

[00:00:00] <music>

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.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors. This episode is sponsored by our friends at [BetterHelp](#). There's almost always some kind of big decision to be made or big thing to process, right? Maybe you're thinking about a career change or feeling like a relationship needs some attention, or you want to get some attention in a relationship. Maybe you're stuck with [a fair?] decision or you're not sure what to do about some conflict with your friends.

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Intro: Today on the show, y'all just get ready. I mean, how good are our shows right now? I'm losing my mind. Today on the show I get stuck with my friend Hosanna Wong. You may remember Hosanna from Episode 311 here on That Sounds Fun. She is a bestselling author and a spoken word artist. Her new book, *You Are More Than You've Been Told*, shows us a new way to approach spiritual disciplines as the practical ways to stay connected with God.

And y'all, listen 100%, hand to heaven, when we tell you it is a new way, I've never read anything like this. It is so unique and so helpful. It totally changed me. The book is brilliant. It's just brilliant. This is a note-taking episode. So get ready and go order this book. I cannot wait for you to hear. So here is my conversation with Hosanna Wong.

[00:02:31] <music>

Annie: Hosanna Wong, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Hosanna: I am so thrilled to be here with you.

Annie: Thanks for being here. I love that we're in person.

Hosanna: I know.

Annie: This makes me so happy. Thank you for doing this.

Hosanna: I love people in 3D.

Annie: Same.

Hosanna: I have a new appreciation.

Annie: Same.

Hosanna: We're 3D.

Annie: What's your travel happening right now? I mean, it's launch week for the book.

Hosanna: It is. I'm blessed. But you know, I do 40-

Annie: I'm blessed, I'm tired.

Hosanna: I'm blessed, you know, in the name of Jesus. I do 43 weekends out of 52 a year right now.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: So getting to also do that alongside of sharing the message of the book, it is a blessing, and to get to see friends through it, truly. So it might be physically tiring but truly, more than ever, emotionally, spiritually, relationally, extremely fulfilling.

Annie: 43 out of 52. Do you and Guy decide that at the beginning of the year, how many weekends you're going to do?

Hosanna: It is seasonal. So not all yours are created equal. So the beginning of the year, what are our goals? What has God called us to do in our families, in our relationships, in

our churches, and our ministries? And then based on that. But typically about 10 of them I could drive to.

Annie: Okay.

Hosanna: So whether that's, you know, an hour or two. But typically, 10 I'm still sleeping in my own bed. So that's more like 33 as far as that.

Annie: That's brilliant. I've never separated it like that. Okay, here's how many I'm willing to drive to, and here's how many I'm willing to fly to. That is really smart. It does change things if you think, Well, yeah, and go speak Saturday morning and be home Saturday night.

Hosanna: "Here's all the things I'm called to do and only one of them is traveling and speaking. So how can I do all of the other things well? Here's how I'm able to do it." So not every year is created equal. I don't know how many... I know that we will do a little bit less next year. But it just depends on what God's calling us to in that season.

Some events are three days long, some are only one. And then there's quite a few weeks where maybe I'm gone for 10 days but I do four events there. And it allows me things like January and June I don't travel. There's things like that.

Annie: How do you suss out which events are calling you that are yeses?

Hosanna: I will say nowadays it is a sense of mission and like, is this something that I feel called to do?

Annie: So you look up the church or the event, you listen to what their theme is, and you go, Yeah, I'm the girl for you.

Hosanna: I have a big heart for evangelism, reaching people far from God and discipleship, helping people take the next step in their faith. So with ministries and churches that that's also their goal, helping people know Jesus for real, I'm down with that. I love that. And also if I get to see friends, something else I'm called to do, you know, I get to celebrate something else I'm called to do. So there's what we have to do as a ministry for our bottom line. And then there's the extra stuff that we get to do and we do out of mission.

It wasn't always that way. For a long time, it was just say yes to anyone that would allow you, invite you. And then it became, Okay, God, what have you specifically called me to do and what have you specifically called me to say? Because I believe that God gives you the capacity to do what you're called to do, but He does not give

you the capacity or the grace to do what someone else is called to do. So it's over the years, it's been Oh, God, what is the mission this year? So yeah, that's the closest to true that I can think of.

Annie: That's very good. I feel like that's a great way to say it. That is the closest to true that I can get to today. I feel like I have two chapters of my speaking life so far. I feel like the Lord really turned the page for me in 2019. I think I had grace in 2012 to 2019 to go as much as I could. That is just not in my life anymore. And my ministries are different in Nashville than they were then.

Hosanna: That's right.

Annie: I didn't have that local ministry beyond college. I mean, I led my college small group that was Tuesdays. And now that I serve at a church on Sundays, it just changes. But I didn't know that in 2019. That didn't happen in 2019. Right?

Hosanna: Right. And you were obedient to what God was calling you to do in that season. And that's when I met you. You were in the middle of a book run and you were saying yes to a lot of things. I was saying yes to a lot of things a lot of years. Then there came kind of a line in the sand when I was invited so much to teach on Sundays at local churches, and it became very clear that that was part of what God was calling me to do.

So I wasn't able to do as many events that were on Saturdays or Fridays or conferences, because local church became such a big part of my heart. Then years later, when I felt God called me to go back to spoken word poetry, then it was events that had me come preach and perform spoken word. So not all seasons are created equal. And it's not that, oh, this is the right way or the wrong way. It's, what are you called to do in that season? And doing our best to faithfully do that then. But it evolves.

Annie: How often does Guy travel with you?

Hosanna: This year more than ever.

Annie: Yeah.

Hosanna: I knew you'd love it.

Annie: Yeah, I do. I love him. He's so fun.

Hosanna: He's fun. That took a choice and quite a lot of planning. That kind of margin does not just fall into your lap. You have to make a choice and a commitment. And then

it takes quite a bit of scheduling ahead of time to make sure that's available. So this year, more than ever, Guy is on the road with me a little bit. I'm coming back home in the middle of trips a little bit. And that's a blessing. That took time to be able to learn how to do that well. We didn't always do that well.

