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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm yours Annie F. Downs. I'm really happy to be here with you today. We have got a great show in store.

But before we dive into today's conversation, I want to let you know that this episode is sponsored by [BetterHelp](#). It would be so nice if life had a turn-by-turn directions app that could just tell us which direction to go when we're feeling a little lost or stuck emotionally. But that is just not the way it typically works, right?

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Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with my friend and one of my favorite pastors Louie Giglio. If he sounds familiar, it's because he's been on the show before. He was on episode 142 and on Episode 306. Be sure to go back and check those out. You will see the links as well in the show notes.

He is the pastor of Passion City Church in Atlanta, the visionary behind the Passion Movement, and an amazing author. In fact, he has had two books come out this

year, we talked about both of them. Louis is out here helping us conquer the negative thoughts and feelings we deal with in his book *Winning the War on Worry*, and his new devotional *At the Table with Jesus*.

He's here today to help us walk towards our Thanksgiving celebrations next week with grace and gratitude. I'm so thankful for his voice to guide us. So here's my conversation with Louie Giglio.

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Annie: Louie Giglio, welcome back to That Sounds Fun. What a joy to have you back!

Louie: I got happy the moment I knew I was going to be on. There's just something about it just brings me joy.

Annie: Ah, thank you. I feel the same way. This morning when I was thinking about it, I thought, "Annie, just don't cry. Just please, could you not cry when you're talking to Louie?" So I don't know how it's gonna go. I want to tell you earlier this month for the first time we had Andy Stanley on the show.

Louie: Oh, my word! Come on.

Annie: Right. Will you talk a little bit... I don't know how much of our friends outside of Atlanta or outside of your y'all's sphere know y'all's history. And I think it is so interesting when people have been in ministry, because they've done life together so long. Will you talk a little bit about y'all?

Louie: Yeah. Let me tell you a really quick story and then I'll back up.

Annie: Yeah.

Louie: Shelley and I were in London in the summer. We were there with another couple on our team. And we had a busy weekend. But I'd found out at a wedding a few weeks before from another friend that Andy was going to be in London. So I texted him and said, "Hey, I heard you're going to London this week." And he said, "No, I'm actually going next week." And I'm like, "Wow, that's when we're going. We're going to be in London for the weekend."

And He goes, "I have a thing on Tuesday outside the city somewhere. Sandra and I will be in London. Monday we have no plans." I said, "Great. We'll connect." We get there and our schedule is all over the map and plans are changing dah dah dah.

So now the weekend is over and we've not seen Andy and Sandra and I feel terrible. And I'm trying to figure out "how do I formulate that text?" You know, the one that's like, "Hey, we were in the same city for a weekend but we didn't get together" text.

Brad is over here hustling to get us on a train to Oxford, and we've got a couple hours to kill and we got a meeting about an hour away. So he's working on train schedules. And finally he lands on the one, we jump in the cab, we hustle off to the train station. We get on the train as it's pulling out of the station. Literally, we're walking up the aisle of all the cars.

And on these trains is four seats on one side around a table and two on the other side with the table in the middle. We finally get to our car, we think, we're walking up the aisle, look up and there's Andy and Sandra Stanley sitting by the window.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Louie: I'm like, "No way you're on the same train we're on." And they're like, "Where are your seats?" We're like, "I don't know." So finally Brad catches up and goes, "Hey, those are your seats right there. "

Annie: No.

Louie: Brad had booked us at the four top table with Andy and Sandra on the train to Oxford.

Annie: Oh, my gosh!

Louie: And they said, "Yeah, we're going wherever but we got two hours to kill on Oxford." So we had the most amazing two hours together, one hour on the train." We did Addison's walk where J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis used to walk at Magdalene College. It was just like the Lord made it all... What are the odds? What are the odds?

Annie: I mean, that had to feel like such a moment for the two of y'all to do that walk that those two friends did.

Louie: Well, that was really cool. Shelley and Sandra are walking behind and taking pictures. It kind of felt a little bit nostalgic in a way. I was in middle school at First Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. That's the church I was born into. Back in the day you were born on Thursday, you went to the nursery on Sunday. That's how life worked in the old days.

In about middle school, a guy came to be the associate pastor at our church, Charles Stanley. This man was preaching fire. He was preaching the word of God. It was shaking things up. The church was giant. 3,000 people every Sunday, packed out, but not really rockin for the Lord necessarily.

And everybody was happy and comfortable, 19... You know, I don't know, whatever year that was. 60-something, maybe early 70s. And the church started rumbling because of this Bible-preaching man. And eventually, the church kind of blew apart, split up, very, very tragic.

And that pastor's kids, he ended up becoming the pastor of the church miraculously really. His kids were Andy and Becky Stanley. Andy and I were the same age. And from that moment on, I don't know, 13 years old, 14 years old, we were best friends.

I grew up in their house going on vacation with them. It was just an amazing run. We went to Georgia State in Atlanta. He ended up going to Dallas Seminary, I went to Southwestern in Fort Worth. And you know, we've been in and out of each other's lives since. But every now and then we end up on a train to Oxford and it's been good.

Annie: I think one of the things y'all model so beautifully for those of us that are coming up behind you in their 30s and 20s and me, 40s, is some of these friendships that you forged a long time ago are the ones that actually keep you close to Christ through the whole thing.

Louie: Yeah. It's so funny, Annie. We were crazy, knuckleheads in high school and it's a miracle that God is using either one of us really. But I respected Andy from even that point on. He's so gifted. Even then you could tell this guy's extraordinarily gifted.

And then we were in North Point for a good season of our lives. When we moved back to Atlanta before Passion City Church days, we were at North Point every Sunday for maybe a decade or so. I got to preach there a lot. Andy and I could not be more different. We are wired differently, our personalities differently, we see the world a little bit different, our emphasis in our ministry is a little bit different, but both love Jesus and want to serve Him and have loved Him and wanted to serve Him as long as I can remember.

