you and I got together the same event last fall. And I think I've said this but I'm gonna say it to your face, too. I walked out of there—there were 40 women there—and I thought, "Three of these women are stuck with me forever." And you are one of them. I was like, "Katie Torwalt is so stuck with me." I will never be able to resist being friends with you. I'm so glad you're here.

Katie: I feel the same way. I'm so glad.

Annie: Thank you. You guys, what are you doing in Nashville, for starters?

Katie: Oh, we're here on a songwriting retreat with some of our team. We just have done one song so far. It's been amazing.

Annie: This morning?

Katie: This morning.

Annie: And then you were like, "Throw me a salad, I gotta get in the car and go to Annie?"

Bryan: Yes.

Katie: Yes. Somebody handed me a salad when I was walking out of the door, and we're here now.

Annie: Oh, that's so kind of you.

Katie: And that's all that's happened so far. Oh, it's our privilege. I mean, I have told you this off air but you know I'm a huge listener of this podcast. I highly support it. I'm very excited.

Bryan: She's not lying.

Katie: I'm not.

- Bryan:** I walk into the bathroom, she's putting her makeup on and she's having a conversation with you.
- Annie:** You're like, "I hear that."
- Katie:** I feel a part. I feel a part. And so it's just been so fun. Of course, if we could squeeze us in, absolutely But we are here to song-write. We write worship music mostly, and that's what we're here to do. We love it.
- When we got in the car on the way here, we're both talking about, "Man, this doesn't really get old." I think we get physically tired. We don't have the same energy we did like five years ago, 10 years ago even but we love it.
- Bryan:** Also our daughter is with us. And parent fail, I forgot her favorite stuffed animal that she sleeps with every single night.
- Katie:** She's four.
- Bryan:** So last night was a tougher night to get her in bed.
- Annie:** Were y'all like on Amazon in the middle of the night?
- Katie:** They don't sell this stuffed animal.
- Annie:** No.
- Katie:** We are those parents know. I'm like eBay. I'm on eBay.
- Bryan:** Yes. And we got a flight delay. There was a lot of stuff that happened yesterday, so we're both like six coffees in.
- Katie:** We instantly asked for black coffee when we walked in.
- Annie:** That's right. So y'all just got to town yesterday.
- Bryan:** Yeah, last night.
- Katie:** Last night, yeah.
- Annie:** Oh my gosh. And it started today. I've never been on a songwriter's retreat. Does everyone stay in the same house? Are y'all like in a cabin in Leipers Fork somewhere?

Bryan: We've done that before but not this one. This one is just like we're in hotel. Yeah, we're in hotels, and we go meet at the spot. We get better sleep this way.

Annie: Got it. Yes. Yes. When everybody kind of has their own space, they can go home and...

Bryan: Absolutely.

Annie: Katie, you don't get tired of writing worship music?

Katie: No.

Annie: Why?

Katie: You know what? It's always interesting. Like even this morning, I felt like we went into it... We've been writing quite a bit. Mostly not for ourselves. We've just been writing in some different other retreats and stuff.

And so we went in there and I'm like, "I don't even know." They are like, "Is there something you're wanting to write about?" I'm like, "Well, no, I didn't come in here with anything." And then instantly stuff just started to be like, "Well, God, I feel like this have been on my heart."

My favorite part of the song rights, which you would love, this aspect too, is like the conversations before we ever tried to write a song. So we're sitting there-

Bryan: And throughout the whole time it's just like intertwined conversation. Because you have to get vulnerable with each other. And so you go deep with people. Sorry, I cut you off.

Katie: It's okay. The best songs come out of that really authentic place. And a lot of these people are really good friends. And we sit down and we start talking about the Lord and melodies will just come out. And then we were sitting there just smiling like, "Man, God is so good that we..." It's like it's a never-ending river, kind of what you were just praying.

And it's like, just when you think, "I don't have any ideas. I don't have any songs left. We've written so much," and then there's like something new. There's a new part of God that's revealed to you or whatever it is. Just even in those conversations it just flows out to you. We were just talking about it in the car on the way here, like, Man, I'm really thankful to still be able to do this. I love this.

So that's what we're here to do. And as tired as we came already, it's so life-giving for us. So we're thankful.

Bryan: Absolutely.

Annie: Bryan, this is a sad story that will end up fine.

Bryan: Thank you for the caution.

Annie: I'm giving you a heads up so you can be like, "Annie yo." So I'm helping plan a funeral, and the people picking the music are picking some hymns and some modern-day worship. Will you talk about that for a minute? Why do we still write songs? Why do we not just sing hymns? But also why do we still sing hymns?

Bryan: That's a good question.

Annie: Thank you. My dad loves when people say that. He's gonna be so thrilled. So thank you.

Bryan: That is a good question. I think it just points to the history and moments that people had with God throughout the history of the church. And it's like they're markers of moves of God, they're markers of... I think especially if you look at the last, you know, recent history, you see these different artists have come out.

And a lot of times there's songs or there's moments that come out of God doing something in a community of people. Even the church that were part of, Jesus Culture, the very first songs, it was like they were just recording their youth conference.

Annie: Right.

Bryan: And then it blew up on YouTube and then people got touched by God through what was happening within this local community. So I think the hymns for that day and age, you know, they were moments that people had with God that they put language to that impacted a generation.

