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**Annie:** Hi friends! Welcome to a special Friday episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be with you on a Friday. Let's go! We have got a great show in store.

Today I get to talk with my new friend Taya. Her voice has been one that has walked many of us through worship moments over the last several years. Yes. She's the voice behind *Oceans* and *Touch The Sky* is some of our favorite UNITED worship songs.

And now her debut solo full-length album is available. It's self-titled. So it's everywhere with the four little letters T-A-Y-A. Y'all, that album is so good. You're going to hear me say it. It's one of the first times I've ever printed lyrics out and hung them up in my house.

Hearing her story was such a gift to me. I just cannot wait for y'all to hear her heart. So here is my conversation with Taya.

[00:01:02] <music>

**Annie:** I started by offending you, Taya. So welcome to That Sounds Fun. I didn't mean to. I didn't mean to.

**Taya:** As an Australian, offense is a sign that we like you.

**Annie:** A sign of love?

**Taya:** So I'm like, "Okay, I love you."

**Annie:** Great. Great. It is mutual. It is mutual. Thanks for doing this today.

**Taya:** Of course. Thank you for having me. This is very sweet.

**Annie:** What a dream to be in the same room.

**Taya:** I know.

**Annie:** I'm so grateful.

**Taya:** So many mutual friends. Like we know of each other, we've thought about each other. Now officially we can be like, "I know you."

**Annie:** Yeah, that's right. That's right. People will be like, "Have you met?" and I'll be like, "Yes." Because-

**Taya:** Not just like Instagram friends.

**Annie:** That's right.

**Taya:** This is real life.

**Annie:** Real life. That's right. Okay, I'm gonna ask you some basic things early in friendship that I don't know.

**Taya:** I love it.

**Annie:** Do you live in America?

**Taya:** I do.

**Annie:** Do you live in LA?

**Taya:** No. Well, what I've learned over the last seven months because my husband and I moved 3rd of January this year, OC is not LA.

**Annie:** Oh, okay.

**Taya:** Which I was like, "Okay, sorry to offend everybody as well." Because that's what everyone back home, my family has been like, "She lives in LA." And now I know no.

**Annie:** No. You live in Orange County.

**Taya:** Orange County.

**Annie:** Okay. Why did y'all pick the West Coast?

**Taya:** Well, truly, we have a church campus down there. We have some of our closest friends down there as well. But to be honest, it was in response to obedience to where we felt was pointing us.

**Annie:** Oh, that's what I wanted you to say. Tell that story.

**Taya:** Well, I mean, just crazy. When Australia was still in lockdown last year, I got the opportunity to head out of the country to go sing with a very famous... I'm just not

sure how much I'm allowed to say about the artist but I'll just literally drop all the hints. A very famous opera singer in Italy. Someone wrote a letter, he signed it. It was like a documentary that hasn't yet come out.

**Annie:** Oh, wow.

**Taya:** We get to sing together. It's got a whole bunch of other artists and every, you know-

**Annie:** Cool.

**Taya:** And we were riding horses talking about Jesus, and it was amazing. But you need to know that no one was allowed to leave Australia. I think it was like something like 33,000 people that applied to leave, but only 1,300 had been accepted to go.

**Annie:** Oh, my gosh.

**Taya:** So truly was locked. Completely locked down. And of course God would use this crazy opportunity to go sing with this very famous opera singer. And the government said yes, which I'm like, "Oh, okay.

**Annie:** You're like, "Husband, children, we're-

**Taya:** I was like, "Yes." So then Ben and I were like, "This is amazing." Ben got approved literally 24 hours before we left." I'd been approved for three weeks. It was a crazy thing. It was like learning how to press in, pray, believe, have faith, still be wise and make sure that you're all ready to go. We have a refundable ticket. If not, we said five o'clock on the Friday afternoon PM like we will call them to say, "Get your money back for that ticket because he didn't get approved."

And we had so many people praying and so many people saying, "Hey, we really feel like until you get on that plane, for some reason, this is going to be a very significant trip." And I was already feeling the pressure of just like, "What am I doing? God, why did you call me? I'm a part of a worship team and a band. Why didn't you call all of us?"

So I'm going through all of this because no one really knows that I've been secretly working on this record. So I think no pressure is great pressure.

**Annie:** Right. Right.

**Taya:** So I was like, "I'll take that," even though the Lord's like, "No, actually, it's pressure that makes it done..." I was like, "Ah, okay." Maybe my analogy is off.

**Annie:** But it worked.

**Taya:** But it worked. But it worked. I was already questioning within my heart, like, "Lord, why? And what are you doing?" And it ended up being a trip where I felt like personally God lifted the horizon, not only my eyes but the horizon of what this could be or what He wants me to see or be open to. Because I'm a person who's kind of resistant to change and doesn't really appreciate it, which is hilarious because once I said yes to Jesus, like welcome to the church life, welcome to the adventure. Nothing is for certain except for Jesus.

I was feeling like I was already in that and then the Lord's like, "Mm-hmm, look up. I'm gonna stretch this wide. Here we go."

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** And we got to Italy, then we're like, "Oh, my gosh." We're in Italy... Also, that was a dream of like, you know, I was 18, definitely was not married, wasn't dating anyone, and I was like, "I would love to go to Italy before we have kids." Like whoever I marry, wouldn't that be the dream? And the first time I go is when we're in lockdown. Just crazy stuff where I'm like, Thank you, Lord.

**Annie:** Wait, I thought y'all had a kid.

**Taya:** No.

**Annie:** Oh, sorry. I thought y'all had a kid.

**Taya:** I mean, I love that. One day I would love that. In a few. I'm thinking about it. No. I feel like I've been talking about the album as like a baby. To be honest... Okay, this is actually... We're just going there. My mom called me up the other day, and I was eating pizza. Really healthy.

And then my dad pops into the FaceTime and he goes, "Oh, is that baby food?" I was like, "What?" I said, "Dad, that's so weird." I was like, "Is pizza... What? I'm so confused." My mom then pulls out, "I've read in this article that you guys are trying for a baby."

**Annie:** No!

**Taya:** And I was like, "Mom!" I was like, "I would never talk about that. Also, we aren't. We've just moved countries. Please hold your horses. Don't get a bit-

**Annie:** "I read in this article."

**Taya:** Literally. Someone had posted about it. Anyway, this is all the things you just learn when you just open up your life.

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

**Taya:** I'm like, I need to make sure that I say the album was the baby.

**Annie:** Okay. So you and Ben are in Italy pre-children as an answered prayer.

**Taya:** Yes.

**Annie:** That's right.

**Taya:** We're in Italy and then we're like, "Wait a second, this is a miracle though out of Australia. Should we go to America?" I had been writing this album on Zoom for the better part of like a year and a half. Should we just have a good crack at this in person? Like, try co-writing."

I'd been kind of stagnant, hadn't written for seven years. So this was kind of like my first foot in the door of like trying to see if I can co-write successfully, which I just mean to finish a song. Definitely not like we're in the realm of like God will take it wherever He wants to or not. But just to finish the song. And so we're like, Oh, my gosh.