Annie: I think that has got to be so helpful for our friends listening who are teaching at their local church and leading the women's Bible study on Wednesdays. That you have to learn a rhythm of being a regular teacher and your life has to... Because it's not just those 30 minutes you're on the stage or an hour you're on a stage. There is hours during your week that get us there.

Hosanna: Right.

Annie: I think people underestimate until you're in the middle of it, that for every hour you see us on stage, that's two or three hours of prep.

Hosanna: Right. Absolutely. You know, preparing to minister to those specific people well, to serve that specific church well, and what the leadership there is already doing as well as join them in discipling their people after. After you share, then you maybe spend hours or days with their people continuing to partner with them in discipleship. It is a joy to serve the local church to—I know you and I both feel that way—to really disciple people in our local context. But it does take intentionality to do it well.

Annie: Yes. One of the questions I love to ask... We always do a call with an event before I go, and I always say, "Why did you pick me?" I'm not trying to get them to like scratch my back. I'm going like, "Did you pick me because you love the podcast? Did you pick me because you've seen me teach? Did you pick me because of a book? Because I need to know, what has God said to you about me being the person?"

Hosanna: Wow.

Annie: Because I think that's the only way we can really partner well with events is to go in and go, Hey, I'm not trying to be a firework show. I'm trying to be a link in a chain.

Hosanna: That's beautiful.

Annie: And the best way to link in the chain is for you to say, Oh, yeah, we love your podcast. I'm like, Okay, well, you need to know I preach. You need to know that I'm not quiet...it's going to be a different Annie a little bit.

Hosanna: And like what we were saying about how God will give you capacity to what you're called to do, but not what other people are called to do, often I'll get invited places where I think I know someone else who would fit this better. I have a friend that has a message for you that is more for you. I don't have a message on that. I don't have a conviction on that. These are the things God's called me to do.

For me to do what I feel called to do in my lifetime, it takes quite a bit of saying no to the things I know somebody else is called to do. Then there's events are like, Oh, they just bring a bunch of whoever, every time. And sometimes I have something that I'm specifically called to that interferes with that. So I say, you know, I have a few friends that can also do that. So I'm actually constantly recommending people because this is about really discipling people where they really are, if I know someone that can disciple that group better.

And I know I have friends that feel the same. It's just like, how can we actually help the global capital C church? That's really what I'm here to do.

Annie: When I read *You Are More Than You've Been Told*, which is such a good book, Hosanna, I cannot wait for people to get this, I mean, my first question I wrote down was, why was this the book after *How To (Not) Save the World?* Then you're saying, salvation, discipleship; salvation, discipleship. This is a discipleship book. Is that true?

Hosanna: Yeah.

Annie: Am I making that up or do you feel right about that?

Hosanna: 100% true. D. L. Moody says something where he says, consecrate and then consecrate. It was just a very simple mantra that he lived by saying, consecrate within yourself and then go and consecrate the world. And I wrote *How (Not) to Save the World*, which was about how to share about Jesus in your everyday life, how to help consecrate the world for Christ.

But I wanted to write a book that was about us consecrating first so we know what Jesus is actually like and live for Him for real. I think one reason why so many people outside the church are far from God is because so many people inside the church are far from God. We need to have a real one-on-one relationship with Jesus and know who we really are and live the lives even created a live so we can represent Jesus for real and what He's actually like to a watching world who desperately needs Him.

So I just love that simple phrase of his: consecrate and then consecrate. God, don't let me get that backwards. I want to help disciple everyday people, those of us who

maybe didn't know all the lingo, or weren't raised in church context, where we understood it all. I really wanted to help us know how to follow just for real normal, everyday lives. So in regards to that. But it actually came out of my season of writing *I Have a New Name*.

Annie: Really?

Hosanna: Yeah. My spoken word poem. I wrote *I Have a New Name* seven years ago and I memorized all these names from the Word of God. And it was powerful. God breathed on it, God used it. But it wasn't enough to just read who I was and declare it. I really needed to change my lifestyle. I really needed to change my habits, my rhythms, not just know who I am, but live like it every single day. And often after I performed *I Have a New Name*, people would ask me, Okay, now how?

Annie: What do I do?

Hosanna: Yeah. Not just who am I, but how do I live as who I am? So I set out to discover how do we know who we really are. You know, when I was in that season, disconnected from myself and disconnected from God and I lost who I was, just a season of immense loss financially, relationally, physically, my husband and I had one of the hardest seasons of our marriage, the people who we thought would stay, didn't, the people who we thought would defend us, didn't, I lost who I was, and realized in that moment that I had built my identity on all of these things that did not last.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: In that season, I remember that people, growing up in church, would say, your identity is in Christ. And I thought, "Yes, I'm in. Can someone show me how?"

Annie: What does that mean?

Hosanna: What does that mean? Or you find your identity in Christ by abiding in Christ. And I thought, "I love it. You don't have to sell me. I'm in." How do I abide?" So I set out to discover what those terms that I had heard, what they actually meant, and how I could practically do them in my actual everyday life. And that is where this book came out of, how we can know who we are and live like it every single day.

Annie: The consecration piece is really interesting. I'm annoyed that it keeps showing up in my life because it must mean the Lord wants me to change. But Jon Tyson did a sermon in June—we'll link to it—at Church of the City in New York and he said, "Others can, you can't." And to come to terms with "others can, you can't."

Hosanna: Wow.

Annie: And how to live consecrated just means others in the church can drink that, you can't because of your history, or because of who you're around or for a myriad of reasons. Others can watch that show, you can't because your time needs to be used differently or what you see needs to be different than what they see. And I have really wrestled with that even in my friend groups of feeling that leadership invitation God's given me making my life look different than even some of my friends in my church. Have you experienced that, like the personal consecration that sometimes adds a little separation with your friends?

Hosanna: Yeah. Even friends who were also Christ followers.

Annie: Yeah.

