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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. And man have we had a week on the podcast! We are so grateful for all these shows. I'm so happy to be here with you today as well.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to tell you about another podcast I think you're going to love called The Best of You with Dr. Alison Cook. Based on your reaction to a series we've done, like the Enneagram and Build Your Board, I know The Best of You is going to be right up your alley, too.

Dr. Alison is an author and therapist who has counseled women for over two decades. She's a former teacher and she loves taking complex topics and breaking them down into practical tools you can apply in your everyday life. You'll hear topics on things like your secret weapon against stress and anxiety or how to make new friends and manage your capacity in different seasons.

And you'll get to hear her guests like our friends Dr. Curt Thompson and Sissy Golf, Jennie Allen and so many more. Episodes come out every Thursday. So there is a new one today. And you'll walk away learning how to break free from painful patterns, mend your past, and discover your true self in God.

It is truly like your own therapy session or eavesdropping on someone else's and taking away the nuggets you need. It is such a good show.

Subscribe wherever you're listening to this episode and don't miss your chance to learn and grow from one of the best, Dr. Alison Cook. Again the show is called The Best of You with Dr. Alison Cook.

Intro: Today here on That Sound Fun, I get to talk with our dear friend and Grammy Award-winning songwriter, producer, and critically acclaimed artist Brooke Ligertwood. You may remember Brooke from Episode 369 or you may remember her from her maiden name Brooke Fraser. She is truly one of my very favorite guests and friends and man, I'm so grateful that she sat down with us.

Her sophomore solo album *Eight* just came out. It is a collection of new songs and songs you may remember like *Lead Me to the Cross* and *Desert Song*. Y'all. They're new for the now generation and intended to be this unfolding listening experience for every worshiper to engage with. It is such a good album.

Eight follows Brooke's debut solo album *Seven* which has over 146 million global streams. Since its 2022 release and features hit singles you probably know like *A*

Thousand Hallelujahs and *Honey in the Rock*. Brooke's contribution to the church through her music, her heart, her writing, her... I mean, just her as a human is just impossible to measure.

I'm so thankful that she's back to talk about this new album and what God's been showing her. And it is a tender, beautiful conversation. I'm so honored that she would sit down with us.

So here's my conversation with the dear Brooke Ligertwood.

[00:02:53] <Music>

Annie: Okay, Brooke, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Brooke: Thank you.

Annie: I'm so glad you're here.

Brooke: It is fun to be here-

Annie: It is. Thank you.

Brooke: ...with you again.

Annie: I feel the same. What a gift. I reached out to your friend Jason Ingram, and I was like, "Do you want to come?"

Brooke: Oh, yes.

Annie: "You can come sit with Brooke and I."

Brooke: Yes.

Annie: We've got to get him on at some point.

Brooke: I know.

Annie: Because he's just the like juice behind so many albums.

Brooke: Yeah.

Annie: Did he do *Seven* and *Eight* with you?

Brooke: I will only ever do stuff if we're doing it together.

Annie: Really?

Brooke: I mean, we've been friends for a lot of years and really realized there was something special that happened when we got together when... You know, we had known each other for a long time, but not really ever spent time together, and Scott and I kind of said to him one time, "Should we just like break the ice? Like, should we just write together?" We never do this, but we just have a day together. And this is kind of like probably six years or so ago now. And we got together on that day and we wrote *King of kings*, and we were, oh, I guess there's something here."

And then a few years later, we were like, "Hey, shall we get a couple days together?" And were like, "Look, let's lower our expectations. *King of Kings* is like a once-in-a-lifetime thing. Like let's just not put that expectation. At least just hang out." And then that two days we wrote three songs, which ended up being the beginnings of really *Seven*. That was the time with Jason was when I realized I think that this is a thing. Because this doesn't really happen.

So yeah, Jason and I, we produced the albums together. I am a female producer. So we do those things together. So him he just has a gift and a desire and a heart to really come alongside some of the kind of voices in this generation that sometimes maybe, sometimes might not necessarily kind of tick all of these boxes, which fit in a traditional flow.

So Jason just has such a heart to kind of get alongside those people and have their voices be heard, which I just think speaks so much to the purity of his own heart and just kind of that pastoral... He's very pastoral. That pastoral part of Jason that just kind of wants to see the next generations kind of getting stronger. He's an incredible guy.

Annie: It's so interesting that in every person who does a public thing, there have to be people who feel as called to that person and to the work of that person as we feel called to the public work.

Brooke: Yes.

Annie: And my brain does not work like that at all. Of course not because I'm not ever in that seat. But I just think people like Jason and I think of like Jeff Pardo is another person that, you know, and then a bunch of people on my team where you go, like,

man, you're called to do the mission but you also have the humility to not be the face. And that's what Jason is. He's just so humble.