And I think it's really important for us as songwriters, as creatives to look back but also move forward. And so we're having our own moments with God and trying to put language to that, where we are right now. But in the same context, we don't want to forget what God has done in the past as we push forward.

Katie: I think with hymns too, especially, it just reminds you of the faithfulness of God through history, even outside of your own personal lived experience. We talk a lot about like our theology sometimes can just be shaped around our personal experience. And that's not really biblical.

Like we're actually supposed to go back and look, what has God done? What did He do for my grandma? What did He do for this Bible character? Who has He been through history? Because it says in the Bible that He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, who was and is and is to come. So sometimes we have to purposely go remind ourselves of those things.

There's so much richness found in hymns. I'm really happy. I think we should continue to incorporate more hymns. It's so fun. I'm happy to hear when people take a little piece of a hymn and almost rethink it in our modern worship. It's something that really unifies the church too, I feel like.

We talked about, in Jesus Culture, it started out as a youth movement but now it is very multi-generational. And it's something that we're really passionate about because our parents both love the Lord. We grew up in Christian homes. But to see their history with God and to see their lives now lived—they're in their 60s—faithfully for the Lord, like we need that in the church. It's so powerful.

And then to see our fifth graders and sixth graders and seventh graders come up at worship and worship God so passionately and with so much zeal, and to see a grandma in the next row there too, there's something really kingdom, it feels like, about that. So doing that. As worship leaders, we try to lead that way as well, with that in mind. But I love that guys are doing that.

Bryan: To serve the church.

Annie: I sat with some friends a couple of weeks ago talking about finishing well as leaders.

Bryan: Wow.

Annie: And one of the guys said, "I feel like the only way out of this is to fall. I don't know anyone who's finishing." And I thought this is the problem that we have less multigenerational churches. It's like Jesus Culture.

So many of our churches that are multi-generational, you see big groups of people in their 60s, 70s, and 80s. And there are some churches where you see two, right? Where there's a huge amount of 20-year-olds and a huge amount of 30-year-olds,

and then there's two 6-year-olds, and you're like, "Oh, well, then I don't finish here." You're like, "No, no, no, there is a way. There is a way to finish well."

Katie: We need more. Honestly, we need more in our community.

Annie: We do. Everyone that I know does. It's what I'm looking forward to. I'm always like, Show me a faithful person. You don't have to stay in leadership publicly forever. But I want to see someone who runs across the finish line.

Katie: Often it seems like not the person that's been in the public,-

Annie: That's right.

Katie: ...on the platform all these years.

Annie: This is our concern, Katie, for you and me.

Katie: I know.

Annie: This is our concern.

Katie: Show me that grandma that's been there for 40 years. You know, there's something that is just so precious about that.

Bryan: It is cool. Both of our sets of parents have really loved Jesus their whole lives. So I think we get to see that, like the fruit that they've had in their lives because of their walks with God. I think it's a beautiful thing to see someone live their whole life that way.

Annie: Okay, that's a great lead in for me, Bryan, thanks, because one of our friends that sent in a question through AFD Week in Review asked, how did y'all meet? So will y'all back me up? Are y'all high school sweethearts?

Katie: No.

Annie: Are you two worship leaders who saw each other across a Sunday morning?

Katie: Almost.

Bryan: We sang to each other.

Annie: Oh, that's what I want to know. Did you sing to each other?

Katie: Oh, man.

Bryan: We gotta make the story.

Katie: This is a good story.

Annie: Oh, good.

Katie: We'll try not to go too long on it.

Annie: No, come on. People will love it.

Katie: Go ahead, Bryan. What level of honesty do you want to give today?

Annie: Wow. How much coffee have you had?

Bryan: We met... 16 years ago?

Katie: Yeah.

Bryan: 16 years ago—wow, we're just getting old—at a worship school.

Annie: Oh, cool.

Bryan: And it was the very last day of worship school. Katie was 17, turning 18.

Annie: He's like, "She was very, very almost legal."

Bryan: She was very close.

Katie: That's the next age you turn is 18 after 17.

Bryan: It was like this... I don't know. It was like a worship school and they had this moment where people did-

Katie: It was a talent show.

Annie: A talent show.

Bryan: Basically, yeah.

Katie: Let's talk about it.

Bryan: But she sang and the whole room was just like, "Oh my God." Anyway, I talked to her. But I'm also Canadian. We had a couple conversations and then I went back home. I did end up getting her number at some point.

Katie: Well-

Bryan: Should we skip over? No. First I asked her-

Katie: People need to know because it is funny.

Bryan: First, I asked-

Katie: He was trying to be so casual.

Annie: How old were you?

Bryan: I was 21.

Annie: Okay, great. I was like, "Are you saying you're 42? Was something weird about this?"

Bryan: No, no, no. I asked her email address at first because I don't think my phone worked as Canadian—it was a while ago—and she gave me a non-working email address but she never thought she would see me ever again. My car broke down, I was still there two weeks later when she came back for Jesus Culture conference.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Bryan: And I was like, "Hey, I email you and-

Annie: And you were still there?

Bryan: I was still there because my car broke down.

Katie: He was still there. I never thought I would see him again.

Annie: You couldn't find another way to get home in two weeks?

Katie: Right?