Hosanna: I think one of the myths that I hope to dispel and I know you're passionate about this, too, is your relationship with Jesus doesn't have to look like everyone else's relationship with Jesus. It doesn't have to look like your mom's or your pastor's or your favorite podcaster Annie F. Downs. Really God wants to have a real one-on-one relationship with you that can work in your real everyday life. And God is calling you to something new, something next. And it might not look like the person next to you. So 100% I discover that.

Annie: It's so challenging. There's also things that I can do that my friends can't do that they have to say no to because of history or family or whatever. But man, Jon Tyson teaching on consecration and just going like, What does it actually look like after you're saved, after you're healed even in a lot of ways? Like you gotta get some real healing around your life and your pain. And then getting consecrated is like, Whew, that's a level. Right?

Hosanna: Right. And not only does it not look like your friends, but it doesn't look like it did for you 10 years ago.

Annie: Yes. Say that.

Hosanna: It's also a different season for you. You're not the same person you were 10 years ago. God wants to do something new in you.

Annie: In the book, you talk about doing a self-audit of the voices that are telling you who you are and telling you what consecration looks like and telling you who Jesus is. But a lot of the names you live by, come from these voices that you are listening to or you aren't listening to. How do we do that?

Hosanna: Right. 100%. Because I think for so many of us who struggle with knowing who we really are and how to live, we will discover that what we think about ourselves determines how we live. So what voices are you listening to? Who are you putting the most stock into? Whose opinion do you care the most about?

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: Who are you allowing to influence you? Because what you think about yourself determines the way you live. So if you believe that you're not enough, you'll start living like you are. Maybe you'll start to change yourself to try to impress people or fit in with people, or perhaps work harder, do more, achieve more to show your value. If you believe that you're a burden to be loved, you might start to isolate yourself thinking if you got real with anyone, you would come off annoying.

So now when you have big dreams or big prayers, you don't want to let anybody into it or ask for help because you believe you're a burden to be loved. If you believe you're a failure, you start living like you are. Maybe you don't want to start anything or try anything. Sometimes not even obey God because you think anything you do will fail.

And these are things that the enemy of our soul hopes that we believe. He hopes to be answered a lesser names so we live lesser lives. So if you've ever struggled with knowing who you are, you're not crazy—you've been lied to your whole life. So let's identify the voices that we've allowed to define us, that we've allowed to influence us.

So my invitation is to have a self-audit. Who are you listening to? Who, right now, do you care about their opinion about you the most? That's something any of us could do. And what right do they have to define you? What power do they have to tell you who you are? The truth is that nobody has the power to define you, but the one who created you. We need to start making God's voice the loudest voice in our lives so we can start to tell the difference between what's true and what's not?

[00:18:10] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation to share about one of our amazing partners, [Chime](#). The end of summer and beginning of fall can definitely be a season of spending with all the back-to-school expenses and getting some new boots or sweaters to prep for cooler weather. Come on, cooler weather.

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Now back to our conversation with Hosanna.

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Annie: So in this book, I want you to know I've never seen this concept before in spiritual disciplines.

Hosanna: Wow.

Annie: You have written something and created something that is shaping how I move forward with my spiritual disciplines. So I'm dying for people to get this book because the trellis idea, the trellis of rhythms. Will you explain that? Will you explain how you even... how did God even give you that in your brain, that the way we find out who we really are is by getting a trellis of spiritual rhythms.

Hosanna: Well, I lost who I was and I didn't know who I was, and I needed to figure out what identity in Christ and finding your identity in Christ and abiding in Christ meant. Well, we get this term "abiding in Christ" from Jesus Himself. In John 15, Jesus says, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Abide in me, I in you. With me, you'll bear great fruit, without me you accomplish nothing. But I needed to know how, and so I called my friend who works in vineyards. And she doesn't have a background in the church.

Annie: How did you know to do that? How'd you think, "I should call my friend who works in vineyards?"

Hosanna: Because I don't work in vineyards.

Annie: Just because the Bible is like, vine and branches.

Hosanna: Right. Kind of anything in the Bible though, when it talks about farmers and harvest fields, I call my father-in-law because he is a fourth-generation farmer. I don't know anything about farming.

Annie: Brilliant.

Hosanna: Something about carpentry, you know, I call... Someone give me the context of what this would've meant. So I thought, Okay, my friend works in vineyards, maybe she'll know something. And because I know she has no context of church or this scripture, maybe she'll help me see something I've never seen before. So I call her and I say, "Hey, can you help me with this? Can you tell me anything about the relationships with the branch in a vine? Anything that I don't know." Is all that branches need to live really only to be connected to the vine?

And she said to me this, and it changed my life. She said, "Technically yes, all branches need to live or to be connected to the vine, but really they need a trellis, a structure to help them grow and flourish and stay connected to the vine." And she

said this, she said, "Without a structure, the branches will live their lives constantly weighed down."

Annie: Weighed down. When you wrote that, I stopped on that page. I was like, oh, when things feel heavy, I'm not attached to this trellis.

Hosanna: Yeah.

Annie: Dude.

Hosanna: She said the branches will fight an uphill battle. They don't have to fight. And then eventually they will grow apart from themselves and then grow apart from the vine. So really branches need a structure.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: And I felt the same way. I thought, this is my problem because I've chosen Jesus. Choosing Jesus is not the problem. But I feel disconnected from myself and disconnected from God. I am weighed down. It turns out to reclaim my life I need to reclaim my structure. I have lost a sense of structure so good in my life.

And here's the truth. Some of us were raised in Christian context or religious communities where maybe all of the emphasis was on the structure. Maybe all the-

Annie: Yeah. Having quiet time,-

Hosanna: All the emphasis.

Annie: ...going to church. Yeah.

Hosanna: Yes. Some people call them spiritual disciplines. In my book, I call them rhythms of Jesus. However you learn them, some of us were taught that we must do these things to be saved. So we think that there's salvation in the structure which is certainly how I was taught it. The truth is there is no salvation in the structure.

Annie: Yes. Yes.

Hosanna: The trellis is a stick by all agricultural purposes. It is a stick. It is lifeless. There is no sap, water, vitamins in the stick. There's only life running through the vine. There is no salvation in the structure. There's salvation and life in the source of life, Jesus Christ Himself. But the structure will help you be connected and stay connected to the source of life. So really we might need to take a look at our structure.

