

[00:00:00] <music>

**Annie:** Hi friends. Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host, Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today. Get ready for this episode. And did y'all hear the big news this week? Okay. On Sunday, August 11th, 2024 Sunday night, we are throwing a huge 10th anniversary That Sounds Fun live celebration at the Ryman Auditorium here in Nashville.

I'm freaking out about this. I've been dying to get you into the Ryman. I want all my friends to experience the Ryman, so I cannot believe we get to do this. It is going to be me, our friends Lady A from the podcast, Jamie and Knox, of course, Demi-Leigh Tebow, Eddie Kaufholz, of course, I couldn't do it, your favorite Broadway stars, Ginna Claire Mason Moffatt, and Mary Kate Morrissey, and some fun surprise guests and tons of surprises that we cannot tell you about just yet.

Tickets go on sale actual to the general public on Friday. Today is Thursday. Because you're a podcast listener, you are getting a pre-sale access today that will only last until Friday morning. The code is TSF, like That Sounds Fun. You're going to go to [anniefdowns.com/Ryman](http://anniefdowns.com/Ryman). That's where you can get your tickets. Again, the code to get in, the pre-sale code is TSF.

So, we have already had a lot of tickets purchased. The room holds 2,000 people. I want you to be in there. So, get your tickets right now. Like, right now. [Anniefdowns.com/Ryman](http://Anniefdowns.com/Ryman), and the code is TSF.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors, [AG1 by Athletic Greens](#). Part of my morning routine is starting with AG1 because it's just such an easy way to cover my nutritional basis for the whole day. It's just this guarantee that I am kicking off the day with essential brain, gut, and immune health support. Plus, it has a ton of vitamins, probiotics, and nutrients from whole foods.

Taking a bunch of different supplements feels like a lot for my brain to keep up with, which is why I love that all I have to do is take one scoop, put it in really cold water, you know I love it with some lemon juice, ice cubes, and I am good to go. Plus, if I'm running short on time or when I'm traveling, when I'm in New York or somewhere else, I can take those little travel packs with me and I don't have to skip out on my routine with AG1.

If there is a product that I would recommend to help elevate your health, it is AG1. And that's why I've partnered with them for so long. We're so grateful. But if you want to take ownership over your health, start with AG1. Try AG1 and get a free one-year supply of vitamin D3 plus K2, which is awesome. And you get five of

those AG1 travel packs for free as well with your first purchase exclusively at [drinkag1.com/soundsfun](https://drinkag1.com/soundsfun). That's [drinkag1.com/soundsfun](https://drinkag1.com/soundsfun).

**Sponsor:** Have you ever walked into someone's house and immediately had to know what candle they're burning? Listen, that is going to happen when you burn today's sponsor of the show, [The NOTES Candles](#). They're on a mission to help eliminate single-use candle vessels and give us a more earth-friendly option, but without having to give up on a beautiful, high-quality fragrance.

Here's what I've learned. The candle industry has a major problem. Almost two billion candles are sold globally each year. Almost all of them are likely to end up in landfills for the next one million years. But we all want our homes and offices to smell great, right? So there has to be a better way.

NOTES has created a refillable candle system that allows you to use your candle vessel again and again. The candles are made with fragranced wax beads. So all you do is place the wick in your reusable NOTES jar, fill it up with the wax beads, enjoy your fragrance for up to 36 hours, and then just do it all over again when you're ready for a new one.

Their collection of 13 fragrances are handcrafted by fragrance experts. I've been loving the smell of the Santal and Atlas Cedar, y'all. I mean, my goodness. Be a responsible consumer while not giving up high-quality home fragrance by making the switch to NOTES. You can build your custom starter kit right now at [notescandle.com/thatsoundsfun](https://notescandle.com/thatsoundsfun).

Right now NOTES is giving our friends 15% off and free shipping when you buy a NOTES starter kit using the CODE THATSOUNDSFUN. Just use that code, THATSOUNDSFUN, when you're placing your order. That's THATSOUNDSFUN at [notescandle.com/thatsoundsfun](https://notescandle.com/thatsoundsfun).