So last minute we extended that Italian trip by like one week so we could just enjoy being there, which food is just beautiful and the people are amazing. And they were so hit so hard with the pandemic, and so getting to be there when they're opening up again, and they're just like, "Yes, please call me." And I was like, "I would love to."

**Annie:** "Very happy to."

**Taya:** I was about to act like, Here, blessing you, blessing me.

**Annie:** Me too. I've been to Italy twice. Once or twice. Maybe twice. Maybe once.

**Taya:** So nice.

**Annie:** I've been there a time at least. I'm relaxed when I'm around Italian people. They just are like, "Stop going fast. Just settle down."

**Taya:** Enjoy.

**Annie:** Just love it.

**Taya:** It's like family, culture, we have a meal, we sit down. I don't know if they do this but I'm sure they would have like a lovely afternoon nap after those cabs. I'm kind of down for that.

**Annie:** Me too.

**Taya:** Like, if we want to do that as well, I'm into it.

**Annie:** Me too.

**Taya:** I'm definitely into it. So then we just planned to come to Nashville and we just did a three-week block of writing. We did one week in LA just before that to try and help the UNITED album finish. But I didn't really help with that.

**Annie:** Your presence was their present.

**Taya:** I was like, "Guys, I have you seen you in forever!" They are my awesome brothers. So I was there for a week, then went to Nashville. Ben was on there, my husband, for like one week and then he went back home.

Obviously, there was some things that God was just starring in our hearts. He was back in hotel quarantine because that's what you do in Australia. You know, two weeks by yourself, which as an introvert, I was so looking forward to it. I was even calling and I was like, "If you need me to stay an extra day, I totally will."

**Annie:** Right. Right. "If you want to test me again, fine."

**Taya:** I miss Ben but I feel... uh-uh.

[00:08:54] <music>

**Sponsor:** 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 podcast. 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](#).

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**Taya:** Yeah. So then he was back in hotel quarantine. I called him and I said, "Hey, are we moving to America?" And he just said yes. And as soon as he said yes, it felt like the Holy Spirit was like, "Yeah, this is the thing." I have no idea why I asked it. I'm so Australian. My husband's even more Australian.

You know, we're kind of slowly heading into the season of when we will eventually have kids, you know, a family starting to have little babies. Everyone's there and it just makes no sense. Australia is safe. Like all the things, you know.

And I already did like a massive move from the country to Sydney when I was 21. I wasn't from there. I already did the big step out, you know. *Oceans* was a gift in more ways than one, particularly giving me a prayer to sing in moments when I'm feeling like I'm walking out, where you're I'm like, "Oh, this doesn't feel very safe, but here we go." So I was like, "I don't need to do another one." But I got mad as soon as he said yes.

**Annie:** Really?

**Taya:** Because I was like, "Are you kidding me? You're in Australia right now, I'm in America. Have you been thinking about...?" I was mad even though I was the one that asked the question.

**Annie:** Yeah, right. I get it.

**Taya:** He was so gracious. He never was like, "Why did you ask that?" He just was like, "It just would feel wrong if we weren't..." And obviously, God had been stirring stuff within his heart. So then two days later, it was the second last Sunday being in Nashville. So we did three weeks of writing, then I did four days in the studio. Basically we recorded and wrote six-eight to the album, which is so in the natural that doesn't make sense-

**Annie:** No.

**Taya:** ...could that actually happen? But God-

**Annie:** He did.

**Taya:** ...He did it. It was a wild time but lovely at the same time. He was just gracious. And I felt just so many times like—I'm sure we'll talk about—the word that he gave me for the album, like I just kept getting reminders all the way through that. Like, "remember the honey." I would go to record a vocal and I would see a bee on the way and I'm just like, "Oh, remember the honey. Okay, here we go. It's gonna be sweet. You don't have to push this."

So the wild thing was being in church, you know, on that second last Sunday, I saw the people who were responsible in a good way for bringing Ben and I out to Italy. They're a lovely couple. They do amazing things for the kingdom of God, you know, ultimately, for Jesus.

And I saw them and they weren't meant to be in church. They didn't even know I was meant to be in church or anything. And they're like, "What are you doing?" At the end, I was like, "What are you guys doing?" They were like, "We just flew in from Italy today. We didn't know you'd still be here. We weren't meant to come but we just felt to come."

So we're chatting and then I just tell them, "We're moving to America." So there's that. And I said it with a terrible attitude. I get moved to a different conversation because someone interrupted and said hello. I hugged them, spoke to them.

Five minutes later, I come back, they look at me and they say, "We have a house in Orange County in Newport Beach. If you want a home to walk into off the plane, it's your, six months rent free."

**Annie:** Oh, my gosh!



**Taya:** So I've never met anyone that's given a house or received a house. I instantly was just like, "Oh, Lord, why? I feel like you're making it very easy to go, 'This is the God thing, and trust me.'" And it's so funny. So after that, I told my husband and he's like, "I think you heard wrong. I'm sure the music in church was like quit loud. Because no one does that."

**Annie:** Right.

**Taya:** So then he called him and then he calls me back, he's like, "Nope, you heard right." Then two days later, he sends me photos of trucks—we call them Utes in Australia—because he's always just love the massive ones like here in America.

So I'm like, "Great, my husband's locked. This is where he would love to go." Which we ended up, you know, such a blessing getting and used massive doldrums-

**Annie:** Oh, I love it.

**Taya:** Living history. Every time I'm like, "You have this look in your face when you're driving this." It's va engine. Like just stupid but it's awesome. But I'm just going, "I've never expressed this to my family. I've never expressed this to my church family, to anyone involved within what I do, within..."

**Annie:** Your job.

**Taya:** And I'm just like, "Oh, my lanta." So then when I got back into hotel quarantine, Ben and I decided to do a three-day fast. He has done quite a few of them. I had fasted but I had never fasted food like that way because as a girl... I have to be honest. Whenever I did fast, someone would be like, "You look really skinny." I was like, "Ah, thanks." Which is not what a fast is about at all. And it's meant to take your eyes off yourself and completely on God because you're so desperate. So I was like, "Okay, we're going to do this because I'm in a hotel. I can kind of just say, "Please hold the food."

**Annie:** "No food. I'm good."

**Taya:** Sometimes we did it and I was like, "This is tempting. Now I understand when the, you know-

**Annie:** Yes.

**Taya:** Oh, my downstairs was saying to Jesus in the desert like, "Yeah, have..." You know?

**Annie:** That's right?

**Taya:** I'm like, "No. Absolutely, no." So then we just prayed and we fasted because we're like, "God, if this is what you want us to do, you're gonna have to make away because we'd heard past conversations about people moving and people really against it. Just so many different things."

And even though, you know, of course, people are devastated that you're leaving, when they're like, "We believe that you guys hear the voice of the Lord and are actually trying to pursue him and what He is asking of you, they gave the blessing. It was just crazy. So then we're like, "Oh, my lanta." Which-

**Annie:** Did anything happen in the three-day fast that you were like, "Here's the sign that I needed"? Or was it just "we know the next right thing is fasting with prayer?"

**Taya:** Personally, the second day was like the worst day for me. I was livid with hunger and my attitude was less than appropriate.

