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Annie: Hi 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. We have got a great show in store.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors. This episode is sponsored by [BetterHelp](#). I just saw my counselor last week. You guys know by now that she has been so helpful to me as I navigate my mental, emotional, and spiritual health. I've benefited so much from her help, and spoiler alert, y'all have benefited from it too. I think it's really important to prioritize time for therapy even in the midst of busy seasons.

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Intro: Today on the show is a good one y'all. I get to talk with my friend Shane Claiborne. Shane is a speaker, an activist, and bestselling author. Y'all get this, he's worked with Mother Teresa in Kolkata. Mother Teresa. And he founded The Simple Way in Philadelphia.

Shane is a champion for grace which has led him to places like jail, yes, actual jail, as he advocates for the homeless, and to places like Iraq and Afghanistan to stand against war. Shane heads up Red Letter Christians, a movement of folks who are committed to living as if Jesus meant the things He said.

His latest book, I've read a lot of his stuff, this is my favorite, it's called *Rethinking Life: Embracing the Sacredness of Every Person*. It released in February, and it explores the battle between life and death that goes as far back as the Garden of Eden. This moving and timely book creates a larger framework for thinking about

God's love and our faith as we embrace a consistent ethic that values human life from womb to tomb. I think you're gonna find this one really interesting.

So here is my conversation with my friend Shane Claiborne.

Ashley: Hey, y'all, staff boss, Ashley here. Don't worry, nothing's wrong. We just gave Annie the afternoon off and then realized there was one more thing we wanted to say before we dive into this conversation. So here I am.

This conversation between Annie and Shane is important and thought-provoking. Also due to the nature of some of the topics that they discuss, things like gun violence, sexual abuse, abortion, murder, we just wanted to go ahead and give you a heads up about that upfront, so that if any of those topics are tender for you, you can proceed with the sensitivity that we always encourage each other to have with our own hearts and that you can also make that decision now for any MiniBFF ears who may be in close proximity.

Annie: Shane Claiborne, welcome to That Sounds Fun.

Shane: Hey, I'm so excited to be here. Thank you.

Annie: Man, you have got to know what a fan I am. I mean, for years I've been watching you in the least creepy way lead in so many interesting places. So thank you for making time to do this.

Shane: I'm blushing over here. So nice of you.

Annie: Wow. Okay, so tell me this. You grew up in East Tennessee. Is that where y'all still are?

Shane: I love East Tennessee. That is where I grew up. I came to school in Philadelphia and I kind of stayed. I've been here for about 25 years in Philly. But I still get down there all the time. I'm a mama's boy. I love my mom. I love East Tennessee. My people are buried in the Smoky Mountains up there.

Annie: I mean even in *Rethinking Life*, your newest book, you talk about how different failures in east Tennessee, but also you bring up my girl Dolly Parton, which I appreciate.

Shane: Ooh!

Annie: I mean, your grandparents lived around the corner from her?

Shane: Yes, Annie. If I was in Tennessee, I have a little office up in Tennessee as well and on my wall I have my two Shane love Dolly, like, picture. I mean, literally my great grandparents, her family grew up on the same hillside. I remember my uncle saying, "I remember when she used to play on the front porch." I still inherited a little piece of land in the mountains, and it says on the deed 'old hog hauler'. It's a name of the road. That's how country we are.

Annie: Oh, I love it. Okay, so much of what you write about and talk about is pro-life from start to finish, a pro-life belief system from birth to death, right?

Shane: Yes.

Annie: I mean, I grew up in Georgia and spent a lot of time... I mean, I use the word hauler on a normal basis. So our upbringing, I was around guns my whole life, I was around young moms a lot in my life. So will you talk me through how you go from growing up around that culture to living in such a different culture and having different belief systems in your family? I assume. Sorry, that's an assumption.

Shane: Well, honest to goodness, part of what gives me a lot of grace and patience to talk with folks who might see things a little differently or might be working through how they feel about some of these big issues, I have a lot of patients because I was passionately on the other side of many of them, like the death penalty and guns and different things.

I think where we sit determines what we see. My worldview was really shaped by that East Tennessee culture I grew up in. There's things I absolutely love about it but there were a lot of things that once I came to Philly, I kind of looked back and I started to have eyes to see, as Jesus said. Like we had the Confederate flag on, everything in my high school... I went to the... Merrill High School rebels. That's who we were. We had it painted on our walls with the Confederate flag, on our lunchroom trays.

Annie: Oh, my gosh, on the lunchroom room trays.

Shane: I kid you not.

Annie: And for our friends listening, you weren't in high school 50 years ago? Because they don't see you. So they don't know that you're not 90. That was like in the last 25 years or something you were in high school?

Shane: I won't tell you what high school reunions coming up actually, you know. Yeah, it was back in the 1900s. And I grew up passionately saying that I was pro-life, but really the main lens through which I thought about that and defined that was on the

issue of abortion. And I write about this. I still think that abortion matters, and I care deeply about it. But I think the other things matter, too. So I don't want to shrink what it means to be pro-life. I want to expand that.

Gun violence now is the number one cause of death of kids in Tennessee and kids around the country. So that matters to me. I think every person that dies is made in the image of God. And whether that's the death penalty or gun violence, or abortion, or racism, that matters to me. I think it matters to God.

And a lot of my family are still gun owners. Like our family are still hunters. Katie, my wife, is from North Carolina. So we're very comfortable with guns. And there's entire groups now that we work with of gun owners concerned about gun violence. You know, hunters against assault rifles. And some of my family would fit that category. They're gun owners that are concerned about gun violence.