- Annie:** That had to be the Lord. It had to be the Lord.
- Bryan:** Right.
- Katie:** His covered wagon.
- Annie:** You said, "I emailed you and you never responded."
- Bryan:** I didn't say, "You never responded."
- Katie:** He was not even worried about it.
- Bryan:** I was like, "Hey, I emailed you." And then she was like, "Oh."
- Katie:** I was like, "Oh."
- Bryan:** Then we sat together at one of the services. I got her phone number out of her phone.
- Katie:** He helped himself with my phone. I don't condone this behavior. I feel like we need to have a disclaimer here. The level of confidence was impressive, you know.
- Annie:** It was high confidence.
- Katie:** And it did stand out obviously. Look at us.
- Annie:** Yes, it worked.
- Katie:** It did work. But the first try did not work.
- Annie:** No. No.
- Katie:** It was a fail. And then the Lord intervened I guess.
- Bryan:** At first you don't succeed.
- Annie:** How off was the email address you handed? Was it like not a real email address @gmail.com or was it like Katy with a y?
- Katie:** I'm pretty sure it was just a little off, but I also didn't have a password for it. It wasn't an email.

- Annie:** No, it wasn't an email.
- Katie:** It took me off guard, you know. So I don't know. It was in an instant. I was just like, "Ah, here's my email." Honestly, it's not good. It's not telling the truth. I should have just been like, "Well, let's get to know each other a different way."
- Annie:** The Lord was like, "I'm not concerned about what email address you gave." He's like, "I'll work this out."
- Katie:** Although now that's... Nowadays-
- Annie:** Yeah, right. No.
- Bryan:** No, it's crazy.
- Katie:** Email is safe.
- Bryan:** We dated long distance for three years and then we got married.
- Annie:** Wow.
- Bryan:** Three years and long distance is horrible. I don't recommend it.
- Annie:** That's also a really long time.
- Bryan:** I couldn't work in the United States, so that's why.
- Katie:** It was good. I was very young. We were talking about getting married young the day now that we have our own child. It's like, Oh, my goodness. We were so young.
- Bryan:** She's four also.
- Katie:** Yeah, she's four. We have been married 13 years and a lot of our friends now are having their junior highers, high schoolers even, one of our best friends. And we're like, "We met..." I had already graduated, but I mean, high school age.
- Bryan:** It's wild.
- Katie:** That is very young.
- Annie:** Yeah, it feels very young.

Katie: I'm like, "My goodness!" By the grace of God we're here today.

Bryan: All the 18-year-olds listening-

Annie: Yeah, that's right. That's right. Go find them. Bryan, were you already leading worship? Oh, yeah, because you were at worship school.

Bryan: Yeah, yeah. We were both leading worship at our home churches where we came from, and honestly just kind of looking for God.

Katie: Hungry. Hungry for the presence of God. I think we both met Jesus, you know, and we just knew that there was something else. We knew that and left home to find it on our own. I didn't know anybody. I had moved to Redding to go to the Bethel School of worship there at 17 by myself. I just took my car and drove up there. It was like six, seven hours from where I grew up.

I just wanted to meet Jesus for myself, you know. You hear everybody talk about Jesus. And I was like, "I need to find Jesus for myself." Grew up as a pastor's kid. So I mean, I was around people that love the Lord my whole life, but you have to figure it out for yourself. You have to find Him for yourself. So that's what led me there. And then we met each other.

Annie: I had some friends go off to college this week, two freshmen girls, and I said to both of them—they're both pastor's daughters—and I said, "You are going to want to figure this out for yourself. And you should. I had to too."

Katie: And you should.

Annie: You should. It is okay that you grew up and believed everything you grew up believing, and you need a little blackout phase or something. You need a little moment to figure it out. And then it becomes your own.

Katie: I think when you're in an environment... And it's actually such a blessing, it's such a safety place to grow up in an environment.. And then even at the church that we met at, growing an environment where it is so just saturated with the presence of God that you don't realize, Oh, maybe this isn't all, you know, inside of me myself. It's not necessarily all my own faith. I haven't tested this out on my own."

I mean, I don't know if we use this word on this podcast, but deconstruction and stuff. A lot of that stuff that has just come up in the last several years, at least that word has been such a big word.

You know, the Bible talks about the testing of our faith and how that only purifies and strengthens the faith, especially if we have someone to return to. And so figuring it out for ourselves and creating our own history.

One of our favorite quotes that we talk about a lot with Pastor Bill is, you know, we can pray for impartation for so many things but could never impart our history with God. And so creating that on your own is just so vital, I feel like.

Bryan: Making a place where you have moments with God that when you go through the harder things in life, because we all will at some point in time, that you can look back to like, "God was with me here. He will be with me again."

Annie: That's what I think about my sophomore year of college when I had my hardest season up until that point as a person. And I can look back and go like, "Oh, that's when I really figured out that this was for me. That this wasn't just because of the environment I grew up in," which I'm also grateful for. Man, that is... 17 years old, you went looked for Jesus and you found Jesus and Bryan Torwalt. Well done. Well done.

Bryan: I thought you might say Bryan Torwalt found her.

Annie: That's right. That's right. Did y'all move to Canada for a time? Am I making that up?

Bryan: You're making it up.

Annie: I'm making it up.

Bryan: We've gone to visit lots because my family is still there.