**Annie:** Beautiful.

**Taya:** And my husband's trying to be really sweet. He's like, "Hey, so you know that..." Keep in mind he's also going without food. This kind of tells you he is steadfast and he is immovable in his faith because he loves Jesus and looks to Him and he's steadfast because he prays. He's just the best.

And he's like, "Hey, in these moments, you know that when you feel like this, that's when you meant to get on your knees and pray and seek God." And I do feel like something broke. What I didn't tell you about that trip that we had just come back from, I also feel like in a sweet way, God was like fusing Ben and I even more in that season because we went to Mexico to quarantine away from Italy to get into America.

So for two weeks, we went and visited our friends who live in Mexico. I now know they're missionaries. We knew what they were going to do and they wanted to start a church there and a ministry but I don't know sometimes, you know, photos in Instagram can just put up a different picture literally.

Because they would always post these beautiful, you know, ones of them at the beach and their family and their home that they have a lot but to build and everything. And it's lovely. It doesn't have air conditioning. It's like 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

So there's no air conditioning, you're not sleeping at night. There are also like crazy bugs. So like you're getting about an hour and a half sleep because you're so hot. They also don't have electricity. And they live in the jungle.

**Annie:** Oh my gosh.

**Taya:** But it doesn't have an address because there's no streets there. Even if something happened you wouldn't even be able to get an ambulance in there because the potholes are like half a meter deep and people tow their cars just from the street. It's just stones and rocks.

So then my husband got sick during that time because we definitely after this, we're like, "Thank You, Jesus. We now realize you have not called us to anywhere remote-

**Annie:** To third world.

**Taya:** But unfortunately, well, why do we have the widest stomach? I can't even do spice. And it became very clear that I do not have the tenacity in the stomach and neither does my husband. He got really sick to the point where I think because we were tired, we've lasted like eight days. And now that I'm thinking, we're not going to do that again. We're gonna go to like, I don't know, a place where Americans are, whether there's air conditioning, a resort or something, and then pay for our friends to come and be like, "This is a blessing to you and to us and we'll all survive."

**Annie:** That's right. "We're so glad we saw your life. Next time you'll see our life."

**Taya:** We were so into you, guys to be refreshed-

**Annie:** 100%.

**Taya:** ...have a good sleep," you know?

**Annie:** That's right.

**Taya:** So it was kind of wild. He ended up just becoming unconscious. Like it was really bad.

**Annie:** Oh my gosh.

**Taya:** Like really bad. This kind of talks about having good people around you, people that love Jesus, and also God being really kind, knowing the seasons that you're

heading into and what you need. So we have this doctor in Australia, so I still have his number. Whenever I'm in Australia, we catch up.

He loves Jesus. He's a man of prayer. He's Indian but lives in Australia, and just has such faith. So he texts me all the different things, even like, you know, Jewish festivals, and... Just things. We talk about when the Lord's coming back and all this really cool stuff. I'm like, "Oh, I need to read my Bible so much more and extra literature."

**Annie:** Right.

**Taya:** So I just knew in that moment, as soon as he passed out, like when he was unconscious, I called my friend [Nikodem?]. And then I said, "I'm going to call..." And this was also maybe like 12 o'clock in Mexico, but I do not know what time it is in Australia.

**Annie:** Oh, certainly.

**Taya:** I've been out in different times. As I said, "It's gonna be 3am in Australia. I'm going to call Dr. AB. We're going to call him on FaceTime because he's going to be up praying."

**Annie:** You just knew.

**Taya:** Obviously it's the Holy Spirit because I was calm as anything. And I process through crying, so I'm like, "This doesn't make sense." So I just called. He doesn't pick up, so I call again. He picks up straight away, bright lights, he's fully clothed. He's like, "Hi, Taya. It's 3 a.m. here. I've just been up praying." He's like, "How are you?"

**Annie:** Oh, my gosh.

**Taya:** And I was like, "Well." I said, "I'm really good." I said, "Ben, not so much." Then I turn the phone on to Ben. Ben's, you know, unconscious in my friend's arms. So he's like, "Yes. Okay, well, he's very ill." Thank goodness I already had some medicine just in case we ever got sick. Because when you're doing like a road trip, you have to take something just in case.

And so I had it there. So then he told me what I was to give and when and all that. And he said, "You actually just need to put the phone down. You guys need to pray and lay hands on him because he's really, really sick." I was like, "Okay." So hung up, had all the stuff that I needed. And we just laid hands on him for like, 15 to 20 minutes.

And also I think that's why I'm so grateful that my friends are missionaries because they know how to pray. They're just like, It's Jesus or nothing. And so we just prayed, you know, over him, laid hands 15 to 20 minutes. And every so often, I would... just keep in mind like he's so far out. Like he's just not with us.

Every now and again, we'd put like a little straw in his mouth, and somehow he would just come to take a sip and then pass back out. A

**Annie:** My gosh.

**Taya:** So then about like 15 to 20 minutes-

**Annie:** That's scary.

**Taya:** Yeah, I know. I had post-traumatic just a little bit. Like a few days I'm like, Okay, that was wild.

**Annie:** Yes.

**Taya:** But something broke and then he just came out of it. He was still hallucinating a little bit and it took a little while. And then after a couple of days, I was like, "Okay, I need American's fried food. We're not having any water. We're just drinking Coke. Which we did.

And then in the end, they end up coming to us and getting to hang out and everything. And we can laugh about it now as well because they're the sweetest and they hadn't had any visitors yet. So it was kind of great that it was family and everything.

All that to say, I feel like the Lord used that whole trip to fuse us together, to fuse us in... I don't know, not just experiences but the power of prayer and how when you hopefully are living a life where you're open to the Holy Spirit, we can hear him, particularly at critical moments.

Because as if when my husband's like, you know, unconscious that I'm thinking, "Let's call Dr. [Avie?]" Because it could be anywhere. If he's helping a patient and he's not picking up his phone, he's being attentive. So just so many moments where I felt like the Lord was fusing us together. So the fasting together was really special because I know that he had done that before.

All that to say back to your original question, it was more so a confidence that this is the right thing to do. And I think it was more... You know, Esther before she went

to go see King Xerxes, this is just the way that I think about it: how she prepared herself for like a hundred and something days. That her skin would be fragrant, that she would look the right way, and all that kind of stuff so that she would find favor in the sight of the king.

And it sounds funny when... I've never thought about it this way but perhaps it was more just we were making sure that we had our whole lives before the Lord, just allowing Him to really just like fully cover us so that whenever we were having those conversations, that if it was the God thing, we will be covered with favor. And even though people truly wouldn't want us to leave, they couldn't help but give us their blessing. Which is, wild and unusual. We were just to be trust...

The other word was trust and be joyful. And my husband wrote it down. And I asked him to keep that piece of paper because he wrote it down when he was in hotel quarantine. And that was four weeks before I was there or something. I just asked him to keep it.

So we've actually framed that and it's sitting like on our bedside table, "trust and be joyful" because I feel like I will never graduate from that if we're truly living a life of faith, believing that God is going to lead us and call us out. And He will do it in every sphere. And to trust. But also, you know, the mark of the Holy Spirit is joy as well. Joy and peace.

