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Annie: Hey friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today. Today is a special day for me getting to be with Chris but also it's a special conversation that I'm really excited to share with you all.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I get to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Christian Appalachian Project](#). Y'all know how much I love CAP. Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with mental health challenges, and May is Mental Health Awareness Month.

And get this. Did you know there is one quarter of the number of mental health providers in the Appalachian region compared to the national average? One fourth, y'all. That is such a problem for the community that CAP serves our friends who are ready to seek help, but can't find it. And that is where CAP comes in to help fill those gaps.

They serve families and help children who are dealing with the impact of a variety of trauma. Last year CAP provided essential mental health services to more than 900 individuals in eastern Kentucky. Do y'all get that math? That is three a day, three a day that they helped in Eastern Kentucky. It's just incredible.

Counselors with CAP often help individuals with chronic multi-layer problems, and recently CAPs family life counseling services expanded into additional Appalachian counties. These caring counselors are committed to the value of the individual, the importance of families and the wisdom of spiritual beliefs and principles. The work they are doing changes lives, strengthens communities and creates a ripple effect for generations to come.

Let's help bridge that gap and provide mental health care for our neighbors and Appalachia by giving the CAP today. So just visit Christianapp.org/mentalhealthtsf to give today. That's Christianapp.org/mentalhealthtsf.

And remember, we always have our links and all of our codes, all that important stuff is in the show notes below. So if you didn't catch that and you want to be a part of what CAP is doing, you can just look in the show notes and there's a place for you to click.

Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with my friend Christine Caine. You know and love Chris. She was on Episode 82, and then recently also on Episode 297. She is a speaker and activist, author and founder of the A21 Campaign and Propel Women.

Today she's back talking about our brand new book, *Don't Look Back: Getting Unstuck and Moving Forward with Passion and Purpose*. It just released on Tuesday. It blew my mind, y'all. This book blew my mind. I cannot wait for you to hear this conversation.

This is also a special one for me because I get to share some news in person with Chris that is something that likely would not have happened if it weren't for her. I'm really excited to share that with you today too. But the kindness of the Lord to give me a chance to tell her this news in person was just really special to me. So, here is my conversation with Christine Caine.

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Annie: Christine Caine, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Christine: Okay, I am pumped. We have not stopped talking really.

Annie: I know. From the minute you walked in the door we have not slowed down.

Annie: Okay, I've got to tell you this story that I have not told anyone yet, that you are so important to me and that I could almost cry starting it. Do you remember...? I think maybe in 2012 is when we met '11 or '12 in Florida at a hotel with Joyce Meyer.

Christine: Yes, I do.

Annie: Do you remember the dinner that night at a table, and it was me and Jenny Allen and a bunch of women pastors?

Christine: Yes, I do.

Annie: Okay. Will you retell what you remember about that to some degree?

Christine: Okay, our conversation or just the dinner conversation?

Annie: Yes, the conversation.

Christine: Oh, gosh, I remember sitting at the table with you all. I remember a lot of the things we were talking about generally, because the group that was around that table was a very selected group. Do you remember?

Annie: Yeah.

Christine: Yes, you know. That was hand picked. Were you dreaming?

Annie: Yes.

Christine: Yes?

Annie: Because what you said is, Annie and Jenny, do you know any female pastors?

Christine: Come on.

Annie: Neither of us really knew. I mean, 12 years ago, neither of us really knew any. And you said, "Everyone else at this table is a female pastor." And it was moving to me. So what I want to tell you is I got ordained yesterday.

Christine: Oh, no. I'm gonna cry. You just told me this. Okay. Like I want to leave this and come and cry.

Annie: 12 years later, Chris.

Christine: Yo, I wish y'all could see what I'm holding in my hands. You probably all can. And this happened in church?

Annie: Yeah. So it was a two-year... I took a class for a year, a pastoral training class. And then you write a paper defending all the beliefs of the church and then you have an ordination council. And it's a two-and-a-half-hour defense of your paper, and then the elders vote. So it took two years and I finished yesterday. And then you're in here today.

Christine: I want to cry because, you know, when I first came... We met 2011. The meeting you're talking about was in 2012.

Annie: Of course.

Christine: But it was in 2012. I remember your and Jenny's face because even I had met Jenny first and her shock that there even existed female pastors or even that I would communicate in the way. That I would back then, you know? And I had never, at that point, encountered women that hadn't known that. You know what I mean? Like you're talking to people that love Jesus but had just no idea.

And then the fact that you showed up to be in that, that already told me everything about you. And I'm gonna say, because as I walked into this room and I walked into your whole studio, I'm overwhelmed, I kept wanting to say to you, "Man, Annie, you're on your way..." The largest media ministry in America would be Joyce Meyer. And I want to say, Annie, I think you've got the same mentor.

She's 80 now and I've been looking at all of this going, "This is it." Like you're on that route. And then you hand me this and I'm like trying not to freak out because you guys was so wide-eyed with all these dreams in your heart and all these passions in your heart, but not knowing you could even think to be this.

Annie: I had no idea.

Christine: Like if I told you in 2012, "Annie, in 12 years you're going to be a pastor," you would have had a frame of reference to put that-

Annie: My theology wouldn't have understood it. My history wouldn't have understood it. And it has been a 10-year journey to get to where I went, "Chris was right, I want to pursue this for me in a house where my pastor said, you have the gifting, you have the character, though, needs work all the time, right? You have the gifting and the character, and the leadership that I want you to pursue ordination through Cross Point."

Christine: And the fact is you have been a minister ever since I've ever met you. It's like this is just a formal recognition of how you've already been operating and the Lord and the Holy Spirit did this. I mean, you didn't ordain yourself, right? So it was recognized by your leadership and the fact that you was...

I want to cry because you've been so courageous. You have planted yourself, submitted yourself, served. And as the Lord's built your life and built your ministry, which is astronomical, you still stay connected into a local church, serve a local church. I listen to your sermons and to watch your preaching grow over all these years. I mean, you use the Bible now, which is fantastic. I was very grateful.

And the Holy Spirit revelation is like that last sermon you preached... anyway. I say because I feel like a mother in the faith and I'm watching you and I'm like, Lord, in their 40s, as women come into their own and just watching you be a mother. I feel like we're like grandmothers. And I'm like, the church is in good hands. And then you hand me this.

Annie: Can you believe it? I haven't even had it for 24 hours. I pray that this is the start of a whole generation of you girls where what you had to wrestle through what... That won't be a wrestle for women because of your faithfulness. And you are with this megaphone that the Lord's given you to multiply, multiply millions of people throughout the world, and then yet it's undergirded by your faith, in wanting to serve King Jesus above everything else. I want to hug you and kiss you, say, Congratulations, girl. Y'all, this is a start because I wish you were all in that room in Florida.

Annie: I know. I couldn't believe it. When they scheduled it for yesterday and then you were coming in today, I said to the Lord like... And I'll tell you, the other thing I did today that I think you'll enjoy is, I accidentally... I rabbit trail with the Holy Spirit this morning, because after I preached yesterday and then did ordination, so my team gave me the morning off. So I've sat for longer with the Lord.

And I did a rabbit trail of a song by Rita Springer. Then I went, "Man, there's an album on Spotify I haven't listened to since college." And I started listening to the songs I sang in college, and I said to the Lord, "You believed me when I sang that." I knew what I was singing, but I didn't know I was singing over 20 years plus. But I said to the Lord, "You believed me when I said that my life was yours."