Annie: Because your family is also there. Which part?

Bryan: Yes. Do you know where like Calgary or Edmonton-

Annie: No.

Bryan: No. It's in the middle. It's like if you're in the middle of Montana and then you go straight up.

Annie: That's so unfortunate that I need you to direct me from America. So take me from somewhere in America, like Montana up, straight up.

Bryan: It's like Vancouver, Toronto-

Katie: It's in the middle.

Annie: So are you a hockey guy?

Bryan: I grew up playing hockey.

Annie: Okay.

Bryan: They went through a season of life when we first got married that you couldn't really find hockey here. So I kind of just moved to-

Katie: To basketball and football.

Bryan: ...football and basketball. So I was like, you know.

Annie: Okay, let's talk about the reason I really brought you here. It's a song called *Wouldn't It Be Like You?* This is the song we have to talk about. Our friends who already listened to y'all's worship music have... everyone has their own favorite. Will you tell me the story of *Wouldn't It Be Like You?* Because that song has literally been... It's one of like four on my 2022 playlist. It has walked me this whole year-

Katie: Oh, wow.

Bryan: Wow.

Annie: ...since it came out. Maybe it came out in the spring? No.

Katie: It came out in January, right?

Bryan: Yeah.

Annie: Okay, literally the whole year then. It has been my song of 2022.

Katie: Wow. Thank you.

Bryan: It's amazing.

Katie: You know, that song really started because... We joke about this now because I think when the pandemic hit, first of all, we had a tour planned just like everybody

else, everything gets canceled. There's almost some relief in that because you could feel something building around that time anyway and everyone trying to figure out, what are we going to do? What do we have to do? What are we allowed to do? Like all the things.

So when we had to stay home and everything was canceled, I think we truly thought that we were going to write 200 songs.

Annie: Yeah, right. One a day. Here we go.

Katie: We're gonna make a sourdough loaf a day. Bryan's gonna learn a trade, like woodworking. He did build some bridges in our backyard without really-

Annie: Bridges?

Katie: Yeah. We have a little tiny creek.

Annie: That's adorable.

Katie: He built some little walking bridges. People need to know, Bryan. Be proud.

Annie: That's impressive.

Bryan: They're kind of nice

Katie: They're gorgeous.

Annie: Are they flat or are they arched or some of both?

Bryan: Flat.

Katie: They are flat.

Bryan: I can't build arched.

Annie: I don't know. We had a lot of time. You might have sorted that out. I don't know.

Katie: And it took a lot of time.

Annie: That's amazing you built bridges—spiritual. Very spiritual.

Katie: He built a bridge. And so Jesus, you know, carpenter or whatever.

Bryan: Jesus carpenter or whatever.

Katie: Oh, my gosh. We did not write songs and nothing came to us whatsoever. And I think just like everybody else, you know, you want to have all the answers, you want to be able to get on your Instagram live and be like, "This is the word of God. This is what God wants to say right now. It's March 20th, 2020 and I have God's word."

Annie: "And I know..."

Katie: "In six more days."

Bryan: "2020 vision."

Annie: That's right. That's right.

Katie: Oh, my. Oh, my. But truthfully, you know, we didn't.. I think there was... Oh, my gosh, it was such a long period of just listening. And it was frustrating. And I think a lot of people felt like that. But at the time, we were like, "we should know what God wants to say. We need to write. We need to..."

This is our way usually that in our own personal life we process. So why isn't this happening? And it probably took us six months at least to write a song. Six months. Just like we're talking about... We're here for songwriting. We're at a songwriting retreat. We already wrote a song. So that's not typical for us.

And I think that God just wanted us to wait. There was so much noise during that time. I think we just felt really sensitive to try to not add to that noise. But yeah, so this song really came because we started to open up the Gospels again. Because it was such a shaky time for all of us, you know, and there's so many thoughts, so many opinions, and we're like, "We need to go back to the Gospels."

So we started to look through the Gospels and something stuck out to us that I hadn't... It's not a new thought, but it wasn't new to me. And it was around all the times that even people that walked with Jesus physically in the flesh missed Him. Completely missed Him.

And, you know, with the best heart, the best intentions in mind, the disciples... On the roads Emmaus, Peter on the water. And we joked about it because literally it's in the Bible. You know, they think that Jesus is a ghost on the water. They literally were like, "It's a ghost."

Annie: Right.

Katie: We were laughing but also it encouraged us so much, because we're like, Man, there's something so childlike in our faith that we have to return to during this season, trusting God that He is good, that He knows better, that He is better than we could know.

When all the prophecies about the Messiah somehow came true, but He literally came as a baby, as an infant when they thought they were going to get this warrior that was going to take down the physical kingdom at that time. And why would it be different now? Like why would we feel like we had it all figured out now when even people that could touch and talk to Jesus Himself didn't recognize Him multiple times?

So that's really where the song began. So we started to tell the story of that through the song. Do you want to add to that, Bryan?

Bryan: Yeah. It's a song that just the two of us wrote and we wrote it after our little girl would go to bed and we would go to our little music room and have a glass of wine and process-

Katie: We called it processing.

Bryan: Processing. But that song was one of the ones that kind of kick-started us making an album that really is a lot about the gospel.

Annie: Yes. The album's called *I've Got Good News*, and it's Gospels-centric. We are big fans of the Gospels around here.