**Annie:** So in this year, you moved to a different country. You have a new trauma bond with your husband.

**Taya:** Like I love him so much.

**Annie:** I mean, you pack up everything you move and you release your first solo album. Like is it a new season?

**Taya:** Yeah, yeah. I mean, maybe I'm the most reluctant person truly because I'm more like a worker bee. Work really hard to the glory of the Lord. You know, like you set the vision, I'm 1,000% in. So it's kind of funny that he would give me an opportunity to do a record and just make it so clear that that was the thing that I was meant to be doing.

Yeah, it is a new season. Because, for me, creatively it was finding my voice. Which again, sounds so dumb because I'm a singer I'm known for my voice. My voice has gone out-

**Annie:** We can all hear your voice.

**Taya:** Yeah. People will be like, "Oh, that's Taya," you know?

**Annie:** Yeah.

**Taya:** But I struggled to raise it, say in a writing session just because it's basically pride. Fake humility is pride. You're like, "No, no, no, I'm fine." Like you're not willing to put yourself out there just in case. So I was dealing with that for a long time. And just acknowledging that and then going, "Hey, God, if this is what you want me to do, I'm gonna have to believe you can anoint me and grace me for it."

And He's so kind because... As if He's gonna, you know... He doesn't knit us together in our mother's wombs, let us be birthed out into the world and then say, "Peace out. I'll see you at the end. And I'll give you a score at a time."

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

**Taya:** Yeah, exactly. He's like, "No, I'm gonna give you my spirit. I'm gonna give you my word, the word, infallible, eternal. It's gonna scoot past your doubt and your defense and no one's impervious to the Word of God. So even you, this is going to be your lamp in how to do this." Yeah, He's just so gracious and so kind.

So many times I could just see over this period that God has so clearly said, yes, it's this new thing, but He was allowing me to raise my voice not just in a musical sense, but then use, you know, sonically, a new sound. But this has been a season of stepping out and raising my voice in conversations with people, speaking truth with love, realizing, you know, to whom much is given, much is required even when it comes to speaking about just certain things.

I mean, I could not hide what we're going through as a church or anything. It's basically splashed across newspapers and magazines, and online articles and all of that. And some of it is true and some of it is not. So it just looks like being obedient with what God's asking of me and also to not drop people just because, you know, once I say the thing or even loving people when you don't agree, which is like really hard.

**Annie:** It is so hard. It's so hard. At our church, our friends listening know this, a couple of years ago, our pastor left very suddenly. And we've had a couple of times, unfortunately, where a leader has left, and they've also been a personal friend of mine. Reconciling "I love you as my friend" and our church is hurting is really hard.

**Taya:** I mean, I think about Jesus. Again, we just have to go back to Him-

**Annie:** Have you watched *The Chosen*?

**Annie:** Were you part of one of the Christmassy things?

**Taya:** We were.

**Annie:** I thought so.

**Taya:** I felt bad for them because for having us they got a lot of hate. A lot of hate.

**Annie:** It's so weird.

**Taya:** Which I'm just bu... I mean-

**Annie:** You were talking to Jesus and I'm like, "Man, I just think of Him."

**Taya:** I actually have a picture of-

**Annie:** Sorry, Jonathan, for the rest of your life.

**Taya:** What a great comparison, though! For the rest of your life.

**Annie:** Right.

**Taya:** I mean, he just does it the best. He never put His faith in people because He knew what was in the heart of man. But never did you see Him bitter, never did you see Him cynical. Never did you see Him look down upon people. The only time He spat on them was to heal them. He didn't do it like a rude manner.

**Annie:** That's right.

**Taya:** And I've actually had opportunities, I guess I'll say it that way, to see just some people that have hurt other people and have had a lot of things going on. But when it comes down to it, it's like in the moment. Because when things happen and you're processing, you know, it's okay to be angry, but it's like way you take that too and don't let the sun go down on your anger as it says in the Bible. As if I'm gonna punch anyone. I get it being frustrated.

Like if I would just be honest, I had a moment many years ago. Someone did me-

**Annie:** Dirty.



**Taya:** ...really wrong. Really wrong. And that person walked in, I'm leading worship at one of our camps. I'm just being honest. Like this is where it was at. They didn't come to that campus usually and she sat on the front row.

**Annie:** No.

**Taya:** And it was like in front of me and I'm like trying to lead worship and pour out all my love on Jesus. And literally in my head, I'm thinking, I could literally jump off this stage and fly... This is terrible because I'm usually not this person.

**Annie:** You could do a wrestle move.

**Taya:** No.. I was like, "I could fly kick her in the face and I would just like teeth gone-

**Annie:** I know. I know.

**Taya:** Which I'm like, "Gee, I've got a lot of things in my heart I need to let the Lord deal with. Because I was like rage. Like, "Can you believe the nerve of this person coming in here to my campus-

**Annie:** "Knowing what she said."

**Taya:** ...knowing what she did and she hasn't said sorry." I was truly livid. Truly livid. PS I'm still leading worship. I'm leading the song. That's what's going through my head. And then the next word that come out of my mouth in this song is "my judge and my defender." I was just like, "Shut your mouth, Taya. Because He is your judge, He is her judge; He is your defender and He is her defender. And you don't need to say anything. You don't need to do anything. I see everything. You don't have to do anything."

So I think it was a gift to have that experience to then now if you have a moment where you see someone, and it's like, I have no right to punch you in the face. I'm a sinner, we've all got stuff going on and show it publicly can look different and to whom much is given, much is required. I got to read in the New Testament... I was kind of saying if I could qualify to be a pastor. Technically I don't in America. So don't worry, guys, I'm not.

But I was just reading all of that and the requirements... like it's pretty full on. Like, get your house in order and just so many things. It's a holy thing as well. So holy and amazing. And still, what does Jesus say? Turn the other cheek. And He says, "Love your enemies." And maybe perhaps that's the thing to love the people who hurt you the most.

Jesus didn't really turn His back, didn't ignore them. He was so kind. And He sees everything and He knows everything anyway, and He still loves them. And perhaps your response would help it. Doesn't it say it's your kindness that leads us to repentance?

**Annie:** Yes. You like Jesus so much.

**Taya:** Love Him. I could literally cry to that. I love Him.

**Annie:** I know.

**Taya:** Because He's so... Didn't have to. He didn't have to come. He didn't have to do anything. And He did. And He did it because He was being obedient to the Father so the Father can have relationship with us. I feel like I'd need a million revelations with that.

**Annie:** It's all throughout what we've experienced of you on stages and in songs. But in this new album, as I've been listening through it, I was like, Taya... I know you love Him, but I was like, You like Him so much? Like you just like Him.

**Taya:** He's the best.

**Annie:** Yeah, He's the best.

**Taya:** Because He's perfect from every viewpoint and He speaks words that pierce but they also heal. He gave us His Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is the thing that will reveal the mind of Christ to us. Otherwise, we would have no idea what...

There's this whole cool chapter in the New Testament that talks about how His ways are higher, and his thoughts are not ours. They're so much better and bigger and broader. And who could know the mind of the person who scooped up the sea and who put every star in place and calls them out each night by name?