Hold on, I'll read you the lyrics. It's probably a song you know because we all sang it in 2001. But it says: I want my life to be a pure reflection of your love. So I come into your chambers and I dance at your feet, Lord. You are my savior, and I'm at your mercy. All that has been in my life up to now belongs to you. And I thought, "I sang that when I was 20 and the Lord believed me.

Christine: The Lord believed you and led you. But I've got to say, yes, the Lord believed you and you stayed faithful because nobody knows that 23 years when you were singing that to this. This doesn't come without a cost.

Annie: Right. Do you know I thought that yesterday? Will you talk about that for people listening? When you agree to leadership, it's a sobering thing.

Christine: No, hugely. Number one, first and foremost, knowing that we are held to a higher standard and will give a greater account. If that doesn't put the holy, reverential fear of God in you, I can't help you. I mean that alone. And you just know if the Lord gives you that sort of position, it means that he puts weight on your words that you couldn't put that carry further. I'm not just talking numerically, but they truly carry weight in people's lives. So the responsibility of your words and your actions in people's lives is great. It is hugely great. It's a setting apart.

At the end of the day we are like Levites. I mean, you're talking about you're ordained, you're consecrated. So there is a part of you that... Forever and a day, there is a part that no one will ever see, no one can understand, things that others may, but you never will be able to. It doesn't mean that it's right, wrong, or indifferent. But for you, people won't understand it, and you just won't be able to.

Annie: The Lord has said to me so many times, your rules aren't their rules.

Christine: That's the bottom line.

Annie: So you don't get to get worked up that they get to do this and this and this. You just don't have the same rules.

Christine: You're going to have to die to that 100 more times. I'm 14 years down the journey and I can't even say it gets easier because you don't know what God's got ahead that it's going to be that issue for. So every time it's a consecration afresh. Every time.

There is a narrow path that you just have to walk. But it's the best part. I'm stopping because I don't believe there's a higher honor on the earth than this.

Annie: I know.

Christine: The fact that this is sitting on my lap. For those of you that are just listening and not watching, I'm like holding it for this entire-

Annie: You can put it down and you talk if you want.

Christine: No. You know me, I'm Pentecostal, so this is so holy. How I haven't laid my hands on it and started speaking in tongues yet, I don't know. But it's welling up on the inside of me because I wasn't expecting this. She blindsided me. I wasn't expecting it but I'm grateful for it. Because I remember your hunger and Jenny's hunger sitting around that table. And the rest of that table was more from the charismatic world. And yet, you guys, I'm in, I'm coming. You listened, gleaned great wisdom from someone that's been walking longer than us. And then here you are.

Annie: Can you believe it? Do you know what else I said yesterday to the...? My family came to town. I invited some really important friends, our co-workers here and I said to them, There are two times I'm going to invite you to something that matters this much to me. And it's this in my wedding. There are two times that I'm making a commitment this size of my life.

Christine: And this is as holy. I mean-

Annie: And I said, "I'm so glad that one went first."

Christine: Yes.

Annie: Because Jesus has been my partner for the first 42 years. When I get married, that will be the second time I make a commitment this size. And I'm so glad I got to make this one with Jesus first.

Christine: That's huge. And right now every person is saying they're grateful that Annie is not a Catholic because then she wouldn't be able to do the second one.

Annie: I do not. I do not. That's right. I'd be the female Father Mike.

Christine: She can do both. I just want to know. But it is holy. I feel the same way about mine. It is so holy. You put this somewhere and it's not so other people can see it, it's so you can remember. That's the deal is it just keeps everything in check that got... I'm like shaking a bit here. Like I gotta tell you because it's... I'm sorry if I'm being weird.

Annie: You started it. You did it.

Christine: I feel an anointing because when the Lord called me, I had just moved to America then. I was only here for a year but I was very new to your world, like that part of the church world. I had been in America but involved with lots of other different streams. And truly, Jenny's as radical as they come. So she starts introducing me to a bunch of you guys. And then Lisa Harper, you know, that's that kind of that world. But it was a new world for me because I was from a totally different stream of the church. And I have learned so much from all of you in massive ways. You've all been so good for me. But when I hold this, I think, Lord, if this is what you brought me into this part of the church for-

Annie: That's right.

Christine: ...I feel like I did my job. Like I don't know what to say to you.

Annie: I don't think I would have done it without that dinner and without your leadership in my life the last decade.

Christine: It was so pivotal. And you girls were asking questions a ton. I mean, you think you'd ask questions on your podcast, my lord. You must have come out of the womb asking questions, I think because you and Jenny Allen. And for someone that had never been asked those kinds of questions, I thought, what's wrong with you, women? But then I've understood and you know, then I went to seminary, I went, "Oh, that is what they were taught." So when I realized you all grew up steeped in a tradition where this was not possible, so I get why there was so many questions. But you've done the hard work.

I'm thinking as we're talking there'll be some people listening to this going, "Wow, Annie, okay, that's a big thing." But it is a worthwhile study to do to discover what Scripture says about God and about women and about leadership and leadership

and His church. No one can make anyone think anything. But I think if you do the study in the Scripture, you come and go, "Oh, I see, when and how."

Annie: Two years of doing the work in my church.

Christine: That's huge.

Annie: I mean, I went to a class every other Tuesday.

Christine: You did?

Annie: Yeah. We had a class every other Tuesday. We read 10 Different theology books.

Christine: You would have had to.

Annie: Yeah. And then to write that paper, I mean, it is a real process. And I was like, "Oh, they don't hand this out around here." And even to someone who's been on the teaching team for five years at my church, I still went through the process that every other person who wants to get ordained at Cross Point goes through. But I mean, you're as plugged in at Mariners, right?

Christine: Well, literally, yeah, I'm plugged in at Mariners. And you know, I had gone through this process back in Australia, in the 1990s. But it is a robust process. Because the fact is, once you commit and we're signing this, we're saying the certain things we believe and certain things we will do and won't do and a certain way we choose to live.

But you have to, theologically, go through a process. I'm thinking you've done two years of intense books, okay, you've got to go deep with God because you can't fudge this, not if you're serious about it, because it confronts, for me personally, too, it confronts, Okay, wow, what do I really believe about Jesus? What do I really believe about the Bible? What do I really believe about salvation? What do I...? I mean, all the major doctrines. You have to dig deep, right? You have to dig deep.

So to me, I'm holding this and I'm thinking not just this, I'm thinking what this represents and what you've gone through. Can I just tell you? I just want to affirm you, because you've navigated this beautifully. You've just done this... you haven't put it out there and hi everyone, guess what, you know, here I am. And yet God has continued to increase both your reach, your visibility, your influence for His glory.

And you steward it so magnificently, so Holy, I'll use that word not lightly, so holy, so righteously, so for the glory of God. And it's not mutually exclusive with a whole lot of fun, whole lot of cultural relevance, a whole lot of wrestling really

difficult things and not pretending to be an expert on everything. I think no wonder God can trust you. No wonder God can trust you.

Annie: You're very kind.

Christine: I'm honored to know you. I've always been. This is like next level. This is fricking next level.

Annie: I wasn't even sure I was gonna talk about it publicly ever. And then when you were coming in, I was like, "No, I want Chris and I to tell the story on the podcast and I want to tell people. Because it's also going to affect my internet, it's going to affect what I talk about, what I don't talk about because now I have a real authority and I have a local congregation that I am responsible to all of them.

Christine: Well, that's it.

Annie: And they aren't all going to agree politically and they are not... So I have to have wisdom and courage around where my beliefs match and don't match with all the people that are looking to me as a pastor.

