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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today on a Friday. You know I love a bonus Friday episode. Oh, I love it.

Before we dive in, I just want to pause for a second and thank y'all for listening to the show. So many of you have been friends for years and your comments and emails and input have really helped us to continue to bring you episodes that you want to hear. And we absolutely love hearing from you.

And y'all have been so generous with your words, these last couple of weeks. It kind of feels a little extraordinary how connected you felt to the most recent episodes of the That Sounds Fun podcast. So thank you for telling me when you feel that so that we know what God's up to in your life and what He's up to in our lives and where those are intersecting. So I just am really, really thankful that y'all are here. I love getting to do this, our team loves getting to do this. So that means a lot.

If you didn't know at the bottom of the AFD Week in Review that is delivered to your inbox every Friday, we actually share who the upcoming guests are on the podcast that I'll be interviewing the next week, so you can drop in any questions you have for them. If you're not signed up for the AFD Week in Review email, head to the link in the show notes right now because that really is the best way to stay in the know about all things that are happening around here.

It's got everything from links to the podcast to updates about new resources coming your way, to some of my favorite things that I am loving right now. Plus it has a list of all of our sponsors. If you ever miss a link during an episode, you can always find that in the Week in Review email as well. We also tend to tell people there first what is going on. So you should make sure you're getting the AFD Week in Review. And again just head to the link in the show notes to sign up.

Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with my friend and award-winning artist, Cody Carnes. I'm certain you've heard his songs *Run to the Father*, *Nothing Else*, *The Blessing* which has been a massive worship anthem that was written and released with his wife, Kari Jobe. And now Cody's released a brand new album called *Firm Foundation*. It just came out last Friday, and y'all, it is so good.

Today is really special because you're also going to hear our friend Shayna, who you remember from the Attachment Theory episode from the Summer Lovin' series, tell a story to Cody not knowing she's talking to Cody. It's very, very fun, y'all. And this new album *Firm Foundation* is really special. Hope you've already

gotten to listen to it since it's been out for a couple of days. But I cannot wait for you to hear Cody share about it.

Cody and Kari live here in Nashville with their two boys, serve at their home church, The Belonging Co. And this is just such a perfect conversation for Friday as you head into Labor Day weekend. Well, for those of us in the US we have a Labor Day holiday weekend. But globally, we can all enjoy new music for any weekend. And that is a great thing.

So here is my conversation with my friend Cody Carnes.

[00:03:00] <Music>

Annie: Cody Carnes, welcome to That Sounds Fun.

Cody: Well, this is already very fun.

Annie: Listen-

Cody: We just started and it's very fun.

Annie: We're going. Sincere apologies that this is your first time.

Cody: Oh.

Annie: I should have had you on a thousand times before this.

Cody: No. This is the right moment for this. The anticipations have been building for a long time.

Annie: That's right. That's right. And here we are. Also, you and I live in the same neighborhood-ish. We're kind of close to the studio. Aren't y'all still here?

Cody: Oh, no. We used to be.

Annie: Oh, right?

Cody: We're very far from here now.

Annie: Are you really?

Cody: Yeah.

Annie: I mean, yeah, during the pandemic you were right close to me.

Cody: Yeah. And we're in the country now.

Annie: Are you?

Cody: We're country folk.

Annie: How do you feel about it?

Cody: Great.

Annie: Really?

Cody: Yeah. I mean, I grew up in West Texas, you know, Country Boy.

Annie: Where it's an hour to everything.

Cody: Yeah. So I'm back home.

Annie: Okay. Are the boys like outside playing and getting dirty and all the things?

Cody: Oh, yeah.

Annie: Do y'all have like farm tools?

Cody: No.

Annie: Just a lot of land.

Cody: Yeah, some land. We're still in the neighborhood but we're in a neighborhood of only a few houses surrounded by farms.

Annie: Oh, great.

Cody: So you know, it's a little bit mix of both. There's a bunch of kids in our neighborhood. Our kids all have like little baby four-wheelers and they ride around and cruise. So yeah, it's a little blend.

Annie: Yeah, there you go. Okay, well, I miss you guys in the neighborhood clearly.

Cody: We miss you too.

- Annie:** I gave you a heads-up about this. My friend Shayna—our friends on the podcast know her because she was on in June—she told me a story yesterday about your song *Firm Foundation*, which has...
- Cody:** Really?
- Annie:** I mean, that song, did you ever dream it would impact already the way it has?
- Cody:** No. You never do. You're excited about songs but you never know what they're gonna do. And it's fun to watch them.
- Annie:** So she tells me a story yesterday at lunch. And this morning when I realized that that was yesterday, today is today with you, I texted her and I said, Can I call you and will you tell the story?
- Cody:** Amazing. I'm excited about this.
- Annie:** I want to call her. I don't know that we've ever done a call on the show.
- Cody:** I hope she answers.
- Shayna:** Hello.
- Annie:** Hello Shayna.
- Shayna:** Hi Annie. How are you?
- Annie:** Thank you for making time to do this.
- Shayna:** Yes, happy to.
- Annie:** Okay, well, first of all, I already gave everybody the heads up that you are the Shayna they already know from being avoidantly attached. You're healthily attached but we did a whole episode on attachment theory.
- Cody:** Okay.
- Annie:** And we had a single person from avoidant and... what the other? Anxious, I think. And so she was on. Okay, Shayna, I'll tell you more about our guests in a second. But will you tell the story of how the song *Firm Foundation* has mattered to you in the last year?

