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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. Y'all, I'm so happy to be here with you today. This show! This show! We've got a great show in store.

Before we dive into today's conversation, a word from one of our amazing sponsors, [BetterHelp](#). At work, problem-solving comes pretty naturally to me. The puzzles we get to put together every day at work are energizing and fun for me most days.

I bet you're like that too, where one area of problem-solving comes a little more easily, but sometimes problem-solving skills don't tag along with some of the other challenges I'm facing in maybe my personal life. It's why I'm so grateful for the support of my therapist over the years.

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And always be sure to check out our show notes for the links to our sponsors, the transcript of the show, and so you can sign up for the AFD Week in Review email that we send out every Friday. It's very fun. You don't want to miss it.

Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with my new friend, Cynt Marshall. I can believe I get to call her friend, you guys. I respect her time 1 billion. Listen, Cynt is the CEO of the Dallas Mavericks and AT&T's former SVP of human resources and chief diversity officer.

She's a trailblazer in business and in sports to things that I love, and one of the most positive, joyful people you'll ever meet. I mean, I adore her. You guys, I adore her. Her new book, *You've Been Chosen: Thriving Through the Unexpected*, tells her

story of resilience and faith. It is unbelievable. She's unbelievable. We're going to talk all about it.

And for MiniBFFs and for any of your friends, we do talk about domestic violence a little bit. So I just want to give you a heads up about that. It's a beautiful redemptive story but there is some things I wanted you to know ahead of time.

So here is my conversation with one of my newest heroes who I adore so much that I can't stop saying it, Cynt Marshall.

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Annie: Okay, Cynt, welcome to That Sounds Fun. I'm so honored to have you here.

Cynt: Thank you. Thanks for inviting me. It's exciting.

Annie: Oh, my gracious! Does it feel exciting to have this book out? Is that kind of what's going on in your body?

Cynt: Yes, it is. It is. Because for so long it was my cancer journal, and so many people have told me that, you know, "Turn it into a book." People were calling for it all the time. I was just sending it out as hard copies. And finally, the Lord just impressed upon me to get it out.

So many people wanted me to just totally focus on my career or whatever, and I said, "No, the Lord wants me to get this cancer story plus a few different stories. He wants me to get it out.

Annie: I mean, that is so interesting to me that this started... Because you do a beautiful job of weaving your journal of cancer throughout the book. But I mean, you go back to your childhood up till now being the CEO of the Dallas Mavericks. I mean, you cover the whole thing.

How did you decide how much goes in there? Were they these moments in your letters where you went, like, "Oh, I'm gonna have to tell people about my parents," or "I'm gonna have to tell people about my kids"?

Cynt: That was all the publisher and this woman who was helping write it. Because I really just wanted to talk about cancer. And I gave them the cancer journal, put a little flavor around it, and I just said, "This is what it's about."

And after they interviewed me, they said, "There is no way that you could have gotten through cancer the way you did without other things having happened in

your life." Because you know, in that first email to my team, I said, "You know, I'm equipped to handle this."

And they said, "We need to talk about why you were equipped to handle this. Throughout your journal you talked about being chosen for different things. You have been chosen and now you got to tell the story." So it was all of them, Annie. I did not want to do it. I didn't. I didn't want to do this book.

Annie: Ain't that the way the Lord works? Ain't that the way He does?

Cynt: It is. I said, "I don't want to tell all that." But then I went back to what my mom said, "This is for His glory and you will tell the story one day." And I guess it was not just the cancer story, but His story about goodness and grace in my life.

I actually liked the way it came out. I was kicking and screaming. But I liked it. And I liked the way they set it up. So I guess, you know, as always, the Lord had a plan.

Annie: Yeah, it just amazes me because I'm thinking about my friends that I know and... I didn't get to tell you as part of my story, but my sister lost an infant baby this summer. So we just did a funeral two weeks ago. And in your story, there are four miscarriages and an infant death. Is that correct?

Cynt: Yes, that is correct.