Bryan: Us too. Us too.

Katie: Perfect. And it's just that *Wouldn't It Be Like You* have to be different than we want, but better.

Annie: But better. Different than we want but better. That is a good line, you guys.

Katie: You know, it's like that line was for me because we usually know how we want God to move when we pray. We have something in mind.

Bryan: We want God to look like us.

Katie: We have something in mind. And it is. There's a framework for how we think that God should do things and look and heal us and do miracles and all that. And so when we pray, there's often that mindset attached to it. And there is just something about realizing like it's probably going to look different. There's something in a surrender about that. But it will be better. And usually, you can see that in hindsight so clearly, but at the time, it just felt so tough. And even now looking back to 2020, right?

Annie: Right.

Katie: You're like, "Oh, man, I see what worked during that time." Even in the midst of all the tragedy and grief and stuff that we've all experienced, it's like you do see God's hand. Anyway, that song, yeah, it just meant a lot to us.

The verses we really went heavy in on the story and kind of painting a picture hopefully for people. And then my favorite part of that song is the bridge actually, which is just help me be like Mary, lay down, pour it out. I won't miss you in a crowd.

Annie: I won't miss you in a crowd.

Katie: I love your voice.

Annie: I will cry if we keep doing this. And I know the sound-

Katie: I know the sound. And that's where we can find our anchor, right?

Bryan: Yeah.

Annie: That song will mess people up. I'm just warning everybody this weekend before you start listening.

Katie: Oh, thank you.

Bryan: It keeps going back to when you were in college, you know, and then it's like, "I know the sound of His voice. I'm not gonna miss Him now because I know."

Katie: And that's why we don't have to worry, we don't have to fear. You know, even when there was that season of life where we all... You know, I know for me, I was on Google. I was on Google. Everyone's like... I'm not gonna use all the catchphrases, but look into things. We'll say that's a different way to say it. Look into things.

So I'm googling, I'm trying to get information for peace, basically. That's my little replacement for peace. And I'm Googling, Googling, Googling, and I hear that again, of like, "You know, the sound of my voice. You're not going to miss me. I said, 'Come to me like little children.'"

The gospel and the Word of God is actually very simple. There's other things in life and there's other things that make it complicated, but Jesus was not complicated. We just found so much peace in that.

We didn't know it was going to be an album. That was a kind of a standalone song for a while. And then as we continued to write, we were like, This is a story. This is the rest... not the rest of the story but part of the same story.

Bryan: That's what we needed. We needed to stay in the gospels for a little while, just for us and for our-

Katie: The testing of our faith that we're talking about, right?

Annie: Right, right.

[00:28:07] <music>

Sponsor: Hi friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to tell you about one of our amazing partners, the new movie from the Kendrick Brothers and Kirk Cameron called [Lifemark](#). It opens in theaters everywhere a week from today, September 9th.

I got the chance to watch it a little early and here's a sneak preview. Lifemark is based on a true story, which I think is so cool, following 18-year-old David through an emotional series of decisions he has to make when his typical high school world is turned upside down. He is adopted and now his birth mother unexpectedly reaches out and ask if they can meet.

The story is really powerful and so is the storytelling. Lifemark shows just how many lives one decision can impact. It celebrates adoption and reconciliation and love. So if you're looking for a movie that is helpful and explores so many relational dynamics in really interesting ways, Lifemark is the movie for you.

Those of you with younger MiniBFFs in the family will probably want to preview this one first, so you're prepped for the conversations that may start. But I've thought about the story. So many times since I saw the movie, our team has talked about it. There's a lot of thoughts after seeing this movie I think that will happen with your friends and family as well.

So go see Lifemark in theaters nationwide beginning September 9. You can learn more about Lifemark and get your tickets today at lifemarkmovie.com. That's lifemarkmovie.com.

And now back to my conversation with Bryan and Katie.

[00:29:29] <music>

Annie: I read this quote today that I wanted y'all to talk about. It's from Ray Hughes. Do y'all know him?

Katie: Yes.

Bryan: Yeah. Love Ray Hughes.

Annie: Man, I love him. When he talks about the sound of the bells in the church where your family resonates with that-

Katie: I know.

Annie: I did some weird stuff and I'm here for it. I just love it. I love it.

Katie: I love it.

Annie: Today he said on Instagram, "There's something missing in your life if most of the music you hear is recorded. Sometimes, just the simple tenderness of the song of the Lord in your heart becomes a terror to the enemy. When the enemy comes lurking to steal your voice, don't just listen to a recording. Go ahead and praise right on through."

Katie: Ooh.

Annie: Does that feel true?

Katie: Yes

Bryan: Yeah. Wow.

Annie: To me too.

Katie: It does.

Annie: I thought, Man... Because that's why we go to church on Sunday or whatever day your church is and it's why we go to shows when y'all tour, it's because-

Katie: It's why we do those.

Annie: It's why you record albums live like this, right?

Bryan: Yeah.

Katie: It is true.

Annie: You need to go like, "There's something different." What is that spiritual thing?

Bryan: I don't know. I think even as you're reading that quote, it made me think of driving in the car and just like turning off the radio and like singing your own song. We love music in general. We have music playing, we have podcasts playing, we have stuff going on. But there's something about like, okay, use your own voice to lift up praise or to find your way through something. I don't know.

