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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sound Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today. In the month of July, I am having the most fun with these. We've been calling this the TSF Hall of Fun series, and we are bringing back some of our favorite episodes from over the years for you to listen to. Gosh, I hope you have loved listening back to these conversations as much as I have.

Some of y'all have been around since day one. I salute you. 2014, you guys. That means we are about to start our 10th year. And boy have we got plans for our 10th year! And y'all also probably remember a lot of these episodes from the first time that we ran them. But there are lots of you who are new around here. So we thought this one will be a great opportunity to highlight some of my favorite episodes that I don't want you to miss.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I gotta tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Athletic Greens](#). Does it ever stress you out, listen, to keep up with all the vitamins and supplements that you're supposed to be taking? Especially when you're traveling this summer, it is tough to get them all packed and make it easy to maintain while you're gone.

But with AG1 by Athletic Greens, you can get the daily nutrients you need without taking a bunch of different things. You just mix one scoop of powder in really cold water once a day. AG1 was designed with ease in mind so you can live healthier and better without having to do a lot. Every scoop is filled with 75 vitamins, minerals, and Whole Foods-sourced ingredients of the highest quality.

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And I haven't had to set a reminder to order it or worry about running out because AG1 is delivered like clockwork every month. So it is super easy to make it a daily habit. 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 with your first purchase. So go to athleticgreens.com/soundsfun. That's athleticgreens.com/soundsfun. Y'all check it out.

Intro: Today on the TSF Hall of Fun, you get to hear my conversation from Episode 286 with one of my heroes and favorite pastors Francis Chan. It was such an honor to

get to chat with Francis Chan for an hour. We talked about his book *Until Unity*, how to avoid distraction, division in the church and so much more. This is a note-taking one, y'all.

He is just so wise. I learned new things. Even listening back to this two years later, the struggles and division we talked about in the church at the time of this conversation are still a struggle now. We have not solved all of our problems but we are not without hope. Whether you've heard this conversation before or not, we still have plenty to learn when it comes to loving our brothers and sisters both in and outside of the church. So I'm just so grateful for Francis' leadership here.

So here's my TSF Hall of Fame conversation from April 12th, 2021 with Francis Chan.

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Annie: Pastor Chan, thanks for making time to be on here with us today.

Francis: Oh, yeah, of course. Good to be here.

Annie: I mean, I know the podcast is called That Sounds Fun, but we do talk about a lot of things. So I hope you were prepped-

Francis: That's good.

Annie: ...that I'm not just gonna force you to talk about fun things this whole time.

Francis: Perfect.

Annie: Though we will. We will talk about fun things.

Francis: Okay.

Annie: Okay, you aren't playing around with this book, *Until Unity*. We're just going to jump in. Because if there's one thing that feels painful right now in the church, it's the disunity. So, when did you write this? How did the pandemic play in?

Francis: Oh gosh.

Annie: What do you feel like we can do? Let's just go.

Francis: I mean, there's so much. This has been on my mind for several years now and it just keeps getting deeper and deeper and deeper. The more I study the Scriptures, the

more I'm going, what in the world are we doing? The way we are acting out as a church makes absolutely no sense biblically. And the more I study the Scriptures, the more I'm convinced of this.

I just realized, okay, I've been a Christian for about 40 years now. And right when I became a believer, I jumped into this Bible Quizzing, memorizing competition because I was so competitive. Any competition, I'm in and I'm gonna win. And I did. But the first passage I memorized was John 14 through John 17.

Annie: Oh my gosh, you memorized the whole prayer.

Francis: Oh, yeah, 40 years ago. We memorized John 1, 3, and 10 that year too.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Francis: But it was hitting me, I'm going, "God, I memorized this literally 40 years ago and I didn't get it. I haven't understood it. I don't know it." And I'm reading these passages where Jesus is saying, "I and the Father are one." And they have this relationship and He's inviting us into this oneness with God the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and how they interact with each other. And now we can have that with one another and with Him.

Sure, I memorized it, but I didn't know it. And I haven't known it. And I'm still in this process of learning it. And I'm going, what have we been doing all these years? It's a lot of this horizontal relationship with each other and we don't quite understand this incredible mystery we're invited into. And it's because of that that we're not unified. Because we don't care how rich, how deep, how overwhelming this is.

So I don't know, I just had to write about all of these things that God is teaching me and continuing to teach me.

Annie: Can we talk a minute about Scripture memorization? How important is that for you in your faith life?

Francis: It has been huge. I will be honest. My mind is getting messed up. I just think there's so much stimulation, so much input, so much entertainment or education. It's almost making it harder and harder to meditate on a few things and memorize. Because you don't want to miss out on all the news you could have, and what's going with all these people. But when you do that, you lose the ability to truly focus on a few things like I used to be able to in the early days.