Annie: Yeah. It is like you are reading my notes because I literally tagged page 95-

Hosanna: Praise God.

Annie: ...where it says, "There's no power in the structure." And on my notes, There is no power in the structure. That's hard for me. I never thought... You're right. Let me preface. You're right. I'm not about to argue with you.

Hosanna: Let's go.

Annie: I never thought if I don't read my Bible and pray and go to church I won't be saved.

Hosanna: Okay.

Annie: I thought if I don't read my Bible and pray and go to church I'm gonna fall off. I'm gonna make too many mistakes. I'm gonna be alone. I kind of thought it is my job to stay connected to God. And it's not our job to stay connected to God. He ties us to Himself. Right?

Hosanna: I think I felt maybe not that I must do all this to be saved, but every single thing was wound up in a whole lot of guilt and shame. What if I miss a day? Guilt and shame. What if I don't do it as long as she does it or as much as he does it? Guilt and shame. So I'm constantly feeling weighed down because I feel so much pressure to perform like this certain kind of Christian I've made up in my mind. All the while, the whole point was to be connected and stay connected to Jesus who came to set us free from shame, who came to set us free from guilt. And I realized I had put so much pressure on the structure, but I had not really been connected to the source.

And this is what I've learned, the truth. When you don't know who you are, when you struggle with being weighed down, you will know more of who you really are when you spend real time with the one who knows you best.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: So without the pressure to have your rhythms or structure look like anyone else's, not the pressure for it to look like how it did 10 years ago or some ideal way you think it's supposed to look. And hopefully you can one day in 10 years. Today God wants a real relationship with you. So today let's talk about your structure, your plan of how you'll have a real relationship with the one who knows you best.

Annie: Because even with the vine and the branches, the branches are thinking about making fruit. They're not thinking about the vine, the vine, the vine. They're thinking about the fruit. And I think, I thought especially as a teenager and a 20-something that my job was to make sure the vine doesn't go anywhere.

Hosanna: Oh, wow.

Annie: To make sure you need to have these disciplines. So I didn't think of the trellis as helping me grow and be lighter. I thought of the trellis as rope tying my branch to the vine.

Hosanna: Wow.

Annie: But that is not God. That isn't it at all. It says He keeps us under His wing. He's not under my wing because I read my Bible today, which I didn't, FYI. But it is He keeps us under-

Hosanna: No, that's powerful.

Annie: ...His wing. So when I was reading the rhythms of Jesus that I want to talk about that you create in this trellis, I went like, Oh, this is only about it being lighter, not heavier.

Hosanna: Right. Yes!

Annie: This is only about it being lighter, not heavier.

Hosanna: Yes.

Annie: That is a gift that you're giving us.

Hosanna: That's what I set out to do. God, how can I live lighter? I am weighed down. When she said those words to me, I am weighed down, how do I live lighter and freer, so I did an in-depth study on the lifestyle of Jesus. How did Jesus live? If I want to have a new structure in my life, a new lifestyle, I'm gonna look at the man Himself. How did Jesus live in private so He was able to know who He was and live as who He was in public? And that's why I highlighted the four rhythms that I did. Because I took them from studying the life of Jesus.

Annie: What did that look like? I mean, when you sat down to start, you have to read the gospels, I assume. If you sat down and start reading the gospels, are you going, I am reading this because I'm gonna write a book so I need to find all this. Are you going like, save me from myself, show me Jesus? There's not a wrong one.

Hosanna: You wouldn't happen to be passionate about reading through the gospels, would you?

Annie: I wouldn't care deeply about reading the Gospels every month. Would I?

Hosanna: I needed a fresh encounter with Jesus. I really did. I needed a fresh encounter with Jesus. I have read the Bible. I have read the New Testament a lot. But I knew I needed a new encounter with Jesus. I will say something that showed me that there was more to discover about Jesus. Actually, the truth is when I had the crazy honor and privilege of my life to get to lead my baby brother Elijah to Jesus, and I read slowly through John with him-

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: Reading a book I've read a lot and preached on a lot slowly with somebody who was experiencing it for the first time. And as we read through, I was seeing things about the lifestyle of Jesus, as my baby brother is trying to learn about God and how to live, seeing things through the lifestyle of Jesus that made me realize there's more here than I thought.

If I were to look at this through not what did Jesus do but how did He live, there was more there that I needed to discover. So that kind of opened up my eyes. And then well me and my brother, when we started going through the gospel, we would read through a chapter a day. So we slowly read through it.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: We read through one chapter twice and I said, Let's pray these two prayers: God show me something new about you and God show me something new about how to live.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: So that was the way that I was trying to disciple my brother and getting to know Jesus but it actually transformed me a lot. It made me see how did Jesus live. Someone please show me how to live. Jesus showed us how. And then he said, Come and follow me, follow how I live, and then you're gonna discover who you are. So I said yes to that.

I never imagined I'd write a book on identity because it is the struggle of my life. Like truly *I Have A New Name* came out of one of the most painful seasons of my life. I never thought I would write on it because it is something that has been a big

pain point for me. So when I set out, I just needed to know what identity in Christ meant. I just needed to know what "abide in Christ" meant. And I just didn't want to...

We live in a world where we can see a lot of people's lifestyles and we can see how a lot of people live. I grew up in the Bay Area where social media started. When I grew up was when people... I was 18 when people started getting Facebook. I really have a lens about social media and the lifestyles people put online where I'm very aware. And God, you know, show me how to speak to this generation with your lens in it. I want to take my lifestyle from Jesus himself. I was desperate to make sure I was following the right people in the right way.

So anyways, I started studying lifestyle of Jesus and as I did to figure out a new structure, because of what my friend said, I discovered this is what I wish I would've been told so much earlier so I could have lived lighter all along.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: How can I get these tools into people's hands as soon as possible? And that's why this book is here.

Annie: So these four rhythms, will you just fly by them? I mean, you go so deep into what to really do in the book, which is why I can't wait for people to read it. But will you kind of fly over? What are the four trellises? Is that [inaudible 00:31:53] the four-

Hosanna: The four rhythms.