Annie: So the moms who are going to connect with the loss and the aunts... I mean, I'm an aunt in the story who was weeping right along with you, and then the cancer survivors and the cancer families, and then also NBA fans who know that you are like top of the game in the NBA. I mean, Cynt, you're everything. It's amazing that you're adoptive mom. So we're just gonna go through a lot of it if that's okay with you-

Cynt: I love it. I love it.

Annie: We'll start at the end and work backwards. One of our friends wrote in and said, "What's the most fun part about being the CEO of the Dallas Mavs?"

Cynt: I get to go to 41 parties every year.

Annie: You go to every home game.

Cynt: Yes! Because my team puts on the whole home experience. So we do that. So I get to go to 41 parties with 20,000 people every year. And then of course, you know, I

pick out of the, you know, away games, which I want to go to. So I get to party and enjoy the fans and enjoy our guys. It's an experience. So I have a lot of fun in my life. That's the best part of it.

Annie: I was stalking through your Instagram, and I was looking through your son Anthony's Instagram as well, and he had you and him right in the car, and he said, every time you go to the game you're listening to *Ain't No Mountain High Enough*.

Cynt: Oh, my gosh, that is true. That's my theme song.

Annie: That's your hype song.

Cynt: It's my theme song in life. Okay, that's my song because you know the story. So *Ain't No Mountain High Enough*, okay?

Annie: Yes.

Cynt: So I just rolled up in there and I got my music going, my vibe going, and I am just appreciating God's goodness and what He's done in my life. And I go in there pumped up every game. I mean, the music is wild in the cars. It's crazy.

Annie: Could you ever imagine being the CEO of an NBA team?

Cynt: Absolutely not. Absolutely not. That wasn't even part of my psyche. I mean, it wasn't even in my dream. At one point, I was wanting to be an engineer. Then I decided I want to be a businesswoman and work for a big corporation. I had my family plans all laid out. Never said one day I want to be the CEO of an NBA team.

I love basketball but never thought I'd be working in basketball. I didn't even know anything about the business side of basketball. But obviously, I was chosen to do it. I got that call from Mark Cuban out of nowhere. I mean, I didn't even know Mark Cuban. I didn't even know him when he called me.

Annie: Wow.

Cynt: But I know a man. I know a man. Great guy. Great guy. I'm together with as my partner.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. I mean, the title of the book, *You've Been Chosen*, I think it's so interesting when we... We could spend a whole show talking about you've been chosen to lead in the way you're leading. A black woman, first black woman leading an NBA team. But also you were chosen as an adoptive mom, and you were chosen for the pain you've experienced in abusive household growing up.

How do you reconcile you were chosen by God to have the parents you had, your mother seems extraordinary, and your father was abusive, and you were chosen to be the Mavs CEO? So how do you reconcile the chosen for the pain and chosen for the joy?

Cynt: Because, you know, the Lord has so much for us to go through. I say it's my story, but it's also history. And so there's good, great, bad, and ugly. It's all in there. And the Lord equips us.

What I try to get across in the book is that everything that's happened in my life, I believe, happened as a setup for something else that was going to happen, whether it was good or bad. So to be able to get through a cancer... Probably I have faced so much adversity in my life by that point that it's like, "Here's another thing."

Yes, it was devastating, it was the second most awful thing I've gone through—the death of my daughter was first—but it wasn't the first time I faced adversity. But then also there's a lot of joy in things that have happened in my life. So the Lord will give you the ups and the downs and He will just use that as a setup for you to help other people and to be there for other people.

So can you imagine how many people I get to talk to and get to text from a personal experience standpoint, whether it's good or bad? I mean women that are getting promoted in corporate America and the excitement of that, but then what you need to do, you know, once you actually start that job all the way to somebody who is burying an infant child.

And I have those experiences, and I'm willing to share them. I think sometimes the Lord will choose people who will be out there, who will put themselves out there to help people. And I think I'm one of those.

Annie: I feel like I'm in the middle of some of that versus at the end of looking back and going, you know, even my knee stuff, even having a knee surgeon's week of going, "Man, Lord, this is the middle." So will you talk to our friends who are in the middle of the suffering, who know that there's joy around... I mean, I saw Shania Twain in concert this weekend. So I'm holding both.