And then the last thing it says is, "Who could know the mind of Christ?" Then it says, "But we have His spirit." And then before that, it was talking about how the Spirit knows the mind of... Anyway, we have so much access, but we just have so little.

**Annie:** Yeah. Me too.

**Taya:** You too.

**Annie:** Do you have unique relationships and a unique prayer life, God, Jesus, Holy Spirit? I talk different to the three of them. I should know if you talk different or it sounds like the same.

**Taya:** I don't know. I definitely feel like in my mind, yes, they're compartmentalized even though they are the triangle because I feel like maybe I've been learning more about that more recently. Like three in one.

**Annie:** Okay.

**Taya:** Anytime I would pray with my parents, my mom would always say, "Heavenly Father." So I feel like I've always had a sweet relationship I think with God as my heavenly Father. Like not just God, but my Father. And I am blessed that I have a dad. Like my parents are still married. And that's not to say, you know, it was perfect all the time.

**Annie:** Sure.

**Taya:** There's definitely times I'm like, Okay.

**Annie:** Yeah, we all grew up with human, for sure.

**Taya:** Yeah, exactly. I think the older you get, you're like, "My parents..."

**Annie:** I think about it all the time because I'm 42. I'm like, "When my parents were 42. I thought they knew how to do everything. I don't know how to do anything."

**Taya:** I know. But also I feel like the older I get, the more I think just empathy I have because then I see that all the things that they went through as a kid and all the things that they maybe didn't have from their parents. I just have so much grace because I'm like... Literally, I would cry if I was just like, "You did so well. All your daughter's love Jesus." We love each other.

**Annie:** How many are y'all? How many kids?

**Taya:** Three. Three girls.

**Annie:** Where are you in the stack?

**Taya:** The middle?

**Annie:** I'm the oldest of three.

**Taya:** I was like, "Is the middle of the naughty one?" It's like a little-

**Annie:** But then when she got saved, she was like unstoppable.

**Taya:** I was like, "I love rules. I'm into rule."

**Annie:** Very quickly, I'll tell you, it was a prodigal son and older brother for us.

**Taya:** Are you serious?

**Annie:** Because she came back and was so... Once she got saved at 13, she was so good. And I was like, "Do y'all not remember yesterday?" I was like, "I have never left the field."

**Taya:** "What is this party? What is this?"

**Annie:** Totally. Totally. That's what happened with us.

**Taya:** Oh, no.

**Annie:** But all three of us love Jesus, too. So then you just go like, Well, if they didn't do anything else right, which I did a lot of things right as well, somehow-

**Taya:** I know. I know.

**Annie:** ...three of their kids, three out of three.

**Taya:** I mean, eternity. Do things that are eternal. The word of God: souls.

**Annie:** Yeah, yeah. Okay, the eternal thing I love because one of the things I was... So we had a family funeral last weekend and the pastor-

**Taya:** Oh, I'm sorry.

**Annie:** Thank you. The pastor stood up and he said, "We're going to worship now and we're going to worship in a way we'll never get to do an eternity. We're going to worship in pain." Will you talk about that for a minute? Because eternity we'll be worshiping God, but it won't hurt.

**Taya:** Yeah. Because there's no tears in heaven. There'll be no sorrow, no pain, no sickness.

**Annie:** No shame, right?

**Taya:** No shame.

**Annie:** Yeah, I don't think there'll be any shame.

**Taya:** No.

**Annie:** No.

**Taya:** Absolutely not. And healed and whole. So there will be no lack. We have Jesus. Doesn't it say there will be no sun because he's gonna be Light, Capital L?

**Annie:** Yes.

**Taya:** I feel like everyone that has been leaning into, say, any Bethel music, they will be totally impacted by Brian Johnson's dad, Bill Johnson just lost the love of his life, his wife. And just the way that he spoke that Sunday-

**Annie:** I haven't heard it yet. My sister told me. My sister told me.

**Taya:** To be honest, I've only heard the smallest little bit, I need to go back and watch it as well. But he just said the same thing. "I get an opportunity right now. I'll never get this opportunity again and I don't want to let it pass me by. I get the opportunity to offer something to God that costs me, like a sacrifice of praise because when I get to heaven, she's going to be there. We're going to be healed and whole. There is no pain, there's no sorrow, there's no sickness."

So the praise that I give there will be from a whole body. Whereas here, in the not yet, in the in-between, that's when I really get to offer Him my sacrifice. I guess the best way for me to describe some of that is first-time worship is mentioned in the Bible is when Abraham is walking up the mountain with his son Isaac to go and sacrifice him.

**Annie:** That's the first time it's in the Bible?

**Taya:** It's the first time it's mentioned in the Bible. And it's when he says to Isaac... it's literally foreshadowing what God's doing with His Son.

And the reason that came to my mind was because when I was in Israel I was with one of my dear friends Katrina Henson. She was our college principal, and she teaches the Old Testament, she speaks Hebrew. She end up doing a really good-

**Annie:** Who speaks Hebrew? That's amazing.

**Taya:** I know. I'm like, "Teach me." She's just the best. And we were born in the same hospital in this small town. So I'm like "That's my girl."

**Annie:** That's right.

**Taya:** It just feel that, you know-

**Annie:** The connection. Yeah, that's right.

**Taya:** That feels good. And she was there explaining something. I'm in one of the churches where they built upon these two place where they think Golgotha could be. And one of them was in this church, the Holy Sepulchre. You know, everyone's there trying to rush. I will not obviously, but the whole time praying, like, "Lord, I don't want to just be religious about this and I don't want to pick up the things that I shouldn't, Holy Spirit. But if there's something that I meant to pick up and remember, please just speak to me and make it plain to me. Because your gal sometimes can be a little thick headed. So please. Please."

**Annie:** Same. Same. Same.

**Taya:** So I was looking up at the roof of this beautiful church and it was like all these mosaic tiles. And the first one is of Jesus getting the nails put into his hands. The next one is Mother Mary being comforted by the other disciples. Another one I think it was of the thieves on the cross that we're going to be beside Jesus. And then it's Abraham and Isaac.

And Abraham is about to literally stab Isaac on top of the altar with all the sticks. And I was like, "Huh." I was like, "New Testament, New Testament, New Testament, Old Testament." I was like, "Have I missed something?"

So then Katrina, who, you know, she was teaching the Old Testament, she's like... I said, "What's that? And why is that up there?" She said, "Well, actually, that was when God was foreshadowing what He was going to do with His Son." Kind of talked about how God put Abraham in asleep and they had a dream. It was like this crazy thing. Cut all the animals in half. And he's like, "Right." I mean, a river of blood.

Then God walked down. But Abraham never had to walk down. And so he was saying like, "Even if you don't do this, I'm still going to do this. But basically was foreshadowing that. Then he gets up, then God says, "Hey, I want you to go take Isaac. I want you to sacrifice him on the mountain."

So as they're walking up, Isaac's literally got wood on his back walking up the mountain, similar to Jesus going up the hill to die.