Brooke: He is. I think that's such an important part of... I think you can tell when there's a team that's kind of called together rather than has been hired together, if that makes sense. There's such a different sense of unity and a different sense of mission because people have heard their own yes to the Lord. And that's absolute game-changer.

So I'm incredibly blessed to have a team, Jason, kind of my management team dominator who have heard from the Lord for themselves that they're supposed to be part of this. So there's such a grace that comes with it. There's such a risk that comes with it. We're not striving to do anything or build anything. We're all just trying to say yes to the Lord. So it's a pretty sweet and safe and clean, beautiful place.

Annie: I wonder if you've ever felt this. I have felt at times when we're bumping up against like brutal spiritual warfare for one reason or another, or if things are just going sideways, I sometimes feel guilty that they have signed up for this. Where I'm like, "I don't have a choice. I'm either the ship or I'm tied to the ship. I don't know which one. You got on here."

Brooke: Yes, yes. I know.

Annie: "I don't get to get off." And so then I feel, man, I'm sorry you're suffering. I'm sorry you... But then they say, "I'm called. I'm called to this." I just think that is... they're better people than me.

Brooke: I mean, it's true. Because like you said, the spiritual life is very real. I remember we had a family assistant and we were in the process of hiring, and, you know, we needed this role to be filled. And we kind of interviewed a few people. And I said to this amazing woman who ended up stepping into this role, you know, just so you know, though, "If you step into this, there will be spiritual warfare. It's part of it. So I just need you to be kind of just aware of it." I'm not like speaking bad things but that's kind of probably going to happen. So just maybe consider that."

And then a few months after she started, she was like, "You said that in the interview," but she was like, "I forgot about when you're on kind of the frontlines in ministry, I forgot that this is the stuff that happens." So it's not just, you know, this stuff that doesn't just happen to me. It happens to the people around us as well."

- Annie:** Think about that when you went from single to married. Because I got my tail feathers handed to me in an event a couple of weeks ago, and afterwards, I said to the Lord, "I'm not sure we should bring someone into this. I understand what I've signed up for. I'm not sure we should bring a husband into this." That feels like a big ask for this guy to put him in this with me." And I know that's not good theology. And I know that's not the Lord. But when you feel real pushback, yeah, it's hard to want to invite other people into it.
- Brooke:** Yeah. I pray often for my kids, because my kids didn't ask for this. I just have to believe that God loves them enough and that He has grace enough for Scott and I to have entrusted us with the lives of these two little girls who will be women, you know, incredible women. But sometimes they're having to navigate things either getting of an age now where kind of people, you know, ask them weird things or say weird things to them at school because of me. And we're having to have those kind of conversations. And I'm just like this... I have to fight the mom guilt in a different way. Because I'm like, "They didn't ask to be born to me." But they're incredible.
- Annie:** I bet every Bible Study leader and pastor, and pastor spouse listening is like, "We get it. We get it." Anybody who's doing any version of ministry is getting what we're saying. Because it is like, if there isn't any challenge, that's probably a problem, too.
- Brooke:** Yeah.
- Annie:** Right.
- Brooke:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Annie:** I had the worst migraine I've had in maybe a decade-
- Brooke:** Oh, sorry. Oh gosh.
- Annie:** ...a couple of weeks ago at an event. And when I tell you, Brooke, people came over and prayed. And before they prayed, they said, "Do you need to not do this?" And I said, "If I throw up on stage, I know God brought me here to do it." And then people came and prayed and it was gone. And I was like, "Oh, the Lord just needed me to step into the river before He could part..." I think both forces needed to hear me say I'm doing this no matter what to break something. But then I thought, we can't get... no one needs to sign up for this. I'll just handle it.
- Brooke:** They get the grace. They get the grace.

Annie: That's right. Oh, so it just makes me so grateful for our teams and what they do with us.

Brooke: Yes.

Annie: And the ways I can support my pastor too and pray for the people that are leading me.

Brooke: That's right.

Annie: What do you know about God that you didn't know last time you were here?

Brooke: Oh.

Annie: It has been a long year and a half? February of '22.

Brooke: Yeah. Gosh. I have been relieved and amazed and partially horrified at His holiness. His holiness will not be diluted or defiled. It's... woo.

Annie: What does it change in your everyday life? Has it changed how you pray? Has it changed who knows what they know?

Brooke: I'm not sure. It leaves me grateful. Honestly, there's been a lot of grief that is... not that I know that the Lord is holy. I am amazed and in wondering and awe and in love and a flame at His holiness, but just so saddened that we, including me, like underestimated so often. But I'm so relieved that He is who He says He is.