Annie: It's amazing. It's so fun to watch. As a person who attended 7:22, the Bible study you led in 1998 and early 2000s, it's just amazing to watch y'all both continue to be in ministry, to be loyal to Jesus when the world has not always been kind to either of y'all.

Louie: We've seen a lot. When Andy's dad—I can tell you about this for a long time—but when his dad became the pastor, our church split. It went from 3,000 people to 300 people.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Louie: It was one of the most brutal things. Here we are middle school or almost in middle school and you know, church people now are all discovering that the church has flaws, you know, got worse around their corner. There's imperfect people. But I mean, we saw it early on.

Like a guy walked up in a business meeting and slugged Andy's dad in the jaw, I mean, nearly knocked him out. There was all kinds of crazy going on. And so they wouldn't let Andy and his sister into the business meetings because it was no telling what was gonna happen.

So our church had a big wraparound balcony in downtown Atlanta. So I would go up in the side door and I would get down on the floor because no one was in the balcony for the business meeting, and I crawl around behind the wall, and then I'd kind of pop my little head up, see what's going on, then I would get down and crawl back out, go down to the pastor study, fill Andy in on all the goings on, what's happening.

And then I would go back up and the whole two-hour business meeting, I'm kind of shuttling back and forth. "You're not gonna believe what they just said. You're not gonna believe what they just said." But God used all that in amazing way.

And Annie, Dr. Stanley became the pastor in my family's state, thank God, my mom's state, my dad didn't have any dog in that fight, but my mom's state... And I, through high school, sat there and watched 300 people become In Touch Ministries and worldwide impact and just a move of God.

And I learned right there everything I know about ministry: preach the word, trust God, leave the results to Him. As Dr. Stanley says, Obey God and leave the results to Him. And I knew if I preached the word faithfully, if I love God and preach His word faithfully, whatever I do will grow. And people say, "Oh, what happen at Choice Bible Study?" We just preach the word. "What happens at 7:22?" We just preach the word. "What happens in Passion?" We're just preaching the word of God and pointing people to Jesus. And it's really as simple as that is.

Annie: I have been in a conversation with a friend about one Bible verse that I wanted us to talk about because it is this... We're going to talk about Jesus which is what

you're known for in my circle of friends is talking about Jesus. I love this verse so I wanted to read it to you and have you respond to it.

This is 1 Corinthians 1:24. This is in the Message version. "But to us who are personally called by God Himself, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is God's ultimate miracle and wisdom all wrapped up in one."

Louie: Eugene Peterson, boy, he can unpack something, can't he?

Annie: That's right.

Louie: How beautiful!

Annie: Think about Jesus being the ultimate miracle and wisdom of God.

Louie: Yeah, it's really hard to get our minds around when you think about it. God is speaking through Jesus. So He is the Word of God. And the beginning was the word and the beginning was Jesus. And what was God doing in the beginning? He was speaking. What was He speaking? The wisdom of God, the word of God through the word of God. And we now have access to Him.

I think that when it all gets clear and everything crystallizes, you realize that Jesus isn't just a thing, but He is the thing. And thus this is the difference. I think for a lot of even people in church, Jesus is a thing. He is a real thing, a good thing, an awesome thing. We love this thing, Jesus Savior. He's amazing, healer. He's amazing.

But I think there's a difference between loving Jesus as a thing and loving Him as the thing. At the end of the day, it's just Jesus. It always was, it is and it always will be. And how we got invited into the story is another miracle. That's probably the second greatest miracle is that we're in the story with the greatest miracle. And at the end of the day, we're going to be there with Him in glory.

It says, "When He appears," this is Colossians, "We will appear with Him in glory." This is our future. I don't know, it's just gonna be a mind-blowing eternity that is far greater than anyone has even imagined. And what a privilege to spend our time today talking about Him and four, five seconds we have on planet Earth to talk about Him.

Annie: Right. Right. The whole conversation started yesterday with my friend because we were talking about how, at the start of that section, it says the cross is foolishness to the people who don't believe. Because we were talking about how Christians sometimes judge non-believer decisions on Christian scales. And then we go like,

"I can't believe they're doing that." And you're like, "Well, the cross is foolishness to them." But to us who are being saved, it's the power of God. Right?

So you spend so much time investing in the next generation, but we also watch them through TikTok and on TV and all the places be foolish at times. So how do we bring them toward faith without judging them on a scale that is not their scale?

Louie: Wow. I think that's a brilliant way to put that. a) I think, you know, what business do we have judging people anyway? I mean, God is the ultimate judge. And I think if we mind our own business and try to live a quiet life that honors Him, we do well. I'll let God judge all the other people and kind of help them sort out and straighten out their situation.

But you know, all these kids on TikTok... all these kids on TikTok—that sounded just like something an old person would say—they learned most of their foolishness from us.

Annie: From us. That's it.

Louie: So I think that looking down on emerging generations is really, you know, not very self-aware approach to them. I just like to offer an alternative that's probably better than a critique is an alternative. And that is to show people that Jesus really is satisfying and that He's more than enough for everything that we're craving in life right now.

And I think honestly, and I don't know, I don't know a lot about the emerging generation, but I think they want to be distracted from some of the pain and hurt that they're dealing with. And TikTok is perfect. It's a perfect distraction. I'm not on TikTok, but I can get lost in reels on Instagram and all of a sudden an hour went by and I been watching some guy fish or watching the dog dance, or-

Annie: I watch an Australian guy cooking every day. I'm like, "What am I doing? What am I doing?"