Annie: I heard you say at IF: Gathering, you said that you had felt foggy in your mind, because of all the news you were taking in, and how you had to take a break from that. It makes people like Annie feel better if Francis Chan is having a trouble with how much the internet is offering. Can you talk a little bit about your rhythms and boundaries you've drawn as we're all trying? So for me, I plug my phone in across the room when I go to bed now. That's one of my rhythms. What are some of the rhythms you have to try to simplify?

Francis: Oh, gosh, there are so many things. Again, please don't take this like, Oh, he's got this nailed. I mean, here's what I try to do. You never see those, you know, that bingo game where there's all those balls rattling around. That is my mind. God is one of those balls. And it drives me nuts that I have so many things bouncing around in here.

So I'm trying to just take these things out and say, You know what? First thing in the morning, I'm not going to check my messages. I don't care. The most important thing is that I really come before my Creator and praise Him that I have another day of life. I mean, he determines whether I had another day of life. So why would I run to anyone else? Nothing is as urgent as this.

I've got to get on my knees and join with heaven as they're screaming, holy, holy. I have to think about that throne because we pray "As it is in heaven". That's why we want it here. In heaven, they've been worshiping God all night. So I just want to not start worshiping but join into their worship and go, I'm right here with them, Lord. Holy, holy, holy, and worthy is the Lamb who was slain. Here I am just another being on the outskirts of that throne going, Oh, yes, God, it is about you.

Otherwise, I will jump onto my phone and listen to all these messages that are about me. And suddenly I'll think that I'm central because all of these people need to get my attention and I need to quickly respond to them. No, I don't want to start my day that way. I want to start my day going, You know what? I'm just another little speck around this throne, and it is about you and I want this day to be about you. And hallowed be your name, not mine.

Annie: A lot of people talk about starting their morning in Scripture. And some will push back and say, but I'm better at night. Like I'd rather read before I go to bed. I'm a morning girl with you. Oh, you're not a girl. But I'm a morning girl with you because I feel like it sets up my day. How are your rhythms different in the evening?

Francis: It's a little bit different having seven children, grandchildren, wife, just life. It just feels so busy. It feels like the day gets busier as it progresses. You know, after school's over, then the kids are there and then ministry and all the people. You

know, our front door is just wide open. So people are just coming in and out. So it's kind of a little bit of reflection at the end of the day. But honestly, I'm just spent and I'm exhausted. So it's not typically a quiet time for me at the end of the day.

Annie: That's what I found, too, is that the morning is the only time people don't expect me to respond. Any other time the rest of the day, the world is expecting me to respond. So in the morning, no one's texting me that is more interesting to me than what I'm reading in the Bible.

Francis: Exactly. The morning times, you're right. And the people who are up early in the morning, usually it is because they're getting together with the Lord. It's not because they're anticipating my response.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Francis: As you've led in this space for so many years... I'm 40. So I'm the generation who we read *Crazy Love* in college. So my peers and I have been shaped by your leadership for two decades, probably.

Francis: Wow.

Annie: What have you seen change about unity in the church since you started doing this really?

Francis: It's really gotten worse and worse. It's to the point where it just doesn't make any sense to me, which I think it's good. I think there are people listening, the younger generation... In fact, I ran into two people yesterday, randomly, younger people, you know, early 20s, just they're done. They're done with all these denominations. They don't even know how to move forward. They just know this doesn't make sense. It maybe made sense to your generation but it doesn't to mine. If this is what Christ called us to, this perfect oneness, all of this does it make sense?

And I think there's a rising generation because it's gotten so ridiculous. And now it's not even just this big Schism of when the church split into two, or three, or to four or to eight, or to a thousand. Some people say over 30,000 denominations, I go, Okay, it's not even that anymore. It's the churches themselves within those denominations splitting. And then it's not even that anymore. It's individuals that are going, You know what? I'm just gonna start... and I'm not saying this, because you're on a podcast. "I'm gonna start my own podcast, and I'm gonna get my own followers."

So it's not even about individual churches or church splits. It's about every man or woman for himself. And it's like, this is outrageous. And I'm going to bash

everyone else that doesn't follow my theology. And whenever I think that they're off, I'm going to share to the world.

And I'm going, Okay, I get it. I see some of that in scripture. But let's be awfully careful that you are not bashing someone that has the Holy Spirit of God within them, a son, or daughter of the Almighty, Holy God. You be careful with your lips. You speak with that gentleness and all humility that is a fruit of the Spirit. We don't have that nowadays, where people go, "Oh, yeah, this person is an idiot." That's the clickbait. Annie Downs is a heretic. Ooh, I'll click that.

Annie: Right. Right.

Francis: But "Jesus loves you", ah, everyone says that. No one's gonna click that. Guys, we are saying some blasphemous things, and we need to be very, very careful of because God loves His church, and He wants the unity. And it grieves the Holy Spirit of God, Ephesians 4 says when we are divisive and we have all of is slander going on in our circles.

Annie: How do we know when is the right time to speak out against what someone is doing? Is it ever right? Or do we always stay quiet because we want to unify? How do we know when is the right time for us to do something as individuals?