Shayna: Yeah, I'm happy to. Just a little context. I am on a church staff here in Nashville. And last summer, I was on a long run of hosting our guest speakers, kind of nearing the end of that hosting season, the summer season, and just getting ready to go back into the rhythms of what fall would look like. And I remember it being Sunday, July 31st. I was in one of our services, we were well into the worship block and *Firm Foundation* was playing. And when it got to the bridge of the song, I just felt this... I don't know how to explain it. But I just felt what I know now is the Holy Spirit just laying on my heart that something hard was coming. Something was looming, and that it was going to be really hard but He was going to carry me through it. So those words "the rain came, wind blew, but my house was built on You, I'm safe with You, I'm gonna make it through," it was just like this feeling just in my body of the Holy Spirit just kind of giving me a warning of something that was coming. And sure enough, a couple of days later-

Annie: Literally, like 48 hours later. Yeah.

Shayna: Yeah. A couple days later, there was just a big shift in leadership at the church. And it was a shift that directly impacted my job. I didn't lose my job, I will say. I had nothing to do with this thing that happened, but it impacted me really greatly. And sure enough, it was just a really hard thing to face. Definitely ended up in some counseling and, you know, I just had to work through a really long season of just grief, honestly.

So that song was just kind of an anthem through that season of just, you know, Lord, it still feels really hard, when is it not gonna feel hard anymore? So I would just listen all the time. And it just brought peace. And the song, the lyrics are such a promise of the Lord, of like, "I'm gonna carry you through this." And I believe that wholeheartedly.

So cut to one year later, and exactly one year later, I'm sitting in, run-through for the upcoming service that was gonna be on July 30th, we have run-throughs on Thursdays. So I'm sitting in run-through on Thursday, and we play the tracks of the music set, and sure enough, *Firm Foundation* is in the set list for the exact Sunday a full year later of when I had that encounter with the Holy Spirit.

And I leaned over to my friend and was like, "Remember how I told you how this song impacted me on July 31st last year? Yeah. This Sunday is gonna be July 30th. In that moment, I realized that promise the Lord made me a year ago was being completely fulfilled. Oh. I mean, I was like walking on clouds that whole weekend getting ready for Sunday just in awe of such a small detail to some, to have that song on the worship set. But specifically for me, it was just like the most beautiful touch of the Lord to just show me, you know, that He did carry me through that season.

Annie: She leaned over to me that Sunday morning, she said, "Do you remember we sang this a year ago before this really tragic thing happened?"

Cody: Wow.

Annie: Okay, Shayna, so in the studio with me is Cody Carnes, who wrote *Firm Foundation*.

Cody: Hi, Shayna.

Shayna: Oh my gosh, you were being so weird about not telling me who the guest was.

Annie: I know. That's why. Because I wanted you to tell the story without knowing that Cody was sitting here.

Cody: That's amazing. Oh.

Shayna: Oh my gosh. My heart is beating out of my chest.

Cody: What a beautiful story. What a beautiful story. That's incredible.

Shayna: Oh my gosh. Well, thank you for writing that song. I can't wait to listen to this podcast to hear more about... is that what we're talking about on the podcast?

Annie: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Shayna: Okay.

Annie: Shayna, do you have anything you want to say to Cody before I hang up on you?

Shayna: Oh my gosh, just thank you. Thank you for your obedience to what the Lord put on your heart going into that writing session. I've told that story just since this past July 30th to so many of my friends, and there have been so many people that have told me how much that song has impacted them in very specific ways as well.

Cody: Wow.

Shayna: So just thank you. Thank you for just hearing the Lord's voice and putting that song out.

Cody: That's beautiful. And thank you for sharing your story. I mean, that means so much to me. I love hearing those stories. I love what God's doing through that.

Annie: My goodness. That's fun, right, Shayna?

Shayna: Yeah. That's super fun. Oh my Gosh.

Annie: Oh, thank you, Shayna, for letting us interrupt your work day.

Shayna: Yeah, you just made my day.

Annie: Okay, great. You made mine too.

Cody: Mine too.

Annie: All right. Love you, friend. See ya.

Shayna: Love you too.

Annie: Bye.

Cody: Oh, man, that's beautiful.

Annie: How about that?

Cody: It's incredible.

Annie: A year later.

Cody: Yeah. I love when God does those kinds of things. God is so in the details, you know, and He's pursuing our hearts and He's doing things all the time that are just, you know, communicating to us how much He loves us, how much He sees us. You know, God makes Himself very available to us, you know. That song and that set on that day, you know, like she said, didn't mean probably much to a lot of people, but it was very much speaking something to her. I love that about God. That's just amazing.

Annie: Will you tell the story... I mean, I-

Cody: I feel like I should tell the story about *Firm Foundation*.

Annie: Yeah, that's what I want you to do. Tell the story.

Cody: All right, Lemme tell you. Well, you know, the song started for me in October of 2020. At the time, I was honestly going crazy. I was on the verge of a panic attack. I had been carrying this heaviness for a couple weeks.

Annie: Did you know why? Or was it just undetermined a little bit?

Cody: It was conglomerate of things. I mean, a lot of it was the pandemic, what was happening then, there was also some family stuff going on. It literally was the song like rain and wind and flood waters. And I was just like, everything coming from all sides. There were a lot of mornings in those couple weeks I just didn't even want to get out of bed.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: And I'd never really dealt with that level of depression and all those kinds of things before. So I was really cratering. So I woke up one morning and it was like Groundhog Day at that point. It was just like, every day I woke up, nah, feel it again, I'm carrying this heaviness. And I woke up one morning and I felt the Lord say, "You're gonna sing your way out of this today."

Annie: You're gonna sing your way out of this today.

Cody: Yeah.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: And I kind of chuckled honestly with very little faith going, "Okay, how are we gonna do that?" You know?

Annie: Right.