**Intro:** Okay, buckle up, because today on the show I've got my friend Tim Ross. Y'all know him. Upset the Gram. If you don't know him yet, you're about to. You're going to love him. He's a podcaster, a social media influencer, author, preacher.

His book, *Welcome to the Basement: An Upside-Down Guide to Greatness*, comes out on February 27th. But today we are talking about everything about our culture, about sexuality, about friendship, about confession. I mean, we are talking about the things that Tim loves to talk about on his podcast as well. It is really fun.

So a warning for those mini BFFs that might be listening along, we are going to talk about singleness and sex and marriage and sex. So this is probably like a

grown-up ears versus little friends' ears episode. Just keep that in mind if y'all are like in the car on the way to school.

Hi, MiniBFFs. Maybe this one isn't for everyone. I definitely hit the wowie zowie button in this one. So here is my conversation. If y'all are ready, let's everybody's buckle up. Let's go. We're talking with Tim Ross.

[00:05:52] <music>

**Annie:** Tim Ross, welcome to That Sounds Fun.

**Tim:** Thank you so much.

**Annie:** I mean, what an honor. Thank you for being here.

**Tim:** I'm grateful to be here.

**Annie:** We have been friends long distance on the internet for a while, maybe more. I've been a fan. But it's fun because our podcast network across the hall... I mean, when we sit down for staff meetings, there are times where people are like, "Did y'all listen to Tim Ross? Did y'all hear this today? So thank you for the work you're doing.

**Tim:** Thank you. I'm honored to be here. Really am.

**Annie:** Thank you. Okay, we're starting this year, 10th anniversary year, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you, Tim Ross.

**Tim:** What sounds fun to me is being on an island with Juliette with no cell phone, no books.

**Annie:** No books, even?

**Tim:** Not even books.

**Annie:** Okay.

**Tim:** Just each other.

**Annie:** Each other.

**Tim:** Yeah, absolutely. I'm an introvert, so when the question was posed, I'm like, if I was completely alone, then I would miss Juliette, so I need Juliette.

**Annie:** She's a star.

**Tim:** I don't even need my kids. Just Juliette.

**Annie:** I just listened to y'all's episode. We'll link to it. I listened to the episode of y'all retelling your story of how y'all met. And I thought, Juliette is a star.

**Tim:** She is.

**Annie:** I mean, she's been hearing in the Holy Spirit since she was a teenager.

**Tim:** Well, she gave her life to Jesus when she was nine years old and she meant it. It wasn't like, "I gave my life to Jesus young, and then I kind of went wayward and then came back." Nope. Nine, done. That's who she's been. The girl falls asleep listening to a British man whisper the King James Version of the Bible in her ear when she goes to sleep. No cap. No hyperbole. That's what she does.

**Annie:** That's amazing. Okay, so you'd be on an island just the two of y'all. Because you're a book guy too, like you're a reader.

**Tim:** I am.

**Annie:** Yeah, me too.

**Tim:** And when I say book, I mean Bible. I've read the Bible... Me and my friend Preston—he's my twin brother, but we're fraternal. He's just taller—we made a covenant with each other in 2008 that we would read the Bible more than we read any other book. So since 2008, I think I may have read maybe 15 books outside of the Bible. But we just go Genesis to Revelation and back.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Tim:** Like multiple times.

**Annie:** Do you switch versions or do you stick with one?

**Tim:** So I was 30 years King James and then I switched it.

**Annie:** Wow. Gosh.

- Tim:** Yeah, 30 years. So I have it all memorized in King James. But I switched to NLT when I became a young adult pastor because KJV is like off-roading through the Mojave Desert with a Honda Civic. So it just shouldn't happen.
- Annie:** You're right.
- Tim:** Yeah, it shouldn't happen.
- Annie:** So we have another podcast called Let's Read the Gospels, where I've been reading Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John every month.
- Tim:** Oh, awesome.
- Annie:** So we did it all of 2023. Now we're on our 14th lap.
- Tim:** Wow, that's awesome.
- Annie:** It changes when you read it out loud.
- Tim:** It absolutely does.
- Annie:** Because suddenly I'm like, "Wait, what did Jesus say?"
- Tim:** Yeah, absolutely.
- Annie:** Wait, what are you saying? I mean, it's been a wild experience being in the Gospels that much. I haven't read the whole Bible that much at all, but I've been in the Gospels much. It's crazy.
- Tim:** How did you feel about John 6 when you were reading it out loud and he's like, basically, eat me?
- Annie:** It is so bizarre.
- Tim:** It's my favorite chapter in John 6.
- Annie:** Really?
- Tim:** Absolutely. It's my favorite leadership chapter.
- Annie:** Okay, tell me why.