Annie: ...sections

Hosanna: Yeah. Yeah. No, I do four sections.

Annie: I'm on page 170. You have this really beautiful graph that I cannot wait to fill out. Will you talk through what the four rhythms are?

Hosanna: Yeah. The four rhythms of Jesus that we see demonstrated throughout His life as He's showing us how to live. One is a rhythm of scripture. Jesus going out of his way to be in the temple, to read the scrolls, what was written of the Bible at the time. Jesus was on a road trip with His family, He goes off the path everyone is on to discover who He is.

One of the things that we can think is, well Jesus knew who He was. He was able to say no to the lies of the enemy, speak truth to lies, overcome doubt because He was God. But the word of God says He was not just fully God, He was also fully man.

So we can see from Him how a human was able to hear opinions about Himself that weren't true and have painful circumstances and have friends betray Him and still know who He was. It's actually the lifestyle Jesus had in private that helped Him know who He was and live out His purpose in public.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: So here's how Jesus did it. He had a rhythm of scripture. You might need a new way to engage with God's words to know who you are. If you've been reading the word of God for a long time and you feel like your routines are stale and mundane and you're not getting anything out of it, you don't feel like you understand your translation, there's nothing new, the answer is not "we'll keep reading that translation and read it faster, longer, and harder."

No, we might need to have a self-audit of how am I engaging with God's words. Because it is important that you know what God says about you. So I encourage you to think of new ways to engage with God's words.

Annie: What translation did you read with Elijah?

Hosanna: All right, with my brother, we did a paraphrase together. We were looking at a few paraphrases. We looked at The Message. It's a beautiful paraphrase of the Bible. There's also a translation called The Voice, which is not a translation either. It's more of a marriage between a paraphrase and a translation. And then NLT became a place where he was able to land. That is a translation of the Bible.

But for my brother... and look, people might disagree and I would love to have a conversation about it because this is my working theory. But my baby brother did not have any idea about the real person of Jesus. And I wanted to give him a palate for what he was like and a palate for the life he would get from reading the word of God. I wanted him to know. So I onboarded him in a way that was language that was a bit easier for him.

And then after he got to know Jesus well and had a desire and a craving for theology, all of that, then he moved on to NLT. And sometimes when we study some things, you know, we have ESV and NIV, all the things. I have a deep love and knowledge for translations and reading many. But when I'm teaching people who have never heard about Jesus before, I do veer towards language that would help them have a taste of what Jesus was like. I could be wrong, but this is how I was able to introduce my baby brother to Jesus.

Annie: I love it.

Hosanna: So we kind of looked between those two at first. What do you think about that?
How are your feelings?

Annie: I love The Message. I love The Message. My primary is NIV 84 because I've had the same Bible for 20 years or something. But I love The Message. It's my secondary. I keep one beside me in the mornings. Because I want to sometimes see what the paraphrase, what the language is of the verse that I'm reading in the NIV.

Hosanna: And I typically teach off the NIV. For a lot of churches I'm at, they're familiar with it. Some prefer New King James Version or NLT. But NIV is probably where I preach the most from. I feel strongly about using it. It's a great translation. But I will look at things on The Message or the Voice just to see any imagery that I missed. And I'll say this because of the podcast I'm on. It just makes it more fun. I'm not here to say these are translations. They're not. I'm here to say, sometimes it makes it more fun to see imagery someone else thought of. And I appreciate that a lot. You might need a new way to engage in God's word.

There are some of my friends who, they've read the Bible a lot and now they're listening to it on audiobook while they're taking walks and it's bringing it to new life. And great. Let's engage with what God says about us. Or people I know who now they've read the Bible alone for a lot, now they're doing devotionals with friends because it's doing in community brought to life.

Me reading a new translation that I had not read before with my baby brother slowly, three things I had not done before reading it with somebody, a new translation, and slowly really brought these scriptures to life for me. The question is not how do they all read the Bible. The question is, how will you know what God says about you? We need to make a plan in our structure for engaging in scripture.

Annie: It gets lighter if you read scripture. It does not get heavier, it gets lighter.

Hosanna: Absolutely.

Annie: Trellis.

Hosanna: Yeah.

[00:36:43] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to share about another amazing partner, [Kiwico](#). We got more fun things for my MiniBFFs. Gosh, y'all, I love Kiwico. They are the cutest and most fun ideas for kids that keep our MiniBFFs busy and help them learn a little something too.

Each month, Kiwico delivers crates packed with fun and sparks creativity with kid-friendly topics and activities. Kiwico has subscription lines for infants and preschoolers up to teens and beyond. Kids are discovering everything from the science of magic to engineering a domino machine and more. There's no commitment, so you can pause or cancel anytime.

If your big kids are back at school but you've got some littles at home, Kiwico would be the perfect thing for them. There's this one adorable crate where they make their own little rainbow pillow. Y'all get outta here. And then they learn about how rainbows appear. And it is so cute. And you can always throw some Bible in a rainbow conversation.

Everything you need is in the crate, including materials and easy-to-follow instructions. It is the perfect boredom buster for the entire family. Plus my MiniBFFS feels so proud of themselves when they're done making it.

So get 50% off your first month plus free shipping on any crate line at kiwico.com/thatsoundsfun. That's 50% off your first month at kiwico.com/thatsoundsfun. And listen, if they make that rainbow thing, please tag me in it so I can see it. Okay. I just really want to see it.

That link, kiwico.com/thatsoundsfun, and pretty much every other link you could ever hope for are in the show notes. And we also send them every Friday in the AFD Week in Review emails. So be sure to check those out.

Sponsor: And one last amazing partner I get to tell you about, Nutrafol. Okay. Millions of Americans experience thinning hair. And it may seem like there's nothing that can be done, but Nutrafol is a solution you can trust to deliver results. Yes, please.

Nutrafol is the number one dermatologist-recommended hair growth supplement clinically shown to improve your hair growth, thickness, yes, we love this, and visible scalp coverage. Thank you. It supports healthy hair growth by targeting the five root causes of thinning: stress, hormones, environment, nutrition, metabolism. And I have a friend taking it because When she got sick, she lost some hair and it is really helping it grow back.