Francis: I mean, that is where you have to be so close to the Holy Spirit, and so knowledgeable of the scriptures, because I am not promoting unity at the expense of truth or holiness. God commands these things. He hates sin. He hates, hates, hates, hates, hates sin in a way we can't even understand, in a way we cannot comprehend. Because that is what brought forth the cross, that supreme sacrifice, his hatred of sin that Christ had to pay the penalty for it.

So we can't just go, Oh, whatever you're doing is fine. No, we have to get rid of the sin in the church. And He hates lies, especially lies about Him. So we have to fight for truth. This is not saying, Hey, this relativistic Don't worry about truth. Don't worry about sin. Let's just all get along. No, no, no. But I think people that tend to fight for truth and fight for holiness can also diminish His command for unity and His desire for it.

Annie: That feels like the challenge, Pastor Chan, is how do we... The balance I think feels so hard to find is the balance of loving our neighbors well, our church neighbors. I don't want to talk about the world yet, but we're going to. But loving our church neighbors well. And so many of my friends feel very strongly that they need to stand up for what is true, because there are people in what they would consider... There are people in the church who are heretics, who are teaching false teaching. We just ask the Holy Spirit?

Francis: Here's what I would say. I would say it starts with humility. It starts with what I was talking about. Even right now, Annie, I'm glad you said that because I'm thinking okay, Francis, are you loving Annie right now or are you just recording a podcast? And I'm going, God, you know what? I don't want to get in this mode. I want to think of her as your daughter and challenge her.

Did you get before the Father this morning? Did you picture His throne and all of His glory and all of that power with innumerable angels all just screaming His glory? Did you join them and just go, Ah, I love being here. And to think that that being is looking at Annie and saying, I have this desire for her spirit. No one on the planet desires. I want her. I want to be one with her.

Did you comprehend His forgiveness of you through the blood of Jesus to where you're trembling on one hand, like, who am I standing before? Who am I kneeling before? Who am I weeping before? And at the same time, you're feeling this security and this blown away that He would love you as you're in this low, low, inconceivable space?

Then you look over and you go, Oh, there's my brother Francis. He's bowing his eyes out. He's shaking before this God. He's overwhelmed by God's glory. Okay, now, let's talk. Now let's talk about if you see sin in my life from that position before the throne. Let's talk about where I think you may be off in your understanding. The conversations are a lot different when you picture Him properly, and you get the perspective of who you are in His presence.

Now my prayers to Him are different. Once I see Him, it changes the way I pray. That was what *Crazy Love* was about. Stop just closing your eyes and talking. Imagine Him. Know who He is. It'll change the way you talk to Him and it'll change the way you talk to other people.

Annie: As you're saying this, I'm just thinking about, if I did that every time before I left it Instagram comment or every time before I gossiped about another church in Nashville, or every time before I thought about someone else who did my job and had opinions about it, how different would it be if I pictured them kneeling beside me?

Francis: Oh, yes, yes, yes. And challenging them to do that. It'll change you. It has to happen with you and then it spreads from there because, okay. For example, I listened to an interview I did not that long ago. And I hate listening to myself.

Annie: Oh, yeah. Why did you do it? I don't do it.

Francis: It's the worst. Because there was a comment made, I'm like, "What did I say?" And then I listened and I go, "Oh, I don't like how I sounded." Because I could hear... We know what's going on in our mind when we speak. Other people may not, but we know. And I go, "You know what? I'm insecure right there. I'm defensive right there. I'm proud right there."

And what that showed me was I was not close to God at that moment. Because if I'm proud, that's a sure sign that I was not close to the throne at that moment. I used to just confront pride. Like, Oh, you're arrogant, you're arrogant. It's like, that's not what this is about. There's a deeper problem.

You're proud because you're not close to the throne. Those high angels that are right in the presence of God are not being proud. They are just day and night, Holy, holy, holy. That's why all through 1 John it says, if you say you're close to Him and you have fellowship with Him but you're this and this and this, you're a liar. Because when we're close to God, there's gonna be a humility. And it's helped me as people say, awful things and right awful things. You just go, Oh, Lord, help her, help him. I just want them to be close to You. When there's a closeness to You, there's going to be humility, there's going to be a gentleness.

So when I see abrasive things come out of my mouth and an attitude that I don't like, I don't just get mad at myself. I seek God and go God, I need to get closer to you because I don't want to spread that. I'm adding to the problem when I'm not close to you.

[00:22:38] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation to share about our amazing partner [Thrive Market](#). In a travel month, like this one, when I'm barely in town to run errands, Thrive Market is my go-to for all my grocery and household essentials. And the convenience of getting it all quickly shipped to my doorstep is a huge time saver.

Even when I'm in town a lot, I'm not the biggest fan of grocery shopping so Thrive Market truly is my go-to. They've got my favorite snacks and they have my clean cleaning supplies so that I know my house is getting clean without introducing unnecessary chemicals into the situation.