**Tim:** Because Jesus is literally telling those people something that He knows they don't understand and He refuses to clarify himself and lets them walk.

**Annie:** Yeah, that's right.

**Tim:** No American pastor would ever.

**Annie:** No.

**Tim:** Right? They would be in like guest central or the meet and greet, like, no, no, no, I meant this.

**Annie:** What I meant was... yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Tim:** But he's literally adding by not even subtracting. He's slashing. Like he's turning around to his own disciples and going, would you all like to go with them too? I always wanna remember that being unfollowed is actually more rabbinical than being followed.

**Annie:** What is it you do? Wooo?

**Tim:** Yeah, exactly. You really listen.

**Annie:** I know. You gas yourself up.

**Tim:** I do. I do. I get high. I get high. I get high when people don't care.

**Annie:** I mean, you're right because it hurts my feelings so much when people unfollow and tell me why.

**Tim:** Yeah.

**Annie:** But it should...

**Tim:** It shouldn't.

**Annie:** I mean, people are allowed to do whatever they want. I unfollow people all the time. But you're right. My skin is thinner than Jesus' was.

**Tim:** Well, a lot of us are, yeah, in many ways. Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** And I love when Peter says, "Where else will we go?"

**Tim:** Exactly.

**Annie:** It's almost like Peter's like, "Yeah, I want to go. But to where?"

**Tim:** Which seems like the most endearing statement. But I think Jesus' hypoglycemic levels were low that day. Because He's very grumpy throughout that whole chapter. And after such an endearing statement, Jesus' response to Peter is, one of you is a demon. And I'm like, Jesus...

**Annie:** Be sweet to Peter.

**Tim:** Did you sleep last night? You must have had a long day. It's a fascinating chapter to me. One of my favorites.

**Annie:** Talk to me about when you get pushback because you do specialize, some might say, in getting pushback for things you say, and yet you keep going, but with humility is my experience.

**Tim:** Thank you.

**Annie:** I feel like there is humility attached, but you do not waiver very often. What does that feel like in your insides? Does it still hurt your feelings?

**Tim:** 2023, my feelings were hurt a lot, because I had been a preacher and teacher and pastor for 27 years. And then the Lord's like, I want you to step down from being a lead pastor, I want you to now be a podcaster. The specific thing the Holy Spirit said to me was, The same way you have mentored and disciplined in private is the way I need you to speak in public. My response was, well then I'm going to get canceled.

**Annie:** Yeah, I can't do that. You write about this a little bit in Welcome to the Basement.

**Tim:** Yeah. I'm like, "I'm going to get canceled because you know how I talk in private." I'm from Inner City LA, like the hood. My brother founded a gang. I reach people that are kind of hard, you know what I mean, and obstinate. So the Holy Spirit was like, "Go ahead and get canceled." And I was like, "Okay." And then it opened up a door to like a whole group of people that I've never had influence with, right? So the way I describe it...

**Annie:** Because who cancels you is Christian.

**Tim:** Yeah, absolutely. And here's the thing...

**Annie:** That's true for all of us. Who gets mad is a Christian.

**Tim:** Absolutely correct. Absolutely correct. And these are people that loved me as a preacher and a teacher. And that's all they've heard for two and a half decades. So then I become a podcaster and they've never heard that. I mean, what I say sitting down on the couch is not what I would ever say in anybody's pulpit, right?

**Annie:** Yes.

**Tim:** So there's a decorum that I have there that I don't have to have when I'm on my couch. I just didn't know He was gonna make my private life public in that way.