Cody: And before I knew it, I was writing *Firm Foundation*. I was walking around my house that morning, it was a quiet morning, you know, and making coffee, and I'm just getting ready for the day and God just starts downloading the song to me. You know, I've got my phone open, my voice memo and I've just pushed record and I'm just singing and I'm going, and all the lines are coming to me, and the melodies and all this stuff.

I think it was about an hour that I was just writing it. And I wrote basically the whole first stanza of the song. So from "Christ is my firm foundation" all the way to "He won't" is the part I was writing that morning.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: So that whole first part, first statement. And I remember if you go back and listen to the Voice memo, it's really cool because you can hear the point when I get the "he won't" idea, like when that light bulb goes off. And the first time I say it in the voice memo, I'd start laughing to myself.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: And what's beautiful about it-

Annie: That is so cool.

Cody: ...when you hear it is that I knew where my heart was when I started writing that song, and then you could hear where my heart had been transformed into by the time I got to that "He won't" idea. My heart had completely gotten flipped upside down from raging chaos and anxiety to this tenacious joy and confidence in Jesus and this hope in Jesus just by declaring that song. So it was the encounter with Jesus that I had that day.

And what I love about songs, and this is true for basically any song that I've written, I could tell you a story about all of them like this, but there's an encounter with Jesus that happens in songs when they get written. And when they're written from encounters, those encounters get locked up in those songs and people-

Annie: Oh wow. Like spiritually?

Cody: Yes.

Annie: You're talking like in the world we cannot see, something happens when the encounter gets put into the song.

Cody: Yes. And so-

Annie: Wow.

Cody: And then what's amazing about God is God invites people into a similar encounter that He had with the person creating it. He invites people into a similar encounter in the way that whatever facet of Himself He was in that moment, He is that for that person who's experiencing it. You know?

Annie: That is so supernatural.

Cody: It is very supernatural. It's unbelievable what God does.

Annie: And that's what Shayna just explained.

Cody: Exactly.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: So I hear that story and I'm going, This is so amazing because this is exactly what God was doing. For me in that moment is I had all these things coming against me.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: That is the facet of God, the attribute of God that was in that moment the song was created. So it still lives in that song, you know? I love that, you know, because God basically just flipped my heart upside down, changed the atmosphere of my mind and my home. I see it happen every single time I lead the song. I see this tenacious joy and this hope come out and it affect people and affect people's hearts. And it's beautiful for me to watch because I can go back to that moment, for me, of like, I know exactly what's happening. You know?

Annie: I mean, I love thinking about that supernatural part. Because my guess is if songs are like books, then there are books of mine that are holding certain things and people respond to me differently. And all of them, just like your songs, all of them have something of God because you're a person of God. But some of them have like, nah, this is different. You know? And I want to see what we can't see. I want to see what the Lord does, how He wraps that up.

So before you're writing *Firm Foundation*, are you saying to God, wrap this experience in this song and let it minister to other people? Or are you just like on the piano or guitar, like, Help me sing out?

Cody: I mean, in that kind of moment you're very much just... that was about me just clinging to those promises, you know? And then I think afterwards, you're all... I'm always processing as a songwriter, you know, basically like, is this meant to go beyond this moment or is it not? There's often-

Annie: Oh wow.

Cody: There's often like this stamp of approval I feel like I get from the Lord of like, Yeah, this moment is for you, but this moment is also meant to...

Annie: So ratio me of how many songs you write or how many choruses you write, how many things come to mind and this is how many go public and this is how many just stay in the Carnes home at The piano?

Cody: I mean, that's a good question. I think the majority of them would go public. You know, the majority of them do.

Annie: Because my journal doesn't go public, but my books do.

Cody: That's fair. That would be a good way to put it. I think by the time it makes it to a song, there have been a lot of journal entries that have happened that never go public. But those kind of feed into that moment.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Cody: I don't journal much, but there was weeks of journal entries written on my heart and my mind of just processing everything I was walking through and the heaviness of it. And then ultimately it all led to that moment of God basically breaking through into all of it, and God's truth lifting me out of the pit.

I think those declarations and those moments and those melodies, you know, as a songwriter, that is my job. That is what God has gifted me to do. As a book writer, it's the same thing. Like, it is meant to go out and it is meant to lead other people ultimately into that moment with God that I had. So yeah, the majority of them do.

[00:18:15] <Music>

Annie: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation to make sure you know we started a new month of reading the Gospels together today over on Let's Read the Gospels, and we would love for you to join us this month. This time, oh, y'all, we're reading the NIV, but we're going through the gospels in chronological order. So that means that we are mixing up all four books and reading the stories as they happen.

This plan for the month of September truly is the most eye-opening for those of us who've read the Gospels a lot. Or even if you never have reading it chronologically, it's so different. I love it. I love it. I love it.

So whether you've never listened or whether you've joined us every month, I really think you're gonna enjoy this month's Let's Read the Gospels. It brings scripture to life in such a new way when we read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John like this.

So come on and join us wherever you're listening to this. Head over to Let's Read the Gospels podcast, subscribe so you don't miss a thing. Let's start our days in

scripture in September. Let's just commit to these 30 days together and see what might happen.

And don't forget, we have a guidebook and a reading plan that goes along with the podcast, and you can get those at anniefdowns.com/gospels. But the reading plan will really help you as we jump around from book to book to book. And the guidebook includes the reading plan with some additional things.

And remember when you get the guidebook for September, you actually get every guidebook from January to September. So it is lots of fun in that. That's again anniefdowns.com/gospels.

Okay, let's jump back into our conversation with Cody.

[00:19:49] <Music>

Annie: Steffany Gretzinger was in here a couple weeks ago and I told her this.

Cody: I love her.

Annie: I love her.

Cody: She's the best.