Christine: And it is a different challenge. And I think unless people understand that, then it's easy to sort of judge, "Well, why are you saying something about this or that?" You know, for me, it's the same thing. It's this when you lead a global organization with offices in 15 nations. The reason is I can't just weigh in on a current hot topic in North America because I'm thinking how is this going to affect what's happening politically in my office in Thailand or in Cambodia or in South Africa or in Mexico City, or I mean, you in Bulgaria.

Annie: Because if you still lived in Australia, you wouldn't weigh in on all the US stuff.

Christine: No. I'm thinking it's not a matter of just where I live or reside but it's got to do with the reach that I have. So, you know, there are some things that I believe a universal thing. So I'm very measured and people would see that. So if I think it's a universal humanitarian issue or whatever it might be, of course. But again, like you, I serve a local congregation, I serve within a local congregation, so people in those congregations, if it's truly a godly one, I've got lots of different opinions about lots of different things politically, socially, you know, morally. So it's biblically we stay together.

And again, you had to have really felt a prompting of the Lord to do this. And to me, you must feel a real sense of obedience, because quite honestly, it would have been easier for you not to. That's the bottom line. It'd be a lot for what you do and what you're called to do. To me, this is so much about you and your relationship

with Jesus. It really does because you've obviously surrendered everything to Him. Because in the media world that you're in and the microphone God's given you, it's like you've given the microphone back to God in many ways. Because there's checks and balances that are innate in this that in the field that you are in, you could, naturally speaking, seem to go further if you don't have these restrictions.

Annie: Yeah, because there are so many Christians who have public opportunities that don't have a covering of a local... You say this all the time. I'd like to say it to remind people too. Like, if you want to be global, you have to be local first.

Christine: That's it. And to me, that's where the strength of it comes in. And I've always said when I say glocal, that was a word that they use, you know, but it's my local planting is what gives me a global confidence in many ways. And it's not a pretend covering. It's like true checks and balances.

Annie: In *Don't Look Back*, your new book, you write a lot about when the Russia-Ukraine war began. And that is such a good example for people of why you can't do things publicly because you were literally getting people over the border.

Christine: Totally.

Annie: So you're like, "I don't have time to tweet, everyone. I'm trying to get humans over an international border to save their lives."

Christine: And I've got my own staff where we were trying to get the husbands and the wives and the children across the border. And then they get to the border and then the day before, you know, the decree comes down from the government that the men can't leave. So I'm having to watch on FaceTime my staff, the wives hug their husbands, the children kiss their fathers on the border.

Well, here we are today and they still haven't seen them. You know what I mean?
Now we're talking 15 months later

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Christine: ...because the war is still happening as we're recording at this moment. I'm trying to navigate that we're rescuing survivors and restoring victims from both Russia and Ukraine. So I'm thinking, What exactly do you want me to weigh in on here? Like at this moment you're worried because you're not talking because you're on opposite political sides. I've got real humans, that I've got Ukrainian aftercare workers looking after Russian survivors and somehow I'm trying to make all this work.

Annie: I felt a version of that with the Covenant shooting because people were chirping at me to have opinions about all the things. I was like, You understand I'm still holding a five-year-olds hand who was in the building. So at times I think giving grace to each other on the internet, of going, I actually don't know how involved you are, when I... Even today I sent an email about something going on in culture. It doesn't mean I need to talk about it on social media. I'm doing the thing that we want everyone to do.

Christine: Totally. And I'm doing that left, right, and center. And sometimes I think, and we have to... because we will be accountable for this one day. A lot of people sprouting things and doing nothing. Now because I run a global anti-trafficking organization, I know the difference between talking the talk and walking the walk. And you don't stay in this for 15 years and see legislation changed and trafficker is prosecuted and victims rescued and restored without doing a whole lot of silent work that no one has any idea what my teams are doing around the world day and night, 156 full-time people, in the trenches every day doing it, 15 countries, 19 offices. No, that's why I'm not tweeting. Yes.

Annie: How do you have time? What does your day look like between... I mean, you have your new book coming out, you are preaching every weekend. I need you to know I dreamed last night that you flew between teaching in Charleston, that you flew to India to teach about the Enneagram, and then came back. And I woke up and I was like, "That is not what Chris just did over the weekend."

So you taught this weekend, you're teaching most weekends preaching at different churches, you're deeply involved at Mariners, propelled graduate degree from Wheaton and A21. How do you do that in a day?

Christine: Yeah, sure. Because my day, you know, doesn't look like a normal day, whatever a normal day is. I think we all have a grace. Number one, let's be very real, no one does anything alone. So from the outset. You know, I got married at 30, we had our first child at 35, our second when I was 40. So now Catherine is 21, Sophia is 17. So in there, there's mothering and wifing as well.

But Nick and I, we always knew it took a village. So from day one, we knew God had called us and we were in it together. The village started with us too. Like we are in this, we married around purpose. So that was very helpful. So we were running toward Jesus 100 miles an hour when we married, and we just have kept running towards Jesus as we've been increasingly becoming one flesh, whatever that means, you know, as we've been working that out over 27 years.

So that meant when we had kids we had help. You know, we were living in Australia then and Annie, we were on the road internationally nine months of the

year. So you can't do that alone. So I had help all along around that. And then everywhere I went, churches were so gracious, people were so gracious about helping. Youth workers and youth leaders became my best friends, they became my kids' best friends. None of this has been done alone.

Today, of course, we run a major global organization, have lots of staff. Nick, looks after all of the operations. We have an unbelievable, when I say world-class team, everyone's got PhDs, everyone is world-class in their field. I had lawyer work for the Department of Justice. Our head aftercare psychologist wrote the program for the restoration of child soldiers after the war in Uganda. So I mean, we're talking... we have brilliant people.

Now, that executive team across the globe works with Nick. And so our whole organizational structure, systems, HR, the whole box and dice is really awesome. I do nothing operationally. So people need to hear that. I do nothing operationally and that all runs. Now what I do is I'm a great advocate and I travel around our offices and inspire the team as much as possible, where it is possible, really meet with survivors, it's good for my soul and it's good for my heart to you know, roll my sleeves up and see what's going on and be able to be there. But I carry it, but I don't carry the operational side of that. Again, with Propel, we're closer to almost that place. I'm still involved, right?

Annie: So you birth it, and then and then you get the people around it to run it.

Christine: And then build a structure. But it normally takes 10 years, A21 15 years. So I'd say about the 10-year mark is where I begin to, you know, step out almost entirely in any way. And it would be I'm probably a little bit a couple more years away. But for all intents and purposes, we're really getting there with Propel. and it's huge. I mean, we've got Ecclesia cohorts and we've got the Wheaton cohorts and you know, there's been over 1,100 different women writers that have written articles elevating women's voices over.

Propel is nine years old. So just to even see that happening just brings me great joy. And the cohorts are all flourishing. So I probably will do my doctorate in... So what I do-

Annie: Oh my gosh, that's what's next.

Christine: Yes. That would be where I put my time. I looked at your calendar, we're the same. I don't even do my own calendar, though. I have a team. Because I would just want to say yes to everyone and it's actually not possible because I already do 2 million things a year. But I love everyone and I want to serve and I am obsessed with everyone.