Thrive Market saves me drive time and waiting in line time and shopping time. Because I love the filters on their website and app—they have over 70. Whether you're looking for certified gluten-free snacks like I am or if you're looking for non-toxic cleaning essentials, you can curate your own shopping experience with a click of a button.

And as a Thrive Market member, I can save money on every single order. On average I save about 30% each time. Yes and amen. On top of the massive savings on each order, Thrive Market has a deals page that changes daily and gives me cashback on so many brands. And they have a price match guarantee. I love that deals page, you guys.

Plus, when you join Thrive Market, you're also helping a family in need through Thrive one-for-one membership matching program. You join, they give which I love. Join in on the savings with Thrive Market today and get 30% off your first order plus a free \$60 gift. Go to thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun for 30% off your first order plus a free \$60 gift. That's thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun.

And that link and pretty much every other link you could ever hope for are in the show notes or in our Friday AFD Week in Review emails. So be sure to check those out.

Sponsor: And one more amazing partner to share with you, [Ritual](#). Y'all, I'm trying my best to take care of my skin. But it is a lot of different things to keep up with. And I'm running out of counter space. But did you know there's an option to swallow your skincare?

Ritual's HyaCera combines hyaluronic acid and ceramides and a once-daily capsule. You can enhance your skin routine from the inside out with just one capsule with this really great sweet vanilla scent. Each capsule contains two of the best clinically studied ingredients shown to help minimize wrinkles and hydrates. It's proven to show results in 90 days with ingredients included at their clinically studied doses.

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HyaCera from Ritual is a skin supplement you can actually trust. Ritual is offering my friends 20% off during your first month. So visit ritual.com/thatsoundsfun to start Ritual or add HyaCera to your lineup today.

Okay, now back to our TSF Hall of Fun conversation with Francis Chan.

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Annie: I loved how in *Until Unity* you explained denominations. I thought that was really helpful because I don't know that I've done enough work understanding where that came from. But the chapter you wrote, which is kind of what you're talking about where it said it must start small... I mean, so much of the unity, from what I'm understanding you say, the unity we've longed for in the church actually starts with our time with God by ourselves.

Francis: It does. And that's the thing. I grew up in this last generation of what we call church, where it was about a lot of things besides you really connecting with Him. In other words, I said this to the elders, you know, we were praying couple of weeks ago. The elders of the church we were just talking about how we've missed a lot of things and we have not seen ourselves, and we need to see ourselves like the receptionist at the ER.

No one is coming to see us. And if they want to see us, we have to tell, Look, I don't know what I can do for you. All I want to do is get you into a room with a great physician. There's this physician and you got to be alone with Him. My only job is to get you in that room. You didn't come to see me... I hope you didn't come to see me. No one comes to see me. They shouldn't. If you did, then you're off.

The only reason you'd want to see me is because I can get you to Him. I can get you access to Him. He is going to change you. And this is not the mindset. So that's why for years, people are like, Oh, I want to hear Francis. I want to hear this preacher. I want to go to this person's church. And it's not "I want to know the Creator who said He wants to know me. Can anyone help me, just point me in this direction? I, by myself, am gonna go after Him.

And then if that is truly what is happening, then when you get together, then suddenly you're having these conversations like, can you believe him? Can you believe? He did this surgery on me and found all sorts of things wrong with me. But people have been satisfied with the receptionist, and they're blaming the receptionist. You know, we as elders are just going, We've got to see ourselves in this. We're taking on too much. And people are not satisfied. They go, Oh, we've experienced church. I've experienced Christianity, it doesn't do anything for me.

And now there's more and more people in our position who have become public figures that go, You know what? I don't think I believe this anymore. I am walking away from my belief system. How do you do that? And I realized, it's because it's a belief system to you. I'm walking away from my parents' belief system. If you encountered Him, you don't walk away from that. Moses doesn't walk off of Mount Sinai and go, I'm gonna walk away from my belief system.

Annie: Right. Even Peter. Even Peter, right? What a belief system.

Francis: The people who encountered the resurrected Christ... Did disciples walk out of that room after Jesus appears to them and go, I'm going to walk away from my belief system? Do they have these tongues of fire land upon them and these miracles work and they go, I'm going to walk away from my belief system? No. People do this because they never encountered Him. They encountered a preacher. They encountered a service that felt great, but they don't know Him. Sorry for going long on this, but I am so passionate.

Isaiah 29:13 says that these people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me and their fear of me is a commandment taught to them by men. So this is just someone taught you to fear God. Maybe you even read *Crazy Love*, or you heard a Francis Chan sermon and he's told me to fear God, so I began to fear God. I taught you the fear of God. God did not teach you the fear of God.

That's why when Jesus asked Peter, who do you say that I am? And he says, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," he goes, "Flesh and blood didn't reveal that to you but my Father from heaven. That was not man that taught you that. You encountered Him. You experienced Him. It's upon this, Peter, that the church is going to be built." There are too many people that listen to us and have never encountered Him.