Annie: I mean, gosh. I went to my acupuncturist a couple of weeks ago and he said, "I see this thing in your liver and I think we need to work on this, blah, blah, blah." And I said, "So what do I do?" And he said, "You need to start singing every morning."

Cody: Oh, whoa.

Annie: And he said, "I just need you to sing for a little bit every morning and it will change your body."

Cody: Wow.

Annie: Which is fascinating.

Cody: Yeah, it's amazing.

Annie: I would've thought he'd say, Take fish oil, you know, or something. So will you talk for a minute about the supernatural of this? There is a supernatural thing when we sing. As you can imagine, I'm not singing, though I love him, I'm not singing Justin Timberlake in the morning. I'm singing *Firm Foundation*, I'm singing worship in

the mornings. I actually have my Alexa set that after it tells me the news, it goes straight into a Spotify playlist so that I don't even have a choice. So it just gets in my house. How does that matter in our houses? How does that matter in our bodies to worship?

Cody: You know, I need to study this more, but I have this picture of... when you were talking, I have this picture of like a tuning fork. I don't know if you've ever seen one of those. But basically, you ring this fork. That is the center, that is like, this is the pitch everyone is meant to match. Right?

Annie: Ah, right. Right.

Cody: And what's amazing about sound waves is like when you're out of tune, this works with a guitar as well, when you're out of tune with that centered pitch, this is the true pitch, the sound waves they go wa wa ma ma ma. Like the more outta tune you are, the faster they go. And when you meet that centered pitch, they level out.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: So they wa waa waa waaa. So it almost like it rings through this is in tune. Right?

Annie: Wow.

Cody: And if you think about how we're made, if we're created to worship God, the Bible says that we are, if we're made in the image of God, if we're made with this God-shaped void in our heart and we're searching for God, then when I am singing the praises of God, I am in tune with how I was created. So I think, you know, I love it that your acupuncturist said that because-

Annie: I know. It's amazing.

Cody: All that preaches is like you were made to sing. You were made to praise God. You were made to declare the promises of God. In Psalms, you see David a lot of times command his soul to bless God, commands his soul to praise. So what does that tell me? There's a lot of times when I need to praise God when it doesn't feel good. And that's a bit of a misconception that we've believed in church is like you praise God when things are good. Yes, you do. And that's a different kind of praise. But also we are meant to praise God when things aren't good.

And I've learned that. I mean, writing the songs for this album and the last album I did, I kind of all wrote them in the same season, I wrote these songs and I walked through the hardest moments of my life in the 18 months that these songs were written.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: I lost my dad at the beginning of 2022, deepest moments of grief and mourning I've ever walked through. And I'm writing these songs out of those moments. And I learned that praise is so good for the soul. Actually, we're gonna experience these valley moments in life, but we're not meant to camp there. We're not meant to build a camp there. We are meant to pass through those moments.

And a lot of times we do—we build camps there. And we look 10, 20 years down the road and we're still living in that moment as if it happened yesterday. And God is actually... we're designed to... we are gonna experience Him. He is the comforter, He is the counselor, He's the healer. He walks through those moments with us. I've never felt a richer presence of God than I felt in the moments that I lost my dad, those grieving moments. He's so near in those moments.

But what I learned is that if I praise, if I praise in those moments, it actually helps me to pass through the valley. It's very, very good at helping to pass through those moments. Because what am I doing? I'm recognizing, I'm aligning that my heart with that tuning fork of God is good, He is faithful, He is trustworthy, He is love and joy and peace and patience. Like, God never changes. He's constant.

So, if I can remember that, what does it do? It lifts my heart and my mind to that godly perspective of this is the God that I'm trusting in, this is the God that carries me through as Shayna said. You know, this is who He is. So blessing God in every season is so, so good for the soul.

Annie: I didn't know about your dad. I'm so sorry.

Cody: Thank You.

Annie: Was it sudden or did you have some time to prep?

Cody: It's a very complicated, long story. Basically, to sum it up, my dad and I had a great relationship growing up. When I got to my mid-20s, our relationship became estranged because He kind of went off the deep end. So the last like nine years of our relationship was very distant. There were a lot of complex things that were going on.

Annie: Sure.

Cody: So him passing was... it was sudden and tragic in the sense that, you know, he wasn't sick or anything like that but he was dealing with a lot of stuff.

Annie: And you didn't have time to prepare like someone who has cancer.

Cody: No, no, no. I got a call, you know, he's gone. And he really missed. He really missed the last 10 years of my life. He raised me to play music. I mean, so the last 10 years of my life has been really exciting with music. He basically has missed both of my kids being in our life, he missed a lot of really rich parts of my life. So it was a lot in that moment. Just a lot of grieving, a lot of basically me praying for our relationship to be reconciled and the reality of now that's never gonna happen.

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

Cody: He's never gonna, you know... I was a young kid at two years old on the drum kit, kind of this prodigy drummer. My youngest is four and we're watching him do the exact same thing.

Annie: I've seen videos. It's sick.

Cody: And my dad's never met him, you know? So just the realities of, man, my dad's never gonna stand in a room and see his grandson do what I did, and us get to share that. Just all those, the kind of things, you know, dealing with. So yeah, very, very, very hard.

But like I said, three weeks after he passed, I remember just having this moment with the Lord of looking back at the last three weeks and going, I don't like what I'm walking through, but at the same time, I wouldn't trade your presence in these moments for anything. Because I had never felt Him closer. I had never felt His comfort richer. I just had moments where I just felt like the Father just had His arm around me and was just sitting with me.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: And the warmth that your heart would feel if that were happening is like what I felt in those moments. So the first song I wrote after my dad passed away was a song called *Good*, which was on my last album.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: And it's basically just a declaration of you are good, you'll always be good, you can't be anything but good. You're good today. You'll be good tomorrow. If you listen to that song, you would probably think, Oh, Cody was having a really good day that day. He's declaring how good God is. He must just be in such a good place.