**Annie:** So public, right?

**Tim:** Here's the way I've synthesized 2023. I came out of 2023, Annie, with thicker skin and a softer heart. I'm not cynical. I'm not walking around like, I got haters. I had to grieve... This is why therapy is so important. I had to grieve being misunderstood. As a communicator-

**Annie:** It's the worst feeling, ain't it?

**Tim:** ...I hate being misunderstood. And now I have to live with it. Like I have to live with it because... here's a delightful kind of way I've tried to explain it to my pastor friends. The 27 years that I was just solely teaching and preaching, if I was to land in one of Paul's epistles, it'd probably be Ephesians. I was preaching to Ephesians, right? The church that I led, Embassy City, for seven years, Ephesians, right? It squarely probably falls in there and a couple of chapters from probably Philippians. As a podcaster, it's Corinthians.

**Annie:** Oh, okay. I thought you were going to say Romans. That would be my guess.

**Tim:** No, it's Corinth.

**Annie:** Okay.

**Tim:** I think that if any people from Ephesus or Philippi or Thessalonica would have received one of Paul's letters from Corinth, they would be like, What is this dude talking about? Because he has to address things in Corinth that are completely different than Colossus. So I am answering people's questions. That's what Paul was doing in Corinth. He's answering people based on the questions that you asked about marriage and based on the questions that you asked about meat and based on the questions that you asked about this. That's my life now. I'm talking to Corinthians, and Corinthians are off the chain.



**Annie:** It's easy for me to say sitting here, because no one's very loud mad at me today, that I know of. I'm not on Twitter anymore, so maybe. But it's easy for me sitting here to go, okay, if Christians get upset with me and they're walking with the Lord, we'll be friends in heaven. It'll be fine.

**Tim:** Oh, I will see them again.

**Annie:** It'll be fine. Yeah, and okay.

**Tim:** Yeah, it's okay.

**Annie:** If unbelievers come toward us because of that, then that's a win.

**Tim:** It is.

**Annie:** That hurts so much when it really happens. Because I go, Wait, we're on the same team.

**Tim:** We are.

**Annie:** Like, I thought-

**Tim:** We are.

**Annie:** We love Jesus. Be with me as I'm trying to reach these other people.

**Tim:** For sure. For sure.

**Annie:** That's what hurts me the most is when I lose brothers and sisters as friends because I think. And that doesn't mean I'm always right.

**Tim:** No.

**Annie:** That's the other thing.

**Tim:** Yeah, exactly. I could be completely wrong.

**Annie:** Yeah, but I'm trying. I'm just trying in front of all of y'all, and y'all are seeing it. So that is the problem.

**Tim:** That is a huge, huge distinction. Yeah, exactly.

**Annie:** And it hurts my feelings.

**Tim:** It takes bravery to do stuff in front of everybody.

**Annie:** Yeah, it hurts my feelings. But it's been a masterclass watching you handle the world.

**Tim:** Oh.

**Annie:** And just kind of go like, "I'm gonna keep saying this."

**Tim:** I am.

**Annie:** And be willing to change your mind as we go.

**Tim:** Yeah, absolutely. I can course-correct in front of everybody. I was sexually abused at eight. So humor became my first coping mechanism.

**Annie:** Sure.

**Tim:** I started rapping when I was nine. I was a battle rapper by the time I was 13. So I'm used to confrontation.

**Annie:** Fascinating. The Lord did that so early in such a different way.

**Tim:** Oh my goodness. So when I gave my life to Jesus, that has basically been dormant, right? I'm not confronting Christians and going out trying to do it.

**Annie:** Not a lot of rap battles at youth groups. Sadly.

**Tim:** Well, I would have beat them.

**Annie:** Yeah, that's right.

**Tim:** But now in this season, it feels kind of like that. And it's kind of like, Except I don't get to like diss you. I have to love you. So my skin is just thicker. 2023 was a year where I was just like, Oh, that hurt, that hurt, that hurt. Oh, I see what you're doing now. You're just getting that... I need some calluses so I can go out here and really do what I'm doing." So '23 was like, okay, I felt it all, and '24 I quadrupled down.