His patience, the line of mercy He extends to us that we so often don't take. But the line of mercy He extends to us because He is holy and we do need His mercy. It's pretty wonderful and terrifying and good. Yeah, deeply good.

Annie: Is that why *Fear of God* was the single?

Brooke: I think *Fear of God* is something that has been staring at me for a few years. I love scripture and I love the vocabulary of worship. I think if we look at the Psalms, you know, this anthology of God's songs, there's everything in there. And I think it's really important that we have a really diverse vocabulary in worship. Not that reflects our experiences, but that reflects what scripture says about what it is to be human, which is included in the Psalms, right?

Annie: Yeah.

Brooke: Because I love the Song of Worship, I love what the praise that's entrusted to us to bring on this side of eternity as the church. So when I look at kind of the song of the Song of Worship in the Capital C Church, just didn't see anywhere that we were really singing about the fear of God.

And I guess in my own life and in the past few years of my life, kind of seeing, for better or worse, what happens when we do or do not yield to the fear of God and cultivate that reverence for better or worse. It doesn't mean that you become kind of an uptight religious person. The fear of God actually leads to the... the word says friendship of the Lord belongs to those who fear Him.

Annie: Wow.

Brooke: In other words, it leads to more intimacy, not less. Because we are approaching God and knowing Him on His terms, not on ours. So, anyway, so *Fear of God* kind of was simmering in me for a few years. Just that desire to write about this in some way. And then yeah, the song finally kind of bubbled up.

It is not the most congregational song, but it is a song that, for me, especially finishing it around the time that my mother-in-law was in her last months of life and kind of really sitting in that Corinthians chapter about resurrection. And in a twinkling of an eye, you know, we will be just immortal, will be clothed immortal, and all of these really important themes of resurrection kind of in there as well.

So it's kind of definitely my most screamo song. But it's not a screamo for the sake of screamo. It's a screamo because the victory's very real. And one day we will apprehend it in its fullness. So that's an exciting thing to be able to declare.

Annie: When Redman was on and we talked about what's God doing in the world, he said, have you heard Brooke's song *Fear of God*?

Brooke: Oh, he did?

Annie: Yeah.

Brooke: He's amazing.

Annie: And I said, "Yeah, I know." I was like, "I know." I mean, it is like everybody, let's take a step forward song. It is a rally-and-cry kind of song. It's beautiful.

Brooke: Thank you.

Annie: I mean, it's just incredible.

[00:14:36] <Music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation to share about one of our amazing partners, Indeed. Listen, hiring is always a challenge no matter the size of your company. And while we're up for a challenge here, we all know the time it takes to research candidates and review resumes. And interviewing is a lot of extra work. So that's where Indeed comes in.

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Sponsor: And one more amazing partner to tell you about, [Hiya Health](#). When it comes to helping my miniBFF stay as healthy as they can, Hiya Health is such a great way to get them to take their vitamins. Typical children's vitamins are basically candy in disguise. They're filled with two teaspoons of sugar, unhealthy chemicals and other gummy junk kids should never eat.

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That link and pretty much every other link you could ever hope for are in the show notes below or in Friday's AFD Week in Review email that we will send you. You can also sign up for that in the show notes below. So be sure to check those out.

Now, back to our conversation with Brooke.

[00:17:19] <Music>

Annie: I think one of the interesting things you said is what God has entrusted to us to worship on this side of eternity as the church. Will you talk about what we get to do in worship before we know heaven? Like what is the uniqueness of worshipping now before we know? And what's the faith like? Why does God... Well, I don't even know about God. Why does worship matter to us now on this side of eternity?

Brooke: What a gift that we get to worship now before everything is redeemed, before every... What's that phrase? Before every sad thing becomes untrue, you know?

Annie: Yes, yes.

Brooke: Like what a gift to be able to know a broken and contrite heart and spirit the Lord will not despise. We get to worship Him now before the fulfillment. And we don't get to do... In eternity, that's definitely not gonna be boring. I believe there'll still be work that we have to do and all of these good things, you know.

Annie: I hope so. I don't wanna be bored.

Brooke: I know. Exactly. All of these things.

Annie: Did you watch *The Good Place*?

Brooke: I didn't.

Annie: I'll spoil the ending for just a second. *The Good Place* is boring in the end.

Brooke: Oh.

Annie: And the whole show is so interesting, and then *The Good Place* is boring.

Brooke: No.

Annie: And you go, "No, we're gonna work. We're gonna worship. We're gonna play. We're gonna..."

Brooke: All the things before the fall. Right? Gardening and work and things growing and rest and all of these good things. But we get to worship now before everything is fulfilled. What a gift to be able to worship the Lord in the midst... You know, that Psalm 23, you prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies. This table that we get to eat at now is really unique, but it's also the means by which we taste the final table.

