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

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to make sure you know about one of the incredible shows on the That Sounds Fun Network, the Matthew West Podcast. I love telling y'all other podcasts that I think you will love to listen to.

And you may remember Matthew from when he and his lovely wife Emily were on the podcast during couple's month in 2020 or when he launched the Matthew West Podcast on the network. Or maybe you know him as the writer and voice behind so many of your favorite songs on Christian radio. He's a five-time Grammy nominee, you guys.

Well, each week on the Matthew West Podcast, Matthew is joined by some of his favorite artists, authors, athletes, and influencers. People like Mark Hall from Casting Crowns, Olympic gold medalist Shawn Johnson East, country star Carly Pierce, I love Carly Pierce so much, comedian Michael Jr. and many more. He's even been so generous as to invite your girl AFD on with him.

He also gives listeners a behind-the-scenes look at some of the powerful stories behind his music plus a special segment called Dadvice! with Matthews Dad. It's the sweetest y'all. It's so good. I love listening to Matthew's podcast. They're fun and funny and also thought-provoking, really tender.

Episodes release weekly on Wednesday. So wherever you're listening to this, just search the Matthew West Podcast and subscribe. And you can listen to yesterday's and then be ready for next week's.

Intro: Today on this show I get to talk with an absolute faith hero of mine, Beth Moore. Beth joined us on Episode 202 and also on our prayer Q&A. If you want to go back and listen to those, they are such rich conversations.

She's a New York Times bestselling author and teacher whose conferences take her across the globe. Beth founded Living Proof Ministries in 1994 to encourage women to know and love Jesus through the study of Scripture.

She has written numerous bestselling books and Bible studies. And this week, she releases her memoir entitled *All My Knotted-Up Life*. Y'all, this book. Y'all, this book. It is poignant and hard to read and beautiful to read and important. I am really honored to get to talk with Beth about it.

I will say that Beth's life has been anything but easy and there are some tough things we talked about around that today, including sexual abuse. So I want you to walk into this conversation knowing that if that is a tender point for you and your story in your life. And if you've got a MiniBFFs around, you may want to save this one until the kids are dropped off at school or are already asleep.

It is a beautiful conversation and Beth has told a really beautifully redemptive story. I'm really excited to share it with you. So here is my conversation with Beth Moore.

[00:02:49] <music>

Beth: Okay, Annie, I have the funniest thing to tell you.

Annie: Okay.

Beth: I'm gonna sound like such a nerd. You know, I love listening to your podcast so much, so much. You know, as one of your sponsors, you've been talking about Athletic Greens.

Annie: Yeah!

Beth: Okay, I'm on day two. I just want you to know I'm your dream podcast listener because I did order the Athletic Greens.

Annie: Yes, and how do you feel?

Beth: It is my second day, but I have really big plans for myself.

Annie: This is the year.

Beth: This is my year. I'm gonna say I'm feeling, let's see, very athletic and green.

Annie: Are you putting it in very cold water?

Beth: Yes. But I'm gonna tell you something else I'm doing. I have tons of those. The Hint Water, you know, it's not sparkling and it's not sweet. It's just got a little bit... I just use that as my water-

Annie: Great.

Beth: ...and add it to it. But I thought she will need to know that there are some of us listening out here and I've heard it enough times now. I think Russell Moore also

did it. So I thought, You know what? I'm going to do it. I'm feeling athletic and really, really looking forward to the year.

Annie: Yeah, I can't wait to see. We just need to circle back at the end of the year, at the end of your sets and see. I hope you got your free vitamin D. Did you get your free vitamin D?

Beth: Yes. I'm doing well.

Annie: Great.

Beth: I'm doing well. I feel very, very strong.

Annie: Yes. Okay, great. Well, thank you for coming on That Sounds Fun again. I just love you being here. Thank you.

Beth: Oh, Annie, I have looked so forward to this. I've got so much going right now and so many busy things and just the here and there and here and there, especially with the book coming out. But I can tell you that I knew there would be nothing depleting about this time we're going to spend together because I knew the wonderful thing about you is that you are energizing. And I mean that in the way of the Holy Spirit. Just energizing. And I'm grateful for that.

Annie: Thank you.

Beth: I knew I'd have a good time.

Annie: Does it feel different releasing this book than other books? Is it busier? Is it just different? Is it a lot different?

Beth: Okay, let's see. You know, the feeling. And I want to say this because we've got lots of people listening, that are writers or want to be writers or maybe they are hoping one day to put out a book about something they're passionate about, whatever it may be. But every single time. You and I can both say that, every single time.

So I have been publishing now for over 35 years. So every single time something comes out there's a great vulnerability, because for those of us... I mean, when you do your own work, you have put yourself out on that page.

So I've done two kinds of things. Well, really three because I have written one fiction work. But I've done curriculum and then I've done nonfiction books all of these years and a number of both but never has ever one come out that has not

stressed me, that I have not been well aware that when it hit that shelf there was no going back. I remember nearly being sick of Breaking Free.

Annie: Really?

Beth: Yes! Yes! It was so different. That kind of material is so common to us now, Annie, that we don't think of getting negative reactions to a lot of that. Breaking free from bondage, that's more common to us now. But in my part, very traditional part of the body of Christ at that time was considered something that only another part of the body of Christ ever talked about. So that was stressful. All of them are. So long insecurity really was. Nothing match this. Nothing. Nothing.

Annie: Wow.