Annie: It feels like the loudest things we hear are—and this is true. I mean, we should all just remember this every election cycle—the loudest thing we hear are the polar opposites. Not the hunters against gun violence. Like you don't hear from them. You don't hear the people who are trying to do these nuanced conversations that are inviting both... a little bit of "Yes, and..." versus all or nothing.

Shane: That's right.

Annie: Why is that? Why is that who we hear the most?

Shane: Well, I think some of this is not about the gospel of the sweet Lord Jesus, but about partisan politics. Some of the ways that you distinguish yourself from the other person or the other party, especially when you have a two-party system is not by emphasizing the things that you might be able to work together on... but the really stark differences that you have, and digging your heels in. And I think that's why we see a lot of uncompromising rhetoric and ideologies that kind of hijacked the airwaves. I think we could find some common-sense ways to agree on gun laws.

But I also think we could find some guardrails and some common sense boundaries on abortion, on so many things, you know. So that's what I've been trying hard to work together on. And it's really clear to me that self-righteousness is toxic.

Annie: Yeah. Wow.

Shane: Jesus kind of referred to the yeast of the Pharisees as this kind of moral self-righteousness that's so damaging. I think in our culture I grew up with a conservative version of that that was, you know, about being sort of... purity culture and stuff. But there's another version of that in a lot of justice circles that sort of has

the same theological policing and cancel culture, but it's just on the left instead of the right. But I still think it's still about moral righteousness and making other people kind of feel how terrible they are.

Annie: We have another podcast video called Let's Read the Gospels where I'm literally reading Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John every month.

Shane: Hallelujah.

Annie: It's awesome. All I do is read and pray. We don't give any commentary. But I need you to know we're on our fifth cycle now of reading it and the three of us in the room laugh every time we get to that part about the yeast of the Pharisees because the disciples all thought Jesus was talking about them forgetting to bring bread. And Jesus is like, "No, you guys, it's not about that you forgot bread." We love that part.

One of my favorite things about *Rethinking Life* and some of your other writing is you do such deep Bible study, in Annie's opinion, it makes it hard to argue a lot of the things you say but as you bring the Bible in and it's so well done you. But will you talk about the first thing that's labeled "sin" in the Bible was not Adam and Eve? Will you talk about that? I had never realized that my whole life.

Shane: Well, this is a recent revelation for me too. I mean, I've been to seminary and everything else. But really we think of the original sin as kind of the Garden of Eden eating from the forbidden fruit, you know, Adam and Eve and the fall of humanity. But the first time that the concept in the word sin is used in the Bible is not actually in the Garden of Eden but it's what happens right outside of the Garden of Eden with the inaugural murder of Cain and Abel.

And that's where you see, I guess, really the concrete implication... What happens with a fallen humanity? And it's violence. It's a man killing his own brother. And it also says that that blood cries out to God from the ground.

Annie: Yes. Tell that part.

Shane: So this is the grieving of God. This is a person, a child made in the image of God. My Jewish friends actually have helped me understand this a little bit more deeply. One of the things that they pointed out is that that word for the blood is plural. It is about Abel's blood but it's also more than Abel. It's everybody's blood that we've shed it continues to cry out to God. That's why it's in the plural. It's not just one person, but it's that blood that stained the pages of history and the land that we live on right now, that blood cries out to God. And they also point out that the verb is in the present tense.

Annie: Yes, that's the part. That's the part.

Shane: Yeah.

Annie: Jeez.

Shane: It's still crying out to God, and it's also Michael Brown's blood. Everybody's blood that we've shed. So I think it's a powerful place to begin in the book of Genesis. I do love the Bible, Annie. And I think part of what we need to do is better theology because there's a lot of bad theology out there.

Annie: Right.

Shane: One of the constructs for how we even think about justice was one of the earliest ways of thinking about it, even earlier than the Hebrew scriptures, the Bible itself was this idea of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. This idea that we're going to... Real justice is doing the same harm back that was done to us. So it was very specific, though, the law allowed for reciprocal harm. So exactly how the person had harmed you. If they poked out your right eye, you could poke out their right eye, but not their left eye. You know, it had to be exactly the same.

And that's why it's so interesting that Jesus knows that. And you know from your reading of the Gospels He points back to that and He says, "You've heard it said, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, but I tell you this, Moses told you this, but I tell you this..." And He's actually challenging that idea that we should mirror the harm. My mama taught me "two wrongs don't make a right".

Annie: Right. Right.

Shane: And that's what Jesus is kind of saying is, it might be legal, but that doesn't make it right, and it might be how we've understood it but there's an even better way, which we don't mirror the evil. We don't do violence. We don't rape people who rape to show that rape is wrong. But that's why it's so important, even with the death penalty with so many of the ways that we think about justice after 911, after whatever happens is we're going to do that back to them. I think that that's what Jesus is trying to free us from. I love it.

But I think you're exactly right. We got to dig deeper on some of these Bible scriptures, the scriptures that have been used, I mean, misused to justify the very stuff that Jesus came to heal the world of.

[00:14:42] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation to share about one of our amazing partners, [Nutrafol](#). We are always talking about fun ways to style our hair. But what about ways to keep it healthy, you guys? Millions of Americans experience thinning hair. In fact, it's really normal. It's just not openly talked about, especially among women. If you are one of them, you are not alone. There's a solution you can trust to deliver results.

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And as always, if you can't remember a link or a discount code, you can find those lists of our sponsors and links in the show notes below as well as in the AFD Week in Review.