Katie: There's a point that you hit that somebody else's song is not gonna be enough.

Bryan: Sometimes you need someone else's sing too.

Katie: It can be a tool and it can be a bridge in some ways. But then you will get to a point—I think this is not just for singers, not just for songwriters, not just for worship leaders—that you need to sing your own song. And whatever that sounds like and whatever that looks like, I just think there's something that naturally comes out of us as a response.

And hearing the sound of your own praise, like you said, turning off all the noise and singing your own song, there's just something else to that. But it is. It's the reason that we gather again for church in that... You know, the churches aren't as full right now, right?

Annie: Yeah.

Katie: We've streamed for so long, it's hard to go back. We made church bacon every Sunday. We call it church bacon now.

Annie: Oh my gosh, church bacon.

Katie: Our 4-year-old thinks that because during the pandemic every Sunday we made bacon that's called church bacon.

Annie: Oh, that is fun.

Katie: We had it on Sundays. And we would stream the service and we would have cinnamon rolls and bacon. And so she's like, "Can we have church bacon?" So when we went back to church, she was like, "Are we going to have church bacon?" We're like, "We gotta get to church. We don't have time to cook church bacon."

But we streamed for so long and we sat kind of there. And it was such a gift to be able to have technology during the season. So thankful. Like honestly.

Annie: I agree.

Katie: I put on the podcast, we put on Live worship on YouTube. We filled our house with that day in and day out during this last couple years, especially. But there's nothing like being in the room. There's nothing like that.

We're so passionate about God pours out His Spirit when we gather together in person. It's a sacrifice to be there. And you might go 20 times and not feel like, "Wow, this was so different than the stream." But I believe that God will pour His spirit out on us as we gather in person.

We talked about that all the time. We've been talking about that with our friends a lot as worship leaders, because it's been a tougher season as leaders in the church and for our pastors and everything. And recording for that stream for the last couple of years was just like, "Wow, this is different." It took a toll I think. But I do believe that we're on the brink of something. That quote is very prophetic, I feel like.

Annie: I know.

Katie: It just feels like even-

Annie: Very Ray Hughes of him.

Katie: It's very Ray Hughes. But there's something else that happens with music that's not just recorded that you're just playing and just consuming.

Annie: One of the gifts y'all's give on the album, *I've Got Good News* album, too is there is space and songs at times that invites me to sing what I'm thinking. So even in space while... Because all of us aren't as good at like, it's quiet, sing your own song. But I

can sing what I'm thinking in between what you're singing. And so I think even just doing that because... Is it David? Is it a Psalm that says, "Sing a new song? Is that a psalm?"

Bryan: Sure. Yeah.

Annie: Yes, I think it is.

Katie: It's multiple places, I believe.

Annie: Yes. But it's like that is for all of us. That isn't just for worship leaders. Right?

Katie: Yeah.

Annie: And so figuring out how to invite your own song in when it's not what you're most gifted at, but recognizing that is a tool against the enemy.

Katie: It is a tool. And it makes me think of when we... One of the toughest albums that we've ever had to release... Actually, it was an EP. It was called *Praise Before My Breakthrough*-

Annie: Yes, I know, gal.

Katie: That song was the perfect example of why I had to sing my own song again. Because there was another period of time that I went through where I was like, "I don't have a song to sing. I've sung for years this thing my whole life.

I mean, the reason I ever started singing was in my room actually as a little girl I struggled with so much fear and so many nightmares and stuff like that. We joke about it now having a 4-year-old. But my parents kind of taught me, "You can change the atmosphere in your room if you worship Jesus. The songs that you learn in Sunday school, you know, if you wake up in the night with a nightmare, you don't have to come to our room. You can just lift up your praise."

Bryan: "You don't have to come interrupt our sleep.

Annie: "Don't come talk to us. Just talk to Jesus."

Katie: "Just talk to the Lord, honey. Change the atmosphere." It's funny now because I'm like, "That's a genius move." But also, hey, I really learned that I could change the atmosphere with praise.

Bryan: The room.

Annie: So why was that a hard album to release? As you can see, I'm showing you it's already hearted, all downloaded.

Katie: Oh, thank you.

Annie: *My Hallelujah, Prophecy Your Promise.*

Katie: Whoa.

Annie: Listen...

Katie: There's a line in that one that we get a lot of questions. In *Prophecy Your Promise.*

Annie: Really?

Katie: Yes. Which once again... Are we saying this on the podcast? I don't know.

Annie: Yes.

Katie: Well, it's a lyric in a worship song. So I feel like it's probably-

Annie: Yeah, it's fine.

Katie: Okay. But it's the bridge of that song specifically. So that song is about prophesying the promises that God has spoken over your life in a season that you can't see those promises. They have not manifested.

So there's a line in that song that during my pregnancy with our little girl, I was the sickest I've ever been in my whole life. I couldn't talk about it for years, honestly. It was really difficult. It took me out. I think hormonally too, just practically like... Oh, I'm going to try not to cry. I can already feel it coming up.

I was dealing with a lot of depression and anxiety. I didn't know what it was at the time. But I was just super sick. I couldn't drive myself, had hyperemesis. Probably some of your listeners have heard of that before, HG. And it was just awful. So I dealt with so much fear and anxiety. I had seen so much defeat because of those things in that pregnancy that I felt like I did not have a song to sing anymore.