Beth: Because, you know, you're just putting your story. So it's not just someone critiquing, which is everyone's right to do. I know that's coming. It's not just critiquing now your writing or lack of ability to write or even your doctrine or your lack of doctrine. It now is, here, to the degree that I knew how to express it, here is my life.

And going into it, Annie, I have lived a gritty journey. I dropped it in the mail to a good friend of mine that has done so many things right yesterday and I said when I wrote it, Listen, I haven't had a very good story but I have had a very good savior. Anyway, there it is.

But there have been some of these things that I've been anxious to talk about. And it's been healing. I'm gonna say something really weird to you. I came to the end of it, I'm gonna see if I can say this without getting choked up on it. You are so early in my interviews, Annie. I've talked about it very few times before now so it's still raw and tender to me. But I thought after I got to the end of it, Well, I think I accept my story.

Annie: Wow.

Beth: And I don't know if that makes sense to anybody. But you're just like, Oh. You have all these regrets, all these things that you wish were different and you can't... It's such a waste of time. You can't change them. But to get to a point... That's the last I'll say because I can feel that I've got emotion in my throat. To just go, Okay, I accept this. This is my story."

Annie: I've been having this conversation with a couple of my girlfriends where we keep saying, "I have got one life, I've got one life, and I've spent 30 of my 42 years

caring about my body. And I've spent..." You know, we're kind of processing through like what have I wasted time on and what am I grateful for?

Beth: Exactly. Exactly.

Annie: And it feels like you're to even the next level of like, look back at the whole thing and call it yours.

Beth: That is exactly right. I'm gonna have to jot that down because that's exactly right. And to think, It's okay. It's okay. It's not someone else's. It's not someone else's but I could look at my own and go, Okay, all right, the Lord has been there for me. So I'm all right with it.

Annie: Listen, I'm gonna cry this whole time. Just for everybody listening, I've been crying since I finished the book, which was this morning.

Beth: Oh, Annie.

Annie: I told you this, it is such a sacrificial gift, this book. It is like-

Beth: Thank you, Annie.

Annie: And you took your poetry writing and your fiction writing and you matched it with what's true in your story. And so it reads very novel-ish. But then you go, But it's real. This isn't a novel, this is real.

Beth: Okay, I want you to know something. I looked so forward to talking to you, Annie, because I knew there would be things that you would catch because I knew you would be so attentive. You are always prepared for your guests. And that's part of the reason why you got such a great podcast, by the way, is that you are prepared to interview your guest.

But you are on to something that I would love to be able to tell. And I've not gotten to share this yet. You're on target completely. So I was matched at Tyndale... You know, I've worked with them on several projects and I love them to pieces. So when it came memoir time, one of my most wonderful people there, probably the one that I look to the most and spend the most time with, she said, "Beth, I know exactly who we need to put with you."

And so with someone at Tyndale that only does memoir. She only does memoir. So she's the memoir editor. So she said, "And I think you're gonna love each other." And we absolutely did. So she puts me in contact with her. Now we're all on a group call because now we're planning this. Now, I've already made notes. I've

been making notes for about a year on what I thought, okay, as well as I knew how to draw a timeline.

So I knew that I would write on what I believe to be the most shaping seasons or events of my life. Because memoir is like that. It's not an autobiography, right? It is our biography but it's different. A memoir is going at it a different way but you're looking thematically and you're looking to tie events or seasons together.

So my new editor Carol said these words to me. She said, "Beth..." As I approached chapter one, she was, "I'll tell you what I want you to do." And she said, "I've looked all through your writing, so she'd looked at all the styles, my curriculum, she looked through the nonfiction, she looked at it all and she said, "I want you not to tap into your nonfiction teaching self."

Annie: Wow.

Beth: "I want you to tap into the other side of yourself." And she said, "Beth, I want you to approach this almost as if it is a novel, only it is your story and it is true."

Annie: Wow.

Beth: And so it set the course.

Annie: Yes!

Beth: I knew then that I'd even start with my child's voice. You know, the voice of my childhood. I was afraid it would get annoying to people. Listen, Annie, I'm gonna tell you. I don't know if time will be enough for us, but we're gonna do it. We're gonna do it. Okay. So when I did the recording for it, I said in the beginning of it-

Annie: Oh, the audiobook?

Beth: Uh-huh.

Annie: You read the audiobook. Oh, my gosh!

Beth: I read it, yes. And ask me if there were parts that I cried and there was nothing they could do about it. They just said-

Annie: No matter how many times, you're gonna cry?

Beth: That's why I said. I finally said, there's nothing-

Annie: Keep recording.

Beth: "We're not going to be able to fix this."

Annie: That's right.

Beth: So I talk in that thick accent at the beginning. So I tell them, I said, "Listen, bear with it because it will change not much."

Annie: Oh, I mean, when you talk about your childhood at the beginning and you're using the language that your grandmother used when she said, Grt, grt, grt, you know, I'm like-

Beth: G-R-T. G-R-T.

Annie: Yeah, that's it. Everything is a coke? Every drink is a coke? Yeah.

Beth: Oh, it's stabbing us with a broom. It's really a different thing to grow up in a home with three generations. Not different thing. Let me say specific thing. I love to talk to other people who were raised in a home with a grandfather or grandmother because there are so many things we can relate with. You have three parents instead of two, and you have somebody in your business constantly that has lost their filter.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, that's it. My grandparents were across the driveway. So it was like a hybrid of we didn't live in the same house, but when I got home from school and when I left for school, that was usually my first stop. So I have a similar experience.

Beth: Annie, I did not know that.