You know, the table we get to sit out here is a foretaste of the finality of the redemption that we will experience. That's not to say we're sitting around just kind of waiting for everything to be made right. But it means that the work that we do now and here and the way that we built His kingdom here really matters. And that all of these are glimpses and foretastes of what will be more wonderful than we can imagine.

I watched a video from John Mark Comer yesterday, and he said, "If you can't do anything else when you're..." He was like, "When you're laying in bed, before you get up and touch your phone, say Psalm 123 to yourself." Something like that. It stuck with me.

This morning I woke up and I said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He invites me to lie down and green pastures." And so quick, "Brooke, the Holy Spirit said, "I make you lie down."

Brooke: Ooh.

Annie: And I was like, "Oh, you're right."

Brooke: Wow.

Annie: That's not an invitation to rest. You say, "Lie down in green pastures." And I went like, "This is it. It took 30 seconds for me to have an encounter with the Holy Spirit this morning in His scripture. 30 seconds of him going, "I didn't say invite," I said, "Make." I said, "Make you lie down."

Brooke: Wow.

Annie: Isn't that wild?

Brooke: That's so beautiful.

Annie: It just doesn't take very much.

Brooke: No.

Annie: Right?

Brooke: And I think it's just about cultivating an awareness of His presence. And every moment the Lord is at this table with us right now. And it doesn't mean we become like weirdos, you know? But just that we can look for Him in every circumstance and usually find Him.

You know, there's been circumstances in my life in the past year and a half that's beyond my imaginings, but when I've looked for Him, every time I've seen, Oh, but your mercy is here. Oh, but... oh, but this, this, and this. And just... yeah. It's miraculous, really. Yeah.

Annie: I've had a couple of grieving experiences in the last year where I've kept saying to the Lord, "Can you believe we're even talking about this? Can you believe this is even... this person or that thing? Can you believe? So often I felt the Holy Spirit a) remind me, like, but for the grace of God, sister, you know? And also like... Maybe this is our age, Brooke, but it's not necessarily that the world's getting darker, it's that we've lived longer and we're seeing... or is it both?"

Brooke: Yeah. I think it's both probably, isn't it? I remember when I was young and I was so confused at why my mom used to cry in movies. Like I have this memory of watching *Beaches* and my mom just weeping at the end. And I was like, "Mom, why are you crying?" And then now it's my kids going, "Mom, are you crying?"

Annie: Are you watching *Encanto*?

Brooke: Yeah. They're definitely not watching *Beaches*. That was a really random choice for me to watch as a child. Like that's so sad. But now my kids are the ones going to me because you have lived experiences that then kind of reflect in story.

Annie: So you said *Seven* was gonna be your only solo album? A worship album?

Brooke: Yeah.

Annie: And then here's *Eight*.

Brooke: Yeah.

Annie: And *Eight* is full of these songs, Brooke, that you have invited us to sing for years. As you want to, will you kind of tell us how *Eight* was shaped?

Brooke: Yeah. Definitely *Seven* was unexpected and something that the Lord spoke to my husband and I about pretty out of the blue but very clearly. So *Seven* was a really clear thing that we had to do. We didn't hesitate to say yes because we do. We say yes to the Lord. But I don't pretend that I understood why.

And it wasn't until kind of some things started to happen after the album in the months, literally, I think a month after the album was released that I was like, Oh. And my wonderful prophetic pastor friend had had a word for me, which I didn't connect with *Seven* actually because I'm stupid a little, until later. But she had said in kind of the months... the Lord's so kind and how He kinda prepares us for what He's gonna do.

Annie: It is the kindest thing.

Brooke: It's miraculous. But she had said to me, you know, "Brooke, I was praying for you and I saw you here but the Lord was saying where He wanted to take you was over here." And then she said, "As I watched," she was like, "I saw two turntables, and you were standing on one of the two turntables."

Annie: Wow.

Brooke: And she said, "The distance was actually quite far, but all it would take for you was a single step, because at the right time, the Lord was gonna say, now, and you would take one step from one turntable to another."

Annie: Wow.

Brooke: "And then you would end up where He was placing you." So not realizing that, you know, we stepped into *Seven* and that turned out to be the single step. So, yeah, *Eight* has been healing to make, but still a little traumatic to talk about.

And like we were messaging, you know, before we had this conversation, I was saying, you know, unfortunately for some of my team who really would like me to

talk about this in a lot of places, like I wanna be so honoring and so wise in the way that I'm able to speak about this. I don't know that I'm fully equipped yet. So I'm feeling...