Louie: And I think we all kind of need a diversion. And coming out of 2020 and 2021, people want a diversion. So the TikTok came along just at the right time, but I think the downside of TikTok is its namesake. And I think that people are TikToking their life away. TikTok, TikTok, TikTok, and all of a sudden an opportunity is gone, a day's gone, a chance to walk with God is gone, maybe a week went by. Just one TikTok at a time. So we got to be careful or else I think we're gonna get TikTok to death.

Annie: Yes! I had to quit it because I had no self-control. And I'm 40. So I'm going, "Man, the 18-year-olds who don't go, "Oh, if I don't have self-control, I need to leave," I mean, I can't imagine. I can't imagine being faced with some of these.

Louie: I'm not on TikTok because it take self-control, but there is no other control. And you don't know what the next thing is going to be. And all of a sudden it's there. And you go, "Okay, you don't want that." But you don't really get to pick and choose. That's my struggle right now.

I used to like Instagram because I got to choose what my feed was and I got to see things in chronological order and I kind of got to follow along with the few people that I wanted to know what's going on with. And now it's just okay, because you liked Tim Tebow's post, here's nine other things that we think you might like. So now I'm watching the guy cooking in Australia.

Annie: That's right. That's exactly right. But one of the things you've modeled so beautifully for me is that we can't be stuck in what we have experienced as a generation and not look down, not look down in a bad way, but not look down to the next generation and go, "Okay, what can I do to be with you?" I mean, that's what Passion has always done, right? That's what the conference is. That's what your books are doing, is saying, "Okay, next generation come with us and we'll meet you where you are, but come with us toward Jesus."

Louie: Yeah, the future is not with my generation, that's for sure. You're in the midst of it, and you're coming into your prime. You know, 40, 50, those are the best years of life... 60. These are the years that you're preparing for your whole life. So you're like in a zone.

I'm 65 years old in a few months and I'm not the future of anything. So I want to invest in the future. The future is a new generation. And they're amazing. I don't want to say they are amazing. They're all individuals and they're all different and they're all unique. But they have such great gifts and aptitude and ability, especially this new crew that's coming along. It's like 16, 17, 18 right now. They're world changers, and they are going to do some phenomenal things.

And if I can invest in that, and have a stake in that, that would be a really great thing to do with the last chapters that I get in my life.

Annie: I'm really excited about Passion 2023. It's sold out everywhere, right? Like, everybody who's getting in is getting in already, right? It's done.

Louie: We have a dilemma. Stadiums are only available in certain rhythms and time, and we didn't have an option of a stadium this year. So we're in Fort Worth in, I don't

know, 12,000-seat configuration. We're in Atlanta in about 17,000 seats. And that sounds great, except that there were 55,000 people there last year. So we knew going in it was going to be a rough ride.

And Atlanta sold out a week or so ago, then Dallas sold out pretty quick after and people were like, "Well, why don't you add a third one or add or whatever?" And it's like, it's a diminishing return at some point and it's really not feasible financially to do two of them honestly.

Annie: Yeah, that's Oreo for your people.

Louie: And then you start adding a third one... that's millions of dollars. It's kind of frustrating and I know people are a little bit not thrilled right now, given that they're both sold out. But here's the thing. What I've learned is if you want to get into Passion, you can get in. If you really want to be in one of those spaces, you ask God and I promise you, He will make a way and open a door.

Tickets will be available right up to the last second. Somebody's trip got canceled, they decided their family was going to go skiing, you know, the college pastor of the church just left and the eight of us now don't have anybody to go. I mean, it's possible. Don't lose hope if you want to get in. It's gonna be amazing.

[00:20:27] <music>

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And now back to our conversation with Louie.

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Annie: I'll tell you, in Atlanta, you're having one of our all-time favorites, Jonathan Pokluda.

Louie: Oh, come on.

Annie: I mean, one of my favorite dudes. I cannot wait for everybody to get to hear him.

Louie: Hey, I just met him on Sunday. He preached at Passion City Church Sunday to five. It's the first time I met him. I really liked him. And I told them Jonathan is the only person, Annie, that I've ever invited to Passion that I had not met.

Annie: Wow. Wow.

Louie: So he comes highly recommended. And people around me love him. I love the way he talks to this generation. And man, he shared his story. I didn't know a lot of his life story. And man his opening five minutes of the talk he was giving us a snapshot of his life and I was like, "Whoa, now I know why God is using this guy so powerfully." But he was amazing.

Annie: He's amazing.

Louie: His talk just got put up on our YouTube and... He was talking about why resurrection is so important. And man, it was incredible. I'm excited he's gonna be a Passion.

Annie: We did a 12-city tour together in 2020 right before everything shut down.

Louie: oh, cool.

Annie: The highest compliment I can give... I can give him two of the highest compliments. One, I listened to his talk all 12 nights. I did not miss his. And it was the same thing-ish. But I listened to every time. And the thing I think you're also gonna see about him, Louie, he served everyone. He checked in on the people doing catering. He's very tall, he slept in a very small bunk on a bus and never complained. I mean, he's a servant first. And I don't know a lot of those. I'm not, and so I wanna be-

Louie: I'm so glad you said that because... I'll just be honest. You know, I was nervous about meeting him because if he wasn't like that, then it was going to be really tricky. And I didn't know what he was going to be like.

And so the first like two minutes, I was really anxious about it. Not in a bad way, but just like, "Okay, I'm about to meet this guy and I really, really hope that he is humble and I really hope that he comes in low, not fake low, but real low." And you know instantly whether people are fake low or real low. And I want him to be normal and I want him to notice people. And I want him to thank people. And I want him to be grateful. And I want him to respect our team.

And he was saying all that same stuff about us. Because people say that about our team. We have the best team. One of our bands was on tour with KB just for the last few weeks. And when I went to Atlanta, everyone on their tour said, "Your guys are the greatest people we've ever been around." And I'm like, "Well, they better be because there aren't going to be our guys if they're not."