Annie: Yeah, across the driveway my whole life. Ain't that fun?

Beth: It is extremely important. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Annie: Oh, me either. And you know what? Twenty years later when I was back living in Atlanta and my grandmother was in a nursing home, it was across the street from my neighborhood where I owned a house. And I was like, geez, only Jesus does that kind of stuff.

Beth: He did. He took that full circle.

Annie: So sweet. Okay, so today is Thursday, people got the book on Tuesday. So we have people who have read some of this. So I do want to talk through some of the book.

What I also want to say to our friends listening, and we've said this a little bit in the intro, we're gonna really talk about your life and there may be some pieces that are hard for people to hear.

Beth: Yes.

Annie: And that is okay. Stay with us. Stay with us. Stay with us. How do you encourage people to hang through hard conversations when they don't want to?

Beth: Annie, when you prayed with me before we started recording, you made mention of something that I had not thought to pray in that way. Now, I have prayed hard about everyone that reads it.

Annie: Oh I'm sure.

Beth: And prayed against it being triggering in a way that would have a negative impact and all of those things. But you relay and I'll leave a lot of this for the reader, but I'll just touch it for a minute, that even... In prayer you relay that we were going to be serving people that might be having a moment that I had in my own life in my very early 30s when someone was telling me her story of abuse and all of a sudden... I had not forgotten mine but I had stuffed it so far back, I broke out in a sweat, I began to manifest all sorts of these just... I don't know what else to call it but the alarms going off inside of me so much to the degree that I could not even...

If you asked me today—I'm so embarrassed to say this—what was her story, I couldn't tell you. I can only tell you the beginning of it because I completely... I guess I had a full-on panic attack but I was swallowing it. I was trying not to manifest it on the outside.

But anyway, when you said that, Annie, in prayer and you ask the Lord, you said, "This will be for some a moment when they start to kind of reckon," and prayed for protection over that and that it will be something that God would use, I was so deeply moved by that because I want that so badly. I want that so badly for someone.

I want to speak to the solidarity I have with those who have gone through abuse but I don't want to hurt them. I want to encourage them. And I just want to say I'm with you. I'm with you. I get it. And it did affect 1000 different things in my life and many of them negatively. Yes, yes.

Annie: You know this but I've done your Bible studies for my whole writing and reading life just about but this is the first time in this book that you've directly identified your abuse-

Beth: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Annie: ...or you haven't really tell a fly-by experience. You don't give details but you give an experience.

Beth: I hope it's not graphic.

Annie: It's not.

Beth: And I hope this for our listeners, that they understand it is a fly-by where you definitely know. But it's not graphic where you have to replay all the blood and guts of it. So that was very much on purpose. And yes, I have waited till now for a couple of good reasons. Do you want to know what they are?

Annie: Yeah.

Beth: One of them obviously is waiting long enough for most of my parents' generation to die out. Now, I say that with love and I say that almost a little bit teasing but it is true in part that I needed time to go by, I needed to think carefully, I needed a lot of healing to go by where I'm not telling my story with acid. That there's not us bitterness and defensiveness in it but that is just I can just share it. That is a big part of it.

Plus, you know, my age, I'm just at the age where you do really look back. And because, Annie, I have wanted to get more specific, I just needed to know exactly how to approach it because I want to really be a little lean in with those who have been victimized. Period but also for those who have known, if I may be so bold, what some of the added shame feels like when it's within your own home and family and it's incest. We hate that word. We even feel like the word itself has shame with it.

So this needs so much to be ministered to because it is a great wound. A great wound. Let me say this without doing much more to identify. When someone who was supposed to be your protector becomes your perpetrator in childhood, the entire foundation, the concrete under your home has now completely quaked. The earth has quaked under your home and there's nothing...

When I tell the first moment I remember, and this is the thing and I think it's fairly clear in the book, I don't know, I've never asked anyone because you're so new into the readers of it, Annie but it may be obvious that I am unsure of what could have happened prior to it at a younger age. I don't know.

Annie: It does read like that.

Beth: That's true. Because I can't get pictures and images to come but I had the behaviors of someone who would have already been through trauma. So I'm not really sure. But in those things there is so much pain.

But in that moment, that first occasion that I remember—and someone that I'm talking to today is going to know exactly what I'm talking about—it is a moment when you know life will never be the same. It redefines your home. I say in it you'll recall that there were some things... This was even my child thinking, even my child thinking at the time, say 11 years old. That even as a child thinking, I knew there were things that your people could do, your parents could do that you could file away as these are just "we all have faults, we all fall short." I don't think anybody expects their parents to be perfect.

Annie: Right. Right.

Beth: Then there are some things that can happen that you know could only happen if something's really wrong with that person. And that, Annie, I can almost not put language around it. That's a whole different level. I knew in my thinking as a child this was not just a bad thing. It hit me. I think this is a bad person.

Annie: Wow.

Beth: And that will jack with you.

Annie: I'm thoughtful about this in my life, I'm thoughtful about this in our friends' lives of what is the work of how hard we go back and try to pull up memories. What has God tucked away on purpose? What are we meant to dig up?

Beth: Exactly.

Annie: What that...?

Beth: I really feel that way. I really feel that way. That if I pursued, which I did, if I pursued... And not just once, several times because I think for... Well, in my generation... Y'all have to remember that I am of a generation different than many of you listening. So I'm in my mid-60s. So go back and rewind to when I was a young woman and first beginning to deal with this. Then what I would have known to do is go to a Christian counselor.