So I said to you, Annie, I trust you and I trust the safe place that you create and beg the Holy Spirit to give me wisdom and give me the words. But you know, I feel really blessed in that I was able to... you know, it's 20 years this year since my first album came out. And that's actually a lot of listeners probably wouldn't know. I don't expect, you know, anything. That was my mainstream career. So I'm signed to Sony when I was 18, made all of these mainstream records-

Annie: This album is 20 years old?

Brooke: No. Well, that was my second record.

Annie: Okay. Okay.

Brooke: So that was 2006. So 2003 was *What to Do With Daylight*, my first record. But in the process of putting out that first record and beginning to tour that, I met these incredible people in Australia who just felt like home. The people felt like home. Their genuine love for God, and their ease, and their fun. And I was just like, "These are my people."

So I moved to Australia and this became my community. And then that was my safe place, my church while I kind of went around the world making and touring Brooke Fraser records. And then it turned out that these songs that I was writing in my bedroom to the Lord that didn't have a place on my mainstream records, had a place in this beautiful church community.

So I have been so honored that for the past 18 years, whilst having this kind of mainstream career, I was able to serve the church through songs. Like, what a gift. And with my community, you know, with a team of people that I love.

And then, so yeah, at first I was just writing worship songs to the Lord in my room, and then them being able to come out through my church. And the most recent decade as well then being able to write with other friends who are worship leaders and other churches and stuff.

All that to say, you know, I have these 18 years of songs that I personally have never released. It has been my joy to be able to serve, you know, other ministries and movements in my own church with these songs. So-

Annie: Are you a co-writer on every song?

Brooke: I either wrote... Yes. Yes.

Annie: You wrote *Lead Me to The Cross*?

Annie: How did I never know that? Because you don't sing it.

Brooke: Yes.

Annie: Okay, keep going. Sorry.

Brooke: So, yeah. So I have all of these songs that I've never actually-

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Brooke: ...had the opportunity to release myself. And, you know, even when I write these songs for the church, I willingly kind of, you know, go here, "Do with them what you will." But then obviously I've 20 years under my belt as well as an artist and 13 years as a producer as well.

So now at this time in my life, I get to now go, "This is the way that I always heard it, and this is how I get to express it." And for a song like *Lead Me to the Cross* as well, which I do with Martin Smith, who's one of my heroes, we were actually just in his home in Brighton a few months ago doing some stuff for the song. And his 20-year-old son, Noah, walked in and was like, "What are you guys doing again?" That's a terrible... I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Noah, if you ever hear this. That's not what you sound like.

Annie: I need you to know that the American at the table heard you go Australian to English. It was amazing.

Brooke: So, Noah walks and he's like, "What are you guys doing, again?" And we're like, "Oh, we are here. You know, we did this song together, we're doing it tomorrow." And he said, "Oh, actually, dad, I broke into your Dropbox and I listened to it." He's like, "That's awesome. When did you guys write that?" He had never heard that song before in his life.

Annie: Wow. So for me what I'm really passionate about high school students and college-age students and that generation who are coming into a really formative time in their relationship with Christ. And I still remember the songs that impacted

me, you know, at that age. And I'm like, there's a whole generation that have never heard these songs before and I feel like they still have something to offer.

So some people have been calling it Rerelease. I've never released these. So this is actually my first time getting to offer these songs for people who've loved them for a long time. This is 2023, you know. This is how I am offering them to you now. But then there's a whole generation that these are brand new songs. So that's really cool as well.

And honestly, it's been a really beautiful thing too. You know, I think when I wrote *Lead Me to the Cross*, I was 22 years old or something, and I can't tell you the number of times I wept during the making of this record. Just you know, 22-year-old Brooke giving 39-year-old Brooke the words to declare again, you know, in songs like *Desert Song* that I hadn't lead in 15-

Annie: Oh, we've gotta talk about it.

Brooke: ...I hadn't let it in 15 years.

Annie: Really?

Brooke: So, you know, we did this arrangement and we did it on tour actually earlier in the year. I did it at the *Seven* tour, and it was a massive shock. Every night that we did that song, something in the room changed. That again was a kind of a confirmation to me this song has something to offer now. This is actually a now word.

So I guess, yeah, it is the continuation of something, but it's also the start of something I have about... I think my husband and I, our songs of worship catalog together, has over a hundred titles. And I think I have at least a couple dozen that I would love to kind of be able to produce and release myself in this way.

So this is, yeah, the beginning of a process. And then of course the new songs as well. So *Fear of God*. There's one we released a couple of weeks ago called *Calvary's Enough*-

Annie: Oh, gosh. Wrote that song.

Brooke: ...which is just...

Annie: The problem with this album is your first listen can't be in public. That's the problem. Because it is so... The *Calvary's Enough* song will just... I mean, I was

processing a situation this morning and I went, Calvary's enough. All of this, Calvary's enough.