**Annie:** I had a little blip in '22 where I got in trouble with a portion of the internet, and Beth Moore calls me. And when I saw her, "When it said "Living Proof" on my phone, I said to my friends, "This is cool, and also this must be worse than I

thought." Because if she somehow got my phone number. And what she said is, "Your first one's your worst one." And she said, "But you should know it won't be your last one. And whether you make the mistake or not, it won't be your last one."

**Tim:** That's good.

**Annie:** And she said, "You have muscles now you didn't have before."

**Tim:** That's it.

**Annie:** And I thought, okay. And I can feel that a little bit. Something that would have really thrown me two years ago, now I go, Okay, you can feel that about me. I can't explain away all this to you because I don't have your phone number and therefore-

**Tim:** That is exactly right.

**Annie:** I mean, it ain't not painful.

**Tim:** No, yeah, exactly.

**Annie:** It's just that there's muscles I didn't have.

**Tim:** That's exactly right. That's really good.

**Annie:** What's the payoff? What's the good side? What are you seeing God do when 2023 happens and you have a couple of blips that hurt your feelings and are public and then you quadruple down in 2024? What's the beautiful side?

**Tim:** The beautiful side is watching people that swore that they would never step into a church again, that they would never have a relationship with God again, that they would always stay in their homosexual lifestyle, that they would never forgive their father, that they would never utter the sexual abuse that they experienced or the rejection that they felt find a place that's safe enough and stable enough for them to do all of those things. Those are the stories that we have repeatedly. To have men and women from the porn industry asking for prayer off of a clip.

**Annie:** How amazing.

**Tim:** To have PK kids who have seen more behind the scenes than they ever should have seen be able to separate the actions of their parents from the actions of their God.

**Annie:** And reaching both of those in the same clip sometimes, that's a unique anointing. You can't make that happen.

**Tim:** I can't take anything back. You know what I mean? I would love to be sorry for all this stuff, and I'm not.

**Annie:** That's right. Some of my friends who don't walk with God yet, I think, Yeah, this is worth it.

**Tim:** Yes it is!

**Annie:** That you love me and I love you and we're walking in friendship but your lifestyle does not match... the fruit does not match the tree that I hope you become. I will take some of the cuts-

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** ...if you feel like I love you.

**Tim:** Absolutely correct.

**Annie:** But it still hurts.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** The beauty of that. Yesterday at lunch we were talking about you. So if your ears were burning, you were part of our lunch conversation yesterday because I just finished *Welcome to the Basement*, your new book that is really enjoyable to read.

**Tim:** Thank you.

**Annie:** And I said, when you listen to people call in on this podcast, the last thing they always say is, I love you. They say, "I love you, Tim." And you say back, "I love you too, Katie. Let me answer." And I thought, man, for someone who probably has people say, I hate you, or I'm disappointed in you, the fact that every person who calls in says, I love you.

**Tim:** Absolutely.

**Annie:** That's just incredible that they feel that.

**Tim:** Well, it comes from a genuine place because they feel genuinely safe.

**Annie:** That's right. And seen.

- Tim:** And seen. So my mantra is that I want people to be seen, heard, known, still loved, even if they're not agreeing with.
- Annie:** Even if they're upset, as you say.
- Tim:** Even if they're upset. If every human had that, there would be no wars, there would be no bitterness, no anger because people need to be heard. They just need a safe space to be heard. We had a girl call in yesterday. She's the bravest girl of the month.
- Annie:** Do you record every day?
- Tim:** No, we record on Mondays, but we do a live show for two hours and then we do a pre-record with a guest.
- Annie:** Got it.
- Tim:** So the young lady that called in yesterday, she calls in and she says, "I was going to make this anonymous, but I need you to..." I mean, Ooh, I'm a crier, so I get emotional.
- Annie:** We got tissues right here whenever you need them. That's why.
- Tim:** But she goes, I was going to be anonymous, but I need you to know my name. And she goes, I have genital herpes and I love Jesus, and I have sexual desires, and I don't know what to do with all this. I don't think anybody's going to love me with this disease."
- When I tell you it was like I had to contain my joy that this girl was brave enough to be seen and known. Not anonymous. If she was anonymous, she would still have been brave. But to say, "My name is Leslie. Here is what I'm struggling with. I love God. I am in my flesh. I am struggling with this, and I need someone to know it." And then to see hundreds of people in the live chat just start putting clap hand emojis, "We love you, Leslie. You're amazing. You're our hero. We are praying for you. God's got you. He's got someone for you."
- Annie:** You're throwing a church service every Monday.
- Tim:** It's beautiful. It's what every small group should be.
- Annie:** Is it live on YouTube?
- Tim:** It's live on YouTube.