Talk to us a little bit about the people who are in the middle that are going, "Man, my infant just died" or "My husband is in the hospital like your husband was" or "The adoption isn't going through like we thought it would" or "I'm not getting the promotion." What about the people in the middle? How do we hang on to the end? When do we know if the end is coming?

Cynt: I will tell you. I have a saying and it goes, "Sometimes the light at the end of the tunnel is a train."

Annie: Oh, Lord.

Cynt: Bad things do happen to good people. I mean, bad things happen to good people. It's not always goodness. The light doesn't always represent goodness. Sometimes it really is a train.

And what I have learned every time I have been down, every time I've been down, the Lord got me back up. And it was a hand that reached down. So whether it was my husband reaching down to pull me up off that staircase when I kind of like just fell out after we buried our daughter and was laying there the whole weekend while he was gone.

Annie: I could not believe that, that you did not get up off the floor for the whole weekend.

Cynt: I couldn't get it. I just couldn't get up. I was on my way up the stairs, we had gone through - what? Six months of, you know, just to back and forth with the hospital. And then she passed away, then we buried her that week. So it was the first time I was just... I mean, we had just come from the funeral and he wanted to go and see his folks who live three hours away. And I said, "I don't want to do that. I just want to go to bed."

And I was going up those stairs, Annie, and I saw the room that was going to be her nursery. So I caught that out, you know, a glimpse of my eye off to the left side and I just couldn't take it anymore. I

truly believe it was the Lord just releasing all of that and just saying, "Give it to me. You don't have to carry this load by yourself. That's what I'm here for. That's what the cross was all about. I took this already.

Annie: Wow.

Cynt: So I just laid out and I gave it to Him. And when my husband came home and saw me laying there from there Friday afternoon into that Sunday evening with the same clothes on, he said, "Have you been laying here the whole time?" And I just looked at him, I said, "Yes, and I've been crying the whole time."

He just literally put his hand down, which is what the Lord does all the time. He took his hand, and I grabbed his hand. I grabbed his hand. He picked me up, took me to the bedroom. I got a good night's sleep, and got up the next day, and just started my healing journey.

Annie: Wow.

Cynt: There truly is always light on the other side, even when that train knocks you over. But sometimes you need people to help you get there. And if there's nobody around, then that's when I put on some of my gospel music and I just get in that prayer closet and talk to the Lord. Because there's always hope. There's always hope.

And there's always somebody who's gone through what you have gone through for the most part. I have learned that. That sometimes you just have to open up, find those support groups, find those people at church. You have to talk to people. That's why I think sometimes it's just so good to share stories because you never know. You never know.

I mean, when I was working, and then I would say something about, "Yeah, I know how it is to have a man hit you. My father broke my nose when I was 15." And then I would show them the scar. They go, "Cynt, no way." "So if you ever want to talk about it, let's talk about it." And then they call me and I help them through it.

So I just know the Lord always... He always shows up. And that's what I hope comes across in this book. That no matter what, God and good people always show up. They've always showed up in my life. And I've been chosen for some great things I have been chosen for pain. I've been chosen for some crazy things. The Lord was in all of it. In all of it. So you can get through it. You can get through the storm.

Annie: I loved in the book where you said, "I don't get to ask why. That's none of my business."

Cynt: It's none of my business.

Annie: I was about to have a revival on my couch in that moment and I was like, "You know what? She's right. The why behind why I'm chosen for all this right now is actually none of my business."

Cynt: No, it's His business."

Annie: Yes.

Cynt: It's His business. I thank the Lord all the time that my mother was a woman of faith and she raised us that way. So I am a strong woman of faith. And so I learned a long time ago... My mother used to tell us—this was when I was a teenager, early

20s—she'd say, "Okay, just kind of give it to the Lord. He has a plan and He knows what to do. His thoughts are not our thoughts, His ways are not our ways." And I said, "Yes." She said, "So give it to the Lord. Put it on the altar and leave it there."