Brooke: And that's a song, you know, I'm not on the other side of a process yet. I'm in the middle of a process. So what do I have to sing in the middle of the process? And it's that *Calvary's Enough*. So yeah, songs like that.

And then *Bless God*, which is a song that became to mean so much to me personally. We actually wrote it to... Cody invited me to come and write with him and our friend, Brandon Lake, for a day. And we wrote it for Cody's record. But I honestly believe it was the mercy of God because for a year until Cody's record came out, all I had was this demo of Cody singing it, just his voice and piano.

And I would put that song on in my car and just drive around screaming and punching the steering wheel, singing that song to bless God, you know, when my hands are empty, bless God with the praise that cost me, bless God when nobody's watching. So that song has become such a personal song to me as well. So that's on there too. But yeah, here we are.

Annie: The *Desert Song*. I mean, I build a playlist on my Spotify every year for like the year 2023. So if the Lord brings songs to my brain, or if a song releases, and I go, this is for me today, this is for me today. So this year it's been very interesting because it has been songs... the Lord has been doing, like you're saying, 22-year-old Brooke wrote it for 39-year-old Brooke. Something I've been experiencing with the Lord a lot lately has been 22-year-old Annie made agreements with God that 43-year-old Annie might not hold, but He's believing her. He's believing 22 year old Annie, because maybe 43 would compromise because she didn't know.

Brooke: Wow.

Annie: 22 had a pure heart.

Brooke: Wow.

Annie: Right?

Brooke: Come on.

Annie: So the Lord has brought back all these songs. So it also has like Rita Springer's *No Other*.

Brooke: Oh, yes. Oh my gosh, Rita.

Annie: And the next song, New Wine, which is not a new song. I mean, it's newish. And then the next song, *I Will Wait* by Jason Upton.

Brooke: Oh my gosh. Yes.

Annie: Right? So the Lord was doing this thing over the summer of going, like, "Annie, go back. Go back and sing what you sang. The next song was the *Desert Song*. And then you say, here it is again, and I go, it's a word for today, Brooke. The Lord made it a word for my today in the summer when I was wrestling with Him. So it is what you have built here in *Eight* is a healing and a wrestling album.

Brooke: Yes, it is. And I like to say, you know, I'm not bringing anything back, I'm bringing it forward.

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

Brooke: We're not going back. These are not songs to reverse into. They're songs to go forward with.

Annie: Yes. And I have to wrestle with that, right?

Brooke: Mm-Hmm.

Annie: Like, I have to wrestle with God isn't bringing this song to me today for nostalgia purposes. It is for remember, remember that? And go. This is supposed to take you somewhere.

[00:32:53] <Music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about another amazing partner, [Beam](#). Did you know that sleeping less than six to seven hours a night is linked to reduced white blood cell count? And those white blood cells protect our bodies against illness. Considering it's the season when there's so much sickness going around, we need good sleep. And that's why Beam Dream is here to help.

Beam Dream contains a powerful all-natural blend to help you fall asleep, stay asleep, and wake up refreshed. You just mix Beam Dream into hot water or hot milk and stir and froth and enjoy it before bedtime. It's like a little nighttime treat before bed that's actually going to help you rest.

And today my friends get a special discount on Beam's Dream powder, which is their best-selling healthy hot cocoa for sleep with no added sugar. And now it's also available in delicious seasonal flavors like cinnamon cacao, and sea salt caramel, and white chocolate peppermint. I am interested. Better sleep has literally never tasted better.

If you wanna try Beam's best-selling Dream powder, take advantage of their biggest sale this year and get up to 50% off for a limited time when you go to shopbeam.com/tsf and use the code Cyber at checkout. That's shopbeam.com/tsf and use the code Cyber for up to 50% off.

Sponsor: And one last amazing partner to tell you about, [Prose](#). Okay, listen, I love Prose so much, I made sure they knew my new address here in New York for these two months, so I could get my shipment here.

Prose is custom-made to order haircare. It's one of the best things I've done for my hair. I just retook the quiz, added all the new information here about my life in New York, and they're sending a new custom shampoo to me. I am so excited.

All you do is take that hair consultation quiz, we love a quiz, answer the questions on everything from the climate where you live, that's something that changed for me, the issues you have with your hair, that's something that changed for me this time, too, your hair type and texture and your eating habits.

They analyze 85 personal factors and then handpick clean ingredients to get you closer to your hair goals with every wash. They took all my answers to that in-depth hair quiz and gave me this new formula. I am so interested to see if it is going to help solve some of the problems I'm having. And in history and my experience with Prose, it is.

Prose is an industry leader in clean and responsible beauty, and all their ingredients are sustainably sourced, ethically gathered, and cruelty-free. If you're not 100% positive, Prose is the best haircare you've had, they'll take the products back, no questions asked.