Annie: Yes. So where do they go? If they stopped the podcast right now to encounter God, what did they pray? What did they ask? Where did they go sit? What's the next move?

Francis: This is something... John 13 to 17.

Annie: You're like, Everybody, memorize it? I did.

Francis: I'm sorry. It is. It is. And I think there's something crazy that it's been. I believe exactly 40 years for me. And it is just now that God has been revealing like, This is it, stay in here, because there are deep, deep truths. This is the treasure. Some people call this the Holy of Holies of Scripture because it was Jesus before He died. This is what I want to say to you. And there are truths about God and who He is, the Father and Son interacting in the love they have with one another. And inviting us into that.

I mean, I just can't say enough. But get alone, get alone with the scriptures, talk to God about these truths. It has to come from inside of you. It can't even be us. It's saying, "God, I need this. I need you to stir in me." The Bible says... One of the first verses that was told to me, was behold I stand at the door and knock. And if anyone opens a door, I'll come in to him and I'll dine with him. That's Jesus.

If you hear this, it's probably not because you're listening to Annie or me. It's because Jesus is seriously knocking and saying, Look, what he's describing, it's me. I'm coming after you. Let me in and just get alone and say, Yes, I want you, Jesus. I want you, Jesus. I don't know you, Jesus. I want to know you more. Please reveal Yourself to me. And to start interacting with the scriptures of what He says He wants with you.

Let me read from John 14 because this is one of the passages that really, really hit me, where I go, I memorized this? I hardly remember this. John 14:21, "Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

And Judas goes on and asked him, he goes, "Lord, how is it that you'll manifest yourself to us and not to the world? And Jesus says, If anyone loves Me, he'll keep my word and my Father will love him. We will come to him and make our home with him. Again, I memorized this, but I didn't know it. It's like Jesus talking about people who are always learning but never coming to an understanding of truth and knowing...

This is my heart for people. This is my heart for me. I want to know in a Biblical sense of know. I want to know what it means to have the Father and Son abide in me, live in me, manifest Himself to me. Ah. I think I know some of it but I think there's so much more. And I remember my one... There's always that one teacher, you know, of all the seminary profs, or whatever, where you go... He said something I actually remembered because he said in a way that it seemed like he meant it.

He would say it over and over. He would look at us... It was this old man, he would... and I don't know if he's still alive. But he would look at us as seminary students sitting there nodding our heads, and he would just go, "Ooooh, you think you know but you do not know. Oooh, I look at you, you think you know, you don't know." And I'm like, "What is he talking about? Like he is just sure we don't get something." And now I get it. It was almost like this groaning, grieving like, Oooh, you guys are memorizing it, you're saying it, and you think you know it, but you don't know.

I didn't know these passages. I had so much information in my head. When I graduated seminary, I thought I knew everything. I knew nothing. I had a bunch of info and knew none of it.

Annie: Is there some value... Because as you're telling the story, I'm thinking, man, those four chapters spun around in you for 40 years. So having them in there led to what you do know today.

Francis: I'm sure it did. I'm sure it did. I think there is something that God is doing right now. This is a unique time. It is a special time and God is doing something right now, where He is changing people's hearts. We are discontent with what we've called church, what we've called a relationship with God, and He is calling us into a deeper oneness with Him. That has to be the starting point to get into this unity.

Because we've tried a common doctrinal statement, we've tried 'let's get a big conference together and hold hands'. We've tried, hey, I wrote a song about unity. We've tried, you know, whatever these conversations. It's because we haven't done it from a deep, deep oneness with Him. It's kind of like... Well, I'll just leave it at that. It's just we have to be one with God and really understand the depths of that. Otherwise, our oneness with each other is never going to work.

Annie: Is there a difference in desiring unity in the church and desiring unity for the world? Are we missing unity in the church because we're trying to make the whole world get along?

Francis: Absolutely. I hate conflict. I hate war. I mean, I have friends in Burma right now, Myanmar that are just getting slaughtered, running for their life. I've seen video of them being shot down, and I just go, Oooh. I've been in Ethiopia talking to warring tribes with scars and anger, and it's like, Oooh, God, and this and this and this. But there is a truth where Christ said, Look, I didn't come to bring peace but a sword. And there's going to be this fighting, and the world is going to hate you. So there's some of that that while we don't like it, it's just the reality.

Annie: I really don't like it.

Francis: I hate it. I hate it. So here it is. Think about this, Annie. In John 15, He says, "If the world hates you keep in mind that it hated me first. If they persecuted me, they're gonna persecute you." And then probably a few minutes later in chapter 17, he's praying for His church where He says, May they be perfectly one just as you and I. Okay, just as the Father and Son are perfectly one, He's saying to the church that all of them become perfectly one.

So, in these chapters, he's saying, there's going to be such hatred and persecution, but in the church, there's going to be perfect oneness. I want perfect oneness. So it's like on this hand, you can't do anything about that. So you want it, but it's not going to happen. In the church. Jesus says, I've given them my glory so that they can become one.