Annie: Wow.

Katie: And the song *Defender*, Rita Springer wrote that song. Some of our other friends actually wrote on to it. That was the song for me that somebody else wrote it, but it was the word that I needed to sing until I had my own song again. And then I felt like God asked me to sing my own song again.

But when I walked downstairs one day after being sick for like a week in my room, in our upstairs bedroom, I heard Bryan on the piano just singing, just playing. It wasn't the same melody that's on the record, but he was just like, "Fear can go to hell." And I just broke down and cried. I was just-

Annie: Shame can go there too.

Katie: Shame can go there too. I know whose I am. God, I belong to you. And it was just like, oh, it gave me language again, you know.

Annie: Is that what y'all get yelled at? The verse "fear can go to hell"?

Katie: I think people are confused by that.

Bryan: I think most people love it but she feels nervous.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, There's like three people... The nature of this whole public thing. Three loud people and we think everyone.

Katie: Yeah.

Bryan: Yeah.

Annie: Me too. Me too.

Katie: I know. I know.

Bryan: When we do it live though, if people haven't heard, it's like the first time people are like, "Oh." And then by the second or third time, they're like, "Yes, fear can go to hell."

Katie: We like to give a little context. There's a couple of songs we've written like that. But I'm like, I feel like if I give people context that it feels a little safer. You know, it's such a weighty thing to ask people to sing words that you wrote. There's a lot of weight behind that. Well, you're writer yourself.

- Annie:** But I'm not ever like, "Everyone, sing that back to me. Say back to me what I just said to you."
- Katie:** Oh, my gosh, I don't know, declarations and stuff. But they are so powerful. So we don't take that lightly at all. We have another song that just came out on this record called *Sound Mind*. And when we can tell people, "Here's where you can find this in the Bible. God did not give us a spirit of fear but power and love and sound mind." And then when you ask them to sing it, there's peace and there's something to that that feels a little safer. But that song specifically, yeah, sometimes I'll say fear can go back to hell.
- Annie:** That's right. That's true too.
- Katie:** I'm like, "If you need to-
- Annie:** If that makes you feel a little better.
- Katie:** But those were the words when it was... When we're talking about the words when we're talking about the Ray Hughes quote. That it gave me language again to be like, "This is what I need to say." This has to come out of my own mouth. It's not enough for somebody to sing this over me or play this album again and again. At some point, these words have to come out of my own mouth.
- Annie:** When I was in kind of a funk just in my life, I had COVID, blah, blah, all the things, and I was like, "Why can't I like rally?" And I realized I hadn't put on worship music the whole time. And I was like, "Oh, it's because I haven't invited God to do things here the way worship music does." So I was a little girl. My mom and dad were like, "Don't come in here. You work it out."
- Bryan:** "You work it out."
- Annie:** "You work it out."
- Katie:** "God will come just for you and your room."
- Annie:** "You have everything you need." So it just matters so much. Bryan, tell me what you love about the new album, *I've Got Good News*."
- Bryan:** We're proud of it. It's our first live album that we ever did. We loved the studio. We love leading worship at church and on tours and stuff. But to record a live, we're like, "This feels like a lot of pressure." But it was really beautiful and just have a space... It was one of the first worship things that we did coming out of 2021 where

we really felt like the passion and energy of people going after God together where it-

Katie: It was electric.

Bryan: It took us off guard. We're like, Wow, people-

Annie: Did y'all record it at Jesus Culture?

Katie: No.

Bryan: No. We recorded it at a church in Costa Mesa. It's actually like a kind of a random long story, but we felt like God led us there. It ended up being a really beautiful night where we felt like—we've talked about this—where in a lot of ways, it just felt like God displayed His kindness. Like you could feel the kindness of God in the room.

Katie: It was really interesting. There was people there that we knew and then people of other friends that we knew. That barely made sense. But you know what I mean.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, I'm with you.

Katie: ...that haven't stepped foot in a church in years. And we were led there that night, for some reason. I don't know, God drew them. The presence of God drew them. There was something, like Bryan said, just about the kindness of God resting on us. It was so hope-filled that night.

Annie: Wow.

Katie: And I think just once again talking about the simplicity of the gospel and Jesus, Jesus draws people. You don't have to work hard-

Annie: You can feel hope-filled when you listen. When you tell me that's what happened, I'm like, Oh, that's the thing I feel when I listen to this album.

Katie: That's awesome.

Annie: That makes so much sense.

Katie: It's always hard to know if it will translate. But I just know that Jesus does all the work. We put Jesus up, we put Jesus' name up, He draws the people, He heals the people, He brings hope to people, He restores people.

We've been doing this, as, I guess, recording all our worship and everything for the last 10 years, and it's just Jesus. I don't know. We don't have anything else to offer people. We try our best to be excellent at whatever we do, but ultimately Jesus draws people on His own.

Annie: That's right.

Katie: And so we're so thankful for that. And we're thankful to be able to continue to do this and hopefully just continue to tell the story of Jesus and bring hope to people.

Annie: Okay. Now, because these Friday's episodes are all musicians, I need to know who are y'all listening to. What should we be listening to this weekend besides *I've Got Good News*? That's the one we're all spinning. But what else?