Nutrafol addresses all of the stressors through whole body health. In a clinical study, 86% of women reported improved hair growth after six months. 3,000 of the top doctors and stylists recommend Nutrafol as an effective and high-quality solution for healthier hair. I love that Nutrafol offers three different physician-created formulas that support women throughout all stages of life, including postpartum and menopause. So no matter what season we're in, they've

got us covered. With the natural drug-free, medical-grade ingredients, they're bringing us the most reliable results.

You can grow thicker, healthier hair and support our show by going to nutrafol.com and entering the promo code THATSOUNDSFUN to save \$10 off your first month's subscription. This offer is only available to US customers for a limited time. Plus free shipping on every order. Get \$10 off at Nutrafol.com. That's [Nutrafol.com](https://nutrafol.com) and the promo code is THATSOUNDSFUN.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Hosanna.

[00:40:04] <music>

Annie: Okay. And then prayer. Ooh.

Hosanna: Prayer.

Annie: Hosanna, I love talking to you about prayer.

Hosanna: Prayer. Where do I begin? I pray so much. I have a great ongoing one-on-one casual conversational relationship with Jesus that I never would've thought prayer would've been something I was convicted in when I was trying to discover who I was.

Annie: Interesting.

Hosanna: I talk to Him all the time. The three things I break up in the book are solitude, specific prayers, and saying thanks, and three very practical ways to do it. Yeah. But I'll say a specific prayer practice, probably without me learning that practice, this book doesn't exist.

Annie: Really?

Hosanna: Because there are wounds that I've held onto for most of my life. Things I have resolved can never be healed. I don't even think I would've had an authority to speak on identity to people who have truly been hurt and left and lied to and broken had I not confronted some things I once thought I would just live forever and ever confronting. Not something that someone said to me last year, something a family member said to me when I was a kid. These lies that we grow used to, so we're comfortable in them.

I remember sharing with a friend just some wounds I knew I would never be healed from. And she said to me, "Have you prayed about it?" And I like rolled my eyes. I'm offended by this question. Have I prayed about it? Yes.

But I have prayed, God heal me of all these wounds. God, let me have breakthrough in all the places in my life. And I have not had a rhythm, a structure of praying specific prayers over specific needs and specific moments where I was deeply hurt, specific moments where I ran away and no one chased me, specific moments when I thought people would come along with me and they're no longer here.

So there is a practice of specific prayers that I've implemented in my life. And it started with me writing these out in my journal moments in my childhood, things people said, things people didn't say. And I brought myself back into those moments. This was not a lighthearted exercise and it didn't happen an hour or even a week. Over time, with alone time with God, there was 28 different moments that I have been defined by or have been a ceiling over my life because of the lie that I believed from them.

Annie: Wow. 28 that you could identify. There's probably-

Hosanna: That I could identify, that I could say-

Annie: That's crazy.

Hosanna: And in those moments I imagined myself in that moment, what was I wearing, what were the sounds, and what did I feel, and what did I need from people that they were not able to give to me?

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: And now that I have a rhythm of scripture in my life and I know a lot more about what God actually says about me, I'm able to imagine Jesus in that story. And what Jesus, what His words would be to me then, what does He think about me? What does His face look like? Because I know now what He feels about me? And what can I perhaps get from Jesus that I was not able to get from other people in that moment? And knowing I'm loved and wanted and chased after and cared for. What can I get from Jesus that I needed? So-

Annie: You're like sozo in yourself. You're like going back and doing prayer healing over those 28 moments.

Hosanna: I'm just like, I realize that Jesus doesn't want to just redeem me now, He wants to redeem me then.

Annie: Then. Yeah.

Hosanna: He wants me to know I'm not just loved now, but I was loved then. I was worth fighting for then.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: So in those moments... not all situations were created equal. Some of them I prayed over, saw God's lens, and through the power of the cross, I was able to surrender it and be healed from it. Other ones I realized there was people I needed to forgive. There was people I needed to call and say sorry to. There were things I needed to surrender. Not all situations were created equal and some took quite a long time.

But my point is that there were so many things I just let stack up. Because the truth is, Annie, I've been healed from a lot of things. I've had a breakthrough in a lot of areas in my life. There were just some that I was pretty sure I would never have breakthrough in or real healing in. And I was so wrong.

So a rhythm of specific prayers is part of my life's trellis. It's something I schedule because I need a structure of prayer. Jesus demonstrated a lifestyle of going out of His way to spend alone time with God. Like us, He had a lot of responsibilities. Family responsibilities, relationship responsibilities, ministry responsibilities. He had a pretty important calling. And yet he would go out of His way, in different ways, in different seasons, in different locations with different people, to go out of his way to make sure he was being directed by God and not by man.

Annie: I heard a pastor say recently that Jesus knew He only had three years and He still didn't rush.

Hosanna: Oh my goodness. I love that.

Annie: And I thought, Oh my gosh, three years? You and I have tripled that in public ministry at least, and I rush around. And He only had three years and He still walked everywhere. He still didn't like make a car so that He could get places quicker. And I just thought, Man, He pulled away and prayed by Himself. Which not only changed that day of their schedule that day but He knew He only had three years and He still left people when they said they needed Him.

Hosanna: Right. Absolutely. And people were disappointed sometimes because they thought he should stay somewhere. But he thought, "No, I'm called to go somewhere else." Because He was directed by God.

Annie: Isn't that wild?

Hosanna: And that goes to our third rhythm really well, which is rest. Which I know is a value of yours that you've had for far longer than I've had it. I have not valued rest for very long. Jesus does demonstrate this. God commands it and then Jesus demonstrates it, though He says don't worship it. He does demonstrate a life of planning for it. And Jesus did it. But I dismissed it because I have important things to do, Annie. I'm busy. And I think that rest is an antithesis to what I'm called to do, not a lifestyle God has actually called me to. Not a part of the calling, not a part of the life He has for me.