Sponsor: And one more amazing partner to tell you about, [Shopify](#). Y'all know that sound? That's right. It means that another one of you is out there shopping our online store at [shopanniefdowns.com](#). And that is powered by Shopify.

Shopify simplifies selling online and in person so you can focus on successfully growing your business. What small business have you been dreaming about starting? That is what I would like to know. I'm so excited to shop for small businesses coming to the Here For You Tour. I love seeing what you guys are up to and what you're making and selling.

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Now back to our conversation with Shane.

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Annie: So what made this the right time for you to write *Rethinking Life*? I mean, this has been your trajectory. All of us who know you and know your name and know your work, this has been a central part of taking the stories of Scripture and saying, This is how it translates to what we're doing today and how we are handling life and death and murder. We don't have a lot of murder conversations on That Sounds Fun, Shane. So here we go. So why was this the right time to write *Rethinking Life*? I'm sure this book has lived in your heart for a long time.

Shane: Yeah, it has. The last couple of books that I wrote were sort of more specifically about particular issues. And the reason I wrote them is because as much as we say that we're pro-life, I saw that when it comes to gun violence, Christians are actually not always the champions of life. In fact, we're, I think, often obstacles to some of the things that would save lives when it comes to some of our policies and even just grieving the over 100 lives lost every day in our country to guns. But we own guns, Christians own guns at a higher rate than the general population. We're one of the biggest gun enthusiast groups in the world. So we're worshipping-

Annie: Is that Christians of all races? Is that across races?

Shane: White evangelical Christians are this steady base of support. But even as you just zoom out a little bit, there's still a problem that we have as we're, you know, kind of worshipping the Prince of Peace, the one who said, love your enemies, who loved His enemies so much He died for them. You know, it's hard to reconcile that.

I wanted to write about that. I wrote *Beating Guns*. And then I also saw that the biggest supporters of the death penalty are Christians. In fact, 90% of executions are happening in the Bible Belt where Christians are most concentrated. And Tennessee is one of those, one of the many states that still execute people. We still have the electric chair in Tennessee.

Annie: I did not know that. I didn't know that. Wow.

Shane: So the fact is that the death penalty wouldn't stand a chance if Christians decided to abolish it. I think, you know, when Jesus... There's so much of what Jesus says His entire life. It's like, Blessed are the merciful for they will be shown mercy. I have not come for the healthy but for the sick. I mean, so much of the Gospel is about that. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

So, for me, the death penalty and gun violence are not just political issues or social issues but they are deeply spiritual and theological issues. So the reason I wanted to write this newest book is because I felt like we needed to zoom out a little bit from just the hot-button issues, and we need to look take a close look at our, the foundation for how we think about what it means to be for life, to be champions of life and to think about that beyond just these kind of culture war issues of gun violence and the death penalty and abortion. Let's actually step back and say, what does it look like to be a champion for life without exceptions, from womb to tomb, from the cradle to the grave?

Annie: For *Rethinking Life* and kind of for your—I don't love this word, but it's the best one—for your platform, are you thinking about speaking to Christians the most? Is that your hope is that Christians are listening to you the most versus going into New York City, or Atlanta, or any big city and just standing on the sidewalk and going, no matter what you believe, here's what it looks like to be pro-life? Because when I read it, I thought, Oh, he's talking to me. He's talking to me as a Christian evangelical Annie.

Shane: I try to write books in a way that are really open to anyone and you know, explain who John the Baptist is but also explained who Bano is-

Annie: You explained Valentine and Constantine to me.

Shane: I do think that for Christians who think about the Bible as their primary authority for life and Jesus, I want to lean into that. I don't want to have less Jesus, I want to have more Jesus. Even on the issue of life, I want to have a better conversation on abortion and what would really reduce the number of abortions. You know, we've got some great examples of that.

I kind of point to Mother Teresa as one of my inspirations for what it really looks like to be driven by love and concerned about life. And she was passionate about abortion, but she was also calling governors the night before an execution and saying, "Do what Jesus would have you do? I'm praying for you. You don't have to do this." So that passion for life is contagious.

Dr. Martin Luther King was really passionate about so many of these issues. And even as a gun owner himself, there was a point where he just said, We're not going to win the fight to peace using the weapons of violence. And he gave up his gun and really decided to choose love. And he said, love doesn't kill.

Annie: And then he dies by gun violence.

Shane: Right.

Annie: Unbelievable.

Shane: Unbelievable.

Annie: I'm pretty good as a person at seeing different points of view. My mother might even tell you I'm a little too good at seeing different points of view for a lot of things. Can you help me understand? There are a lot of our friends listening who are pro-gun, anti-abortion, and there are a lot of our friends listening who are pro-abortion, anti-gun, and they all would claim Christ, which is great because that means we'll all spend forever together. How do we end up with that dichotomy? Do you see that dichotomy too or am I just seeing something rare?

Shane: I mean, absolutely. I think that first of all, when we have a bigger framework for every person is precious, made in the image of God, when that's kind of our, our operating framework or... you know, what I keep coming back to in *Rethinking Life* is this question, what does love require of us? What does love require of us when we're talking about abortion but we're talking about a 13-year-old girl that was violated and raped? What does love look like?

These are hard questions. That's why I think we need a lot of grace and we need to talk about these. We're really good at having opinions about people we don't know, about issues detached from the real people behind them.

Annie: That's it. That's it.