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

Louie: And he said to me, Jonathan did, he said, "Man, your team, your artists, blah, blah, blah, everybody's so great. Everybody's so humble and so real." And I was like, "Well, man, shouldn't that be the way we all are?" But I came away from meeting Jonathan, and I don't want to pump him up too much, and I came away, I was like, Hey, I loved his style. He has a very unique timing in his delivery unlike anyone. And I could not put my finger on.

There's two things in there that I was trying to figure out, and I haven't figured them out yet. His timing is just refreshing in the most incredible way. His content was great. Obviously, he loves the Bible, and he loves God, loves God of the Bible. His timing is really cool. And he's a little quirky and I liked that. And it all just works.

Annie: He's awesome. I'm so excited. I mean, you know me. I'm such a fan of Passion. It's like every year we get to gather together and then just have like an internal bomb go off in our lives that goes for the whole year of like, "This is what I heard God say. And this is what I experienced." It's why we need to gather. It's why it matters that our faith is like that. Whether it's Sundays or once a year, we need those, "Now go and do. Now go and do. Now go and do." That's how I left Passion last year is feeling very inspired to go and do. So I'm really excited about it.

Let's talk about *At the Table with Jesus* and *Winning the War on Worry*, your two books that everybody is getting this Christmas. Because in the same vein of us talking about JP, I mean that you two men or two men in my life who have like modeled Jesus first. So tell me what was it about sitting down and going, "Okay, here's 66 days at the table with Jesus."

Louie: Well, two things. Love to just, you know, thanks from people because these two resources really are, as Levi Lusko was saying to me the other day, he goes, "You got a whole suite of books around worry." And he goes, "No, not a suite, a fleet of books."

Annie: A fleet. That's right.

Louie: And I said, "Well, that's because I have an amazing team." I was doing an interview, Annie, with Caroline Leaf, Dr. Caroline Leaf when *Don't Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table* came out. And she was explaining to me that the misnomer that I had my whole life that you can create a new habit in 30 days in a month, you can create a new habit, she said, "Actually, it's 66 days."

Annie: I was gonna ask you that. Why?

Louie: And she said it's scientifically proven that in 66 days you can create a new neural pathway in your brain. I said that as if I was an expert, but I didn't know what a neural pathway was until that conversation.

And she said, It's like walking through a field. You know, if you just walk across the pasture once you can kind of see where your footprints were in the grass. If you do it every day, for a few months, there'll be a little path get worn. If you drive a tractor on it, it'll really turn into like a two-lane road. And if you stay with it, you're going to see the fruit of that path and that routine and that consistency.

She said, your brain is like that. If you think a negative thought consistently for 66 days, you build a road in your brain.

Annie: Wow. Wow.

Louie: That negative thought now can you go 60 miles an hour on not just six miles an hour.

Annie: Wow.

Louie: But she said, Louie, the opposite is also true. If you consistently for 66 days think a positive thought, then you also can create a roadway in your brain. So that's why we landed on this table 66 days to draw closer to Christ to fortify your faith. And so we were really wanting just every single day for 66 days to look at an aspect of Jesus and to think about Him.

Saying, "I'm not going to give the enemy a seat at my table" is not the answer. I know that's the title of the book. But that's not the answer. The answer is actually sitting down at the table with Jesus, not sitting down at the table with the enemy. So I loved it. I just actually did it for the second time with one of my guys that I do my subs with. And it was so great just doing it again.

Annie: I loved watching you do it the first time where every day you're putting up a sticky note on the wall of one thing you learned about Jesus that day. I thought, "Oh, that is how I'm going to do this. That is it." Because to me, putting it in front of my eyes is what makes the road for me... and seeing it.

Louie: I loved that too. It was really refreshing for me. You know, I was traveling around a lot at that time. So I've got sticky notes everywhere and coming home and trying to put them all up on the wall, and then they're all falling off the wall. We had to get some extra heavy duty, stick them to keep them up there for... 66 days is a long time. But it was really refreshing.

And you know what? What it is honestly, Annie, too, is it's a Christology. This book is. It's not just to feel good moment with Jesus every day. It really is teaching people the theology of who Jesus is—what we call Christology.

And I think doing it with some friends along the way a couple of different times, people are like, "I knew Jesus was born in Bethlehem. I knew He died on a cross for my sins. I know He was raised from the dead on the third day. But man, I didn't know there was so much more to know about Jesus that I didn't know about Him." So it's been a really great journey.

Annie: I mean, these may not correlate at all. So say, "Annie, you're wrong." But I mean, is there something to that there's 66 books in our Protestant Bible and it takes 66 days. Am I right? They're 66 books in our Protestant Bible?

Louie: There are 66 books in the Bible.

Annie: Did God do it on purpose? Did Martin Luther do that on purpose? I guess that's who I need to ask.

Louie: Yeah. Let's read one book a day for 66 days.

Annie: That's it. Just read Psalms in a day you'll be just fine. Can you imagine? I mean, for our friends listening, we've done Read the Gospels around here where we read the Gospels in a month, where you read three chapters a day, and you get through the whole gospels all four of them in a month. So we've got some fun stuff with that coming up.

But why is it Jesus, Louie? For those who are friends who are new to doing this, they're jumping in with Advent with us for the first time, they're maybe new to study, why don't we start in the Old Testament? Why is it okay to start in the middle of the book, per se, and go for Jesus first?

Louie: Well, I think that's a great question. And it doesn't really matter where you start. Honestly, it's Jesus. There's this misnomer that, Oh, the Old Testament, that's all that. And then there's the Gospels - that's all about Jesus. And then there's this other part that's kind of all about how we do life in the church now.

Annie: The after Jesus.