No, I was having the hardest moments of my life. But sensing and experiencing how close God was in those moments is why that song just poured out of me. Because I just thought, "If I can go through the darkest moment of my life, and if you're this close, then you really are good all the time. I can make it through anything." So that's why I wanted to write that song that day. It's why I wanted to make that-

Annie: I mean, I hear that in *Bless God* too. I hear this like, take your body somewhere before your heart's ready to go there. You go and your heart will catch up-

Cody: Yeah, that's right.

Annie: ...and will believe what you're singing.

Cody: That's right.

Annie: Sing it till you believe it. Not fake it till you make it, but sing it till you believe it because it's still true.

Cody: Your soul really wants to boss you around and you have to boss it around a bit more. Like you've gotta get it in line with the word of God. You've gotta command your soul to bless God. And it does. It will come in line with your spirit and with the truth of God in those moments.

Annie: My sister and her husband had a baby last summer that lived two months and died. We knew he was sick in the womb, but lived longer than we thought, less than we wanted, obviously. The experience you had of losing your dad versus us losing TJ because we had time, it felt like the Lord took me slowly, like I'm a scuba diver, slowly to the next level of connection and nearness. But it wasn't fast like that.

But you and I have the same story of "in our grief, God drew us closer". And before grief, you think, "I don't know how He and I are gonna make it if this happens." And then you go, Oh, actually what God does, either if it's slow and it's a slow descent and you're adjusting your oxygen as you go down, or like you where it's like you're dropped into the deep end, either way, it's God draws us in in our grief, which is not... that's not the economy of earth. That's kingdom economy.

Cody: No. You think about the beatitudes and God's saying all these things. Blessed are you who mourn for you will be comforted. I've even heard a different translation of that word "blessed", the word lucky. So like, like lucky are you who mourn for you will be comforted. You think, how is that actually possible? And it's because of that. It's because God is saying actually in those moments, I am the comforter and

I'm going to take you into a... You're gonna experience a facet of me that you don't get to experience unless you need to be comforted.

Annie: That's it.

Cody: So, you know, you get these opportunities to experience a different facet of God. It's so hard and so beautiful.

Annie: Tell me if this is true for you too. My experience with God has been, if I so choose, I get to stay at that depth without the continued pain.

Cody: Yes. Oh, yes

Annie: I mean, I still grieve my nephew not being here, but the sharpness of the first week, month, year is lightning. But God has kept me down there. So the connection stays as the seasons change. Has that been true for you?

Cody: Yes. Absolutely.

Annie: Because that's what you wrote this album out of. Right? That continued.

Cody: A hundred percent.

Annie: Wow.

Cody: A hundred percent. These songs came from a depth in me that no songs ever have. A hundred percent. And I'm a different person out of you... We are. We are different out of the things that we walk through. We become more mature. We're on this journey. The Bible says it takes us from glory to glory. It takes us from depth to depth and richness to richness. So yeah, that is the beautiful thing about it, is these experiences will take us to a different place in the Lord. And yeah, it just keeps building on it itself and it keeps going deeper and deeper.

Annie: How do we trust those experiences? Because everybody listening is like, "Yeah, I've been through a thing," you know? How do we trust those experiences when we don't know the end of the story? Right? So you grieving into the story in the way you wanted it, I grieve into the story in the way we wanted it, but we can only see temporarily anyway. So what's the faith walk for you? What's the mantras or the language or even the prayers of how do you trust God's plan when it doesn't look the way you thought it would?

Cody: I think I'm always trying to remember to trust God and not the plan.

Annie: Ugh, say that.

Cody: I think-

Annie: Make that shirt.

Cody: In that moment of losing my dad, I'm juggling the tension of, Ah, man, this is really hard and this is so broken. The situation is so broken. Like, this was not the destiny for my dad. He didn't fully live out... I don't believe he fully lived out the destiny that God had for him. And that's such a mystery. Right? But I know for sure that he didn't yield and submit his heart in certain ways to the plans the Lord had for him and that it was meant to be... God had good plans for him, rich plans for his life.

So I'm dealing with that tension of now that's never gonna happen on the earth. That's really hard. But I'm not trusting that everything's gonna go great. I'm not trusting that the plan's gonna be perfect. I'm just trusting in God, you know? So the plans are... they're always going to feel probably different than we expect and they're gonna be hard and they're gonna be moments of disappointment and moments of grief. But at the same time, God understands that. You know, God walked the earth. He understands the grief and the mourning and the disappointments.

Annie: The man of sorrows, right?

Cody: Yes.

Annie: Ugh.

Cody: So I think we can trust in the fact that Jesus knows what we're walking through and He knows that the world is imperfect. He knows that sin has come in and ruined everything. And He understands just the ramifications of that, why He brought... It's why He came back to redeem it so we could be with Him. It's why he came back to establish His kingdom on the earth because it is upside down from what we experience, and it is the hope that we have in eternity.

And I'm thinking about the hope that I have now is that my dad knew Jesus and that he's in heaven, and then I'm gonna get to experience life with him. Ultimately, all these dreams and all these things that I'm mourning here on the earth, I'm ultimately still gonna get to experience with him in eternity.

Annie: Yeah, the Long part.

Cody: And that is beautiful to think about. And that's where the hope is.

Annie: Do you think you'll write worship songs in heaven? In eternity, on the new earth-

Cody: Oh. I don't know.

Annie: Are you doing now what you will do forever? You know, people talk about... Your pastors, Alex and Henry, I've talked with them about our jobs in heaven. Like what we do here is just setting us up for how we're gonna be... have a purpose forever.