Shane: And that's part of the problem. So let's start with this conviction of the preciousness of life, you know, fueled by love, because a lot of our other conversations can be fueled by fear. But then this is where I would say, Annie, when it comes to policies, sometimes Christians are like, whoa, you we don't want to get political. But they were inconsistent on that. Because we want to get political on abortion, but not on gun violence, or whatever.

And there's folks that will say, well, laws, they won't change anything on guns. If you want to get a gun, if you want to kill someone, you'll figure out a way to do it. But on abortion, they do believe that laws have changed. So I want to be reasonable and say, laws don't change everything, but laws should make it harder to take life. And Martin Luther King had a great line. He said, "A law cannot make you love me but it can make it harder for you to kill me."

Annie: Wow.

Shane: I think we need-

Annie: Why do people not quote that line more?

Shane: Come on. I know, right?

Annie: For every Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and we see all those people who make graphics, why have I not seen that one?

Shane: Annie, come on, I'm telling you. We know that no law can change a racist or violent heart. But we can make it harder for people to kill. Every country in the world has a heart problem, has a sin problem, has the human problem of folks that want to do violence and harm, and they will figure out a way.

But what we are unique in in America is allowing sinful people access to weapons that can do unimaginable harm, like the AR-15. And this is interesting. Because when you say, what do people believe? anytime I have an opportunity to talk with someone who might see things a little differently, I want to do it, you know? And the fact is I can't even talk about the Second Amendment. I put the Sermon on the Mount a little above the Constitution.

But James Madison that wrote... I mean, this is the father of the Constitution. He said that liberty can be endangered by the abuse of power, but liberty can also be endangered by the abuse of liberty.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Shane: So one person's unregulated access to whatever guns they want, as many as they want, can begin to infringe on someone else's right to live. And they knew that. That's why they wrote well-regulated in the [soccer?]. So I want to talk about it. That's why, you know, with Russell Moore, he had a great show. Dr. Moore did a great show where he said, tell me where I'm wrong. That was the name of his contest. And I did it on their county. We talked about Romans 13, we talked about all these different... because I think that's the conversations we need, right?

Annie: People are so afraid of that, Shane. I mean, one of the things we've been talking about in the show is what do we do when our stomach hurts? When we hear something on my podcast, or in a book that we read, what do we do when our stomach hurts? But to me, the more we get to have them, the more your stomach settles because it isn't the only time you've ever talked about gun laws and your faith with people who may not agree with you.

And as you know, I mean, I had already started reading your book before the shooting at Covenant. But I mean, my closest kids in my life were in that building and we lost people that we know. And that had never happened to me before.

Shane: I'm so sorry.

Annie: Thank you. So the conversation changed for me when it became up close. But that was true... with every hot-button topic and Christianity, the conversation changes when you love someone that is involved with it, whether it's sexual orientation, or guns, or abortion. If you love someone who is directly affected by that, it opens your heart, I think. Is that true?

Shane: I hope so. I mean, it seems to be true to me. The more that we know people, the more complicated some of these issues get. I mean, even in writing this book, I didn't know that my mom had had an abortion because she didn't have a way or didn't feel the freedom to talk about that. I mean, everything that she had experienced caused her just to bury that. And my wife shares her story in this new book.

One in four women had been impacted by abortion, and yet we talked about this thing as just like, you know, we're holding signs and bumper stickers putting them on our car like it doesn't affect real people. So I think it's similar with guns when that gets closer to us. We can't wait on that though. You know, we can't wait on-

Annie: We can't wait. I know.

Shane: ...enough Sandy Hooks or enough Columbines or enough Covenant schools that everybody in this country... That's where you go, let's talk about it. Right?

Annie: Right.

Shane: Let's talk about guns that shoot 100 rounds a minute, you know, very different from the guns when the Second Amendment was written. Shouldn't there be a limit? I mean, we don't have grenades on the streets, right?

Annie: Right.

Shane: So why do we allow weapons of war? And there's even-

Annie: This a dumb question? Is there laws against grenades?

Shane: Yeah, there are laws against grenades. In Philadelphia, this is different than Tennessee, I know, but in Philadelphia, it was deemed that fireworks are dangerous. So you cannot have fireworks, the big, you know, M-80s and all the other big fireworks. You can't have those in Philly because they are dangerous. And yet you can have an AR-15.

Annie: Right. If you can't have grenade, why do you have AR-15? I didn't know that. But I am noticing that no one's ever thrown grenades. We're not seeing stories of grenades. Oh, gosh, Shane.

Shane: This is how I like to think about the way, Annie, too is cars. Cars are not designed to kill, but we know that they can be deadly. So think of all of the things that we've done just to try to keep people safe. You got to show that you can drive a car before you can get a license. You have to pass a test. If you abuse your right to drive a car, you lose your license.

There are consequences if you drink and drive, if you do things that are irresponsible, if you drive recklessly. Like we have speed limits, we have technology, airbags, seatbelt laws, like all these things that have evolved with our technology. And yet guns... we have the capacity to do some of that. That's why I don't think it's just a policy thing.

We have technology, smart guns, fingerprint technology. You know, they don't save every life, but they can sure save some. And I think all of us should have every gear we got going, "What could we do that might save some lives? In this recent News poll 90% of gun owners want to see some regulations. Like a limit to the capacity. We know that folks that are 16 to 20 years old are responsible for a disproportion

amount of gun violence. Like you can't rent a car, you can't buy a beer, maybe you shouldn't be able to own an AR-15. Just reasonable gun laws. Let's try to find some common ground on each of these things.