So I did actually go to a professional. I was so glad of that. But as I was learning more and more about the effects of trauma then it would move in to where I was

with a full-on therapist. So here's how I felt about it. At least for me, I never was pushed that direction. One of the things that helped me is in sharing it then I was able to share, as I would talk about, then I would think, Okay... They would ask a question, I would go, "Okay, this." And it helped me put it together okay, this detail this. And also without saying any more about her, I immediately felt like I was gonna cry because, you know, my siblings, oh my goodness.

Annie: Oh, I love that. Listen, your sister Gay-

Beth: Oh, well, it's who I bring it up. It's who I bring it up.

Annie: I love her.

Beth: Okay. I also talked to my sister Gay at length to try to piece together parts of it. So that was helpful. But where we stopped was that anything that was going to take a jackhammer... If I was walking this through with Jesus, I truly was. And I was in His Word, and I was in prayer and so I became very much at peace with that He had and would bring up what was important for me to know.

And I also did the same. Can I be so bold to say I sort of see... If someone said, "Beth, did you tell everything?" No. No. I didn't. If you think about our life story being in four layers, that how deep did you go, Beth? So say level one is just surface level, everything superficial. Annie, I never did that.

Annie: Yeah, I don't know that level.

Beth: I never did do it because I was already very aware of being messed up by the time I was even in ministry and by the time I was... So I thought I couldn't get away. So I was already past level one. I'd already gone to level two, which is to have some depth and some personal transparency in that depth.

Then there's level three, which is, Okay, I'm going to a whole different level here. I'm going to go underneath what I have done before. I'm going to go on. If you ask me, Beth, did you go to level four? That would be... So I think this almost is an ocean that would be in the depth. No, because, I don't know. Maybe I would at some point. I don't foresee it.

And I'll talk more than I did in the book on podcasts like this but there are certain things that are between Jesus and me or between my husband and me and Jesus, my children and me and Jesus or some relationships of it and Jesus that really are not anybody else's business.

I'll put it this way because someone is going, "So how would we know?" Here's what I want to say to you. Your deepest darkest journeys and things that come from... Let me just... I mean, like the inner... like it say in the Bible where we refer to feeling something all the way down to what the Greek and the Hebrew would be like, in the kidneys and in the liver—things that you would feel all the way down here. You have to ask yourself if the public is worthy of that part of your story. Can they handle it with care? I did enough in this book to go, "I hope you handle this with care."

Annie: Oh, certainly. Yes, you did.

Beth: But there were some things that was like, you know, No, I don't feel like they can handle that part with care. Plus, I didn't tell.... I'm so glad you brought my sister. I didn't tell... Here's what I said to my brothers and sisters. Of course, I had to go to them.

Annie: Yes, yes.

Beth: I said, "What can y'all handle? Can I have your blessing for this?" I didn't ask them to do otherwise. I'm not sure some of them wouldn't have said that I could, but I just didn't. I said, I'm only going to tell my part of the story that is really... I will not tell any of yours. So that's what I did.

Annie: You say that multiple times in the book. You say, "This is my memory."

Beth: My part.

Annie: This is my part. Yes. I mean, you do such a beautiful job of that. But listen, when Gay finds the note from your dad's girlfriend and then y'all call the dad's girlfriend when your mom and dad are still married, I like to come out of my skin. I was like, "Gay is my girl." That y'all get the phone in the middle of the night and called Memphis, Tennessee.

Beth: Well, it was her. I was just on the other line. We're gonna do it together.

Annie: I love it.

Beth: Listen, she was fearless and fearless.

Annie: You say she weren't even scared of a devil's face is what you said.

Beth: Not scared of the devil himself. Annie F, let me tell you this. To this day, if she really gets off on something, I say to her, "Yeah." Now, our listeners, if they've not

been readers, they'll get that. But remember when you do read it because she was always the one that had all the courageous words. And then I would say when she was done with it, "Yeah."

Annie: Yeah!

Beth: It was my way of going, "Me too. Me too." So we still burst out laughing over that. She was fearless. I mean, fearless.

Annie: Y'all are gonna love listening, friends. Y'all are gonna love when you read this part. The idea that she went off on the girlfriend's dog on the phone and tell the girlfriend how much she didn't like her poodle in the picture, that just kills me, man. I was like, "I'm gonna tell you that you shouldn't be cheating with my dad but I'm also going to tell you your dog is ugly." I could have come off my couch. I was laughing so hard at Gay.

Beth: Listen, I'm looking at the picture of her because she would have looked like at that age because I just got this yesterday. My brother sent it to me yesterday. And I'm gonna hold it up to the camera but this is exactly how you can picture her and time.

Annie: Yeah. Ready to go.

Beth: Isn't that fun? Oh, ready to go. And she's holding my other family member's hand right there. Anyway, I'm so glad you thought that was funny.

[00:30:24] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our amazing partners, [Shopify](#). Y'all know that one of my favorite things is bridging you to great resources and creators. And that's what I do here on the podcast in our AFD Week in Review.

It's what we try to do in our shop too. Shop Annie F. Downs.com is where we can connect you to things we hope you find helpful and encouraging. Like the books I've written or the Let's Read the Gospels guidebook.

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Sponsor: And just one more quick moment to tell you about another one of our incredible partners, [Prose](#). Okay, y'all gotta hear this, because you're the kindest group of friends, you're super sweet when you watch my answer stories or when you see me out on the road and let me know when you think I'm having a great hair day. Thank you so much. My response is always the same. It's Prose, the world's most personalized haircare.

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And now back to our conversation with Beth.