**Annie:** I have never thought about that.

**Taya:** Like crazy.

**Annie:** Why have I never thought about that part?

**Taya:** I know. Even just like the wood-

**Annie:** Oh, he carries wood on his back.

**Taya:** Yeah, literally.

**Annie:** Oh, my gracious.

**Taya:** And the Father is there the whole time watching. Like, how heart-wrenching? Imagine what's going through his head. Isaac has no idea. Isaac says, "Hey, Dad, where's the lamb? Where's the lamb? You don't even have..." And he's like, "God Himself will provide the lamb."

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** Even that translation "God Himself," as in He will be the lamb. Again, foreshadowing. It's just mind-blowing. The Bible is alive. It's amazing. There's so many things that-

**Annie:** It lasts forever.

**Taya:** Oh, my gosh. And we will continue to discover all the things and the way that the Lord has truly weave this together, you know, inspired, holy. And he turns to the servant and he says, "Wait here for Isaac and I are gonna go up and worship." And that's when it's first mentioned.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** And worship at that point wasn't a church service, wasn't a music side of things, wasn't a song, wasn't a melody. It was an obedience to what God had said in sacrifice.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** That's the true definition of worship.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** So I'm kind of like always challenged about that, but like letting it cost me something, sacrifice, but also being obedient to what God says. And then, you know, classic God, that when he goes up there, and he's about to do it.

Then you're also thinking about Abraham being a man of faith. In Hebrews, it's been counted to him as righteousness because He reconciled himself to the fact that "will God gave me this son so he can raise him from the dead?" I'm like, he hadn't seen any resurrection. It was even like... Are you kidding me? I want that kind of faith.

**Annie:** Right. There was no proof. You didn't have any callbacks to another resurrection and you're like, "He can do that again." No.

**Taya:** No.

**Annie:** It was first time thinking about God.

**Taya:** Yes.

**Annie:** It's unbelievable.

**Taya:** Yeah. So when I think about worship that cost me, I think about that story. Even just like in our general everyday life... In Romans 12 it says, "In view of God's mercy, bring your..." And then in The Message paraphrase, which I will love forever. And I know not everyone loves it.

**Annie:** Me too. I love it.

**Taya:** But I met Jesus when I was like... like really discovered what He was saying in the Bible when I was 17 because I was reading that book for myself. Like I got saved when I was five in my room, asked Jesus into my heart. But I wish someone gave me that book a whole lot earlier because it literally transformed... because I started reading the Bible and understanding it.

**Annie:** And it's a beautiful bridge to other versions.

**Taya:** Exactly. And it even says in the... Have you ever read Letter to the Reader?

**Annie:** No. And the front from Eugene Peterson? No.



**Taya:** Oh, my gosh. It is the most beautiful thing. It's like, Don't worry. The reason why I started this translation anyway was to get people who had long ago lost interest in the Bible or perhaps didn't even know it was readable at all, that it is. One day, in the near future, you will have to get a study because there's many things that are difficult in the Bible. And I'm not here to try and explain them away or make it easy.

But he says but in the meantime, whilst you read, read in order to live praying as you do God, "Let it be with me, just as you say."

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** How beautiful is that?

**Annie:** Right.

**Taya:** So like, "No wonder..." Anyway.

**Annie:** Romans 12. That's what Jesus is saying.

[crosstalk 00:43:41]

**Annie:** I know. I interrupted you.

**Taya:** No, no, you're the best. Romans 12, "In view of God's mercy, take your eating, your sleeping everyday walking around life and place it before God as an offering, holy and pleasing to Him. This is your true and proper worship." Again, worshiping, you know, the first time it's mentioned in the Bible it wasn't church services, and it wasn't the 20 minutes. It's like how we live our life before God. Are we obedient? Give him something that costs you because again we wouldn't necessarily be able to do that.

**Annie:** Yes. Because faith... I mean, we won't have to believe what we don't see, because we'll see it all.

**Taya:** Exactly. Exactly.

**Annie:** So it feels like the things I'm waiting to see, can I worship while I'm waiting to see healing or while I'm waiting to see restoration or while I'm waiting to see answered prayers? Because there will come a day when we worship and we aren't waiting anymore.

**Taya:** Yes. And that's the thing. We can't be waiting for heaven because we're meant to be experiencing the kingdom of God right here and right now. If we make it all about the destination, then we're not going to have our eyes out looking for what God wants to do now in and through us and the people that we're meant to be speaking and speaking to and encouraging.

One of my favorite authors of devotionals... written by Oswald Chambers.

**Annie:** Tell it.

**Taya:** He's just the best. Have you ever read the little thing at the start of *My Utmost for His Highest*?

**Annie:** No. He has a little letter? How have you read all these little letters at the front?

**Taya:** I know. I don't know why but I just started to start reading like a little bit about Oswald and his wife. And he called his wife B.D., which "B.D." stands for beloved disciple.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** Amazing. They did like a Bible college, like a whole bunch of things. And at 41, I think it was, the first World War had happened, and then he... No, it would be 1914. My bad. First World War. And he got appendicitis because he was posted out to Egypt. His wife was there. He has a four-year-old daughter. They did the surgery and everything, and then looked like he was getting better, then two weeks he just died. It was just crazy infection and he was gone. And then her-

**Annie:** 41?

**Taya:** 41, yeah.

**Annie:** I did not know he died at 41.

**Taya:** 41. And they had a four-year-old daughter.

**Annie:** Jeez.

**Taya:** So now there's B.D. And she basically the whole time was like, "Okay, I just feel like what I need to do is get everything that Oswald ever... Because she would always do like a journalist script just in the back of the room and would be writing every single sermon that he's ever preached. So then she just said, "I just think what my mission in life is to get everything that he ever spoke into publication."

She worked like three or four jobs at a time whilst being a single mother just to get every little piece of paper that she transcribed into. So that's why we have *My Utmost for His Highest* because of her faithfulness-

**Annie:** I've never heard that.

**Taya:** ...and faithfulness in believing that this is what she's meant to be doing even though he's no longer here.

**Annie:** I'm going to look and see how many copies of that have existed. So you keep talking to me.

**Taya:** It's like millions and millions. And the wild thing is that she was writing to someone just a couple of weeks after he had passed away, and she said, "It is going to be as if one day—It's casting bread upon the waters—when we get there into heaven we're going to wish that we had trusted all the more fully."

So if you're talking about faith, just the importance of having faith down here whilst it's the in-between, whilst things aren't perfect, whilst we're waiting for God to set things right. Because like you said, potentially, we're not going to need it out there because our faith is complete and we're going to see everything and know everything to the full see Jesus as He is.

**Annie:** Right. Can't wait. I know.

**Taya:** I know. I sometimes wonder what our reaction... Like, will I literally just be prostrate for eternity?

**Annie:** Right. For the first half of eternity, will I just be on my face?

**Taya:** And then I'll get like a little glimpse, and then boom, out again.

**Annie:** I'm always just a little concern that I'm not going to get enough one-on-one time. That's what I tend to say to Him. I'm like, "Are we gonna get one on one time?"