Annie: Right. Common ground feels like the thing that feels hardest to find but what I long for it. I'm just like, No, can we all kind of meet here and have this conversation? One of the things I love that you did in the book, speaking of common ground, because you said it earlier and I just want to reemphasize to myself and our friends listening, like it actually gets harder the more you search for common ground, and it gets more complicated, the more you try to hear other people's perspective. So we acknowledge that. We acknowledge that it is harder than just living in your community and agreeing with your community and not hearing anybody else.

One of the people you write about so well in the book is Constantine, and how Constantine shifted Christianity, but how complicated he was.

Shane: Oh, man.

Annie: Will you talk a little bit about Constantine and how complicated and what he did for our faith, though?

Shane: Yeah. Constantine is one of those folks that you almost feel awkward talking about as a Christian, because some people see him as the real monumental, like kind of iconic figure, the first Christian emperor, you know, made Christianity the dominant religion. But what I found as I dug deeper on it is that he is very complicated.

Just to show that a little bit is like, Here's Constantine who is leaning into Christianity, he's trying to empower this sort of marginalized Christian movement that's beginning to be the dominant religion of the Empire. So he has a Council of Nicaea where he brings all these bishops together, they draft the Nicene Creed, one of the most iconic documents in the Christian faith. And then like a year or so later, Constantine kills his own family.

I mean, the brothers still got this violence. And he's also got this conflict because he made one form of execution illegal. He said it's an offense to Christ to crucify people.

Annie: Yeah. He's the reason crucifixion went away. I didn't know that.

Shane: We're done crucifying people. Unfortunately, he wasn't done with the death penalty, just with crucifixion, so he kept killing people. I mean, he's not the bloodiest of all

the emperors. But this is where it becomes so problematic because he is trying to embrace the Christian faith, right?

I think what some people get wrong is they think it was just about numbers. And it was not just about numbers of Christians versus non-Christians. But it was about proximity to power, right? And the ability to actually... the power shift, the kind of tipping point where Christians had the power to persecute other people which they didn't have to that point.

And then they begin to mirror the very evil that was done to them to destroy other pagan buildings, to like burn books that were considered holy books in other faiths, to like literally slaughter and kill people and like exchange the love and the cross of Jesus for the sword of Constantine. So I think it's a terribly complicated but also just a terrible moment for Christianity. We sort of lose our way, you lose this kind of passion for non-violence that had marked Christianity for at least 300 years.

Annie: And he gave us a Sabbath and made churches tax-exempt. It's just bizarre. It is just bizarre that he said the calendar so that we worshiped on Sundays. I think the reason I love that you wrote about him and what I learned from him is there's just this like, dear all of us, from the beginning, this has been complicated. And here's the good news.

Our friends listening can go and do their own research, and keep reading and keep learning and take this with them. And I think that's beautiful...

[00:35:37] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupted this conversation one more time to share about another amazing partner, [Kiwico](#). Y'all know I love Kiwico. Kiwico is defining the future of play by making it engaging, enriching, and seriously fun. They create super cool hands-on projects designed to create a lifelong love for learning among kids and Annies.

Each month Kiwico delivers crates packed with fun and sparks creativity with kid-friendly topics and activities. From engineering robots to learning about the science of cooking, there's interesting topics for every kid and real hands-on skills to explore. The most recent box we just got has everything kids need to make their own wooden Ukulele. Y'all, it is so cute. Kiwico thinks of everything. All the supplies are included and the instructions are simple to follow so the kids will feel so proud of themselves when they are done making it and it actually work.

Kiwico has subscription lines for infants and preschoolers up to teens and beyond. Plus Kiwico projects are designed by a team of educators, makers, engineers, and

rocket scientists who brainstorm hundreds of ideas to create the most exciting, age-appropriate, and educational projects. These are real engineering, science, and art projects with high-quality materials. The day the Kiwico box arrives will be your kid's favorite day of the month.

Redefine learning with play and explore hands-on projects that build creative confidence and problem-solving skills with Kiwico. So get 50% off your first month plus free shipping on any crate line at [Kiwico.com/thatsoundsfun](https://kiwico.com/thatsoundsfun). That's 50% off your first month at kiwico.com/thatsoundsfun.

Sponsor: I have one last amazing partner to share with you, [Thrive Causemetics](https://thrivecausemetics.com). Guys, scrolling through Instagram and seeing ads for Thrive Causemetics really got me. But they did not steer me wrong. Thrive Causemetics products are certified 100% vegan and cruelty-free and made with clean skin-loving ingredients. Yes and Amen.

Okay, my favorite mascara is their Liquid Lash Extension Mascara. And with 25,000 five-star reviews, I would say a ton of you agree. It's so good that it looks like you have lash extensions. Y'all, their mascara uses a proprietary tubing formula, which means that it wraps around each lash as you apply it to dramatically lengthen and define your lashes from root to tip. I will take it. It also lasts all day without clumping or smudging or flaking. And you know we need that.

Nourishing ingredients support longer, stronger, and healthier-looking lashes over time. Plus when it's time to take your makeup off, y'all it is so easy. It is crazy easy. The mascara slides right off with warm water and a washcloth. No soap required. It is the best-selling product from Thrive Causemetics and I definitely know why.

Thrive is helping us stock up our makeup bags with incredible clean skin-loving products that make us feel like a million bucks while also helping us help others. "Causes" in the name for a reason. As part of their mission, every purchase supports organizations that help communities thrive, with partners that help people emerging from homelessness, surviving domestic abuse, and recovering from cancer, just to name a few.