Annie: That's fascinating. That's holy spirit because-

Christine: So that's unique because I'm like from all streams of the church and all denominations, across nations and continents. So you know, I could be doing the world Catholic Prayer Summit, and I was in South Korea at the International Pentecostal conference to the Evangelical Alliance in England. I mean, there's very few people at that. So what we save is that stuff where at this moment in history, the Lord's allowed me to do that. So I do pretty much what only I can do, and ensure that I am letting go of as much as I can as quickly as I can because there's a whole generation of you that can all do it.

So there was a season where I was doing more of certain kinds of conferences, or certain kinds of churches because I knew at that season I was the only one that could be doing it.

Annie: You're the only female.

Christine: And especially a lot of Sundays I was doing front and center because I would be the only woman most women would ever see. I never make a big deal about it. But you know, the medium is the message. So I'm there. But then here's you. There was a time I couldn't have texted any woman on a Sunday, but there's probably at least 10 women every Sunday I preached. Well, now I'm gonna have you in that list too. Where it's like, you know, preach well today. I mean, it just gives me smile.

And I said to the Lord, when I get to two dozen, then I might be done in that area. Because when I can just text as a normal thing. You know, we often read the guy pastor friends are like, mate... I'd text my pastor mate to do this, this. And I'm like, "Oh, I'm gonna get to where I can just do to a dozen women. And it's just like, I have great Sunday, and it's no big deal. Have a great Sunday, it's just like what we do. And we're getting close to that. So that gives me so much joy.

And I'm thinking, "Okay, well, that will put... then there will just be certain streams within that I will do that or where I'm helping to build a church or build a network. There's more of a, I'm going to use this word for whatever it might mean, but like an apostolic mantle for that. Because at my age and stage, I'm looking at what's going to multiply, what's going to reproduce. I've got less time ahead of me than behind me. So how can I continue to produce effective fruit?

And I truly believe that my most effective two decades are ahead of me. So when you really believe that, I'm urgent, I'm not panicking. So then I don't have to rush. And I do believe God's given me a degree of supernatural energy. I also exercise every day.

Annie: Also you climb mountains.

Christine: I do all the natural things. I do the things. I stay healthy. I do all the vitamins. I do all the things but essentially, I've got a lot of friends and all the things too. I think there's a grace for what I've been called to do. And Nick and I just wake up. Do we live an extremely disciplined life? Yes. Are things very planned out to 2025, 2026? Yes. Is there of course God margin for I'm waiting for the revival that's coming? Yes, of course. But by and large, is it all in there? Which means that's how I can make time for Sabbath and rest and study and all of those things. So it's not that they're not there, it's just everything is planned.

I mean, of course, you know, does that mean well, Chris, that is dependent on your health being well? Yes. All things considered, that's how it kind of works. But I feel I've been doing this for 35 years. So you know, God's given us grace, our marriage is strong, our kids are the delight of my life and the ministry has never been more fruitful. So I'm like, we've never seen more people rescued, we've never had more survivors in our care, we've never won more cases that have the traffickers in jail.

I mean, in the last year, we've reached over 300 million people with prevention awareness. I mean, this is quantifiable data. This is not like... You know, this is quantifiable where you go, "Okay, we're starting to move in to the B word now. Like we've got some strategies of where's this gonna go to where we can move the needle, really move the needle on this, where I want to see pipelines and pathways for this kind of, I'm pointing for those listening to the ordination certificate, where more and more women that's... what our Propel Ecclesia is to cohorts of support for women in ministry and to create pipelines and pathways. Because I can't be sitting in Florida with 12 of you around a table but I can create multiple cohorts.

Annie: Almost like you were testing for Propel on us without even knowing it.

Christine: I think it was. I'm going to take a picture of this before I go, because I'm going to show the Propel and Ecclesia team and go, "This was one table that I did in 2012, and now there are multiple tables, but I'm believing it's going to end in stuff like this.

Again, I think, Annie, for me, I haven't sat at home and tried to make up what is it that God wants me to do. I literally feel like I'm trying to keep up with God so that keeps it really fresh and interesting. You know what I'm saying? It's not like I'm like, "Oh man, I better hang on to this. I'm like, "The sooner I can let it go in a good stewardship way, the sooner I can let it go, the better. Because I certainly have an abundance view of God. So I kind of feel like we go from faith to faith, from grace to grace, from glory to glory. So I think it just gets better.

And the closer I get to Him, the more intimate I am with Him, I just think there ought to be like a glint in my eyes, a spring in my step, this sense of like, oh, man, I'm running harder and faster. Doesn't mean I am who I was in my 20s. I'm not that at all. I posted a picture today of me preaching in my 20s.

Annie: I saw it.

Christine: Did you see it?

Annie: I loved it.

Christine: And I just laughed about white pants and you know, God bless that girl. I was full of potential. So I don't have that kind of strength of fitness. But I have a whole different sense of weight. Caleb was 85 when he said to Joshua, I'm as strong now as I was then. And he said, "Now give me this mountain, Moses promised me Hebron." He came out of Egypt, He lived in the wilderness, and was full of faith when everybody was full of negativity and they died.

And then he saw the River Jordan push back, he went in and helped to possess the promised land, helped all the tribes set up, and then he said to Joshua, "I'm not cashing in my 401k, because I got a promise. I helped everyone else get the thing, and I've got this promise." And then if you read at the end of Joshua, in that last chapter, there were certain giants that he took out. And only he could take them out because only he had had the experience and the strength to take out those giants.

And I feel there are certain giants that your generation is not gonna have to take out. So as long as I can make it, the strength, the muscle memory, what I've built over the years, we can fight those giants for you so you all can run and just continue to propel forward. Now, if that doesn't give you a reason to get out of bed every day, I don't know what will.

Annie: Right.

[00:33:36] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our amazing partners very timely spoken of, [Fuller Seminary](#). I know we talk about counseling and therapy around here a lot, but have you ever felt led to become a therapist yourself? Have you thought about pursuing a career centered on the healing and wholeness of individuals, couples, and families?

At Fuller's Master of Science in marriage and family therapy program, you can work alongside a supportive community of faculty and students who are committed to the formation of heart, soul, and mind to further God's mission of redeeming the world. Fuller provides students with the clinical training to become skilled marriage and family therapists.

Through their program, you will have the opportunity to engage in a broad range of therapeutic and spiritual formation practices, including exercises that simulate the counseling experience in real-time. That's so cool. Licensed faculty members help equip students for their career and connect them with internships. Fuller students are not only widely recognized as the best-trained in their field but also have one of the highest pass rates for the state licensing exam.

If you feel passionate about becoming an agent of healing and reconciliation in the world, go to fuller.edu/thatsoundsfun to learn more about Fuller's MS and marriage and family therapy program. That's fuller.edu/thatsoundsfun.

Sponsor: And I have one more amazing partner to tell you about, [Indeed](#). When you're ready to hire, you are probably already overloaded with too much work on your plate. And that's why you need to hire, right? And you don't need one more thing to add to your list. That's where Indeed comes in.

Indeed helps make sure the hiring process doesn't become a second full-time job. Whenever we're hiring here at Downs Books Inc. or add that That Sounds Fun Network, we hire using Indeed. And it truly never steers us wrong. They are the experts at helping us find the best fit for the roles we want to build our teams with.

If you're hiring you need Indeed. You can reclaim your time and find top talent fast with Indeed. Their suite of powerful hiring tools like assessments and virtual interviews allows you to find top talent fast. And get this, 81% of US online job seekers search for jobs on Indeed each month according to comScore. That's exactly where you want to be posting your job openings, you guys. That is fishing in a barrel.