[00:33:43] <music>

Annie: Something that a lot of my friends respond to me about when I talk about journaling is "I don't want to write that down". A new door has opened in my healing and my counselor and I are going through some hard stuff and I'm writing it down. And I've said repeatedly, "This journal doesn't leave my house until I take it to burn it." Because I am going to have to burn this one. This is the one.

So you found your first journal ever. And as you open it and read it, you talk about in the book as you open it and read it you haven't even told the truth in the journal. You've whitewashed everything to be this very beautiful family story.

Beth: And let's take that further. I need our listeners to understand that when I didn't tell the truth I was not telling the truth to the Lord. My journals are prayer journals. Okay, so I am now past this experience in my very early 30s where I have met with this woman who's told me her story and it has begun to trigger everything under the sun.

On the other side of it, Keith and I prepare to move, he's clean getting stuff out of the attic and he said, "Look what I just found." My first journal, I was 18 years old, I was in college, and I'm all telling God, I'm all telling God how thankful I am to have been raised in such a wonderful family.

Now, I want someone to lean in with me here because I hope this was clear to you, Annie. As my editor, the one I talked about earlier, she was the first one that read any of it and the only one for a very long time. When she read that part of it, she was so intrigued. And I was flabbergasted at the time when I read it because I knew better. I knew better than what I was writing. I knew better years later.

She said, "What do you think made you do that?" I said, "Okay, Carol," I said, "I was raised with the thought, with the belief that you literally forget people's sins against you." I said, "They were trying to get it together then and we were trying to have a new start as a family then. And somehow, in my attempt to do it the way I thought a good Christian does it, it was like none of that happened."

Annie: I mean, don't you feel tender to that, Beth, journaling?

Beth: I do. Okay, Annie, it's interesting that you tell me that because I have never been very tender to that person. That turned into such a messed up adolescent and to such a messed up young woman. And she messed up so much of my life. I mean, I did.

But yes, as I wrote the memoir, I was able to look back at her and go, "God bless your heart." And because what I saw... and I saw this through the ministry years about the whole woman thing. So forgive me if I get choked up here. What I saw, I saw a train wreck, which is what I was. But I also saw somebody trying so hard to the degree that I understood what it meant to be a Christian and to try to be pleasing to God, to try to do it right and do it by the rules.

But I didn't know how I had twisted that forgiving, number one, I hadn't begun to forgive, I hadn't begun to deal with it. Number two, forgiveness does not mean that you act like it never happened and they're just off the hook. And that's what he wanted to be was completely off the hook. His apology was like, "And I never want to talk about it again." Well, you know what? I wish I never had to talk about it again. But I've talked about it about 4,000 times and 2,000 of those were in therapy. I'm sorry that you don't want to talk about it again. Anyway.

Annie: Because I only know that Beth in that one chapter, I think my experience when I was reading is I thought she is doing what it takes to survive, even between her and God.

Beth: One hundred percent.

Annie: I thought, she's just surviving. She is writing what she wants to be true so that she can... I think.

Beth: So I can deal with it.

Annie: Yes. And I feel like maybe Keith's mom... forgive me if this is the wrong person in the story. But when you asked Keith's mom about losing her children, and you said, "How did you get to survive?" And she says, "I didn't. I just kept waking up."

Beth: I kept waking up.

Annie: and I felt like you were telling me two versions of the same story. One was a journaling and one was a conversation with Keith's mom.

Beth: Well, you actually are giving me insight into my own story there because you're absolutely right. And also so as the future... Here's what I want to say because

people are going then why? Journal if you're gonna... Well, of course, I didn't get to stay that way. I grow up into adulthood, and I'm still journaling. And suddenly, of course, all of those things are coming to call because they always do. They do. That we've stuffed down, boy, it's coming up. And it's coming up in one way or the other.

We can either deal with the truth of it or we'll deal with a distortion of it that leads us to all sorts of ways of coping that are not healthy. So then you can see them with the journaling as it gets more and more raw and more and more honest, and then, oh dear lord. And then you can see come up where I'm beginning to look back at him.

Like by the time I was having babies, I was like, Now what to do with this situation in regard to my family of origin and my dad? So listen, it was coming. It was coming. And I got where I dealt with it very honestly but it was coming.

Annie: How do people journal? Because sometimes the feedback to me is, I can't write this stuff down because what if my husband sees it? Or what if my kids find it?

Beth: Oh.

Annie: So how do we journal honestly for the healing that God has for us. And for a lot of us writing through our healing is important. How do we do that honestly?

Beth: Extremely important. I wish my phone's near me and I wish I could find another picture real quickly, because, Annie, it would make you laugh. But I'm not going to take the time and look for it. I may send it to you after this in case you want to put it up for them to see.

So I had wondered what to do about this. Now. I'm thankful to say as far as I know, my family just... I think they would have considered it like... they might have been afraid if they... It was a holy thing because it was to the Lord. I always put on the front of it, "This is not for anybody's eyes but the Lord's." Always I wrote that on the front. "Do not read this."

And then I would also try to put it in a place like under lock and key, but I had all these spirals. I mean, Annie, years and years had stacks and stacks in those days. I do it a little differently now. Still journal, but now I journal in more bits and pieces and in sentences. But in those days, I did it in longhand. "Dear Lord." Oh, you can't believe every problem I ever had in my marriage, everything I was going through, all my temptations, all of these things, all written out, all written out.