**Taya:** Don't you think He'll be so big? Don't we say that like His light is like bigger than the sun. And we can't even look at the sun. Think about every person have like... This is the things that go on in my head. Like people that have had like encounters with God, particularly, say, Saul becoming Paul, it was a blinding light. And it was Jesus saying, "Why are you persecuting me?" And then he was blind for like three days. And the reason he even could see after it's because he got healed because he's-

- Annie:** I love that story. The guy is like, "I'm not going." And Jesus is like, "You have to go." He's like, "Oh, I'm gonna get killed. But okay."
- Taya:** The next minute, the guy is blind. He can't even see. And then He's like, "Oh, now I need to heal him." But he's completely changed. So I'm like, I don't know, maybe we will have heavenly sunglasses or something.
- Annie:** Yeah, something. Because I'm like, at some point "I want you to be as holy as you are. Don't back up on that. But you're also very personal to me." And I don't want to miss the personal side of Jesus.
- Taya:** Like what smell? When He pulls you in for a hug, what is that?
- Annie:** Yeah. Is He gonna smell like a first-century dude, a fisherman? Because that's how all his bros were.
- Taya:** But then again, think about those gates. It's like a massive hill and the streets of gold. And also maybe He'll smell like frankincense and myrrh.
- Annie:** Oh, yeah. What if He smells like frankincense and myrrh?
- Taya:** I love myrrh.
- Annie:** I love myrrh. It's one of my favorites. Well, listen, we could do this so long.
- Taya:** I know.
- Annie:** You have an album that everybody loves. The two things I want to tell you about your album, then you can say anything you want. This album I think it sounds like a combination of where Maggie Rogers meets Jennifer Knapp's Kansas.
- Taya:** No way.
- Annie:** Yes. When I listened to it my second time through I was like, This is Maggie Rogers and Jennifer Knapp. Does that feel...?
- Taya:** I mean, that feels cool.
- Annie:** That's a deep pull. I know. Sorry.
- Taya:** No.

- Annie:** Because I was listening to Kansas. But I would listen to Kansas right now. I love that album.
- Taya:** The crazy thing is when I was growing up, I didn't have many CDs. We loved music. We played it. I remember getting a Michelle Williams album and... I never know how to say his last name, even though I've met him. Paul Baloche.
- Annie:** Oh, yeah, I think that's right. Yes.
- Taya:** Yes. And then a Matt Maher cd.. And then he also bought a Jennifer Knapp CD for us. Three girls. So that resonates totally. I love that because like singer-songwriter-
- Annie:** It feels like it.
- Taya:** ...like storytelling...
- Annie:** Yes.
- Taya:** Which is kind of like the countryside a little bit, which I love.
- Annie:** That's what I thought. I was like, This album feels like those two things meet with this like I liked Jesus theme.
- Taya:** That's all I got. I like Jesus a lot
- Annie:** I know.
- Taya:** And hopefully it doesn't matter even if I'm not saying His actual name—like that's my worship—like you can easily go up. That's what it's about. But I love that. I have to completely just do a massive kind of shout out to John Garrett because he's my producer. I affectionately call him John the Baptist because he actually is prophet, poet, creating art to just enable people to connect with God. He would call his stuff more devotional music.
- Annie:** Wow.
- Taya:** Devotional music provoking-
- Annie:** That is a great way to title this album. Because one of my question is like, is it a worship album? Is it not? No, it's a devotional album.
- Taya:** Yeah.

**Annie:** That's beautiful.

**Taya:** It's just my expression of who Jesus is to me in my own words and melodies. A lot of friends have said it's like I'm reading, which is really sweet because they've never heard my stuff before. They're like, "I know this is you. It sounds exactly the way you would say it and sing it." It sounds like I'm coming into what I call, whenever I spend time with the Lord, my JC time.

**Annie:** Oh, that's way better than quiet time. Quiet time is the worst.

**Taya:** It's my JC time. It's my JC time. And people are like, "It's like, I've just come into your JC time and we've just opened up your journal and you've just let us in on the process and perhaps what God's been speaking to you about." Because it'd be in the seven years since properly songwriting. You know, that didn't mean that my relationship with God was stagnant in that time.

Actually, it was more like I just had a big stop. And we got just to turn on the tap at the right time in the right moment. It just kind of came out.

**Annie:** We are somewhere around 600 or 700 episodes, and I have never printed out a song lyric to take home with me-

**Taya:** Really?

**Annie:** ....until *Narrow Road*.

**Taya:** Aww.

**Annie:** I mean, the whole album. But each of those songs are so special, but *Narrow Road* I printed it out. I was like, "I have to write it in my journal. So I need to print it out."

**Taya:** I actually love that you did that. Because I was talking about that friend who speaks Hebrew as a teacher. She was actually a really key, key part in our Hillsong Israel. She was leading the team for a really long time.

**Annie:** When y'all did *of Dirt and Grace*?

**Taya:** Mm-hmm.

**Annie:** That album-

**Taya:** Do you know what? We feel like that is the most... not like underrated... Just like not everyone knows about it. That was our personal favorite, UNITED's favorite

across the board. Favorite album to ever get to be a part of. And people don't know that it's a visual album as well. We have all the videos to every single one of those songs on YouTube.

**Annie:** Oh my gosh.

**Taya:** I'm talking like it was mind-blowing. So that's what my friend was there for. We were there. For example, *Closer Than You Know*, a song that we did, we filmed that under an olive tree. It was like the last one we did. We were doing like 20-hour days. We're doing *Even When It Hurts* in the coldest, darkest pitch black place. We can literally hear gunshots from the border. Like you can hear it.

**Annie:** People need to go do *Even When It Hurts* after our conversation. Like that's the worship song for the hour. *Even when it hurts*, I'll praise you.

**Taya:** I'll still praise you. Because He's still worthy, still good, still working. And I want to offer you something that I don't want to wait till then. Because again, what does it say about our faith if we wait till it's all amazing? Before we give praise, before we trust, before we... Don't we like find out who we are in those moments? And then if you speak to anyone that has allowed God to have full access in that whole process, they will never take back those things even though it's so difficult.

Like I think about the hardest thing they've ever been through. Like the hardest. Did it not bring you closer to Jesus? Did it not force you to your knees and then the intimacy that you gained with Jesus? I just think even though I don't want to have to live through it again, I would never take it back because I can then now without a shadow of a doubt say in any season ahead, "Hey, He is faithful. He is true."

Like those are scripture that I used to cling to in Job, I think, it's 9 or 11. And it talks about one day your world is going to be washed in sunshine.

**Annie:** Oh.

**Taya:** And it says, "Still, if you set your heart on God..." It's Job 11. "...and reach out to him, if you scrub your hands of sin and refuse to entertain evil in your home, you'll be able to face the world unashamed and keep a firm grip on life, guiltless and fearless. You'll forget your troubles; they'll be like old, faded photographs. Your world will be washed in sunshine, every shadow dispersed by dayspring. Full of hope, you'll relax, confident again; you'll look around, sit back, and take it easy. Expansive, without a care in the world, you'll be hunted out by many for your blessing."