They can help you attract, interview, and hire all in one place so you don't have to spend your valuable hours digging through multiple job sites looking for candidates with the right skills. Instead, you can do it all and fast with Indeed. Start hiring now with a \$75 sponsor job credit to upgrade your job post at indeed.com/soundsfun.

The offer is good for a limited time. Claim your \$75 credit now at indeed.com/soundsfun. Terms and conditions apply. Need to hire? You need Indeed.

And now back to our conversation with Christine.

[00:36:28] <music>

Annie: One of my favorite things about you, Chris, is you know things like that about the Bible, like Caleb was 85. I heard you teach a sermon about the two times Jesus was astonished.

Christine: Love muzzle. Amazing thing.

Annie: Yes. And then in *Don't Look Back*, you literally built an entire book on Remember Lot's wife.

Christine: Yeah, the second shortest verse in the Bible.

Annie: Yes. Talk to us about... I want people to get lit on fire about studying scripture to where things like that stand out.

Christine: Sure.

Annie: Like the curiosity around scripture. Because you have all that in your head. You had that whole Joshua-Caleb story ready to encourage yourself there and me in this moment. How do we study like that?

Christine: I think because I'm constantly studying, I'm constantly... I'm thinking if God has given us a book, and of all ways He could have communicated to us and left us with something that is... we will be searching the unsearchable riches of Christ for all of eternity. I can't imagine how that could ever get boring. So how the Bible... so I'm always looking for what I'm missing. And that would be before I even start. Before I would write on the top of my book, look for what you're missing.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Christine: Because we all see what we look for. We are all looking at a lot of the obvious. Even with our Bible methods is make sure here, look for the verbs, and look for the nouns. We all got our ways. And then I'm like, But I'm looking for what I'm missing. I'm not looking for some... And I ask the Holy Spirit, Show me what I'm missing. Show me what I can't see it. Show me what...

So I'm not looking for a new doctrine at all, because if it's new doctrine, it's heresy, just so that you know. That is not what I'm looking for.

Annie: If you come up with something no one else has ever seen, slow down.

Christine: But I'm looking for what I've never seen. So I'm like, "Lord, show me." So here I was reading Luke 17, which is like, pretty deep. And I don't understand it. So anyone listening to this, I need y'all to know, I am not the person to listen to for really smart stuff on the Bible because I'm just not that smart. So I'm reading Luke 17 and it's all about the end times. And I'm like, I don't even get this. It's like Sodom and Gomora's burning-

Annie: Let the reader understand.

Christine: I [inaudible 00:38:33] Noah's like flood and you know, if there's two of the bed, one's gonna go. I'm like, "Oh, Jesus, I don't even know what you're talking about. This is intense, and it sounds scary. Then I always feel okay about that. Because, you know, my entire theory when it comes to, and my entire theology for eschatology is just simply this Jesus said, "No one knows the day or the hour."

So I'm gonna save any listener seven weeks going down rabbit trails on Facebook right now. Okay, I'm gonna set you free and you could go and watch a good Netflix series. You know, go watch Ted Lasso or something. Like seriously, save yourself the hassle because Jesus said, "No one knows." So when someone writes a book on it, don't buy it. Like I'm just trying to keep you safe here because nobody knows. The world is cray cray. So you live like it could happen tomorrow. Be prepared and plan like it's gonna not happen for generations. That's it. That's all you need to know about the end times.

Annie: Wow. Live like it could happen tomorrow, plan like it's not happened for generations.

Christine: That's it. And I think-

Annie: That's good.

Christine: Every Christian should be living like that anyway because you don't know the day or the hour we're going to meet the Lord. So I go, okay, as I'm reading it all, the most random three little words... At first, it's like, what a random thing like Jesus is like a throwaway, Remember Lot's wife?

What really struck me was not just three words. Like I've been doing chicks ministry for a lot of years. You know, I could be... Well, I can't be your mother, but I could be your aunt. I could be your... well it depends where from, but I could almost be your mother.

So I've been doing chicks ministry for a lot of years and I have heard a lot of sermons, spoken a lot of sermons myself on so many women of the Bible. We could, you know, start talking about them all. You know Esther and Deborah and you Mary, we've got them all. And then I thought, This is so interesting because there's about 170 women that are in some way alluded to in scripture.

Christine: But Jesus only ever tells us to remember one woman.

Annie: Wow.

Christine: You think about that. There's another woman. When He talks about the woman that pulled the perfume, He said, "What she has done will-

Annie: Yeah, will be preached.

Christine: ...will be remembered. But He only ever told us in four gospels, Remember Lot's wife.

Annie: Wow.

Christine: And I started to think about that and I'm like, "Wow, you've in the midst of the world burning down, and look at the last seven years and particularly the last, you know, three. I'm like, "Okay, why would you tell us to remember one woman? And then of course I'm starting to think, "Lord, why have I never remembered. If every red letter of Jesus is important, now there's not a lot of real estate given to His words. If every word is important and you've given three words and told us to remember her, why have I never heard a sermon on her? Why have I never read a book on her? Why have I never read a...

I go back then to Genesis 19 because you're like, "What do I know about Lot's wife?" I thought, like, Lot's wife, I mean she doesn't even have a name. This is not cool for 2023. Like, what's your name? Lot's wife. That's not gonna cut it. So she doesn't even have a name. She appears on the pages of scripture quickly enough to disappear. She's gone.

So you go to Genesis 19 and then that's deeply problematic. And I'm thinking of the world that we're living in and just so much brokenness and so much abuse and so much pain. And then you're reading that chapter and you're like, whoa, Lot and your daughters, this is really messy and this is like... It just seemed to be fitting into this world that's crazy.

So we know nothing about Lot's wife other than while everything was burning down because the Lord said, "I'm done..." And you know, mostly when people

think Sodom and Gamora God's done, they think firstly, you know, sexual immorality and of course the sexual sin they think about mostly is whatever one they're not committing that day.

Annie: Right.

Christine: Whatever it might.

Annie: Whatever the other people-

Christine: Whatever everyone else is that I'm not struggling with today.

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

Christine: But if you actually read Ezekiel 16:49, the sin of Sodom is actually that you're arrogant, haughty, and that you neglect the poor and the needy, which is very sobering and also sexual immorality. But all of those are equally important.

Annie: You wrote about it in how blessed Sodom was. You wrote about it. It's literally on my notes: how blessed Sodom was. And in a day,-

Christine: Totally. In a day burnt down. Because when you get haughty, when you forget what the blessing's for and you get arrogant with that, when you get prideful, when you get comfortable. Comfortable is the scripture says. And when you have a church that is just full of comfortable, arrogance, we're awesome and no one else is, and you neglect the poor and the needy, oh, that matters to God as much as sexual immorality.

Annie: Right.

Christine: You know, we've tended to focus on just one part of the four that are mentioned in that. And I'm like, no, no. I think the reckoning of the last three years is God cares about the four parts of the four. You know, we've had to have a wake-up call to go, okay, it all matters to God the poor-

Annie: Is the reckoning global or is it in the first world or is it in America?

Christine: I would think more in my experience, and I go to a lot of countries-

Annie: Yeah, that's why I'm asking-

Christine: ...for the last 23 years. I would say in some aspects of the greater Western church, and it would be certain elements of the charismatic church, certain elements of the

evangelical church. But there's a reckoning. Now when I think about it... this actually you think there's not even a stream. I mean if I start mentioning it could be the Anabaptist movement has had a shaking, the contemplative movement, the charismatic movement, the evangelical movement, the megachurch movement-

Annie: The Catholic movement.