You have to try Thrive Causemetics to see for yourself. Right now you can get an exclusive 20% off your first order when you visit thrivecausemetics.com/tsf. That's thrivecausemetics.com/tsf for 20% off your first order. And now back to finish up our conversation with Shane.

[00:39:10] <music>

Annie: I'm thinking about our friends listening who are parenting. Like y'all are parenting, you and Katie. I mean, how do we help kids understand pro-life from womb to

tomb? How do we help them understand what that looks like and teach that even now?

Shane: One of the things that I suggest is that because history has been particular, history has not been colorblind, it's been very particular that some lives matter more than others, that's why it's really important to tell the truth about that history. And also to realize that... You know, even things like for instance, I think the response to the Black Lives Matter movement was all lives matter. I can affirm that but I also if I can't affirm Black Lives Matter, there's something I'm a little off there, right?

Because part of that saying like, I mean, we could say if you were in Israel, it might be saying Palestinian lives matter. When Jewish folks are under attack, it's saying Jewish lives matter, disabled lives matter, LGBTQ lives matter. Every person is made in the image of God. If we can affirm that unapologetically in our soul, then we really don't believe all lives matter.

The scripture that I look to... I heard my friend, Alexia Salvatierra talk about this Corinthians first where it's very familiar to me talking about, you know, we're all one body with many parts. But then there's a part of that scripture that says, the parts of the body that have been harmed or shamed are given special honor.

Annie: Wow.

Shane: So the parts of the body that had been dishonored are given special honor. And she calls it God's affirmative action.

Annie: Wow.

Shane: God's affirming what we have not affirmed historically. So to say Black Lives Matter doesn't mean white lives don't matter. You know, it doesn't mean black lives matter more. It's just saying, we need to be able to say that because from the Dred Scott case, to the three-fifths compromise, to even what's happening now in our country, we are very good at saying white lives matter. And we need to be able to say that Black lives matter, you know, black folks are made in the image of God, they matter to God. And anytime their life is squashed, it's just as tragic to us.

Michael Shane the comedian, I quoted him on it. He said, "If your wife comes up to you and says, 'Baby, do you love me?' you don't say back, 'Honey, I love everyone.'"

Annie: Right. Right.

Shane: On Mother's Day, we're not just celebrating anybody's mother, we're celebrating our mama too. The part of this is that folks are crying out in the streets saying, do we matter? And we've got to be able to tell the truth about that history and believe that the truth will set us free. We believe that in the church, that confession is a part of repentance, it's a part of healing our hearts. It's being able to say, you know, we've done some sinful things. And it doesn't help just to kind of try to move on from that without recognizing it.

As Dr. King says, Our history of race is like infected, festering wound, and we're not going to get better just by kind of bandaging and bandaging. We got to really dig into it and say, "We got to heal some of these wounds. And that might require some repairs, doing some hard stop because of what our history has held true.

So I think that's why, for me, this is so important to talk about, because we're easy and are kind of cliché, little sound bites. But if we really want to talk about healing and unity, what real unity is going to look like, and what it's going to take for us to get there, then we're going to have some hard conversations.

Annie: I mean, what does love require of us? Even post Covenant School shooting here, as I've been reading your book, I've asked myself, Okay, well, what does love require of me in this? So I guess my question for you is, I'm not married yet, I don't have kids, so it's just me, I'm not a gun owner, what's my next move? How do I be a part of what love requires of me? What does love require of me?

Shane: Well, ain't it interesting that we don't just have to speculate on what love is. We also know what love looks like. I mean, Scripture tells us love is kind. It doesn't envy. It doesn't boast. It's patient. It keeps no record of wrongs. I mean, that love. We should be asking every politician and every pastor, every person to say, let's recommit ourselves to that love. That's not just a verse to read at your wedding. That's what we often use that love passage for. But let's say, Well, I'm gonna breathe that in every day. I'm gonna pray that I will be driven by love."

We also know that love and fear are combating forces. They're like opposing magnets. When scripture says perfect love casts out fear, I think it's naming the fact that we've got to choose between love and fear. One of the questions I think we can be asking is, what would it look like if love was the compelling force behind how we're thinking about immigration, for instance, right?

Nobody just said, we don't need any order to things and we just need wide open borders. I think people are saying, We want a path to citizenship. We want folks that are escaping things that we can't even imagine, to be shown hospitality because we know when we welcome the stranger we're welcoming Jesus. Come on. I know we're not supposed to preach, Annie.

Annie: Yes, preach.

Shane: When we're welcoming foreigners, we're entertaining angels unawares. I mean, this is holy stuff. And this is not partisan. Welcoming immigrants isn't a Republican thing or a Democrat thing. It should be a Jesus thing. It should be anybody that's trying to love our neighbor. We're asking different questions. There's a different framework. We're not driven by fear. And a lot of our policies right now, whether it's immigration or guns, or whatever it is, they're really driven more by fear than by love. So I think that's the real question.

And our fears are unreasonable too. I quote this study from the Cato Institute that tells you all of the things that are more likely to kill you. In this case, they were showing all the things more likely to kill you than an immigrant, or a refugee. And a cow is on that list, a lightning, roller coasters, falling down the stairs, one of them has a vending machine falling on you is more like... So our fears are shaped by some of this media and stuff that we're doing, not by reality. So I think let's make a decision to choose love, not fear.

Annie: It feels more complicated than it should. Because it does because people land on a lot of sides of this. *Rethinking Life* was such a good read for me, Shane, because I was like, Man, there are parts of this I have never thought about and I want to. Not only do I need to but I want to. I want to be thinking and get up close to some of these stories that I'm not up close to.