I also think that I knew so many people and have great close friends, heroes, and mentors who I love, who practice things like Sabbath in such a way... who have maybe practiced it for years, in such a way that I felt I could never do it. This exact same day every week at this exact same time with your whole family who does it together. I admire it and I look up to it. And I hope to somehow, someday maybe do it.

But in my lifestyle and my real life because I felt like I could not do what they were doing exactly, I just dismissed rest altogether. That led me to living a life of working, trying to find my value, producing more, achieving more hustling harder to find who I really was. And it's amazing. It's almost as if God knew that some of us would find our identity in the opinions of people and in what we achieved and in what we were able to accomplish. It's no wonder he commanded rest.

Knowing that we needed to be taught a new mentality, that we needed to know that we were loved before we do one thing, then Jesus demonstrated it. So I actually never even took it seriously as a command of God. Never considered that I was disobeying God by refusing to rest until I did an in-depth study of the lifestyle of Jesus. And like you said, Jesus rested and He fulfilled his calling.

So when it was kind of a line in the sand moment of me and Guy... And you know Guy. He's fun. And he actually has a great discipline of rest and celebration, all the things. And I have not had that. So it was kind of a line in the sand moment for us when we said, Okay, we're gonna obey God and follow Jesus, but it will not look like how all of our friends do this. But for our lives, how will we do this? How will we practice Sabbath weekly? How will we have 24 hours to stop and rest and delight and not get ahead and not overachieve? How will we do it?

So we Sabbath may be different than other people's Sabbath but we have refused to be slaves to the pace of culture. So now we do it a little bit differently but we rest.

Annie: What does it look like to you? Do you share?

Hosanna: Yeah. Do we share?

Annie: Yeah. Would you tell me or is it a secret?

Hosanna: No, no. I will tell you.

Annie: Okay.

Hosanna: Yes. So for us, again, it is seasonal.

Annie: Yeah, of course.

Hosanna: But for us, at the beginning of every month we look at that month.

Annie: Oh, smart.

Hosanna: So not all months are created equal and not all weeks are created equal. My husband and I, like many people listening, we don't have the same job, we don't have the same lifestyle or the same hours. We have different responsibilities in our churches, ministries, friend groups, families.

So at the beginning of the month, we look at each week and think, Okay, this week actually I'm traveling Friday, Saturday, Sunday. So our Sabbath Monday. Okay. The next week. All right. The next week you're traveling, you have this thing with family, we have this, we're celebrating these people, here's our church commitments. This week we're Sabbath thing on Friday.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: Okay, the next week. It's not the same day every week and we don't do the exact same rhythm every week. That might look different from other people's, but we live lighter and freer today. We live lighter than I ever imagined we would ever live. It really reconnected me with God and with myself and with all of my relationships, my husband, but also everyone that God has called me to do life with and disciple.

And I did realize I did not lose time. I still had the time to do everything God was calling me to do but I did not have the time to do the things that I was not called to do. So this rhythm of rest has changed our lives. Even right now we're in the middle

of a book run, I don't feel exhausted, I don't feel worn out, I don't feel tired. Physically maybe. Every now and then I need to rest my feet. But I'm spiritually and emotionally and relationally filled not on accident but because of a structure.

So that's how we do it. It's month by month. And then, hey, at the beginning of the year, we planned the year. We knew the family anniversaries that there were, the big birthdays, the weddings, the book launch, the church celebrations. We knew all the things. And like you, we're part of a lot of communities and church communities and ministries. So we have them on a calendar. So we've planned for this, we've prepared for this-

Annie: So smart.

Hosanna: ...so that we can obey God. God, how can we plan for the life that we say we want to live? So it turns out it was about the structure.

Annie: Yeah. You know what? It turns out we need a trellis that no one's ever given us until Hosanna Wong. And the last one is community, which I mean... I'm in on all four of these, but I'm like, yes, friends make it lighter. They make everything lighter.

Hosanna: It's true. I think I had to dismiss the idea of community I had. Like real community does not mean you're best friends of 30 years who you grew up with and you all live in the same neighborhood and you all share clothes because you wear the same jeans size. That's nobody's real life. I mean real community, as in people you can get real with and get real with you so God can be made much of and that you can live life God's actually called you to live.

And sometimes that is seasonal. And sometimes it's friends that you trust and you only see a couple times a year. But I break it down into two practical ways that we see throughout scripture. And one is confession. Getting real with people about what you're really going through. And another is celebration. Celebrating what God has already done and what He is currently doing. I think I just miss celebration as a command of God, though it is commanded and a rhythm of Jesus, though He does live it. Because that sounds too fun, Annie.

I could have a podcast that says That Sounds Too Fun. And these things God calls us to do are for us. But that doesn't make a ton of sense. So I had to repent. "God I'm sorry for the ways that I thought obeying you looked a certain way or that I thought your word said something it did not say. Show me what you actually say and how you've actually called me to live."

And celebration brings new life and fresh breath to all of the discipline. So confession and celebration are two rhythms that I practice in my life. I have a plan,

a structure in my month to make sure I do it because I will not accidentally follow Jesus.

Annie: Yeah, girl, me neither.

Hosanna: I will not accidentally.

Annie: I will not confess to anybody. There's no confession that just falls out of my mouth.

Hosanna: That's right. And I can go months without saying yes to any invitations from any friends for any dinners because I'm very busy with my work. I repent of that. The ways that I was doing what God was calling me to do, but I was not doing it the way He had called me to do it.

Annie: Wow.

Hosanna: Now, it's a structure that I have. Not every month is created equal. God, a couple times this month, I need to make sure I'm celebrating. This month we have margin for a few more. Not every month is created equal. But I don't go into a month without a structure anymore because... not because I'm so holy, but because I'm not yes. Because I will easily break apart from myself and break apart from Jesus.

And the answer to our identity's questions, who are we and how do we live, is a real one-on-one relationship with Jesus. So that's what I've uncovered in a way that I understand a practical way that Jesus showed us how to live. So that's my structure, scripture, prayer, rest, real community broken down, and confession and celebration. And I'm not doing it perfectly or flawlessly. But I live lighter today than I ever have. And I know Jesus a lot more, I see Him in my story a lot more. And that's what I hope people get from this message.