Custom-made-to-order haircare from Prose has your name all over it. Take your free in-depth hair consultation and get 15% off your first order today. Go to prose.com/thatsoundsfun. That's prose.com/thatsoundsfun for your free in-depth hair consultation and 15% off.

Okay, now back to finish up our conversation with Brooke.

[00:35:45] <Music>

Annie: I would like you to talk about how we should not shuffle this album. Because I think that is a very important fact as we're listening through the album. Because the song... I mean, *Bless God* to every chance I get, I didn't even... I didn't know I stopped and got into a new song. So will you talk about when you build it, keeping it non-shuffled.

Brooke: So maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I actually don't care. But, you know, people will say all of the stuff like, you know, albums are dead. It's all about the songs. And I say, Rubbish. I say, absolutely rubbish. I am such an albums girl. I love to listen to albums. I want to experience, you know... I don't wanna go to an art gallery and look at one picture. I wanna see the artist's exhibition.

Annie: Oh, beautiful.

Brooke: I wanna know about the tenor of the collection. Because there's only-

Annie: No one reads one chapter of a book.

Brooke: Exactly. Exactly. So for me, I don't... and particularly because this was a studio album. *Seven* was a live album, *Eight* is a studio album. But I think when it comes to... but I structure it like I would structure a song list in a worship service. I want it to be a worship service.

Annie: Wow.

Brooke: So there's things that I've done production-wise in this album deliberately so that it feels like you are in your own personal worship service. So there's a couple instrumentals that are deliberately too long because I want people to move from listening into singing themselves.

Even there's a song called *Authority*. That's one of the ones where I've deliberately built in a bunch of space to use for contemplation, to use for reflection. And then we go into this tag, all authority belongs to you, that repeats and repeats and repeats.

But then I deliberately kind of do prompts like I would if I was leading at a surface. I'm like, Just begin to declare it now because I don't want you to sit there in your car and listen to me singing it. I want you to experience what God wants to do as you start to declare it, as you start to... So it is a listening experience, but that's the lowest goal, you know? The goal would be that that's a framework for you to step

through into an actual experience of intimacy with Jesus. Because these songs can't change your life, but Jesus can.

Annie: That's right. You get a hundred songs that it could have been.

Brooke: Yeah

Annie: How do you narrow down to these 11?

Brooke: So I approach that like I would... So with all my albums with the mainstream albums or the wish albums that I got to produce the last few years through my church, kind of looking at theme, you know, what's the diversity of theme, diversity of lyric, tempo, key, all of these different things.

So particularly with *Eight*, I'm like, Okay, I don't need two songs that say the same thing or have different angles on the same thing. We want kind of multiple angles. So, for that reason, there's songs of invitation and welcome, songs of reflection and contemplation, songs of intercession, the themes of wilderness, themes of kind of straight vertical make we all... I always try and make sure there's at least one or two kind of cross-centered songs on there as well. And then also finishing with a song about Christ coming again. I love singing about Jesus coming again. So that's referenced a couple of times.

But trying to make sure kind of like we talked about for, you know, that the Psalms have this incredible diversity of theme. So when it comes to putting together a list for an album, that's what I'm thinking about as well. So, yeah, like I said, I've got a kind of couple dozen up my sleeve that I would like to do. So it's just kind of about. And also praying. We obviously ask the Lord, you know, what are the songs that You would like?

Annie: Why do you love singing about Jesus returning and why should we love it?

Brooke: I think it's a theme that's easy to dodge because it's a little uncomfortable. And it can seem to a person with no faith maybe one of the most fanatical aspects.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Brooke: It's uncomfortable.

Annie: After The risen again, it's the coming again. That's weird.

Brooke: It's like, oh, oh.

Annie: You're right. You're right.

Brooke: Like, that part, oh. But really our grip on eschatology has to be firm. And it brings with it not fear, but real faith for today. I love to, you know, think about communion. And I loved when Jesus said, you know, every time... Oh, sorry, Jesus didn't say it. But He said, Do this in remembrance of me. But then Paul said, "Every time you do this, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

Annie: Oh, wow.

Brooke: So, I love to think of communion not only as this beautiful liturgical act that kind of anchors us in the tradition of 2,000 years of the church and of all of the saints that have gone before, but is also such a radically prophetic act that prophesizes His coming, proclaim... every time you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim Christ's death until He comes.

It's another reason, you know, *Seven* was name for Revelation 1. And the seven letters to the seven churches. And just that whole thing of Jesus standing in the middle of His church. And I think that can bring us great comfort and relief and hope now when sometimes community is... and living in a community of believers is messy. But that idea that Jesus doesn't stand on the periphery, but in the middle, and He is coming again for a pure bride.