Shane: That means so much. I mean, I couldn't think of a better thing for... That's exactly why I wrote this. And it's why I tell stories because the stories have changed me. I don't know too many people that changed their mind because they lost an argument or they argued into thinking radically different. But I know a whole lot of people that something happens in their heart and their head kind of moves with their heart, and they begin to then look at the theology that's got holes in it and all that stuff.

And that happened to me on the death penalty. It's visiting guys in Unit 2 on Tennessee's death row. My mom's been, my wife has been, I got stuff on my desk that they've made me. I've seen the stories of men that I think are innocent that are still on death row. Some of them are free now because they've been able to prove their innocence.

There's other folks that I've known on Tennessee's death row that I know they're guilty, they've told me what they did and they're trying to heal the harm and I see what Jesus has done in their life over the years. And that has changed me. That's why to me these are not just unrelated issues. But you go, I think violence is a problem, not the solution. And it's people not just like...

I haven't known someone really in my close family that's been killed. But it's people like Sharon Risher and Suzanne Bosler that their family members were killed. And yet they walked away asking that question, what does love look like, even a love that holds out hope that someone's more than the worst thing that they've ever done?

And you know, Rev. Risher, her mom, and family were killed by Dylann Roof in the middle of a church, middle Wednesday night Bible study. And she said, "The more I thought about Jesus and the Gospel, I knew that forgiveness was the only way forward." And she talks about how hard that was. It's not cheap forgiveness.

Annie: That's right.

Shane: She says, "It's not so that Dylann Roof could sleep at night. It's so that I could sleep at night, so that hatred and resentment didn't poison my own soul." Right?

Annie: Yeah.

Shane: I mean, that's the gospel, right?

Annie: That's it.

Shane: That's the gospel that says it takes faith to believe that God's love is bigger than Dylann Roof's hatred, that Jesus has the power to change even someone's heart who's done such horrific horror as Dylann Roof or [inaudible 00:48:41], right, Saul of Tarsus, or David, or Moses who killed someone, right?

Annie: Yeah.

Shane: Like to believe that no one is beyond redemption, that's really, to me, is, you know, at the very heart of the gospel, and it fuels my passion to try to create alternatives to the death penalty.

Annie: I don't think I've ever thought about this the way you're saying it. But I think what you're saying is the death penalty says you cannot be redeemed.

Shane: Yeah, absolutely. And it's what Dr. King said. It's society's final assertion that we will not forgive. And I don't believe that forgiveness means that there isn't justice or that murder doesn't have consequences. I think Dylann Roof is eminently dangerous and people need to be protected from him. But I believe we can do that without killing him and I believe that the worst thing he does doesn't have to be the

end of the story. And there's days where I might not feel that, I'm gonna say, "Lord, help my unbelief."

Annie: That's it. That's it. Right.

Shane: Pope Francis said that it's a contradiction of the gospel, you know, Mother Teresa was so passionate on this because she believed we're all more than the worst thing we've done. I think of the Methodist church that I grew up in. They've got a powerful statement on the death penalty, and they say that it denies the power of Jesus to redeem and restore and transform every person.

Annie: Wow.

Shane: So I think we can have conversations about what real justice looks like, you know, what it looks like to heal the wounds of violence without just creating more wounds and mirroring the violence that hurt us.

Annie: When we're sitting around a dinner table with people who are of age to have this conversation, what a great, like, let's sit and talk about what it looks like to be pro-life from start to finish. I mean, my friends and I have recently been talking about what we think about cremation. Like it's just kind of been this conversation we've been having about what we think about cremation and the Gospel. And what about our bodies? And where should our bodies be in?

So I'm thinking, Man, I want to have this conversation with my friends around the table too and see what we all think. Nobody has to change my mind or me change their minds. I just want to see what everybody's thinking.

Shane: Yeah. And I want to say to anybody listening to this that these are new thoughts. I would say that it's a gift that we're even able to listen and talk to each other because you just don't learn much from talking to people who say amen to everything that you say and don't stretch you. The things that I've learned have come from folks that ask good questions. These are complicated things. We've always got to have room for someone to change their mind. I changed my mind. Right?

Annie: Me too.

Shane: Our governor in Pennsylvania changed his mind on the death penalty, and now he's hoping to close the door on it. So people change. I love that scripture—that we're working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

Annie: Fear and trembling, Shame. That's it.

Shane: I think it was Texas where I was and this guy came up to me, he said, "I gotta tell you, man, I'm a redneck." He said, "I'm a gun tot and pickup truck driving, whiskey drinking redneck." And he said, "But I've been reading your books and they've challenged me." And then he said, "I wanted to ask you if you could pray for me?" And he said, "Because I consider myself a recovering redneck."

We got to have room at the table for folks. If our self-righteousness gets the best of us where we can't make room for someone else to change. I don't know about you, Annie but if I met my own self 10 years ago, 15 years ago, we would have had some hard words.

Annie: That's it.

Shane: We're different, right?

Annie: That's the problem with writing books.

Shane: Hope we're all changing.

Annie: That's our problem—we write books, and people can read them 15 years later. And I say this a lot, Shane. At the beginning of every year, we do a State of the Union for the podcast. And I always say, you're not going to agree with all the guests. I'm not going to agree with all the guests and you're not always going to agree with me, because I don't always agree with me when I go back and listen.

Shane: There you go.

Annie: That's part of what we get to do is evolve as humans and learn and grow and think. I don't want to be in a faith that doesn't let me think.