And then the next thing, you know, I'm talking about it or I'm trying to handle something, she said, "I thought you left that on the altar." And I said, "Well, yeah, yeah, but I'm the Lord's assistant. I need to help Him."

Annie: "He might need me."

Cynt: "I thought I need to help him. He got a lot to do." Right?

Annie: He has overlooked some things.

Cynt: And she would say, "Nope, He knows His business. He knows His business and sometimes He's not going to share with you everything that's going on, but you'd have to trust Him." So I learned that at an early age, as painful as it is, as hard as it is, especially a person like me, I like to control my life and have my little to-do list and I like to know what's going on, and I want to be able to see around the corner. And sometimes He just will not reveal what's around the corner. He needs me to trust Him.

That's not easy. That's sometimes hard for me but I learned to do it. I learned to do it. And He always has a good plan. He knows what to do. It's His business.

And now back to finish up my conversation with Cynt.

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Annie: I mean, you mentioned your prayer room, your prayer closet. Do you got a real place that's set aside for prayer?

Cynt: Yes. And I actually need to clean it out this weekend because somehow somebody threw some blankets in there. This is my prayer closet. So it's right outside my bedroom.

Before I could have a prayer closet, I just had a space in my house, or when I first got married, a space in my apartment, where I could just go and like, "This is my consecrated place where it's me and the Lord and this is where I kind of just release my mind, release my heart and just talk to God and have Him, more important, talk to me."

So now I'm blessed to actually have a little closet. It's supposed to be a cloth closet. And so I'm like, "No, no." When we first bought this house, I'm like, "Oh, no, no, no, I know exactly what that is." So I have a tapestry up in there, tapestry that a church actually gave me in 2011 when I was going through chemo. So it's a big tapestry. It's a picture of a church, and they prayed on it, different scriptures. So I actually have that up in my prayer closet.

And then I have little PostIt notes, where I have different names that I write down of people that are going through different things. Like I will put your name down and say, "Lord, bless her knee." So when I hear different things, I'll write the names down.

And then I go in there every morning. I mean, hopefully I can go in there more times than just in the morning. But religiously every morning I am in there. I have my music in there and I start my day off with this song called *Before the Day*. I don't know if you know that song.

Annie: No.

Cynt: Basically it says, Lord, before the day gets... in the essence of it is, "Before the day gets going I just want to tell you how much I love you. I just want to spend time with you." I'll try to look it up later so I can tell you who sings it. But it's one of my favorites. So that's how I start my day.

Then I'll go to Donnie McClurkin. I pump it up a little bit more because before the day is real meditative like and then I'll pray and have my time about 10, 15 minutes. And then I'll put on Donnie McClurkin and I'll start pumping whatever song I just feel like I want to hear that day. That's how I start my day.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Cynt: There are some times though when I can't start my day that way because I just jump up in a frenzy or especially like when my kids were still at home. And I always feel different. It doesn't go the way it needs to go when I don't start my day like that. I have to give Him His time so He can just order my mind and my heart and my steps for that day.

Annie: Everyone needs to hear that because you are... three kids y'all raised, right?

Cynt: Actually, four. Four. And Rickey. So four.

Annie: Oh, yeah. Of course, Rickey. Oh, I love that story of Rickey and Anthony and the way they took care of each other. I cannot wait for people to read that. That is unbelievable.

Cynt: It's so precious. Thank you for reading my book.

Annie: Oh, of course. Are you kidding?

Cynt: Oh, my gosh.

Annie: I was flipping through it, I was like, "We're not gonna have time to talk about everything. There's too much good stuff in here." So people just got to read the whole thing. I mean raising kids, AT&T executive, CEO of the Mavs, I mean, wife, friend, leader of a church. The world would say to you, you do not have time in the morning.

Cynt: Oh, yes, I do.

Annie: But you have time.