Louie: Our team worked on the Jesus Bible. We've been asked to do Bibles for a while, you know, the worship Bible, the Passion Bible, the this Bible. And we're like, "Why would we want to do a Bible? The Bible's the Word of God?"

And then finally, someone pitched this idea, "What about the Jesus Bible?" And I was like, "Done. We are dealing with the Jesus Bible."

Annie: Yeah, these are the magic words.

Louie: And the reason we did it was they gave us the opportunity to show how in every bit of the whole Bible, all of Scripture, I prefer to call it scripture, because the Bible doesn't call itself the Bible. But in all of Scripture, it's about Jesus. The whole story is about Jesus from beginning to end. So it doesn't matter where you start, it's still going to be about Jesus. But why not fast forward to the part where Jesus is actually on Earth in a human body, saying to us, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father."

So if you look into the face of Christ and into the life of Christ, you are looking at Almighty God. You are hearing Almighty God. You see a visible representation of Yahweh. And Jesus is not just another smart guy. He's not just another Crusader, another campaign or another nonprofit ministry leader. He's not just another cost carrier. He is the image of the invisible God. And so why not get our eyes locked on Him and our hearts locked on Him and stay locked on Him for the rest of our lives?

Annie: It's one of the reasons I'd love you and Andy having these books come out around the same time. His, *Not in It to Win It*, and this, *At the Table with Jesus* of going like, What if, to live in the culture we live in, what if we just read about Jesus every day and then went out and lived? I mean, I think that's who I want to be Louie. I want Jesus to tell me what to do in the morning and then me to live that for the rest of the day.

Louie: Yeah. We've been doing a series here called Shift. That F is really important in that series title, by the way. And we've been talking about prayer. And I didn't really know this, but I was doing a kind of a deep dive into the original language. And the word when Jesus said, "and when you pray," that word that He used for prayer, that really means "to exchange wills."

So it's me getting in a zone where I'm saying, Not my will but Your will. This is what Jesus did when He prayed using that same word, "not my will but Your will be done." And so when I pray, "I am saying to God, I want to be on your page.

It's what you're saying. You know, we've spent so much of our lives trying to get God on our page. "Lord, here's how I need you to enter into my story to affect things in the way that I think they need to be effective." Prayer is really about me hearing from God so that I can get on God's page.

Jesus said He did what He saw the Father doing and He spoke to the things that He saw with His Father. So He was alone with God understanding what His Father's doing, so then He would go and do what He understood His father was doing.

And that's the way I want to live as well. I want to wake up in the morning and I want to say, "I'm available to You," versus "I need You to be available to me today." "I want to be available to you today. And whatever you want, whatever you need, I'm available."

Annie: I think this is one of the reasons I love the idea of *At the Table with Jesus* being one of the books we put in stockings and pass out to start in the new year, is just going like, "Hey, spend the first two months of the year reading three pages about Jesus and learning something new about Him or hearing it in a new way."

The thing I have learned, Louie, correct me if I'm wrong as always. That's just an overarching statement about our friendship. Always correct me if I'm wrong. I can't get to the bottom of Jesus. I don't run out of learning. Every book I read, I learned something new.

Louie: Well, that's the beauty of being in a relationship, I think. And if it were just information, we would turn the last page of the book and we would go, "Wow, that's great. That was a very amazing read. And I learned a lot." But Jesus isn't a book to be read. He's not a theology to be studied. He's a person to be enjoyed. And He's not just a person to be enjoyed, but He's infinite in every way and on every level. He's the supreme version of everything that is good.

There's no depth to Him and His love even. We talked about the love of God, but it's deeper, wider, higher, longer than we know. So there's going to be an eternity so that we can understand truly how much we are loved by God, specifically through Christ.

So I think when you're in a relationship... Shelley and I've been married 30-something years now. Should have been able to pull that out faster. 36 years. But there's never been a day where I'm like, "Okay, I get it all."

Annie: Right. Sort of I know everything.

Louie: Every day there's something to be appreciated and to be enjoyed, to be discovered. So what God's inviting us into, Annie, what we're saying to everyone listening today is not into our head thing. God wants us to engage our brains. He gave them to us so that we could know Him. But He's inviting us into a relationship. An evolving, living relationship. And this is what we're made for, and this is why our

hearts are so hungry and why we're starved for things is because we were made for someone as big as Jesus.

Annie: When we're thinking into next year and thinking about what's coming culturally with elections and just what's going on in the world, for all of our friends who are newer to Jesus, why is starting a day with Him match with what's going on culturally? Like, even if you don't believe in Him, how can you learn from Jesus?

Louie: Well, I think the thing I learned from Jesus the most is that He isn't float above. That sounds a little bit too frou-frou. But He operates above the culture.

Annie: Yes, absolutely.

Louie: This is what we all need right now. Jesus doesn't get... He's not impervious to cultural pressures. But He doesn't get bogged down in them because His agenda is bigger. And He's actually, in more ways than we would know, using all the craziness in the culture to accomplish things that we don't fully understand.

Remember that text in the Old Testament where it says, "And Cyrus came like a bird out of the east." And why? Because you're going to take down Babylon. Well, who was Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar? That whole Emperor was coming down so that the people of God can be returned back to the land of God. So God like moving—I don't know if I can say this or not—like Putin-sized pieces.

Annie: Sure.

Louie: And if we were playing backgammon with a friend, He's like, "Okay, time to move you over here, time to move you over here, because I'm accomplishing something that is so far beyond what any of you see right now." That's the way we need to start our day.

And when you are walking with the King of kings, the premier of premiers, the president of presidents, the ruler of rulers, the Ayatollah of Ayatollahs and you're walking with Him, it lifts you up, Annie, to be above it, not to be disconnected from... There are real issues going on right now.