Christine: The Catholic movement, the Anglican movement. Actually, so yeah, I take all that back. Because there is not a stream that hasn't had an unearthing... and that doesn't happen by default. All of us need to have a healthy reverential fear of the Lord. I hope all of us certainly has put me in an attitude of repentance on my face and self-reflection. There's no room for arrogance for anyone, I don't think. And you know, all of us ought to take heed and not point a finger at anyone because the lord's not playing.

And I mean that in the best possible healthy, hope-filled, soberly way. It's God's kindness that leads us to repentance. So that's the bottom line. I mean, once you get out of it, it's like when your parents goes, this hurts me more than you and you're like, Yeah, sure. But you come out the other side and go, Oh my gosh, God, you've purified us for our own good and for your glory and for the future of the church and for revival. I feel like I'm coming more out of that stage now where it's like, you go, I can see why it's your kindness that leads us to repentance. Not like your anger or your judgment, but it's your mercy and your compassion and your kindness.

So even with all of this unraveling, ultimately it's God's kindness. Ultimately. And it would lead to God's glory and the good of the church. It's hard to see when it's all falling apart and it's all burning around you. But God has always brought beauty out of ruins and beauty out of ashes. It's what He does.

Annie: But then Lot's wife looks back.

Christine: Well, she looks back. That's the whole point. It's burning. He says, "I'm done with it. I'm not doing it that way you've done. And the only instruction she's given... And you know, a lot of us are like this right now. It's like the angel of the Lord's got her hand. He's leading her into the future. Her children, her two daughters, her husband, and he's saying, "Okay, God's getting you out of this. The purpose of God's in the future, the promise of God, the provision of God, just don't look back."

The inference there is that when she looked back and it says, "But Lot's wife looked back," and that's what everyone knows about Lot's wife, "and became a pillar of salt." The inference there is that the looking back was like she was longing for what was. Of course, you know, I don't begrudge her. You're looking back.. Did she

renovate the kitchen? I don't know. She have had friends there, her whole life there. It's like a lot of us.

But as I was traveling these last two years, everywhere I would go, people would be... I could say anything. How are you? House's church? How's your business? It's like everyone is like, "Well before the pandemic..." Okay. "And then, well..." And I'm like, wow. It used to be that life was BC, AD, before Christ, you know, after. Nowadays it's like before pandemic, after pandemic. I'm like, yo-

Annie: BC, before Covid.

Christine: ...this was not meant to split time. This was like Jesus split time. So if all the promises of God be like that in Christ-

Annie: It does feel like that though.

Christine: Think about it. So you think if all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus yes and amen and those promises haven't changed and not all of them have come to fruition yet because He hasn't come back yet, so there's still promises, purpose, provision, all that has been revealed is, did we think all the promises of God were in a particular political system or sociological system or environmental condition or economic condition. I mean, you know, insert whatever it might be.

And because that's all changed and the tectonic plates of the planet have shifted, do we think the promises of God have shifted? No. Do we think the purpose of God has shifted? No. Therefore, why are we losing our minds? And we are getting stuck in these moments. And it could be chaos, division, argument, offense, bitterness, unforgiveness, loss, sorrow, grief.

And I mean, you know, we're recording this right here in Nashville. My opening chapter is on mourning everyone. So I want you to know this is not dismissing or diminishing or denying pain, suffering. If anyone has listened to me, you know, I do not skip over all of that. I am very committed to what He's revealed, God can heal, but you've gotta bring her before the Lord, there's times of mourning, there's times of healing.

And people will pick up this book at different phases and it's for wherever you're at. But there are some people that are at a phase where this is really gonna be crucial. And I really felt this as I was writing, I felt this was a prophetic word. That if you at this moment... we're in a reckoning moment, that it's time to move on, it's time to not stop looking back or you're gonna become calcified in a moment you were only meant to be passing through.

So that's what happened to her. She got calcified, stuck in a place she was only meant to be passing through. If you and I are the salt of the earth, then if we get stuck in this present moment because we're focusing on the past, we become ineffective, we're rendered useless. Calcified salt is useless.

Whereas if we keep moving forward... And the moving forward, I can't promise you that the world's all gonna be happy clappy. But I can promise you Jesus is there, and He's beckoning us forward, which is why I wrote that last chapter on the "tell us". It's not about stuff. It's about what is the ultimate ending we are moving towards. So we press on. We keep moving forward.

Getting stuck in the loss of the last few years, the pain, the division, the chaos, some of us not willing to deal with the pain that it takes to deal with where we're gonna have to go with forgiveness and restoration and reconciliation. For all of us after the last few years, there's some deep breaths we gotta take and some work with the Holy Spirit. You know, of course people with a background like mine, abuse, abandonment, adoption. There's a point where we have to decide that I'm gonna make what Jesus did for me bigger than what they did to me. Because otherwise you are going to be stuck.

I couldn't do the work I do with human tra... you know, to help stop human trafficking or truly be able to look at a survivor in the eye and say, "You can make it," if I thought that your history defined your destiny, if I thought it ends and you will forever have to be a victim because of what happened to you. So how much more, if you're in Christ, can I not encourage you to say the redemptive work of Christ. I'm not saying it's easy, I'm not saying it doesn't involve pain and heartache and a lot of trial and error and a lot of mistakes and failure and getting back up and falling down and getting back up.

But I am saying, and I can testify at 57 years of age, having made mistakes, having failed, having also been abused, and having had things done to me that were not of my own volition, that He's faithful and He does redeem and the blood of Jesus still can wash us clean and that there is still healing and wholeness. And you might walk with a limp and you might have a scar and you will have a scar, I've got plenty of them, but they don't need to be gaping wounds that seep toxicity on people. They could become scars that truly breed life and hope.

And if we're not careful in this moment with the victim culture that we're cultivating in the broader society... I've talked to lots of psychologists because of our work with A21 and I'm talking believers and unbelievers, like across the board. So I'm using that term, which is a term that they've given me. That the greatest danger of the victim culture is that we are disempowering and we are removing

agency from our survivors to say, You actually can make it. You actually can move forward, whatever your belief system may be, whatever...

You know, your agency was taken from you for a period. Yes, you were contained. I mean, that's horrible. But now helping people awaken to the agency they have now, let me put that in a spiritual context. How much more those of us that have been filled with the Holy Spirit of God? I'm not minimizing anything and any painful situation we may have come through. But I'm saying by the power of the Holy Spirit, we have more agency than we think we have to get unstuck and start moving forward.

And I hope I wrote something compelling enough to make people want to go, "You know what? It's time to move on." And then give them keys to say, "Here is how you can move forward." Because I think people are languishing everywhere I go. They just don't know how and they're languishing. They just haven't got a mojo to get going again. I don't if you are seeing that.

[00:52:03] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to share about another amazing partner, [Kitsch](#). I know you guys love talking about some good hair products and they say that haircare is the new skincare. But there is one brand that has taken it to the next level.

Kitsch has created game-changing essentials that beauty enthusiasts swear by. From satin pillowcases to time-saving towels, Kitsch knows hair care doesn't stop in the shower. You guys, this weekend I tried out their heatless curlers and y'all, what is this magic? Truly, I was so impressed. I just wrapped my hair around the curler before going to bed. And when I woke up, I had these really cute curls that stayed curled. You know that matters.

I never had to break out a curl and iron, and the heatless curlers were really comfortable to sleep in. These are the original, the OG and the best heatless curlers. Don't settle for the knockoffs when you can get the ones that started the craze. I'm telling you, so many of you talked about my hair at the soccer match last weekend on Instagram, and that was Kitsch curls. Listen, it was Kitsch curls.