Cynt: The reason I am strong enough and have the stamina, and the mental capability to do everything else is because of how I start my day. I really believe that that is where my energy comes from, that's where my sense of direction comes from. Sometimes I'm in there and I'll just... I mean, what I try to do also is when I'm doing my Donnie McClurkin and I'm jamming—and it can be something that I'm jamming to—so I will pull up my schedule for the day.

Annie: Wow.

Cynt: I do it the night before, but then I'll just look at it again to make sure, you know, nothing has changed. And sometimes I'm... honestly this sounds weird.

Annie: No, I love it.

Cynt: So your listeners might think I'm kind of weird. But sometimes the Lord might speak to me, "Cancel that one" or "do something else" or "call somebody else," literally when I'm looking at my calendar. So my team sometimes they will laugh at me.

I'll just call them, I'll say, "Okay, let's see if we can reschedule this," or "something's not right. I gotta research this. "I'm not sure Lord wants me to do this today." And they're like, "Okay, okay." Because I mean for Him to order my steps.

I have tried to do it all on my own for so long and mess things up. So I'm about giving it to Him now. If I know He's speaking to me, I have to respond to that. But that's how I get to do everything I get to do because I get that's my source of strength and energy. That's just where it comes from. Truly is where it comes from.

You know, we used to sing a song when I was growing up in church that says, This joy that I have, the world didn't give it to me and the world can't take it away. And it's the truth. The joy and strength that I have comes from the Lord. It really does. That's just who He is. He's a source of strength.

Annie: On your chemo days, you know, you talk in the book about when you get chemo brain and you're forgetting... Your daughter's coming in and yelling her name at you in the end, reminding everybody who comes in she yells, "Here's Aunt Yvonne! She's here." I loved it.

So on those mornings, did you have a little bit different rhythm? I'm thinking about our friends going through some sort of medical treatment now who are going, "I wish I could get out of bed but I'm not getting out of bed right now."

Cynt: I couldn't. I couldn't. I just couldn't. And that's why it's good to have those deposits already and to have that life because every now and then you got to withdraw those deposits because you can't make any more deposits. You just can't.

And when I was going through chemo, I was in the withdrawal stage. It's like I gotta take from the bank. Okay, hope I got enough in there. And if I don't, I gotta have people around me that have a deposit of something that they can pull from the Lord because I couldn't.

There were days where I was just literally laying on the floor in a fetal position. Trying to deal with my neuropathy, trying to deal with just everything going on. I didn't feel like myself. My 14-day chemo cycle, I described it as I had nine bad days and just nonsense-like days because I didn't want to call them bad days but in essence, they were just awful. I mean, chemo was brutal for me.

And then I'd have five more like Sundays where I could do something. And in those nine days, I couldn't be in there in the prayer closet and trying to do all that. I barely have the strength to like walk up the stairs. So you just try to withdraw.

Annie: Yeah, withdrawal from that bank.

Cynt: It's okay.

Annie: But when we're healthy, get in there.

Cynt: Right. It's okay, because you never know when something is gonna hit you. That hit me out of nowhere. I mean, it was my 51st birthday. I got a call from the gastroenterologist telling me what he saw in the colonoscopy results the day before and to get to a surgeon. And I knew it wasn't good. So that was out of nowhere. I'm supposed to be celebrating my birthday. I'm in the office. And I was working on my birthday because I want to be around for the surprise parties, okay?

Annie: I gotta be around for the celebrations.

Cynt: I walked in and like, "Okay, I hope they're all staring in the back. Mm-hmm, they're getting ready for my surprise party."

Annie: "I'm gonna eat a breakfast, a lunch and a snack." Surprise.

Cynt: So I'm at work. I mean, I'm at work and I'm in the conference room with these people who are doing this routine on us, and my goodness, I never expected that when he called me he was going to be that serious about getting to a surgeon. So we just put it all in perspective that fast. Like, okay.

Annie: Is that right when you started writing the journals? Did you immediately start sending out the emails to people?