I mean, I just voted in the early voting here and there are some crazy challenging issues in Atlanta, Georgia. And I want to get behind candidates who are sane and who have common sense and who have integrity and a desire for righteousness. I want to get behind people like that. So I don't want to just, you know, kind of like, "Oh, I'm not involved in that." But at the same time, I want to start my day above the fray, if you will.

Annie: That is a perfect way for us to walk-

Louie: And I don't know if we can say, by the way, Jesus is the Ayatollah of Ayatollahs. So we might need to just make sure everybody understands what we're saying here. He's greater than any ruler of any kind in all of history. He is the King of all kings.

[00:41:36] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just taking a quick break from this conversation to tell you about another one of our amazing partners, [Thrive Causemetics](#). It's the season for giving, so why not give gifts that give back?

Thrive Causemetics makes high-performance beauty and skincare products made with clean skin-loving ingredients. They don't have any parabens, sulfates, or phthalates and all of their products are certified 100% vegan and cruelty-free.

You already know how I feel about Thrive Causemetics liquid lash extension mascara. My makeup bag will never be without it again. It works so much better than any mascara I've used and it washes off so easily and completely. It's like magic. I literally gave it at a favorite things party this year and everyone has been raving about it.

Brilliant eye brightener is a cream-to-powder highlighter stick that brightens and opens eyes. Y'all, I love it. It's like an instant eye lift. You simply apply it to the inner corner of your eyes to look like you've had plenty of restful sleep even if maybe you have jet lag like me. It's blendable and buildable so you can use it as an eyeshadow for a perfect daytime glow or use the metallic shades, yes, for an easy smokey eye.

Thrive's Sheer Strength Hydrating Lip Tint is incredible, giving your lips deep hydration with a hint of color that glides on smoothly for even color and all-day wear. The lightweight non-sticky formula comes in six different universally flattering shades. So there's one that's calling your name or the name of the stalking you're stuffing.

And y'all, for every product purchase, Thrive Causemetics donates to one of their over 300 giving partners across the country that supports all kinds of amazing causes because they feel the same way we do about wanting to help communities thrive any way we can. "Cause" is in their name for a reason. Celebrate this season of giving and try Thrive Causemetics today.

Right now you can get 15% off your first order when you visit thrivecausemetics.com/tsf. That's thrivecausemetics.com/tsf for 15% off your first order.

Sponsor: And I want to tell you about one last incredible partner, [Prose](#). Most of you have probably heard me sing the praise of Prose, the world's most personalized haircare. And for those that haven't, please listen. I have to tell you about the incredible results I'm seeing since using my customized Prose products. My hair is stronger and more manageable since I'd be using my Prose shampoo and conditioner. I love knowing that the formula is uniquely targeted to the issues I wanted to address and it smells so good.

Prose knows there is more to you than just your hair type. Prose has given over 1 million consultations with their in-depth hair quiz, which is how I got started. You know we love a quiz. I just answered questions about where I live, what issues I was dealing with, characteristics of my hair and eating habits. I mean, y'all, they analyze over 85 personal factors to determine a unique blend of ingredients to treat your exact concerns.

Prose also has a "review and refine" feature and it lets me tweak my formulas for any reasons. Like a change of address or hair color or diet. I made a couple of adjustments to improve the volume of my hair. And I think it is so cool that you can do that.

And as a carbon-neutral certified B corp, Prose is an industry leader in clean and responsible beauty. All their ingredients are sustainably sourced, ethically gathered, and cruelty-free. They're also the first custom beauty brand to go carbon neutral. If you're not 100% positive Prose is the best haircare you've ever had, they will take their products back no questions asked.

Prose is the healthy hair regimen with your name all over it. Take your free and get their consultation and get 15% off your first order today. So go to prose.com/thatsoundsfun. That's prose.com/thatsoundsfun for your free, in-depth hair consultation and 15% off.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Louie.

[00:45:21] <music>

Annie: We've all said King of kings since we were singing Christmas songs as children, and it has only been in the last three years or something where I've been like, What does it mean that He is the king of all of them? Like every king that's ever been.

I think that's one of the most fun parts about faith is if you will slow down—it's why I've spent two days in that first Corinthians verse—is if we will just slow down and go, "Look at those words." Because even in that one that we read about like what Jesus said or what Paul said is, the cross is foolishness to the non-believers, but it is power to us, not wisdom. So why? Right? Like why?

So even dig in those little things. So when you say King of kings, I'm like, Right, over every king ever, He's the King. And for so many people who are just covered in anxiety and worry and fear, that is hopeful. That is like a drop of hope that comes into it.

In your devotion you wrote, *Winning the War on Worry...* Will talk a little bit about that? Because I mean, this is able to just go in our backpacks and be that bit of hope that we need.

Louie: I'm glad you said that. I've been talking about this book for the last few weeks since it came out. And it really is a pocketbook. I mean, I'm holding it right now. It will fit in your purse, fit in your back pocket, depending on how big your jeans are. And it just is this practical freedom.

I wrote it as a weekly daily devotion. But then we put it all together into a book so that people could have a practical handbook to fight against worry. And I wrote it, Annie, because I come from worry. My parents, if they gave out Olympic medals for worrying, we'd have some on the wall at our house. I came from an environment of worry. I talked about it in the book.

When I was in late high school, maybe somewhere on senior year, I came home, we'd all had dinner and I was gonna... We lived in apartment complex. I was just gonna go out the back door and around to a few buildings around to where my friend Ray lived. And I don't know we were just gonna hang around, do whatever, you know, high school kids do.

Walk through the den and my dad was sitting on the sofa. My dad I knew had been an orthodontist that day and had a major ordeal. I think he was in the process of getting dentures. And I didn't really ask a lot of questions because high school kids didn't ask their parents a lot of questions about stuff like that. And so I knew it was not a great day probably.