Whatever your budget, your skin type, your hair type, Kitsch has something for you. They are all self-funded, female-founded, and now carried in over 20,000 retail locations. Who runs the world? Girls. Let's go. Kitsch's bestsellers include their satin pillowcases, caps, and eye masks, satin that's vegan and cruelty-free. And they are so great for your hair and skin while you sleep. Kitsch also has rice water shampoo bars that could help with overall hair growth and density and

rosemary scalp oil that'll help support scalp health and hair strength from root to tip and so much more. Yes, please.

Right now Kitsch is offering my friends 30% off your entire order. Just go do mykitsch.com/thatsoundsfun. That's right, 30% off of anything and everything. And listen, you need the heatless curler thing. I'm telling you it is so cool. It's at mykitsch.com/thatsounds. One more time, that's mykitsch.com/thatsounds for 30% off your order. And listen, when you curl your hair, tag me. I want to see it. It is going to be so cute.

Sponsor: And one last amazing partner I want to share with y'all, [Athletic Greens](#). It's definitely that time of year when some of our healthy rhythms start going out the window because schedules are so crazy and summer is coming. But AG1 by Athletic Greens is such a simple way to incorporate a nutritional foundation to your day.

It's hard to keep track of all the vitamins and supplements we need to take, right? So when it comes to things that will help us prioritize our health, what if it's as easy as adding a scoop of AG powder to cold water instead of taking multiple different products? Every scoop is packed with 75 vitamins, minerals, and whole food sourced ingredients of the highest quality that give us major benefits like gut and mood support, boosted energy, and even healthier-looking skin, hair, and nails.

Here's what I love too. AG1 is delivered like clockwork every month so it's super easy to make it a daily habit. You don't have to set a reminder to order or stress out when you realize you only have one scoop left. Plus the single-serving travel packs can be thrown in your purse or carry on while you're on the go. It is the healthiest thing you can do in under a minute. With AG1, being good friends to our bodies each day is really that simple.

If you're looking for an easier way to take supplements, AG1 is giving you a free one-year supply of vitamin D and five free travel packs for your first purchase. Just go to athleticgreens.com/soundsfun. That's athleticgreens.com/soundsfun. Just check it out.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Chris.

[00:55:40] <music>

Annie: I am seeing it seem like people lean on what happens to them versus what they could do. And it used to feel like, Okay, there was a thing that happened. I mean, you tell a story in the book this... I think I told you this when I finished reading it. I think this is the most vulnerable book you've ever written.

Christine: There's no doubt. No doubt. Yeah.

Annie: I mean, when you talk about calling your birth mom, have you ever told that story?

Christine: Never. I can't. Well, it's amazing that you pick that one. Because you're right, at my start of having these conversations, I don't think... I may have told that story to maybe 10 people privately, let alone never publicly should.

Annie: So that story, for people to say, well, Chris can get out of her pain, but I can't get outta mine, I mean, that story could have calcified you-

Christine: No doubt.

Annie: ...and left you as a victim forever versus someone who's been wounded that... Why'd you decide to tell it?

Christine: Because I felt I have to help people see that Jesus can bring you a way forward. People have heard this story, you know, obviously of my adoption and my abandonment and abuse. That helps so, so many people. But I think the story with my biological mother and then, you know, in that I tell about hearing her voice and the rejection in that moment-

Annie: It's unbelievable. I'm so sorry.

Christine: Everybody has encountered rejection of sorts. And I think a lot of the pain and the divisiveness and so many things that I've seen online in the last few years, I'm like, I need you to know I get the intensity of the agony that some of you are feeling... I'm not minimizing that, but I do want you to see that there is redemption beyond that. That doesn't have to define...

Can you imagine, Annie, if I allowed those words from my biological mother to take root in my heart? I mean, we wouldn't be sitting here today. I wouldn't be holding this. It just wouldn't be happening. I imagine Catherine and Sophia would be paying the price of that just in a broken mother and Nick would be paying for something he never did to me. You know, it evolves so much, let alone the ministry that's been built out of that.

So I felt a sense of leading from the Lord that "tell this story now." And I think I'm gonna be surprised by how many, how many people contact me with how that story God used it to help set them free of area that they were stuck in their life that they just couldn't get free from because sometimes just hearing, wow. I mean, it's a big

deal to hear your biological mother not want to have anything to do with you. It's quite a sobering thing

Annie: The day you sat down and were typing that, were you like, "I can't believe I'm doing this."

Christine: Yeah, absolutely balling. You know, I work with a collaborative writer, so I send all my first draft and then she helps me put all this together. Like she's bawling and I'm bawling, and we were like, "Oh my word. And I really had to think, I can't even tell you. Then I went to my editor, do I really wanna say this? Do I really want to..? You know, because I don't want to throw shade either. And I don't think I do. I don't even. It's like she-

Annie: She sounds afraid. She sounds afraid.

Christine: Yeah.

Annie: And that's what I wanted to draw in all of that. And it's really hard. My daughter called me from London, she's been at study abroad and she's now really wanting to dig into my past more. She's starting to ask questions. It's like she hasn't read that chapter yet. And so I'm like, okay, here we go. Now I'm gonna have to start some conversations.

But I had sobbed, and it's many years later now that I'm writing that. It took me a long time because I kept... I can't tell you how many times I deleted it going, "There's gotta be another..." Because I'm like, "There's another story." Then I'm standing up to Elizabeth going, "Do I really want to?" You could imagine like, do we write? And then like she's bawling and going, "I can't, I'm not gonna improve this." It was one of those.

Annie: I think people listening need to hear even that portion of it because so many people want to publish their book and put it on Amazon and get everybody to read it but they never had an editor.

Christine: Oh no.

Annie: And you and I both tell stories raw in draft one and many of them stay, but not all of them.

Christine: No. Yeah.

Annie: And it's so important to have someone else bring their wisdom. Because by the time we read the story from you, all of us know it has gone through a gauntlet to be found correct the right time, the right story, the right chapter.

Christine: And the right way and that it's not coming out of a place of woundedness but out of a place of wisdom with the intention of "how will this help the reader?" I just am so conscious, which is why I work so closely with a collaborative writer because I'm like, Y'all, I need another layer of a check and a balance, another layer. And then even my editor will come through and go, Okay, let's double check this. Because I'm just so...

I realized how many people are gonna read this and I wanted to be helpful. For anything, especially when you have a ministry bent, you want it to do good to people. If I just wanted to sort of say something, I could just like put it on my Instagram and just say something. You know, like that's fine. But also this is not just about me, this is about another human being. This is my biological mom, and my daughters are gonna read this. And I know that people are gonna read that chapter that have been adopted and people are... And as I get more in signing lines, I can't tell you the amount of mothers that I get that tell me, "I gave my child up for adoption, no one knows." I can't tell you how many-

Annie: I bet they'll reach out to you too.

Christine: That's what I'm thinking because, Annie, I guess... So this is how I understand the psyche of my biological mother more because I don't know her from the letters I get from mothers that have given their children up and people don't know. If you see it in my writing in the last 10 years, I write intentionally with way more compassion even about my biological mum because I've read hundreds of letters from women who gave up their children and it has changed the whole way that I've seen how my mom gave me up.

Annie: So often when we hear the stories of adopted children finding their biological parents, it's this beautiful "And then we met and my sister and I have the same eyes and she told me she'd always wished that we had..." And that is not the story that you have.

Christine: No.