We can't purify ourselves. But as we yield to Him, He will do the purifying and the redeeming as we do the yielding and the repenting and the submitting.

Annie: The two turntables, a) they look like an eight. That's what I keep picturing. They look like an eight.

Brooke: Oh, wow.

Annie: Right?

Brooke: I hadn't even put that together. But is it seven to eight? Is that part of the step?

Brooke: I don't know.

Annie: We'll see. Right? I mean, I guess you'll have to see.

Brooke: I mean, definitely if you told me today that this is what, you know, even three years ago, if you said this is what life would look like, I... But I'm amazed at God's

sovereignty, at His poetry, and at His mercy. It's really remarkable. And feel very, very grateful.

Annie: For all the grief you've experienced the last two years, why is Jesus still the right answer? Is He?

Brooke: Well, yeah.

Annie: Right? I mean, I am assuming that you feel that.

Brooke: You know, to whom else will we go? To whom else will we go? I was talking to a friend about, you know, one of the other things that happened in the past couple years, which I dunno if I'll ever talk about, but I also happen to find myself at the scene of a crime taking place.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Brooke: That has brought, you know, a bunch of trauma as well. And I said to a friend of mine, it was like the enemy... I wasn't scared. I was angry because I recognized kind of what was happening. And I said to one of my friends afterwards, like, it was like the enemy was saying "Look how close I can get. Look how close I can get to your kids. Look how close I can get to your..." But I also go, when we were talking before about looking for Jesus in these situations, I also see that the Lord went, you can go that close and no further.

Annie: That's it.

Brooke: You know?

Annie: Right.

Brooke: So Jesus said, no further. That's a really easy thing to say. And I know that there'll be people listening who go, "But I don't feel like Jesus said no further in my life. I feel like things that had happened that should never have happened and He should not have let those things happen." And I think that's a really real place and a really true place.

And part of wrestling with the Lord is not denying those questions. And part of growing in love and intimacy with Him is bringing that to the fore and going, "Jesus, where were you? Can you show me?" And my experience has been that in situations that are unfathomable, when we ask Him where He was, often He will

show us. And even if the answer still means an ongoing wrestle, there's a real solace in recognizing His shepherding, which seems strange at times.

Annie: Right. Right. What do you need to say?

Brooke: The Lord is even better than we think He is. He's so good, Annie. I'm in awe of His faithfulness and His, like I said, His poetry. He's such a poet with our lives. And all the parts of my poem that are like C-R-A-P, the parts where I tried to kind of wrestle the narrative into my own hands, but where I've yielded to Him, He's always written a better story. He's always written a better stanza. He's always written a better transition sentence, you know? He's just so masterful, honest and so trustworthy and so beautiful.

Annie: We always talk about what tattoos we're gonna get and I keep thinking, Where else would I go? I feel like I'm gonna have to do that at some point. That phrase. Because of His kindness and because of His... and because Peter said it and I'm like, Oh, I'm team Peter all day long. I'm like, Yeah, well, I mean, where else do we go? We have the perfect poet writing a story that we do not understand.

I mean, I'm with you that tracing back some of the things that last few years. I'm like, Man, I did not get how this is the best story you want to write but okay. Where else would I go?

Brooke: Yeah. What was the tattoo we were gonna get last time? I can't remember. But there was a tattoo we were going to get last time.

Annie: And Lisa Harper too.

Brooke: I can't remember what it was.

Annie: Someone will tell us today.

Brooke: Someone will tell us.

Annie: I promise we'll hear today. They will tell us what were tattoos. Now we've got a list of tattoos to get. Love you, Brooke. Thank you for doing this.

Brooke: Thank you.

Annie: So grateful.

Brooke: My pleasure.

[00:45:49] <Music>

Outro: Oh, y'all, isn't she just amazing? My gosh, every conversation I have with her, I leave feeling encouraged and yeah, just like strengthened in my faith. I'm just so thankful for her. So go listen to *Eight* right now. I'm guessing you've already streamed it, but like it needs like 18 more runs in your life. And mine too. I'm literally gonna put it in my ears when I'm done with this.

And make sure you're following Brooke on social media. Tell her thank you so much for being on the show. And if you have any questions from this episode, drop them in the Q&A box on your Spotify app if you're a Spotify listener, or send them to us on Instagram @thatsoundsfunpodcast and we will try to answer them there.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and the streets of New York. Anywhere you might need me, that's how you can find me.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is trying this new bakery down in the Lower East Side in East Village. People are telling me over and over to try it. So I'm headed there this afternoon.

Y'all have a great week. We'll see you back here on Monday as we get to talk all things Advent with Raechel Myers and Amanda Bible Williams from She Reads Truth. We'll see y'all then.