Annie: And your life hasn't gotten easier. I mean, it's not that you... "So since I have a rhythm, for rhythms that are no problems."

Hosanna: No one in my family is hurting, no one in my ministry is hurting. No one's leaving our church. Our marriage is perfect. You should learn from us.

Annie: You should just do these four things and you'll magically have everything you want. That's not it.

Hosanna: This is what I have learned. This is one of the most important things I have learned about this trellis. Because some people, like me, have maybe followed Jesus for a long time, we have followed just for a long time. We've chosen Jesus a long time ago. But maybe we feel weighed down, overwhelmed, and exhausted, and feel

maybe sometimes disconnected from God or for ourselves. And we think, what are we doing wrong? What am I doing wrong? Is there something wrong in my faith?

And what I've learned is that it might not be something wrong in your faith, but you might be carrying new weights and you might be growing, and you might be flourishing in new areas and the same trellis that held you up before cannot hold you up today. When you see a trellis and you see a new branch growing, the trellis that's sturdy and enough for that branch. But when it carries more weights and more fruit-

Annie: More fruit.

Hosanna: ...when it grows and it flourishes, it actually needs a new structure, a stronger structure, a wider structure. So as I feel called to do more things, I felt called to do more things and new things in our family, in our relationship, in our churches, and I thought God that cannot be true because I am at my emotional capacity, my physical capacity. God, you are going to have to grow our capacity.

So me and my husband started praying, will you grow our capacity? And as we prayed those prayers, knowing God won't call us to do something, that we don't have capacity for, that He will give us the grace and capacity for it, God brought to mind our rhythms. And He brought to mind places that we did have margin that we had dismissed. Or maybe we were doing things in those spaces that we didn't need to be doing.

And as we thought, we already practiced these rhythms, we do have these rhythms, we have a pretty good trellis. It is going to have to be a new trellis, a stronger structure, a different structure to carry the weights. And that can be a lot of things. That can be good responsibilities. But if God's called you to it, God, I need to obey you and have the structure to be able to sustain it so that I can stay connected to You and grow and flourish the way You've called me to.

Annie: And the idea of the fruit is so important, because when the fruit is getting heavy, it's because you are on mission and you're doing the thing. But the branch is gonna get heavy too if you don't have these structures in place.

Hosanna: That's right. We're not meant to live so weighed down.

Annie: Yeah, yeah. Dude. I can't wait for people to get this. Oh, my gosh. I cannot wait.

Hosanna: Thank you.

Annie: I'm so happy it's out. Thank you for writing this. It has changed me. I mean, I get to read a lot of books-

Hosanna: You do.

Annie: I loved reading something I've never ever thought of. So not that I think of everything everybody else writes. But I mean, I've just never even heard of I teach a trellis of disciplines and rhythms of Jesus. So, thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Hosanna: Thank you, my friend.

Annie: Okay, the last question we always ask.

Hosanna: Okay.

Annie: Because the show was called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you, Hosanna Wong.

Hosanna: Okay, I'm gonna tell you. Last time I was with you on your podcast, you asked me this. You said, "What sounds fun?" And I was just learning a theology of fun, of celebration. I just started my new trellis. And I had said to you, "I want to see Taylor Swift in concert." That was my confession to you. At the time, I was like, I feel bad that I want to celebrate with my friends and do something. And you said, "I hope that for you. And I went two days ago.

Annie: Did you? In LA?

Hosanna: I went two days ago in LA.

Annie: I heard she was blowing it up in LA. It was so fun.

Hosanna: I used to feel guilty about this, like having fun, enjoying celebrating with some of my best friends, including the friend who told me the trellis. And it was the day my book released, and my friend said, "We got tickets for this day." And I thought, "I can't go that day, because that's the day my book releases." And then me and my husband sat there and I thought, "Why can't I go that day? I have a new theology of celebration. I have a new theology of fun." So I told my friends, "You know what? Forget it. We're going." So what sounds fun is keeping with the structure that I committed to years ago. So I'm excited to tell you that I also brought you a friendship bracelet from the concert to you too.

Annie: Thank you. Oh, my gosh, thank you so much.

Hosanna: My husband and I have a few live events, a few concerts of people. Not all of them might be Taylor Swift. But like, we wanted to be a Golden State Warriors game on Christmas. We went last year on Christmas. So we have some sporting events this year, some live shows this year, during our Sabbath, our rest, and during our celebration. And I'll tell you, it's a lighter life, for sure.

Annie: Dear everyone, you know what we do on book launch nights? We refresh Amazon. I mean, what would you have been doing? Watching-

Hosanna: What else was I going to do?

Annie: Right. Get out and go do something. I'm with you.

Hosanna: And I'm preaching on every weekend. And I'm like, I do feel like I'm releasing this book. I preach at local church on this book, and I share with people. That is what I'm here to do. So what else am I going to do on a Tuesday? And then my friends are like, "Will you go see Taylor?" I was like, "In the name of Jesus, I will." So I'm blessed. And I brought a friendship bracelet for you.

Annie: Thank you. That's so sweet. I love you, friend. Thank you for being here, and thanks for this book.

Hosanna: I love you. Thank you for inviting me to be part of your community. And how you demonstrate all these things, I learned so much from you. So thank you, friend. I love you.

Annie: Me too.

[00:58:46] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys. Isn't she brilliant? Don't you love her? I am telling you, this trellis thing is a game-changer. Remember, it is not about putting more on you. It's about getting lighter. Yes, Lord. Y'all, go grab a copy of Hosanna's book. She goes so deep into this so much more. It is called *You Are More Than You've Been Told*. And follow her on social media, thank her for being on the show.

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 the That Sounds Fun podcast on Instagram [@thatoundsfunpodcast](https://www.instagram.com/thatoundsfunpodcast).

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. Y'all have a great week. We'll see you back

here on Thursday with an incredible conversation with Dr. Russell Moore. We'll see y'all then.