Well, a couple... Okay, how long ago would this have been? Maybe two years ago. We both would know. We both would know. It's a Saturday, I'm in a restaurant by

myself, which I can really enjoy on occasion. I was scrolling Twitter and so a friend of ours posts up... He's a journalist but he posts up where somebody else... It is the adult child of somebody just that had been well-known and a Christian leader and already with the Lord their kid has published some of their prayer journals.

Annie: Oh, Lord have mercy.

Beth: Some of their prayer journal entries. And he said, "Isn't it interesting to find out that this was going on in his mind?" I'm gonna tell you something. I nearly died because I thought, You got... Because they were being judged on bringing their temptations to the Lord, which Annie, we are invited to do. Instead of doing what was wrong, didn't they do what was right? They didn't indeed fall into the sins that they had... Do you understand what I'm saying?

Annie: Yes!

Beth: I thought, "Whoa, I thought that was allowed."

Annie: Yes. Aren't we allowed to have sins that have come up against us?

Beth: So it's Saturday, I come to the... because I've got them all here at that point, years and years and years of them. I come to the ministry, I almost can't live to Monday because I have these catastrophic fantasies that I'm gonna get killed before Monday.

Annie: You have them all at your office? They're all at the Living Proof's...?

Beth: It was in my office at Living Proof. And now my daughters have always known what to do with them. But I was like, "oh, no, no, no, I'm not taking any chances." I came on Monday morning and I began trading them. I don't want to exaggerate. At least eight trash bags of pages I shredded. I kept the last 10 years because I didn't do longhand in the last 10 years.

Annie: Interesting.

Beth: But still Amanda knows to destroy all of them instantly. I said, don't even wait and say bye to me. Don't come stand over my cold body. Go shred them. Because you know, I have poured my heart out to the Lord and I recommend it.

Now a friend of mine... because somebody will say, Well, what am I supposed to do? Well, you know, you need to find a safe way to do it with a therapist. That's for dang sure. But what another friend of mine does is after she has written it, because she says I need to write out my stuff so I can tell the Lord because she's in a very

hard marriage. She gets to the end of her sheet log straight over to her shredder and shreds it because she did it to the Lord.

Annie: Per day.

Beth: Per day.

Annie: Please text her later and tell her I love her. That's brilliant.

Beth: I'm going to tell her.

Annie: Just write it down and shred it that day.

Beth: That day. That's how she is. And here you go, Lord. It's just yours, shrrrrr.

Annie: I love you saying that, Beth, because as a person who's not married yet, who lives alone, I don't have the pressure besides if someone comes to fix my water heater, of someone reading through them, right? But I do know that at some point I will not be on earth anymore. So I have a couple of friends that know, "Hey, these get burned. There's a \$20 bill taped to the top of the container for you to buy s'mores stuff. But do a bonfire burn every one of them.

But now I'm like I think you're giving such freedom to people to go write it out. And then you are allowed to get rid of it. You don't have to make your own museum.

Beth: No. No. And indeed you must. Listen, I had a friend have a catastrophic brain bleed a couple of years ago, and she's much, much younger than I am. It didn't look like she was going to live but to the glory of God, she did. But this was in the very first days of it and we knew that her family was on their way into town, and would be staying at her place.

Now she's in intensive care. Several of us asked, "Who's got the key and who can go get any journals?" Annie, you better have some good friends who you know, "Who's got a key to my apartment and who's gonna grab those journals before my mother reads it?"

Annie: Exactly right. That's exactly right. Before anybody... I mean, literally, the one I'm working through now is like every page that I write, I go, "We are burning this puppy. I've got to get this out of my body, I've got to..."

Beth: You do.

Annie: It helps me so much to write it out and to see. I mean, even writing prayers of forgiveness towards myself of like... I mean, you said it earlier where you said you didn't become a messed up adult necessarily. It wasn't your fault about your abuse. It was the response of things, right?

Beth: Right. Right.

Annie: So I have responses to my experiences in my life that are on me. So as I'm working through forgiving myself and other people involved I'm like, "Sis, we're burning this puppy. We're burning it."

Beth: But listen, you are right. And I want someone to hear this. You are right when you say it needs out. And it does. If it's traumatic, you need someone to work through with you. But I want to say this to you. In writing it out, I learned things that I felt that I didn't even know. In other words, I let myself really write and then I would see the words and think, God, no wonder that hurts so bad. Because I knew if I were reading this... because I've just had no mercy on myself. If I'm reading this about somebody else, I don't want to go to them, come get in my arms. You know what I'm saying?

Annie: Yes.

Beth: Come in right now, right now. But when you write it out, you can sort of see some of that, or you can see how messed up you are. Like, Oh, okay, well, that's gonna need some attention.

Annie: Well, I hope you feel that a little bit at the end of writing *All My Knotted-Up Life*. I hope you feel as tender towards yourself as we get to feel towards you has been a leader to so many of us for decades, to be invited into the stories that say for everything we've gained as your readers and as your study-iers, you have written hefty checks for it. So I wonder if there's a way the Lord will make you as tender towards yourself as He's making us towards your story as the readers of this one.

Beth: That is a precious thing for you to say, Annie. I will say absolutely more so than ever in my life, what I am more than anything else. Of course, I'm so tender to the Lord, but also I am very tender-hearted to my husband.

Annie: Yes. Gracious! Beth. I mean, what everyone sees from 2016 on is this public, filleting of you, I will say. You don't have to call it that, I will call it that. What we don't know until we read this book behind the scenes is Keith was deeply sick.

Beth: Deeply sick. Deeply sick.