Annie: Correct me if I'm wrong on this. You have all the permission. In some ways, we're putting a lot of energy as faith people toward unifying something that Jesus said was not going to happen. And we're not putting enough energy, I'm not putting enough energy... I won't even "we" us. I'm not putting enough energy into making sure that the Christians in my town know each other.

Francis: I want to be careful.

Annie: I know. I know, I know. Sorry.

Francis: We should pursue peace. We should. And we should fight for that. But we need to take into account this reality that there's gonna be persecution... If we stand for the commands of God, there will always be people who will fight against that. So we just need to know that. But it doesn't mean we don't fight for it.

Annie: And don't pursue non-believers to meet Jesus.

Francis: Yeah. I mean, if anything, you look at 1 Corinthians 5 and he talks about there is a time for division and it's dividing against those who call themselves brothers but are sexually immoral. And he has this whole list of things along with that. It even talks about dividing against those who slander and those who are divisive. Titus, I believe it's 2:10 or 3:10, where it talks about, you know, to remove the divisive people among you. You warn them, you warn them again, then you have nothing to do with them.

So there is a time of "I'm going to divide against those who are divisive". I'm going to divide against those who call themselves brothers but continue on in the sins. But I'm gonna seek perfect oneness with those who really have humbled themselves before Almighty God, and trust in His blood for salvation, and truly see Him as Lord of their life. I want to love them. That, okay, so this is what God calls me to do.

Love Annie as Christ loved the church. I mean, as John 13, this is the new command, I need to not just love you but love you to the point. And this is in the context of communion, where they're breaking bread. And Jesus says, I want you to love each other just as I love you. I'm about to go to the cross. I'm about to have my body torn apart for you, My blood shed for you.

So Francis, if that is about to happen to Annie, I want you to love her so much that you would say, Take me, not her. Take me. Would you really do that for her? Because that's what I'm asking you to do as you break bread with her. And as you drink of my blood, I want you to love those people in the room to that extent. This

is the miracle that can take place in you. That all that self-centeredness, self-preservation, suddenly you understand what I did for you. And now you can actually have that love for those in that circle. And that is a unity that the world can't understand and that is when the world will know that you are my disciples.

Annie: Is when you love one another. That's right.

[00:44:17] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to share about another amazing partner, [ZocDoc](#). Have you ever been on the hunt for a new doctor and you ask literally everyone you know for the recommendation? You want a doc who actually gets you, listens to you, and makes you feel super comfortable. And then finally, after weeks of searching, you find the right one so you call their office and they have an appointment available? Heck, yes. But then the reception tells you that this perfect doctor doesn't take your insurance. It's the worst, right? But with ZocDoc, you can avoid all of that because you can find and book the doctor who is right for you and takes your insurance.

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And now back to finish up our TFS Hall of Fun conversation with Francis Chan.

[00:46:39] <music>

Annie: Is there a difference in this call or in this invitation from Jesus if you attend a church versus if you work at a church? Is there a different level for pastors and staff than there are for those of us who attend?

Francis: Oh my gosh, yes. This is the scary part. I don't know whether you intend to or not. You're teaching people right now, Annie, not just because you open up the Bible or you preach, but because people are listening to you. And by the way that you converse with me or anyone else, they're learning from you.

And that's where James warns. Like, not many of you should be teachers because as teachers you will be judged more harshly. That's just the truth of Scripture. That's why he says, you know, for the elders, be careful, don't lay hands too hastily on someone too soon. This is the scary thing we do. Very scary thing we do. But it also be scary to not do it if it's what God has called you to do. So you have to walk humbly and carefully and just with such a reverence and fear.

So if you are paid to work in the institution of God, just that itself is such a... Oh my God, I am taking your finances. People are giving their finances and I'm receiving them in your name, which is not a sin necessarily. It is God-given. It is in scripture. But you better do that humbly and go, Okay, I need to steward this well, and lead people in the right way because I am a servant of God, that is using God's resources for God's people. And so yes, if you are working at a church, you better tread lightly before Almighty God and walk humbly.

Annie: You do this a little bit in *Until Unity*, but will you paint us a picture...? I think one of the things that helps me walk towards something is seeing the picture of what it could look like. Do you have a picture of what it could actually look like if the church was unified?

Francis: Well, I think the best thing is maybe look at Revelation 4 and 5. It's probably a better picture than I can paint. You see, in heaven, everyone is staring at the throne. Doesn't seem like they're talking to each other that much. They're telling God how great He is. And it's interesting. You know, that scene in Isaiah 6, the angels are

calling out to one another. But it's not, Oh, your wings look nice today. They're screaming, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. That's what they're saying to each other even. Even their conversation to each other is toward the throne about Him.

And they're with each other, but when you're really in His presence, you really don't want to talk about that much. When you're close to Him, it's just, can you believe what He did? Can you believe? And then there's moments in Revelation where there's silence for half an hour. Where there's just like... This is so dramatic you don't even have words for that moment. And there's silence. That's the picture.