Cody: That's way beyond my theological pay grade.

Annie: It's fun to talk about that.

Cody: It's fun to talk about.

Annie: Yeah, everybody don't write it.

Cody: I know.

Annie: Don't write a seminary course off of this part of the discussion.

Cody: I don't know. I probably think of myself more as the guy who's gonna scrub the Gold Streets. You know what I mean?

Annie: Listen, I know. I'm like, I'm cutting grass. I know there are gonna be people who have served at a church for 50 years and served a hundred people that are gonna be sitting front row and I'm gonna be cutting the grass.

Cody: Exactly. I don't know. That is wild to think about, though.

Annie: Because when you think about your dad and your son and you just go like, I hope y'all just get to like jam.

Cody: Yeah. One thing I do... this is just personal beliefs or conviction, one thing I really do believe about heaven is that all the best parts of earth that we experience are these imperfect little glimpses of heaven on earth. You know what I mean? What heaven is like.

So basically all the best things we know now, which, you know, to me would be like that moment when you're sitting at the table with all your friends and you're having dinner or, you know, those moments of just joy we're like this... at the beach, you know, at the sunset, all those things. I think heaven is gonna be like the perfect version of all the best things that we know, you know?

Because there has to be this connection with we're created for heaven now. So you have to know we're already experiencing these tastes of it. You know what I mean? Like, it can't be this like black and white world of like, Oh, earth and heaven are completely different. It's like, No, I actually think like they're all the best things that we're experiencing now.

So I think it is gonna be tables full of food with all of your best friends. It is gonna be playing music with my son and my dad because that's... I think it's gonna be all those things and it's all gonna be in the presence of God in perfect love, with no fear and worshipping God altogether. I think it's gonna be... I really hope I can climb El Capitan in heaven, you know? No fear of falling. No fear of dying.

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

Cody: You know, just experiencing all those things that God created in like imperfection, I think.

Annie: Dave Clayton who's the pastor of Ethos Church. We were on a podcast, Lauren Akins podcast, and he said that they have three sons and they have this family agreement that once they're all in heaven for the rest of eternity, the five of them meet up once a week.

Cody: That's awesome.

Annie: I thought, "That is the sweetest thing." I've never thought to schedule meetings of like, "Here's what we're gonna do. The five of us are gonna go face to face once a week." I thought, "Once a week?"

Cody: Yeah, good luck.

Annie: Forever.

Cody: Good luck finding time. I'm gonna be water rafting The Yosemite waterfall.

Annie: That's right.

Cody: "I don't have time this week. I'm sorry."

Annie: I'm gonna go down in the ocean below the trench and see the megalodons. I want to see the dinosaur sharks. I can't wait.

Cody: Find out what really happened to that, whatever it's called. Never mind.

Annie: Yes. From under the-

Cody: The Titanic.

Annie: The Titanic. Oh, we'll really see. I do have a big hope that in eternity there's like a movie theater where we can watch like Jonah and we can be like, "Will you pull up Ruth? Will you pull up what actually happened?"

Cody: I love that.

Annie: That's all gotta be video recorded.

Cody: It has to be.

Annie: This is all recorded.

Cody: It's all recorded.

Annie: And then Jonah's sitting there and we're like, "My guy, how did you survive that?"

Cody: That's right.

Annie: "How did you survive those three days?"

Cody: I love that.

Annie: I know.

[00:36:55] <Music>

Annie: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to make sure you've checked out our big sum blowout. Woo-Hoo. It's a sale at shopanniefdowns.com. It ends on Monday. So do not sleep on this. If you've been eyeing something in the shop, now is the time to do some online shopping because there are discounts up to 75% off.

Listen, if you're an early Christmas shopper, if you have people with birthdays coming up or there's something you've been eyeing for yourself, we have t-shirts and tank tops and stickers and sweatshirts. And y'all don't want to miss out on this sale.

It ends September 4th, which is Labor Day. So you do not have much longer. Just head to shopanniefdowns.com. That's shopanniefdowns.com. And remember the big summer blowout, woo-hoo, ends on September 4th.

All right. Let's go back and finish up this conversation with Cody.

[00:37:48] <Music>

Annie: So this album, as I'm thinking about my listen through of it and thinking about... I didn't know the grief story. I'm sorry, I didn't know that. I didn't know the grief story. But when you hear this album, you hear a solidness. That's not a good word. You hear a solidness, but the difference, Cody, is you're a worship leader, but you're a singer-songwriter first. And I hope this is a compliment. It's meant to be. Okay.

Cody: I'm nervous.

Annie: It's sweeter than a worship album.

Cody: Okay.

Annie: Because it has guitar at the center in like a singer-songwriter way. So somehow you've put together the grief of what you've experienced, the solidness of where you and God are with a really inviting singer-songwriter kindness.

Cody: That's awesome. I love that.

Annie: So how do you do that? I mean, do you hear a difference between you and a big, big worship sound? Do you hear a singer-songwriter in you different?

Cody: You know, I've never been asked that before, and I think now my brain's going down the road.

Annie: Go. Take a second.

Cody: I love that because... my first impression of you saying that is, you know, a senior songwriter, that genre is known for vulnerability. It's known for kind of stripping everything back and you really feeling the heart on the sleeve kind of thing. So I love that. I think vulnerability as a worship leader is one of the greatest weapons that we have is just wearing your heart on your sleeve, letting those moments with God be out in the open. I mean, I take that as a massive compliment.

I don't know as far as do I hear a difference. I would say yes. I would say yes before you even said that just because I think that we're all created to be unique. And I

think that I really am... God's kind of brought me through getting rid of the curse of comparison and understanding that-

Annie: The curse of comparison. That's a big...