Annie: At the same time, Beth Moore.

Beth: At the same time. At the same time. And as they read it, if they want to read it, they'll understand more about what I'm about to say. But also he has such total blackouts about much of the time that he was sick.

Annie: In like 2017 to 2019. We're not talking a long time ago.

Beth: Oh, no.

Annie: We're talking he doesn't remember the last five years ago.

Beth: Oh, no. Oh, no.

Annie: Unbelievable.

Beth: He asked me questions about it all the time. So he was late coming into that public filleting. I'll catch him now every once in a while because I told the girls, This is the most interesting phenomenon because we are several years past it. Your father is in... I said, "Baby, don't look up anything else." Because he'll just be so mad. You know, just cast him a blue streak. And I'm like, Well, you know, we're two years past that but he's not. It's always if it just happened. He said, "Why don't you tell me this?"

Annie: I mean, it's an unbelievable story that starts with an injury in fishing that leads to this medication, that leads to... I think so many of our friends listening, married and single, will so deeply appreciate the moment where you say, "I don't wonder if God loves me, I wonder if he loves my husband?"

Beth: One hundred percent.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Beth: And I felt like, if you have character, you can't just... You know, this is me to the Lord. You can't just love one person and not love another. Why? Why would you love me? And of course, that was all just emotion. But it's very real for us to sometimes go, "Well, if you're not going to love them, don't love me either.

I just think even about one of my really dear loved ones. I just every once in a while will say to the Lord, I'm just gonna put on record again today you know how much I love this person. And if you don't save that person, that person is going to hell. So I'm putting that. I can't save him. Only you can. But these kinds of things, this honesty with God, but it has been quite the roller coaster.

And one of the things I want to say to some spouse that knows exactly—it could be a guy that has gone through this with his wife—that when you go through a time when you are not even married to the same person... And I don't just mean they're different. I mean, they may be cruel. They may be like... they don't like you and you don't like them.

And even if you're able to reason, when this goes on for months and months, maybe at first you can keep telling yourself the truth, which is this is sickness and not real. After a while, it's like, "Oh, no. You know what I'm saying? Annie, I cannot put into words my amazement and gratitude to God that Keith Moore and I have survived these last 10 years. I cannot say enough what a miracle it is.

Annie: Yeah, emotionally, relationally, and physically. I mean in every way.

Beth: Every way.

Annie: In every way.

Beth: Every way.

Annie: That he is living and that you are li... I mean it's just-

Beth: And that we're living together.

Annie: Yes. Yes.

[00:52:53] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just one more quick break to share about another amazing partner, [ThirdLove](#). Listen, if there's a drawer in most of our houses that is in dire need of a makeover, it's our bra drawer. It's full of not [brady?], not comfortable bras, something must be done.

ThirdLove spent years designing bras for your body. They make over 60 sizes and even invented half cup so you always get the perfect fit which means you'll always look and feel great. ThirdLove makes my actual favorite bra, the 24/7 T-shirt bra. No slipping, no itching tags, no showing under my clothes, just well-fitting comfort and confidence.

They seriously have a bra for every woman and every occasion. Are you looking for an everyday bra or maybe something with more coverage and unlined style, a little extra lift? ThirdLoves best-selling bras seriously have a style for every

solution and outfit that will help you look and feel great in whatever you're wearing.

Half the battle of looking great is the confidence that comes from comfort, a good fit, and having great support. ThirdLove has got us covered, literally you guys. So ditch the bad bras, get a better one to make the look and feel great. Upgrade your bra, get 20% off your first order at thirdlove.com/soundsfun. That's 20% off your first order at thirdlove.com/soundsfun.

And remember all the links to our sponsors, to the AFD Week in Review, our book of the month, tickets to the Here For You Tour, the transcript of the show and more are all available in our show notes. Be sure to check those out. Just trying to make things a little easier for you where we can.

And now we get to go back and finish up our conversation with Beth.

[00:54:21] <music>

Annie: It is a miracle story. I told you this already this morning. I cried the last 100 pages of a 300. I think my copy I have is 306 pages and I cried for actual third of the book. Because it's also the hope. As you're telling your story throughout this whole book, there is miracles everywhere too.

Beth: Oh truly. Truly. Truly.

Annie: So you just go like, She is living a life that so many of us comprehend in different ways of there's tragedy and miracle that are knotted up. That is what's knotted up is: tragedy and miracle.

Beth: You know what? It is. It is. I realize that in all this ugliness, surely goodness and mercy has followed me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. It's just ridiculous.

Annie: As I burn my journals and shred them as you've shredded yours, I've said to the Lord before, can they all just be in my house in heaven? Like, when we dwell in your house forever, can my journals be there too?

Beth: Absolutely. Let me say that I love the idea of actually burning them because you know that incense... You know what I'm saying? There's something about a fire or something on an altar going up. It's sort of a way to say if you're safe and don't set a forest on fire.

Annie: Certainly. Certainly.

Beth: For that to just go up before the lord, you go, There you go. There you go.

Annie: Yeah, that's it.

Beth: Listen, that doesn't mean, loved one, that you have now forgotten all of that and none of that hurts anymore. It just means, listen, really, only you Lord can be fully trusted with this and I'm just putting it before you.

Annie: So someone listens to the audiobook, someone finishes reading *All My Knotted-Up Life*, and they put it down and they realize, "I have got some stuff." They're having realizations. What's their next step?