I mean, we say Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And in heaven they're not just jumping to, oh, He did this wrong, she did this wrong. Can you believe him? Let's talk about this guy. Now, let's have a talk show about these people. It's just "I don't really want to talk about a whole lot of people right now. I know there's a time for that but there should be, I don't know, 90%, 95%, 99% of just 'He's so amazing'.

I mean, this is kind of what we've been doing for the half-hour, right? It's just, Oh, Isn't He amazing? And I can have that conversation with you. Because you say, "Yeah, I woke up this morning," and I was just like, what? God. And I can do that. And there's... I don't know the page, I don't even know the quote, I just remember something Bonhoeffer said in his book, *Life Together*, where he just warns us, if we're not having that time with the Lord, then when we fellowship, we actually ruin the fellowship of the church. Because now we're talking about things that just came to our mind. We're not talking about things that we got from the Lord, because we had this deep fellowship with Him.

So, Annie, that's what I want to share on this show is not, Oh, you know what I was thinking the other day? Or You know I was driving and this weird thought came to me. It was, Ah, in the presence of the Lord just worshiping Him with the angels, with all of the saints, deeply interacting with His word and here's what I got. That's what I want to share, you know. And the other stuff can really harm the church.

Annie: That's right. That's right. Can we talk for a second about racial unity inside the church? Obviously, there's been lots of generations of racial disunity. But particularly the conversation that's so loud right now is how Asian Americans are being mistreated and there's... I mean, so many. There's just unlimited stories, unfortunately. And God have mercy on us. What's our daily move? What would you say is the thing we can do today to be a part of the racial unity in the church?

Francis: I think, again, start with humility and humbling yourself. You have to. Before you go to action, before you do anything, humble yourself before an Almighty God, and

recognize you may be guilty of this, of thinking wrongly, of just having any misunderstanding or bitterness or whatever toward a child of His, of His, His child because of their background or skin color or upbringing.

I have been humbled. I thought when the Black Lives Matter movement was starting that, of course, I get this. I have African-American friends that I care about deeply, deeply that I see this oneness in them, and I don't see the skin color. So I understand. I get it. I get it. I get it. And I really believe that the Lord has moved me in these directions.

But then, when the Asian violence happened and suddenly they are attacking elderly Asians, especially in the Sunset District of San Francisco, and I recognize, Whoa, I'm an elderly Asian man in the Sunset District of San Francisco. And people are just coming up and pummeling them and taking whatever they have. You just go, Whoa, okay, now it's me. And now I am and now my children. I started thinking, Oh, good thing, they're only half Asian and they won't be targeted.

It's different when it's you is what I'm trying to get to. I thought I understood it but until it's you, I just don't know if you're totally gonna get it. So be humble enough to not just say, "Oh, I understand black lives matter, or I understand the target. I thought I did until it was me.

And then there's ignorance. I didn't know how ignorant I was, until a couple of weeks ago I was at the Grand Canyon and I was filming something. And I got to know this Navajo. You know, a guy who lived on the Navajo reservation, he invited us to camp at the Navajo reservation. He goes, "You want to film where no one can get to you, come onto our reservation."

As I'm talking... you know, and I'm asking, how do you guys survive out here? And he's like, Well, that wasn't the plan. We used to roam all through this country. And you just feel stupid as you listen to him. And I begin to research and go, Whoa, there were 50 million indigenous people. And then we came and slaughtered... "We" because we profited off the slaughter of them.

I started survey and articles about how the temperature of the earth dropped because we slaughtered so many, either by physical force, or by the disease we brought in, and they went from 50 million to 5 million in such a short period of time. And then we move them into this one deserted piece of land that we don't want, assuming they'll just die off there. And he says, but we survived and we figured this out and figured that out.

And you just go, "I've never really thought about this, because I wasn't taught this side in history class." Oh my gosh, Lord, how can I be so stupid to not think about

how I profited by their suffering, how we profited by the slavery of the Africans, how we profited by the slavery of the Chinese, and The Gold Rush? They weren't even allowed to... They were the first humans to not be allowed to naturalize. Like, there's no way you can naturalize in the US because you see these judge rulings because they looked at us as subhuman.

And it's like, really? Because I'm not white and I'm just... And you begin to understand the deep wounds of why when I brought a Caucasian girlfriend over to a relative's house, oh, he starts swearing in, "How dare you, Francis, bring her into my house? Just f and this, f and that, how could you?" And I didn't understand even the pain of my own people.

So there is more ignorance. Obviously, we just don't know what we don't know. And can we just humble from that point, and ask God to reveal these things to us? And I'm learning that even right now. There's so much I don't know. And if we would start at that place rather than this arrogance of 'you don't know me.' It's like, Oh, maybe there's things you don't know yourself. And let's just humble ourselves together and see how we can move forward from that place of humility.