Shane: That's it. That's so good. I think it was a 10th anniversary of my first book, *The Irresistible Revolution*.

Annie: Oh, man, if people haven't read *Irresistible Revolution*, it's very good.

Shane: That's real sweet. I wouldn't say that to promote it. But that's kind of you. Somebody else had this idea. On the 10th anniversary, he said, "I'm sure there's things that you see differently. So why don't you go through and write scrap notes in the margins?" So that's what we did. I did a new addition that has all these notes in the side and it's like, "Well, I said it like that but I..." Now I'm married. And people always ask, "But what about if someone breaks in and is about to rape your wife?" I was like, "Let me just let her answer that question."

Annie: "I've got one of those now. I've got a wife now." So yeah. That's exactly right. Oh, Shane, thanks for making time to do this. Thank you for helping us think about things.

Shane: Oh, it's so good.

Annie: I'm so grateful. I really am. Okay, last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, Shane Claiborne, tell me what y'all do for fun.

Shane: Okay, two things. First is we have been doing this blacksmithing. So my wife and I are aspiring blacksmiths and metal crafters. So we take the guns that are donated, many of them are assault rifles, and we transform them. So this is what we've been making—Shovels. I know people are listening. Sometimes I hold up one of these shovels and I say this is what a gun looks like when it gets born again.

Annie: So y'all are taking actual guns and turning them into farm.

Shane: Gardening tool.

Annie: I mean, that is a Bible verse, isn't it?

Shane: Right. Beaten swords into plows. But I'll tell you this too. So that brings me joy.

Annie: That's cool.

Shane: Also, I love the circus, Annie.

Annie: What?

Shane: I love the circus.

Annie: Nobody has ever said that.

Shane: Katie and I are both-

Annie: You love circus.

Shane: ...we're jugglers. Jugglers, unicyclers. Are you ready for this? Fire breathers.

Annie: No.

Shane: I gotta get outside next time. But we'll do one. I do a little fire breathing for you. I think the world needs more circus.

Annie: You love the circus.

Shane: That's my joy.

Annie: You're a juggler?

Shane: I have to do that next time, Annie.

Annie: Oh, next time please you have to juggle for us. What a great answer!

Shane: I went to circus school. I went to circus school. I think that we need that, right? The world needs a little bit more jugglers and circus, whatnots. I'll bring my machete and I'll juggle them for you.

Annie: Very good. Oh, you're amazing. Shane, thank you again. Thanks for your work. Thanks for helping our stomachs hurt a little bit and think about some things. And that is okay. I'm grateful for you.

Shane: Thank you. Thank you, Annie.

Annie: Oh, friends, isn't he brilliant? It's just so much to think about. What does it look like for us to be pro-life from womb to tomb? What does it look like for us to embrace that ethic? And what would love have us do? I mean, I just think it is so good for us to keep talking about and thinking about.

We don't have to agree on everything but we certainly get to chat together about it. And I'm grateful for how y'all do that. It is really special the way we talk through all this together. So I'm grateful for y'all. Your responses online are always so beautiful and kind and thoughtful. I'm looking forward to seeing all your thoughts from today. Hey, grab a copy of *Rethinking Life* and make sure you're following Shane on social media. Thank him for being on the show today.

And y'all we leave for tour in three weeks. I have no chill. I am so excited to hit the road to see you guys. So if you've been holding out on getting tickets, now is the time. The Here For You tour is almost here. It is going to be a blast, Carlos and I cannot wait to see you.

And listen, we're doing a bunch of nights, three different weekends where we are talking all about community and how we are here for each other. And what does it look like to really do that in our lives, in our families, in our friend groups, in our churches, for marrieds, for singles. I mean, it is going to be a really cool night around community. So I hope you'll join us and be a part of that with us.

You are our community. So we are here for you. You are here for each other. The tour is sponsored by our friends at Africa New Life and you can head to hereforyoutour.com to grab your tickets. Okay, so we heard what sounds fun to Shane, I liked it. Now we get to hear what sounds fun to one of our friends who is listening just like you.

All right, Annie, because she always called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Annie: My name is Annie. I'm from Sacramento, California, and what sounds fun to me is hanging out with my best friends in our college town, going hiking, going to the beach, and eating at all of our favorite places.

Annie: Oh, tell me where you went to college.

Annie: Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

Annie: Okay, so where is that compared to where you live now?

Annie: It's about five hours away central coast of California.

Annie: Okay, so it's between you and LA?

Annie: Correct. It's about three hours north of LA.

Annie: Okay, California is so big, we forget all the time.

Annie: It's huge.

Annie: Yeah. Driving down is not possible. But for a normal person no, no, no.

Annie: No.

Annie: Very good.

Annie: No, it's a whole day.

Annie: First meal you're gonna have. Like, what's your spot?

Annie: Firestone Grill, Tri Tip sandwiches.

Annie: My girl, I'm very interested in this.

Annie: Yes.

Annie: Well done. Good answer. I hope y'all get to do that really soon.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that is how you can find me. and don't forget you can find and follow That Sounds Fun podcast on Instagram @thatsoundsfunpodcast.

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 I get to go try on some of my clothes for the Here For You Tour, you guys. New duds. There are new duds coming for you at the Here For You tour. I cannot wait.

Y'all have a great week. We will see you back here on Thursday with, oh, y'all, one of my favorites, y'all are not ready. Kim Gravelle is on on Thursday. Y'all are going to love her if you don't know her yet. So we'll see you back here on Thursday. Y'all have a great week.