Come to the dentist day, "Hey, Dad, I'm going to Ray's house. I'll be back in a little bit." He goes, "I would just prefer if everyone stayed in the house tonight." "No, no, no I'm gonna be back up." He goes, "Today has been the worst day of my life and I would prefer that everyone just stayed in the house tonight."

Annie: Wow.

Louie: And you know when you're a teenager, your response mechanism is sarcasm and argument. I mean, I got it. I was like, "Got it." Turned around, went back to my room, shut the door, went to bed. Didn't bring it up the next day. But it dawned on me that my dad that day had had this horrible thing happened to him where now he's gonna have dentures. But what dawned on me, Annie, is every time I've walked out the door, my dad had worried himself sick about me.

Annie: Wow.

Louie: And this day he just couldn't add to that to what he was already dealing with.

Annie: And for good reason, my dad worried like that. My dad was passed around to different relatives when he was 2 years old, 3 years old, 5 years old, 6 years old, and he never kind of knew what was around the corner. But that's the environment I came out of, and so I have a tendency to be like that.

And I wanted to be free from that. So I had to start by admitting that I'm a worrier. But then we start the book with this pretty radical idea that worry is a choice. So I may be born into worry, and I was born into the Giglio level worry, but I've also been born again.

And I don't mean to make light of this or make it sound like a spiritual slogan, but I've been born again. And my Father, my Heavenly Father has never worried one time in His existence. Not one time has He ever worried. And He's my dad, and I am born to Him and actually have His spiritual genes in me. So the book is a practical guide to helping us get on that page, and to get off the page of worry.

Annie: Why does anxiety feel more prevalent than it was five years ago or 10 years ago? Is it? Is it not? Do we talk about it more? Do we have new words for it?

Louie: Well, I mean, everyone has heard the saying that there are 365 references in the Bible to "Don't fear." And those are all couched around, "Don't worry. Don't be anxious. Don't be afraid." So apparently being afraid and being anxious has been around for a long time. So it's not like new occurrence because-

Annie: That's right.

Louie: ...Jesus talked about worry. You know, "don't worry about tomorrow, today's got enough issues of its own." Paul talked about worry. "Cast all your cares, all your anxiety on Him, for He cares for you." This is 2,000 years ago. So worry is not new. Anxiety is not new.

I think that the impetus of anxiety is obviously different in the last 10 years since we put smartphones in our hands. And this is not a knock on smartphones or iPads or whatever. It's just you can't worry less if you are on a screen all day because what the screen is doing its lifeline is anxiety.

It's not a calming device. You don't pick it up and the first headline is "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life." And then you swipe over and it says, "Never fear because God is near." Then you swipe up to the next thing and it says "you are a loved son of Almighty God. You're a loved daughter of a King of kings. You're pursued and sought after and valued and prized by the God of all creation." And then you click on the next app and it's calming music. It's not what it's designed to be.

Annie: No.

Louie: It's designed to be a hook. And to keep hooking and hooking and hooking and hooking so you come back over and over and over again and get that hit that you need. So yes, I think the culture is creating more. The word "anxiety" in the Bible means to tear apart. And even the word "worry" has that in it as well. So when someone says "I was worried to pieces," that's an accurate-

Annie: They meant it, yeah.

Louie: ...backing of the New Testament word.

Annie: Wow.

Louie: So what is in our culture? A lot of ripping, a lot of tearing, a lot of fragmentation is in the culture. And that's why we've got to come back to the table with Jesus who's not fragmented and isn't coming apart at it seems.

Annie: The highest integrity, right? He is connected in every way.

Louie: Yeah, beautiful.

Annie: Connected in every way. Okay, so let's finish with this. I just want you for a minute to tell me your favorite thing about Jesus?

Louie: Wow. I think my favorite thing about Jesus is His compassion. I say that just because of how much I have tested His compassion in my life. Like we were talking about the very beginning about judging people and holding them to a Christian standard even though they don't understand the cross and the things of

God, I think we all are judgmental. And when we are we forget how patient God has been with us.

One of the things that I think God is sold short on is His patience. It is a fruit of the Spirit, and we all need the Spirit of God to be more patient. But think about how ridiculous it is, Annie, to be invited to walk next to Yahweh and to not do it.

Annie: Right.

Louie: Or to be invited to have the wisdom of God but then to go and just do something stupid because you decided you'd figure it out on your own. And when you do that, when I do that, I don't get fire and brimstone.

Annie: Right. Right.

Louie: I don't get blown off the planet. I get a Father's arm on my shoulder going, "Hey, hey." And I get compassion. The Psalmist said it this way. "He knows that we are frail and He remembers that we are dust." I guess it's just maybe part of my life story, but I need compassion and patience. And I'm so grateful to Jesus that that's the way He operated.

The only people He doesn't have a lot of compassion for are people who are puffed up with their own righteousness and trying to beat their chests about how great they are. And He just has, "No tolerance for that whatsoever." Everyone else in the story He had compassion on them. And I love it.

Annie: Whenever I get prideful or get too big for my own britches, the first thing the Lord reminds me is like, "You haven't missed one of your sins. You have perfect attendance. So what are you doing?" I mean, that is His first reminder of me of like, "You've been with you every day. What do you remember?"

So whenever I start to feel haughty about anything, the kindness of God reminds me to be humble because I have not missed any of it in my own life. I haven't missed His compassion, and I haven't missed my mistakes.

Louie: Yeah. I love this scripture that says the kindness of God leads us to repentance. And it's really a beautiful thing. And even going back to the Jonathan Pohlman thing, people say, "Well, how can someone be in the spotlight and be on a platform and have a following, and blah, blah, blah, whatever all that stuff is and be humble?"