Annie: I mean, that feels like the theme today is like, what would it look like in your life, any of us, in my life, if our first goal was connection with God, and our second goal was humility? That feels like not the magic trick to unity but a little bit. It feels like the key. The key is humility.

Francis: Yeah, that's it.

Annie: Oh, Pastor Chan, I can't thank you enough for doing this today. Is there anything we didn't say that you want to make sure we cover?

Francis: I don't think so. I think I just want to go back full circle and ask everyone to go back to that humble place before God Himself. John 13-17, go read it, go meditate on it. And not just for a day, not just for a week. I don't know. I almost feel like this is a journey the Lord wants me on for possibly years. If the Lord tarries, like until you know these truths, don't move on. It's that sacred

Annie: I use a Bible app called Blue Letter Bible that tells you everything in the original language. And every time I look something up, I think, the Bible is a bottomless pit. I will never get to the bottom of what this is saying to me. So that feels like with John 13 through 17, that when you say, I think I could be in it for years, I'm like, Oh, I think I could be in it for years. I think you're right. It's living and active and it doesn't ever stop teaching us if we stay and just keep going.

I am grateful and more desiring the Lord today because of you. So thank you for being the receptionist that has led me. Even at the IF:Gathering, you said something that brought a question to my mind from God, that brought up some idolatry that was living in me. And it weren't anything you talked about. You just were literally the receptionist that took me to the right room.

Francis: Amen.

Annie: So thank you for that. It has changed my life. The last question we always ask for the sharpest of left turns if you're ready.

Francis: Okay.

Annie: The last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, what sounds fun to you? What does the Chan family do for fun?

Francis: Oh, gosh. You know what is super fun to me is getting away from everything that is electronic. Like on that Native American Navajo Reservation, I was with my four youngest kids, and my wife in a tent without any reception, anything electronic. And we just laughed our heads off for hours. It was one of the most fun. We have no toilets, we have no nothing, but each other in the presence of God. And we just laughed and laughed and laughed. And I just thought, Ah, this is the best. This is the absolute best.

We forget how fun people are because we're so used to these gadgets, and we're so addicted to entertainment that requires nothing of us.

Annie: Yes, that's exactly right. Well, I'm very grateful. I find you fun, and I feel like we learned a ton today and just experienced God with you. So thank you very, very much for doing this.

[01:03:25] <music>

Outro: Oh friend, isn't he amazing? I'm so thankful for his wisdom and humility and leadership. He is so kind. I literally always learn something from him. Be sure to check out *Until Unity* plus all of his books and resources. He's just prolific. Truly. I love reading from him and listening to him teach.

Okay, we heard what sounds fun to Francis, now we get to hear what sounds fun to one of our friends who's listening just like you.

All right, Brianna, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Brianna: I am Brianna and I'm from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And what sounds fun to me would be a music and worship night with some friends, jamming out and just praising God. You know, it'd be really fun.

Annie: Okay, are you like 'let's gather in the living room', are you a 'let's go to a coffee shop' or are you a bonfire worship night person?

Brianna: I'd probably be like a living room, something cozy, full of snacks too.

Annie: Full of snacks. I think the Lord actually appreciates when there's the aroma of worship and the aroma of Bagel Bites. I think it's a combo.

Brianna: Absolutely.

Annie: Okay, what song is your song right now? Do you have a worship song that's kind of your go-to or an album?

Brianna: Oh, goodness. I have been getting wrecked by Benjamin William Hastings' album.

Annie: Hastings, yeah.

Brianna: Yes. Specifically *That's The Thing About Praise*. Or like, *Homeward*. He's [inaudible 01:04:52] every time.

Annie: You know, the fun thing about him is it seems that he's the guy that behind the scenes has been writing a lot of the songs we love but now he's performing them too. So everybody's like, Oh, yeah, we've known him forever. And you and I are like, you have? So that's the album we need to check out before we come to your worshiping night.

Brianna: Absolutely. Yes, it is a great one to listen to.

Annie: Brilliant. Should I have him on the pod?

Brianna: Oh, please. That'd be awesome.

Annie: Okay, great.

Annie: I don't know. I make it sound like I have everyone's phone number. I know someone who knows him surely.

Brianna: I'm sure you have someone's number that has his number.

Annie: We're about to play that game. When it happens, Brianna, you can know that the reason he's on the show is because of you.

Brianna: Oh, that'd be so great.

Annie: That's awesome.

Brianna: It'd be so fun. Thank you, Annie.

Annie: If you need anything else for me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Any F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me, except not right now because I'm on my summer Sabbath, but I will be back online in August. And don't forget you can find and connect with us at the That Sounds Fun podcast Instagram and it's just @thatsoundsfunpodcast.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you and I will do the same. Y'all have a great weekend. We will see you back here on Monday for our Hall of Fun conversation with our favorite double-name witches Mary Kate Morrissey and Ginna Claire Mason Moffat. Listen, y'all want to know how that friendship started. You're about to hear the episode coming on Monday. We'll see y'all then.