Cynt: So right after I had the surgery and the tumor was cancerous and all that and then when the doctor called me in New Year's Eve and told me, you know, the results, it was few days later, January 2nd I think it was, when I sent out a message to my team members because I just felt like at some point... I ran a big state for AT&T, so at some point, it's going to get public, right? Especially because I had a big event to do and I didn't show up to it because of course I was at the doctor's office.

So I sent an email to them. And I told them that, yes, I'm uniquely equipped for this but I had to let them know exactly kind of what was going on. That was kind of my first public writing about it. And then once I started chemo, you know, so many different people were calling... It's just beautiful how people just show up for you.

So my executive assistant had an idea, she says, "We probably need to do a CaringBridge post." And I never heard, of course, of CaringBridge. Cancer wasn't really a part of my life that I knew of. My father died the year before from colon cancer, but I never put things together.

So she said, "So many people are calling, so maybe this would be a good way to just direct people where they can go and get a status." And at first, I thought, "I'm

not doing it. Well, I'll just tell people what's going on. I'm not gonna have time... And I love to write, okay? But I'm not going to have time to write."

Well, then it turned out to be a good thing because so many people were calling. It was a good problem to have. So many people call in, wonder what I need, how could they pray, all of that. So we decided we would do it.

So after my first round of chemo, I couldn't do it. I was so out of it. But someone on my team, Rob Smith—I love Rob Smith—he did the posting. So he wrote it. And he wrote it, obviously, you know, first-round bad side effects. But he did the first one.

And then after that, I was able to do it and come to my account for my team and some others. They would show up and proofread it or try to just help me through it. Sometimes I had to change the timing. Sometimes I would do it right before the chemo or right after. But it was always that first round to give people an update on what was going on.

But I was brutally honest. I was so honest about what was happening with me and what was going on. And it just turned out to be when it was all said and done just a chronicle of my 12 rounds of chemo to the point where people would start to call and say, "Cynt, can you send your chemo journal to so and so?" or "can you send it to me? You know, somebody in my life was touched with cancer and blah, blah, blah." So it turned out to be something that the Lord really used to inspire people and to help them on the journey.

Annie: I love how you title the chapters based on the rounds of chemo. I thought that was such an interesting way to shape it. There's a story you tell in there that's one of my favorites about when you prayed for President Obama before he was President. Can you tell that story? Because that is so fun.

Cynt: Oh, my goodness! Yes. I get this call, I'm in this meeting, and they asked me if I can leave the meeting that's like an hour and a half away because President Obama was—He was not the president at the time. He's running for president—was going to be in Charlotte in a big event.

And because I was the President of AT&T in North Carolina, maybe even Virginia too at the time, but definitely North Carolina, so they wanted me there. And I was involved in the chamber and all this. So they wanted a lot of big wig dignitaries. I mean, I don't consider myself a big wig, but I was a business leader.

So I get there... You read the story. So I go through all this. I want to stand in line with everybody else. They won't let me - the secret service.

Annie: They won't you.

Cynt: So I said no, "I'm standing in line with everybody else." It was long line of people. It was hot. I said, "I'm just standing in line with everybody else." When that car door opened, literally the Secret Service they came and they swooped me up, because what they were trying to do was get all of us seated before they opened the doors because they've got to do the whole scan and... I understand it. I understand why they did that.

So I get in there and I'm like, "Okay, I cannot believe I am sitting on this front row and I'm gonna see Barack Obama. So of course I do what I always do. Like I would call my mom. I called my mom, I said, "Do you think it's okay." I said, "What should I do? Do you think it's okay if I pray with him?" She's goes, "Yeah, definitely, just pray with him." I said, "Okay, I'm gonna pray for him."

So he comes around, and I am so nervous. My chief of staff is standing next to me and she's nervous. And we're like, "Oh, my gosh, I'm gonna like shake his hand." I can't believe we did this. So obviously, his people prep him, right? And he says, "Well, Hello, Madam President."

Annie: Madam President. I loved it.

Cynt: Of course, I'm the president of AT&T in North Carolina, right? And I'm like, "Oh, my gosh." So I just got a smile. I said, "Can I pray for you?" He said, "Of course, I would love that." So he closes his eyes.