And you know, the answer to that is a) the dumbest question to me. I guess I shouldn't have said that. I just do not understand that question. But humility is not a character trait to be developed is the way I say it. And like you don't sit down one

day and go, "I'm gonna become more humble. I'm gonna start working on my list of to-do list today. And one of the things is I'm going to be more humble. And here's the four things I'm gonna do to be more humble."

Annie: Right.

Louie: It's not like that. It's not a character trait to be developed. Humility is the byproduct of being with Jesus. And no one is with Jesus and is proud. No one. I guess maybe, you know, Peter might have had a moment or two. But I'm-

Annie: Still my favorite guy. Still my favorite guy.

Louie: Peter after the breakfast by the Sea of Galilee was bowled but I bet he wouldn't be proud. So draw near to God and you take stock of yourself real fast. And that I think produces a kind of being low.

I know we're down to the end. But someone shared this verse last week. I don't know why I hadn't seen it as much. But it's that verse at the end of Mount Carmel. And it says that Elijah... So he's called down the power of God, right? He's just done one of the showcase events in the history of Christianity and the church.

And it says that he told Ahab the wicked king go and eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of the mountain, knelt down to the ground, and put his head between his knees. So he just done the greatest thing that any prophet is going to do. The next thing he does is he just disappears into the mountainside and gets as low as he can.

And I think it's that rhythm of life, Annie, of, Okay, God did something great. Awesome. Let's don't post about it. Let's just go home. Let's don't be big. Let's just get small. And let's just disappear into the mountainside and be grateful that we were in the story of God. And I think that that is the byproduct of walking with God.

Annie: One of our pastors at CrossPoint, he quotes some old guy who's long gone. And I can't remember it now, but we'll put it in the show notes. And he says, "Preach the gospel and be forgotten." Am like, "Oh, that's it," right? That's it. That's beautiful. Okay, is there anything we didn't say that you want to say, Louie?

Louie: No, I love that. I do really feel like the Lord just landed on that in a way. Let's just say it one different way. I think I've told you this story before, but Nicky Gumbel, major leader in the Anglican Church in England. There's a big leadership event in Royal Albert Hall. So that's pretty cool.

Annie: Right.

Louie: And everyone on the planet but myself has spoken at this event. I mean, it is the thing. And Matt Redman told me a story that he was leading worship there. He had had a headache and had gone out around to the pharmacy to get something for His headache. He was walking back up the sidewalk at big session and Nicky Gumbel had just interviewed the prime minister, the then exiting Prime Minister Tony Blair of England.

And he's coming up the sidewalk and he sees Nicky come out and he stops. Nicky doesn't see him. Nicky gets his bike unlocked from the bike stand, puts a little rubber band around his pant leg, puts his helmet on out of his backpack, puts backpack on and gets on his bike because he lives just around the corner from Royal Opera Hall or he didn't till recently, and off he goes on his bicycle.

Matt goes up the door, same door Nicky came out up to the green room and there is every famous Christian in the world in this green room. And Nicky Gumbel is halfway home on his bike.

Annie: With a helmet.

Louie: And I have not forgotten that story. Do well, get on your bike, ride home.

Annie: Go home. That's it. Okay, Louie, the last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounded funny to you these days.

Louie: I knew you were gonna ask me that. And I don't remember what I said last time, but today I thought what sounds most fun right now is to go for a walk in the Piazza in Florence. It is the most fun right now.

Annie: Great answer.

Louie: That's what I want to do today. And I want to walk down to the church. The Duomo there is one of the most crazy architectural accomplishments in history. It's one of the largest domes ever, but it was built without flying buttresses. And it's just remarkable. But if you go that way, and then turn down the road and go a little ways down, there's the little church of Santa Croce down there. It's not very big. It's a little tiny place. But in it are buried Galileo, Machiavelli, and Michelangelo, in this one tiny little church.

Annie: Oh my gracious!

Louie: And there's a fresco on the wall there of the prodigal son returning to the Father. And it's not the super famous one that everybody knows. But it is absolutely beautiful. And I think walking down there and seeing that fresco, and then going and getting some pasta sounds really good.

Annie: I was gonna ask you if you're gonna be holding gelato or pizza. Pasta. Pasta will do. Louie, thanks for coming on again. Thanks for these works. Just write as many books about Jesus as you want. I'll read them all. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Louie: Hey, what sounds most fun is coming on this podcast.

Annie: Wow, thank you.

Louie: You are really one of my favorite people. And I know everyone that comes on tells you that but I just love your love for Jesus. And I just love how true and authentic you are. I've been looking forward to this for a bit and enjoyed every second of it. I look forward to the Advent journey you guys are going to be on this year as well. It was super cool and I couldn't be more excited about it.

Annie: Thank you. You're great. Thank you. Thank you.

[01:02:11] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, don't you love Him? I love Louie and Shelley Giglio so much. I'm so grateful. I mean, one of my favorite pastors for going on 25 years of my life? 30 years? Wowysowy... Almost thir... the math is hard. At least 25.

Be sure to pick up *Winning the War on Worry* and *At the Table with Jesus*. Be sure to follow his social media, tell Louis thanks for being on the show.

I hope you're all signed up to join us for our Advent series. It starts in 10 days. If you haven't had the chance yet, you can find all the info about this fun new series we're doing together at Anniefdowns.com/advent. And if you're subscribed to the podcast, those daily episodes will just drop in your feed each week day of Advent. I hope you really love them.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me.

And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me... Oh, I

don't know. I can't believe I don't know. Have I ever said I don't know? Today what sounds fun to me is putting up my Christmas tree. We're gonna do a little bit of Christmas decorating today. So that sounds fun.

Y'all have a great weekend. We'll see you back here on Monday as we start preparing our hearts for Advent. We have two really special shows next week that'll get us kicking off for Advent. And it starts on Monday with our dear friend Tsh Oxenreider. We'll see y'all then.