Bryan: You know what? We just listened to it. One of our friends, Josh Baldwin, has a song called *Narrow Road*. We really love it.

Katie: Oh, yes.

Annie: He's so good.

Bryan: He's so good.

Katie: It's one of my favorites from him.

Annie: Okay.

Bryan: He's getting better at golf and he's great. He's so much better at golf than I am. He's one of our friends.

Katie: Let the truth be told, he's amazing at golf and music.

Bryan: That song we both listened to it when it came out because we like to try and listen to our friend's songs. But that one we were like, "Oh."

Annie: The gift of Fridays, right? We open Spotify and everybody's new music is right there waiting on us.

Katie: I just let it all roll on-

Annie: Me too.

- Katie:** ...maybe the Spotify playlist, all new Music Friday, worship and gospel music. I like Mosaic's [singing] This is how I thank the Lord for lo... I don't know all the words. But I love this song. There's a new version I think with Amanda Cook and Cody Carnes and Joe L.
- Bryan:** Joe L.
- Katie:** Go listen to that.
- Annie:** I don't know who Joe L is.
- Bryan:** He's from Maverick City.
- Annie:** Oh, okay.
- Katie:** You've heard him.
- Bryan:** *Promises*.
- Katie:** You've heard him.
- Annie:** Oh, *Promises*. I do know him.
- Bryan:** It's Joe L and Raine Naomi.
- Katie:** Yebba. Worship music by Yebba.
- Bryan:** Yeah, we do listen to Yebba. Also, our daughter loves the song *Louie Bag*. She calls it Loony Bag. [singing] Put it in my Loony bag.
- Katie:** It's a banger.
- Annie:** It is. It is. For every age.
- Katie:** I know. It's timeless already.
- Annie:** It is multi-generational. Okay, the last question we always ask, you guys. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.
- Katie:** What sounds fun to you, Bryan? Build some more stuff in our backyard?

Bryan: No, no. Going to the movie.

Annie: Yeah?

Bryan: We used to do this thing all the time where we would... because we were married for eight years before we had Indigo, we would go... Because we travel a lot-

Katie: Monday matinee.

Bryan: We'd go to Monday matinee. It would be us and like two old people in the movie theaters. And we loved it. So we haven't gotten to that many movies in the last few years. And I miss it.

Katie: That sounds amazing.

Bryan: Yeah.

Katie: Where we're doing our songwriting, there's gorgeous studio space, and it makes me want to go to like a vintage store.

Annie: Okay.

Katie: Because everything's just like... I'm like, "Is this from the 1800s? Where did you find this stuff?" Which I'm sure it's been curated for like years. But it is like a side passion of mine. I'm like, I want to go to a vintage store, thrift store. That always sounds fun to me. I'd love to see fun treasures.

Annie: There's good ones down in Franklin in Leipers Fork area?

Katie: Well, might have to sneak away.

Annie: How long are y'all in town?

Katie: Actually like five days.

Annie: Oh, yeah. You have time. You should.

Katie: I might sneak away.

Annie: Yes, you totally should.

Bryan: If we don't have time we'll make time because there's too many ducks in a row.

Annie: And also you should see a movie while you're here.

Katie: Probably.

Annie: It's great. A bunch of my friends and I, a bunch of five, have the Regal pass where you... just like a subscription and none of us are married with kids yet. So it's like, "You want to go again? You want to go again?" I mean, it is like-

Katie: "Should we see that again?"

Annie: Yeah. "Do you want to see that one more time?" Because it costs us no money. It feels free to me. I know it's not, but it feels free to me.

Katie: Well, get your money's worth.

Annie: That's right. You guys, thanks for doing this today and making time. It means so much.

Bryan: Thank you for having us.

Katie: Thank you.

Annie: Anytime really. You know this, but anytime. If there's something that you want to talk about whether you have an album or not, you're welcome here.

Katie: Thanks. We'll just hang out.

Annie: Yeah. If there's nothing to talk about, we'll find something.

Katie: We'll find something.

Annie: I believe it.

[00:44:47] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, don't you love them? Okay, you just have to open whatever your favorite app is where you listen to music and make sure you stream and download their album *I've Got Good News*. Go back and just get all of them. Just go back and get all of them. I'm telling you, that Prophecy the Promise song, y'all, y'all, you just have to.

If you aren't listening to Katie and Bryan Torwalt for your entire weekend, I have not served you well, I have not served you well today. You guys, you've got to. You've got to.

And go follow them, tell them thank you so much for being on the show. And be sure to catch their concerts when they come near you. You're gonna love seeing them live. And like we talked about, there is something different when you are not just listening to music through a machine but when you are experiencing it. So let's get out there and see these concerts.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me. And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same.

Today what sounds fun to me is y'all know about my knee, and today is the day that my PT says I can go on a walk. I can't wait to go on a walk. So that's what sounds fun to me. Listen, if your body is working, get out there and walk because we are lucky that we get to. I'm ready to be a moving person again.

Y'all have a great weekend. I know it's a long weekend for some of you, so enjoy that Labor Day end-of-summer goodness. We'll see you back here on Monday on Labor Day with my buddy and fellow That Sounds Fun Network host, Matthew West. He's got a new book and y'all are gonna love hearing about this. He is the perfect guy for a holiday episode. We'll see you guys on Monday. Have a great weekend.