So I went to one of my go-to scriptures, okay? I grabbed his hands, and I go to my scripture that says, "No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper." But I guess the Secret Service people heard "weapon." All of a sudden, all this stuff is brought on, they're reaching for step. I look up, he's laughing. I said, "Hah." I said, "This is all scripture." I said, "This is the Lord's scripture."

I felt so bad. I learned my lesson. When you are praying for people like that, you better come up with the scripture in advance because that is truly my go-to scripture. And that was my prayer for him because, you know, so many death threats. You know, he was just in such a vulnerable position. And that was my prayer for him. And I wanted him to know that the weapons would form but they wouldn't prosper. But I guess I was supposed to tell him that right then.

The fun part is, when that was all said and done, he was looking for me to come in the back to finish praying for him but I had already left because I had another

commitment. I was already committed to go and talk to these women. I didn't want to lead them.

And I probably was embarrassed too and just wanted to get out of there. They said, "He's like, 'Where is she? Where's Madam President? I need her to pray for me. I feel something. I need her to pray for me.'" I said, "Tell him I'll catch him next time," which of course, as you know, in the book, the next time I actually did see him, he was praying for me because I had cancer.

Annie: Yes. Yes. I mean, when you said no weapon and all those Secret Service guys, I got so tickled. I was laughing so hard at that part..

Cynt: It was scary. It was scary but also embarrassing.

Annie: But ain't that great though?

Cynt: But he laughed. Oh, he laughed.

Annie: And people need to know that people with prayer closets are gonna have moments like that too. Right? Like both of those are true.

Cynt: I guess that was the wrong scripture. I guess I didn't really ask the Lord what I was supposed to say in that moment.

Annie: So where does the story go now, Cynt? What's next? What else are you chosen for?

Cynt: Oh, man, I just don't know, Annie. I am praying and asking the Lord because I've been at the Mavericks four and a half years now. It was a three-year commitment. So every year, the Lord just keeps having more and more for us to do. And we're doing some great things in the community.

Before I took this job, I was thinking about... People were asking me to be a college president or lead some nonprofits. The way I describe it to people, I said, "I don't know exactly what's next but I know once I get into it, when I get up every morning, I will be able to name some children. I will be able to name somebody that their life is better because the Lord blessed me to touch it.

So whatever I do next will have a direct impact on the permanence and stability of children. And I don't know what it is, I don't know how that will show up. College, nonprofit, adoptions... I have no idea how that's going to show up but I believe that's the direction that I'll go in. I will be 100% committed to making lives better for children.

Annie: Well, I'm not a child, but you can write me down today as the person that your life affected greatly in the last 24 hours because-

Cynt: Thank you.

Annie: ...I just loved the book and loved... I mean, the adoption part of it, the way y'all chose a family, I mean, the whole thing is-

Cynt: My babies.

Annie: Yes. It's so fun that they're on the internet. You can go see them. Like Shirley. Happy Birthday, Shirley. I just loved it.

Cynt: The Lord gave me those babies. Anthony, watch him on December 29th. That's Shirley's birthday. And he always does a post that says, "Oh, I remember the day when I picked this little gem off the television, which we literally did.

He was watching the news with my husband and he identified this girl and said, "I was his little sister because she needed a big brother because she needed to be adopted. And he was going to adopt her the way he had been adopted. And then we moved to North Carolina 10 years later, same thing happened again.

So we moved him to college, I said, "Give me the remote control." I got to have it. I got to run those kids. I got to fly those kids. There's more days... But the Lord had a way to make our family. So through all that pain, through the four second trimester miscarriages, the daughter who died at six months old, through all that, He had a way to make our family because it goes back to what we talked about at the very beginning. He always has a plan through the pain of it all.

And I'm telling you, I get so much joy from these kids. I've gotten so much joy over the past 28 years with all these high knees and how they showed up. I never would have thought that was possible when I was burying my daughter. But the Lord had a way to make our family.