Cody: Yeah.

Annie: Okay.

Cody: There is a uniqueness to each of us. I'm not meant to compare myself to someone else. I'm meant to be who I've created to be, and there's a specific sound that's supposed to come out of me. And of course, yes, it will have similarities and there will be things that... you know, people often try to put things in boxes and they'll find a box for it, and that's fine. But ultimately the sound should be unique. If I'm being who I truly am made to be, then the sound should be unique coming out. And that's true for anybody.

Annie: Yeah. I mean, I think in the faith space we aren't allowed to talk about the curse of comparison because we're supposed to always... It feels like the party line is supposed to be "I just support everything they're doing." But they're doing... I appreciate you bringing that up because I feel that. I feel that with podcasters, with authors, with speakers, with pastors. I mean, I feel that. So how do you wrestle down the curse of comparison? How do you wrestle? How do you do it?

Cody: I think the root of... when you have an understanding that by you comparing yourself, you're actually stealing God's destiny for your life.

Annie: Oh, say that.

Cody: That you are robbing yourself of the beautiful and unique and full potential that God has put inside of you because you're trying to be somebody else. So I think when you have an understanding, then you get... I know for me then I get real aggressive. I'm like, You will not steal from me. You'll not rob from me.

Annie: That's it.

Cody: You'll not rob everything that God has made me to do and made me to be. And how freeing it is to know that you are meant for your lane. I also see this picture, this beautiful mosaic. You know, if you think about all the people that God has created in this... you know, you look at a mosaic and it's all these different beautiful pieces that they fit together. And they fit together to make a whole picture, right?

And if I'm not in my spot in the mosaic, and if I'm trying to be the same color and the same shape as this other piece, I'm not gonna fit where I'm supposed to be and then the picture's gonna be off. And then you've got one piece that's double stacked because you're trying to be the other person and blah, blah, blah. It's like I've got to fit in my spot in the giant mosaic God has creating of the kingdom of God and the representation of who He is on the earth. I'm made to fit this spot. And I also have to be okay that I'm just made to be in this one little spot.

Annie: That's right.

Cody: This is who God made me to be and it's not my job to be the whole picture and know it's not my job to conquer the whole world. It's my job to do everything that God has asked me to do and be obedient to that on the earth while I'm here. And then to hear, "Well done good and faithful servant. You were who I created you to be, you ran in your lane." So if I compare myself, I'm just messing all that up. Just getting aggressive against it is good.

Annie: Get aggressive against the curse of comparison. We need to call tip. It's spiritual [inaudible 00:42:58]. We got like multiple shirts we need to make now.

Cody: Yes. Let's go!

Annie: I want some dating advice because one of the-

Cody: It's been a long time I've been in the dating world.

Annie: I Know. I know. Excellent. At times, I have dated people who are public like me, had a public life and it has not worked.

Cody: Yeah, it's very hard.

Annie: I tend to really like tour managers, sound guys, people who hand me a microphone and carry my suitcase and who are in their calling, right?

Cody: Yes.

Annie: But then I think about my friends who are pastoring and they're co-pastors with their spouse and they're both pastors at the same church or who are both teachers at the same school. Or who are doing totally opposite things? I'm curious, when you look at my life, do you encourage people going after someone else who is publicly doing ministry would be awesome because y'all would go faster and farther and team it up and blah, blah, blah, or get a support person who's doing what they're called to but they help you go faster and farther and move the gospel.

Cody: I don't think you can give a blanket answer to that question, unfortunately. I think that there are beautiful and challenging parts of both sides. I can only speak to my own situation with Kari. You know, for us it was God bringing us together. It was God developing a friendship for years before we ever knew we would date or get married before that was even a thought in our mind. And then it was mutual friends of ours saying, "Hello, you guys are perfect for each other. You need to realize it."

It was such a journey of just, you know, God bringing us together. I could obviously look at our situation and from a bias lens and go, Yeah, it's amazing to join forces with someone who is also doing what you're doing. And yes-

Annie: You get to tour together and you get to take the boys.

Cody: You know, there is a beautiful thing about... you know, we definitely feel the one can put a thousand to flight, two can put 10,000 to flight. We feel that in what we do. You know, I have to chalk it up to like God just created... And you could get into a whole discussion about, like, is there the one for you or is it the one after you choose and God blesses it. I don't actually know the answer to that. And I think there's good arguments for both sides.

Annie: Same. I'll let you know at some point.

Cody: Okay, great.

Annie: I don't know yet.

Cody: But you know, I think, Kari and I feel like it was very appointed by God for us to be together. So I don't know. That's a hard question to answer. And then I see people that do what we do, that it is very much the other format, the other way that you described it and that's beautiful as well. I think that those people are... they're running in their lane and the person that is in more of the, I guess, support role and they're doing something, you know, or even they have just different career paths and whatever. I mean that's really beautiful.

Annie: Still get better seats in heaven than me.

Cody: That's really beautiful as well.

Annie: Like the tour manager who's making sure your Ashley, who I adore, your tour man... I mean, Ashley makes sure that our ministries move forward in a way that's going to get her a better seat than me.

Cody: That's right.

Annie: I think so much, Cody, that when people clap after I speak, I think, well, there's my reward. I think like, You know who's not getting claps? The guy who made sure my microphone's on.

Cody: That's right.

Annie: You know who's not getting claps? It's the people who held the doors.

Cody: You're right.

Annie: I'm getting it. Here it is. Right here.

Cody: We're gonna be telling and be like, Man, those claps on me a thing now-

Annie: That's it. That's it. I look at the assignment board and I'm cutting grass.

Cody: I'm gonna start telling people not to clap for me anymore.