**Annie:** Ooh. Is that Message version?

**Taya:** Mm-hmm.

**Annie:** Have you had that Bible since you were 17?

**Taya:** No. I had to get this one in Sydney because I'm pretty sure I gave, which is weird because usually I have like a real big attachment, I gave one of them away. The first one I let go was like a purple one. I think my mom forced it onto me, like the color. When I grew up, I was like, "These are the color of your shoes. Did I choose this or did you...?"

**Annie:** "You're gonna love his color."

**Taya:** I think she chose it for me 1,000%. But I love it. So you did well, mom.

**Annie:** That's right.

**Taya:** This one I purchased when I first moved to Sydney. So it definitely looks like it's done... Like that used to all be covered.

**Annie:** I'm overly attached to my Bible. I went to check my carry on last week and I was like, I need to get my Bible.

**Taya:** I did the same thing. I was like, "You can lose anything else."

**Annie:** That's how I feel. When people are like, "If your house is burning down," I'm like, "There's all thing. My history meets God's history too intensely in there for me to lose it but also... I always like, "When I get to heaven, Jesus, bring this Bible with me."

**Taya:** Yes. And at the same time He's like, "No, but I'm the words."

**Annie:** That's right. That's right. He's like, "Or you could just talk to me, Annie. You're not attached to that Bible."

**Taya:** Exactly.

**Annie:** Oh, yeah, she was with you—Catherine.

**Taya:** Katrina.

**Annie:** Katrina, sorry.



**Taya:** So close. So close.

**Annie:** Thank you.

**Taya:** I actually wrote this song for her.

**Annie:** Really?

**Taya:** Mm-hmm, yeah. So I think that's why you can kind of hear a little bit of a singer-songwriter, because, well, God always works through people and what He's coming back for, which is the church, which is made up of people. So I could tell you like a few different tracks like, This is for this person. This is for this person."

**Annie:** Wow.

**Taya:** And so this one was for Katrina because she had exemplified to me sacrificial praise 1,000%. But also just like even if it's only me and you, Lord, that is more life than I could ever find anywhere else. And she's faithful, faithful.

She was pastoring a church in the Middle East as a woman, as a single woman. That within itself is so difficult. And didn't have any reinforcements. She was just there by herself. And I'm like, "What song?" I just felt stirred. As soon as we started putting some things, I'm like, "I know this is for Katrina."

**Annie:** I mean, that line "You and me on the narrow road is more life than I could ever hope to find."

**Taya:** Anywhere else.

**Annie:** Girl, that is one of my... And I love that you said, "I'm not giving up on you. Not giving up on you." And what you would think is say "because you haven't given up on me." But that's not what you wrote. You wrote "because you don't give me up." And I was like, Get out of here with that good wordplay, my friend. I'm taking it to put in my journal. So I can see a world were in not too long I send you a tattoo picture of one of these lines because that matters a lot to me. It's beautiful.

**Taya:** I love that. Thank you.

**Annie:** Okay, is there anything we didn't say that you want to say?

**Taya:** No.

**Annie:** Just come back. Just do it again.

**Taya:** If you would have me, I'd love that.

**Annie:** Anytime. Anytime you're like, "I have an album. I don't have an album. I have a conversation. I don't care. I'm in Nashville, I'm just gonna go see Annie." You're very, very welcome.

**Taya:** You're the best.

**Annie:** Okay, the last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sometimes you.

**Taya:** What sounds fun to me is a cheese platter. I think it's like my fifth love language. 100% a cheese platter with my nearest and dearest.

**Annie:** Are you a cheese, meat, olives, nuts or are you like, give me eight cheeses and leave us alone?

**Taya:** Oh, give me eight cheeses with really good crackers, some grapes, maybe some dates. So I do you need a little bit. And then do you guys have... it's not the Pâté because I'm still on the fence about that one. I Prosciutto though. I love Prosciutto. What is the...? It's like a little jam.

**Annie:** A meat jam or a fruit jam?

**Taya:** No, no. No, thank goodness. None of that like, is this cat food or is this..." It sounds where I felt that. I'm like, hehe. That didn't taste good.

**Annie:** Yes. Where they put like apricot or something.

**Taya:** It's like a fake fist.

**Annie:** Yes.

**Taya:** I'm all about that. I need the sweet in there as well. A bit of dark chocolate if I'm trying to be healthy.

**Annie:** If it's a salad, I'm gonna eat dark chocolate.

**Taya:** Which basically is from the ground. So it's I'm eating fruit.

**Annie:** It's a gift. I'm eating fruit. Taya. Okay, favorite cheese. What's the cheese?

**Taya:** Well, there is a Spanish pecorino truffle cheese. So it's a hard cheese, but it has the little truffle pieces in and throughout it. It is to die for.

**Annie:** Can you get it at like a Whole Foods or is it like Australia special?

**Taya:** It's Australia but I reckon you could.

**Annie:** Okay.

**Taya:** Anything with a bit of truffle. Even like a brie with a little bit of truffle I'm into it.

**Annie:** Have you eaten at Burger Up? I'm sure.

**Taya:** No. What's that?

**Annie:** Oh, we should go someday. Or one of our friends. Any of us could go. Burger Up has truffle fries.

**Taya:** Ooh.

**Annie:** They are unbelievable.

**Taya:** Too much. I love it because Ben doesn't love it.

**Annie:** So then it's all yours.

**Taya:** So it means it's all mine.

**Annie:** I'm a Manchego. I'm a 12-month Manchego person.

**Taya:** Wow.

**Annie:** I can't quit Manchego.

**Taya:** Is Manchego the most amazing cheese that you would put even on like spaghetti?

**Annie:** Yes. And you could-

**Taya:** [hissing].

**Annie:** Instead of ham.

**Taya:** Yes.

**Annie:** Yeah, totally.

**Taya:** [hissing] is what you heard just there. That was us grating.

**Annie:** That was us grating. That's the word. We were grating on Manchego on our pasta.

**Taya:** I wish you made that sounds like because that's the sound of joy to me.

**Annie:** Man, this was exactly what today needed.

**Taya:** Oh, I love that.

**Annie:** So thank you. I just love talking about Jesus with you.

**Taya:** I know. Me too. Thank you for having me.

**Annie:** He's a good friend to us.

**Taya:** He is the best.

**Annie:** He's the best. He's the best. I can't wait. I'm sure a lot of our friends have heard the album already but I'm glad, I'm glad to get to tell them about it. So go listen to Taya, everybody. Go listen.

**[01:01:00] <music>**

**Outro:** You guys, do you love her or do you love her? I know. I know. Isn't it awesome when the music that we love is matched with character and integrity and love of God? It just makes me so happy. I'm so thankful. I adore her. So download and stream her self-titled album. Y'all, these songs are so beautiful. It's so meaningful. Follow her on social media so you can 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, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that is how you can find me.

And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out and do something that sounds fun to you and I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is a good, old-fashioned Sabbath tomorrow, you guys. We are resting on a Saturday. I hope y'all will do the same.

Y'all have a great weekend. You get some rest too. Have a lot of fun. We'll see you back here on Monday to kick off October with my friends Seth and Heather Thompson Day. Y'all are going to love this conversation. All right, we'll see y'all on Monday. Have a great weekend.