And He used her little young life to impact doctors. I mean her doctors talk about how, you know, they believe she was truly here for a reason to expose them to some procedures and things they didn't know about. So the Lord has a purpose and a plan for everything. Every single thing in our lives. He has a purpose and He has a plan. That's always my prayer for people is that they will yield and let the Lord work His plan.

We think we have a plan, and yes, we do have to take action and take steps on our own, but He has the master voice. He's got the blueprint. He has the blueprint. We just need to let him lay it out in order ourselves. That's my story and I fit into it.

Annie: Yeah. I mean, you honored your daughter Special K so beautifully in the book. I found myself even this morning thinking about, "I hope she and my nephew TJ have run into each other by now," because TJ has been in heaven a couple of weeks. They're already friends.

Cynt: They're tearing it up. They're already friends. They're tearing it up. Okay, they're tearing it. And I'll be praying for... Is it your sister who lost?

Annie: It's my sister and her husband, yeah.

Cynt: I'll be praying for her.

Annie: Thank you.

Cynt: The Lord has a plan. And as painful as it is, as traumatic as it is... I mean, that's the most traumatic thing I've ever gone through in my life is burying my daughter. And look where we are right now. It was for a reason. He used her life for reasons.

Annie: He still is. He still is. It's amazing.

Cynt: My son says... Because they celebrate her birthday on February 2nd. He'll go, "If it weren't for Special K, we wouldn't be here. So that's our sister." I mean, so the Lord has plans.

Annie: Okay, I want to honor your time. The last question we always ask is because the show is called That Sounds Fun, Cynt, tell me what you do for fun.

Cynt: Oh, what I do for fun. I like to go to the Bahamas and hanging on the beach.

Annie: Okay.

Cynt: I love shoe shopping. That's my nighttime guilty pleasure between like midnight and two. I used to stop my kids and when they were in college. Now I just stop shoe shopping and stuff. I love my shoe. I like to do that for fun. I do like to write and I love music. So I love, love, love to dance. You can catch me dancing anywhere. I mean, in my house, wherever. I do like to have fun. I like to have a good time and I love hanging out with my girlfriends and my family.

Annie: Well, listen, next time I'm in Dallas. I'm coming to a Mavs game because I've got to see you in action out there.

Cynt: You know, I got to have fun at least 41 times. So you have to come to Dallas. You have to come to a MAVs game. It'll be one of the best fun experiences of your life. You have to come and hang out with me.

Annie: I'll do it. I'll do it in this season.

Cynt: You sit right there with me...

Annie: Oh, we'll have so much fun.

Cynt: You come and sit right there with me because I kinda sit up close.

Annie: Listen, yeah, I can get a nosebleed. I can be there. You don't have to put me up there but I'll just want to see it in action.

Cynt: You sit with me. We're gonna have fun. You will have a blast. I do that for fun a lot.

Annie: Well, *You've Been Chosen* is an incredible book. I cannot wait for people to get to read it. Thank you for making time for this today.

Cynt: Thank you so much. Thank you so much. I appreciate you, sister.

Annie: I'm grateful. I'm grateful.

Cynt: Thank you.

[00:37:49] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't she amazing? I'm telling you. Is she like the queen of That Sounds Fun land now? Can we just make her? Will she be the CEO of my life? Oh, I just... I'm such a fan. And I am dying to go to a Dallas Mavericks game.

Listen, be sure you grab your copy of *You've Been Chosen*. I was blown away by this book, you guys. That's one of the reasons she was on is I read it and said, "Y'all, we've got to see if there is a world where Cynt Marshall will talk to me. And she did. And I loved it. Follow her on social media, you guys. Tell her thanks for being on the show.

And if you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram at Twitter, Facebook, the sidelines of a Dallas Mavericks game, all the places you may need me, that is how you can find me.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I'll do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is surprising you tomorrow with another episode. Y'all have a great day.

We will see you back here with a fun Friday drop-in from one of my favorite musicians and worship leaders, Taya. Y'all know her. Y'all love her. I'm so happy we get to be friends with her. I know you'll just love this conversation. So we'll see y'all tomorrow.