Annie: "Don't clap at the end of this."

Cody: Do not, do not, do not, do not clap. Shh. Stop. You're stealing my crown jewels.

Annie: That's right. You're taking them.

Cody: Stop it.

Annie: I was gonna lay them down anyway, but don't take them.

Cody: Stop it.

Annie: I just think it's really interesting for all of our friends listening who are married or want to be married, there is a world... This is probably me being older too, being 43. There's a world where I look at a man and I think, "Our lives aren't gonna partner because of what I do." So we don't even need to like... Unless God intervenes we don't even need to because of what you're called to and what I'm called to.

One time I tried with a public person and I didn't marry him. Didn't work. So it's been really beautiful to watch like the tour worlds and y'all. And there's so many couples. Jarrett and Jeanne Stevens from Chicago that are pastoring a church, I'm like... Alex and Henry are a great example of like two put 10,000 to flight. I mean,

like run fast. But the complications of two principals or two teachers, or two artists are real.

Cody: Which I think, you know, two will put 10,000 to flight regardless if it's public or not, regardless to... I think what we've learned in almost 10 years of marriage, which isn't... you know, we still have a lot to learn, but I think the two to put 10,000 to flight really happens in the time that nobody sees. It happens in the praying together, it happens in the way that you're hearing the Lord, the way that you're leading your family, the way that you're investing in your marriage.

So two puts 10,000 to flight regardless of what your careers look like, you know? And I think if you were to look at Kari and I and think there is a two to 10,000 thing happening, all that really is happening in the way roots are going in the soil behind the scenes. You know what I mean? We can't possibly get up and have this weight to what we're doing and be able to carry it without that root system going down deep.

And that's happening in those conversations, that's happening in those counseling sessions with our pastor. That's happening in those... You know, it's happening in those marital fights and saying I'm sorry and working it out and hearing the Lord and getting better and going deeper like we've been talking about. You know, it's happening the way that we're doing that in our time. So that applies to every single relationship regardless of what it looks like on the outside.

Annie: That's Good. What did we not talk about that you want to make sure we talk about?

Cody: Oh, I don't know.

Annie: Did we leave any stone unturned?

Cody: We've talked about a lot of great things. I think we're good.

Annie: The last question we always ask. Cody Carnes, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you?

Cody: Oh, man, releasing this album, being done, telling people I'm releasing an album.

Annie: I know. I'm sorry.

Cody: And playing lots of golf. Playing lots of golf.

Annie: I think I want to get into golf.

Cody: You Should. Kari just started.

Annie: Okay, great. I'm gonna text her.

Cody: You should.

Annie: I want an outside sport. Okay.

Cody: It's great. She started with lessons, which is the best thing you could do. I've never had a lesson and I am an idiot for it. I've been playing for 15 years.

Annie: Is she happy with who she took her lessons from?

Cody: Yes.

Annie: Okay. I'm just gonna get her to tell me.

Cody: And she is crushing it from day one. I mean, she's going to be a much better golfer than me in probably a year's time.

Annie: Okay.

Cody: Which is gonna be great. It's gonna be a lot of fun. But she's very into it.

Annie: Okay. Golf. Do y'all have a favorite course? Are there a bunch around here?

Cody: We play a couple of courses around here.

Annie: Okay, Great. See, some girlfriends and I-

Cody: It's beautiful.

Annie: There's a new set of women on TikTok, these two girls who are golfers and they ride around in their golf cart making videos. Somehow that showed up in like five of our Discover feeds. And we're all like, "We should be golfers.

Cody: Oh, nice. It's working.

Annie: Because tennis feels too hot. Too much movement.

Cody: Yeah. Golf is beautiful. What I love about it is every course is different. You're out in the trees, you're out in the woods. It's beautiful. And you can go play golf anywhere in the world and it will take you to some of the most insane, beautiful

destinations. The thing is it takes a lot of investment. But once you invest and you start-

Annie: Money or time?

Cody: Both.

Annie: Okay.

Cody: Yeah, both. Very much of both.

Annie: Do I have to buy clubs before I start?

Cody: No. I would take lessons and then you'll need to get clubs soon after that. But I would do a few lessons.

Annie: So maybe I do lessons-

Cody: And your couch will help you.

Annie: ...before Christmas help and then I ask my parents for golf clubs for Christmas.

Cody: There you go. That's a good strategy.

Annie: Great. That sounds like a good fall for me.

Cody: Yeah. Great.

Annie: That's great. Cody, thanks for doing this.

Cody: Oh, it's been a joy.

Annie: You are welcome any, every time. Anytime you want to come back.

Cody: All right.

Annie: Thank you so much. I cannot wait for people to hear this album, *Firm Foundation*. It's available now. So they can go listen.

Cody: Go check it out.

Annie: Love it. Thank you.

[00:51:16] <Music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't he awesome? I am telling you, I'm having the most fun in these conversations right now. I love everywhere that that conversation went today, and especially getting to hear Shayna's story. Oh, I just loved it.

So go listen to Cody's new album, *Firm Foundation*. Make this your weekend album. Be sure you're following him on social media time. Tell him thanks so much for being on the show.

And if you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me. And don't forget you can find the That Sounds Fun Podcast on Instagram @thatsoundsfunpodcast. Go give that a follow as well so you don't miss out on any of the fun bonusy things we got going on over there.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is getting in the pool. I have not been allowed to submerge myself since my surgery until today. So let's get in the pool this weekend everybody.

Y'all have a great weekend. We'll see you back here on Monday with our follow-up Q&A episode from Summer Lovin. We answer a lot of y'all's questions and a lot of your sex questions coming on Monday with the therapist of the pod, Jim Cress. We will see y'all on Monday. Have a great weekend.