Beth: I would want them, from the beginning, to know that you are completely known and completely loved by God who has brought you to the point where you might be ready to take on a little of this. So here's what I'm gonna say to you. There's no shame before Him. There's no way to shock Him. There's no way to darken Him. You can't have had something messy enough to get Him to...

So completely trustworthy. And I have to believe He's got completely trustworthy people for you as a support system. But here is what I am believing God for over every single one of you that might think, Okay, I do want to take a next step. I don't just want to finish a book. What would it be? Trust the Lord.

Trust the Lord and know that as you look back, if that's what you do, if you decide to kind of string these pearls together on your own with the Lord, then you watch for the wonders. Ask him from the very beginning, You give me eyes for it, Lord, you give me eyes. Give me your eyes to see it where I can... Exactly what I was talking about. I stared at the whole thing and thought two things: What a dang mess! This was at the end of the memoir. What a dang mess! And the second one, Surely goodness and mercy is following me all the days of my life.

If it's a mess, okay, it's a mess. But did God give you eyes to see? And what made you ever read that book in the first place? And why are you even thinking about it? Because the Lord has done something to sustain you. The Lord has been good to you. And I pray that He will give you eyes to see it.

Annie: Yes, yes, that's it. Beth, what did we not say that you want to make sure we say?

Beth: I want to say to you, thank you for letting me minister to your audience, Annie. I looked so forward to this. Listen, I knew, I knew we would have a good conversation. I asked the Lord, I said, Listen... I thought so much of it, I thought, if this is what you want to start with, when the book comes out, if this is one of the

first things you want to put out there Lord, if this gives some kind of... I trusted you when you were trustworthy, Annie, and I thank you for that. I thank you for that. You're a wonderful host and just a marvelous sister in Christ. So thank you so much.

Annie: Thank you. You know, when I read the part about you doing precept Bible studies, and then no one... I've attended events where you and Kay Arthur were on the same stage. I thought I kind of know how she feels because now I'm friends with Beth Moore. How am I friends with Beth Moore? I know how you feel about going from precept Bible studies to standing next to Kay.

Beth: That's so fun.

Annie: I want to read my favorite line from the book that I've already said to you and cried both times I've said it.

Beth: Please do.

Annie: And then normally we ask people what sounds fun to them but I just would love for you to pray for us to end today.

Beth: Oh, I would be so pleased to.

Annie: But my favorite line of the book and I had multiple but the one I wrote down, the one I typed up to you in text is "I've had a good time with the Lord and I hope He's had a good time with me."

Beth: Yes, yes. I'm glad to.

Annie: Put that on my tombstone. Put that on my tombstone. That is the one I want.

Beth: I'd be so happy to. Oh, Lord, I pray that. And Lord, I do. As I look back and think about the many times I've been asked, how have you gotten back up or what's kept you out there and all of those things, it's always come back to the same thing, is that you have been so good, but not only good. But I meant every syllable of that.

"I've had a good time with you. You've made so many things like... Lord, what a blast or how meaningful that was, or how tender that was. And I asked you that. May I ask you that wonder? Could Annie and I agree where two or more, could we agree in prayer together for every reader of this book that he or she would be able, if not already to have developed a relationship where they enjoy you, to begin to trust you enough to enjoy you? Because it comes down to trust. Can I trust you

enough to let down my guard and just flat enjoy you? So God I ask you that, with everything in me I ask you that every reader 100% missing none.

Thank you, Father, for my sister Annie for what a wonderful, wonderful host she is and how she ministers. Bless her. Expand her work to your great glory. In the name of our Savior Jesus. Amen.

[01:01:33] <music>

Annie: Oh y'all, isn't she just the best? Listen, if you knew how many conversations I've had about burning my journals since we recorded this, I'm very much considering shredding them or something. Y'all grab your copy of *All My Knotted-Up Life*. I'm telling you there are miracles in that book that I will never forget. It is just absolutely beautiful. It's beautiful. And y'all follow Beth on social media so you can tell her thanks for being on the show today.

Now we get to hear what sounds fun to one of you. All right, Hailey, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Hailey: So my name is Hailey. I am from Madera, California, and what sounds fun to me is going on a Disney cruise with my family and all my friends.

Annie: Yes. Okay, why Disney Cruise? Why is that your particular cruise of choice?

Hailey: Because it's magical. I went with my husband and going just as adults is very underrated.

Annie: Is it?

Hailey: They have a whole island where you have to be 21 and up. And because it's Disney, adults don't really go, so we had this whole island to ourselves.

Annie: Yes, it's a private island when you go on a Disney Cruise as adults.

Hailey: Yes.

Annie: Okay. Are you not scared of having... I'm sorry to say this out loud, Hailey. But the Titanic was a real story. Are you not scared of a cruise ship sinking?

Hailey: I understand. I do only three nights. I don't know why, but it's the fourth night where Titanic would probably happen.

Annie: Okay, okay, okay. Okay, you're like, I know this thing can stay afloat for three nights and four days.

Hailey: Three nights. Get some Dramamine in you and enjoy the magic.

Annie: Great. Great. Very good answer.

Man, it's so fun to get to hear those, right? So be sure you're subscribed to the AFD Week in Review. It'll drop into your inbox on Fridays. And that's where you can sign up for a chance to share what sounds fun to you on an upcoming episode. We are having the most fun recording those so get on board.

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 is eating Mexican food for dinner. That is what I'm looking forward to.

Y'all have a great day. We'll see you back here tomorrow with a fun little drop-in with one of our dearest worship voices in our generation and a dear friend, Christy Nockels. It's a new music Friday, you guys. We'll see y'all then.