Annie: So thank you for sharing it. It moved me a lot.

Christine: Wow.

Annie: So I'm really grateful. Last question about *Don't Look Back*. Why did she turn into a pile of salt?

Christine: You know, that is the best question forever. I even tried to talk to my Israel guide. And it's like they gave me a big nice theological reason. Here's the Christine reason that has nothing to do with anything. Except because I'm such an evangelist, I'm like, for me, the picture, it forms in my head, that's why I'm not saying this is anything theological, but I see it that Jesus in the New Testament calls us the salt of the earth.

And for me, this is a picture of what happens if you get calcified and you stop salting the earth. Don't get stuck in that moment. So you could keep salting in the future. I'm sure that's not theological, but that's just a metaphor in my brain. It makes sense of why we can't afford to get stuck. You just think the calcification. If your heart gets stuck and get calcified... if your... anything in any area of life. You know, it works. The metaphor works for me.

Annie: I think there are so many times we read stories like that. I mean, this is what you've done in *Don't Look Back*. I mean, I told you, I text you. It's just beautiful, beautiful book about Elijah. I mean there's so much we could go into. But to me, even thinking through, would I have made a different decision than Lot's wife?

Christine: I don't know if we would've.

Annie: I don't know.

Christine: That's what's scary.

Annie: I know.

Christine: I know. I believe that's why Jesus is saying remember because it's that easy to do.

Annie: Exactly.

Christine: And I feel like we're in this moment that it's that easy. I don't have no judgment on her because-

Annie: Neither.

Christine: Because I think, but for the grace of God, all of us would look back. That's actually what I think. So He's like, out of 170 chicks in the Bible, I'm gonna tell you to remember her, not out of...

Annie: Remember her.

Christine: And sometimes, you know, you can have a little arrogant bent. I'm like, Man, don't throw shade here. Jesus is warning us that this is going to happen to all of us if we don't consciously choose to fix our eyes on Jesus and keep moving forward.

Annie: We did a fast last year at church. We do one a year. And at the end I was speaking to someone on staff and I said, "Man, the Lord really convicted me at the end of the fast. Because I was asking God to do renew on all this work and at our church, and at the end I felt the Lord said, "You don't want me to do something new, you want 2018 again."

Christine: Oh, wow.

Annie: And I was like, You're exactly right. Everything, when I envisioned... Because I'm such a picture person. When I was envisioning, when I was praying, I was actually asking you to rewind.

Christine: Wow.

Annie: And the Lord was like, What are you coming out of that fast? That's pretty what you need to know is go forward, don't go back. And that's been the closest I've felt to a pile of salt. Of like, oh, I just—this probably isn't true—I just wasted a whole fast. I didn't. The Lord used it, but the fast ended up being about my desire for things to be as they were, not as they're going to be.

Christine: Well, totally. And it wasn't a waste. It was actually perfect because God revealed to you what was really in your heart which couldn't go and you couldn't move forward until then.

Annie: Right. It changed everything. Oh, I love you, Chris Caine.

Christine: Oh, I love you.

Annie: Thank you for doing this. Thank you for holding my ordination certificate the whole time.

Christine: I'm holding this because I'm waiting to take a picture.

Annie: I know. We're going to. Okay, the last question. You've done this four times. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, Christine Caine, what sounds fun to you right now?

Christine: You know, going to Greece with a few friends.

Annie: You want to?

Christine: Yeah, come on. That sounds fun.

Annie: Oh, I can't wait. I got a dress in the mail this weekend that I bought specifically to bring to Greece. Are you serious? It's blue and white, it's flowy.

Christine: You are Greek?

Annie: Yes. I cannot wait. I'm not wearing it until we go to Greece.

Christine: You're going to be the Greek flag.

Annie: It's gonna be so fun. Thank you for inviting me to go with y'all.

Christine: This is gonna be powerful. Get ready. You'll love me.

Annie: I'm ready. Katie, you're Katie said, "Can we change the dates? We wanna do one more thing." And I was like, yeah. I mean, me and our couple of other friends that we're all on the same email where we're all like-

Christine: You cannot come to Greece and not come to the Acropolis and see the Pathon. No.

Annie: Yeah. So thank you for inviting me. I cannot wait.

Christine: I love you.

Annie: I love you. And for people to get this book this week, it is such a gift. It is. You write incredible books. But this one, this one is for today.

Christine: I love you.

Annie: Thank you.

Christine: Thank you for having me.

[01:06:05] <music>

Annie: Oh friends, don't you love her? She's just amazing. Oh, what a special conversation. This is one that I will truly absolutely never forget. Make sure you grab a copy of

Don't Look Back. I mean a whole book around one sentence in the Bible. It's so good, y'all. It is so good. Please, please read it. Follow Chris on Instagram, thank her for being on the show, tell her how much her book matters to you.

And guys, do you have your tickets to the Here for You tour? The countdown is legit on. I'm starting to pack. That's what I'm saying to you. I'm starting to pack. We kick things off on June 7th in South Dakota. I cannot wait to get on that bus, head up to SoDak and work our way back down. This road trip, you guys, I'm ready for. It is gonna be a blast and we've still got a seat for you. So grab your tickets at hereforyoutour.com.

Okay, we heard what sounds fun to Chris and you know what sounds fun to me, SoDak, we are coming for you, and now we get to hear what sounds fun to one of our friends who is listening just like you. Okay, May Elizabeth, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

May Elizabeth: Hey, I'm May Elizabeth and I'm from Upland, Indiana. And what sounds fun to me is being a part of a Broadway musical.

Annie: I cannot believe you're saying this because do you know in Wicked that Glenda says she's from the upper Uplands?

May Elizabeth: Oh, I did not know that.

Annie: Yeah. She's Glenda of the upper Uplands.

May Elizabeth: Perfect. There you go.

Annie: What show do you wanna be in?

May Elizabeth: I mean, Wicked would be amazing, but I mean, I'll take anything that's got good dance numbers and all that stuff.

Annie: So do you do theater now?

May Elizabeth: I don't know. I did when I was in high school and middle school, but I do not anymore. But I-

Annie: What's your favorite show you've ever done?

May Elizabeth: Let's see. Well, Beauty and the Beast was a classic.

Annie: Of course.

May Elizabeth: Did that junior year. And then Avita is actually a really fun show.

Annie: Interesting. Okay.

May Elizabeth: We did that too.

Annie: Okay. So, dear Broadway people, if you're listening, May Elizabeth is putting in her job application.

May Elizabeth: Yes, I would love to.

Annie: Okay. I mean, you're from the upper Uplands, you have to.

May Elizabeth: I gotta be in Wicked. Yes.

Annie: You are born to be in Wicked. That's what I mean to tell you.

All right, if you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, on a bus in June. All the places you need me, that is how you can find me.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same. Today what sounded fun to me was telling you about being ordained at Cross Point Church. So that is gonna trump everything else today. I'm really grateful for the pastors, the leadership at Cross Point and our elders, and the whole two-year process. I'm really, really thankful and really honored.

So y'all have a great weekend. And guess what? We'll see you back here on Sunday. Happy Mother's Day. We're gonna do a special bonus conversation on Mother's Day because y'all lo-oo-ve of Dr. Nijay Gupta. We got a whole conversation on Sunday about Mary the mother of Jesus. So whether you're mothering the kids you raised or adopted or fostered, whether you are mothering the kids in your community or mothering your friends, mothering yourself, we got a great mothering conversation for you on Sunday. So we'll see you back here on Mother's Day.