**Annie:** I know it's live on TikTok too. So it's live on YouTube. Y'all record it, and that's how we hear it on the pod.

**Tim:** That's correct. Absolutely correct.

**Annie:** Got it.

**Tim:** I don't want to do anything else except continue to create spaces where people are safe and the environment is stable to be able to handle the gift of people's vulnerability. And I call it a gift because you could never demand someone's vulnerability, right?

**Annie:** That's right.

**Tim:** If they give it to you, it is indeed an extravagant gift. So when people choose to be that free with the gift of their vulnerability I just always say thank you. It's very appreciative.

[00:23:30] <music>

**Sponsor:** Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Magic Spoon](#). I mean, do we all just love cereal so much? I love cereal so much, but I want to make sure I care a lot about getting enough protein in my life. And that is why Magic Spoon has become a favorite of mine.

They have a variety pack that includes four flavors: cocoa, fruity, frosted, and peanut butter. My personal favorite is the frosted. Duh, who's surprised? None of you. And get this. The variety pack has zero grams of sugar, 13 to 14 grams of protein, and four to five grams of net carbs. And there's only 140 calories per serving. It is keto-friendly, gluten-free, grain-free, soy-free. It is my kind of cereal.

So just go to [magicspoon.com/thatsoundsfun](https://magicspoon.com/thatsoundsfun) to grab your variety pack and try it today. And be sure to use our promo code THATSOUNDSFUN at checkout. You'll save \$5 off your order. Magic Spoon is so confident of their product, as they should be. It is backed with a 100% happiness guarantee, so if you don't like it for any reason, they will refund your money, no questions asked. So start your day with a delicious bowl of high-protein cereal at [magicspoon.com/thatsoundsfun](https://magicspoon.com/thatsoundsfun) and use the code THATSOUNDSFUN to save five dollars.

That link remember and every link you could ever dream of is in the show notes below. Whether you're listening on the podcast or watching on YouTube the links are below. You can also get them sent to you in our AFD Week in Review email.

That's a great list to be on because not only do we email you every Friday with all of our favorite links and a story I'm not telling anywhere else, those friends also got early tickets to August 11th at the Ryman. So it's a good list to be on. You can sign up for that in the show notes as well.

**Sponsor:** I've got one more amazing partner to tell you about, [Factor](#). Okay, y'all know I am here for any meal prep that makes life easy and healthy. And that is Factor. My freezer in New York, full of Factor. Their meals are truly delicious and ready to eat.

Factor meals are pre-prepared, chef-crafted, and dietician-approved. They're delivered right to your door. Say no more. Quick, easy, healthy. Y'all know I am here for it. You'll have over 35 different options every week to choose from, including keto, calorie smart, vegan, and veggie, and more. There's even more to enjoy with over 55 nutrient-packed add-ons to help make your weekly planning even more delicious.

So here's how easy Factor is. You've got two-minute meals where your meals are literally, you heat and eat right away. They've got a bunch of snacks and smoothies and wide variety of easy options for breakfast and midday bites and whatever. And when you sign up, you also save because Factor is less expensive than takeout... do you hear me? I'm telling you, it is less expensive in my life than takeout. And every meal is dietician-approved to be nutritious and delicious.

So if you're on the go a ton and need a really easy but great option that is budget-friendly and body-friendly and dietician-approved, it's Factor. So head to [factormeals.com/TSF50](https://factormeals.com/TSF50) and use the code TSF50 for 50% off, you guys. Again, the code is TSF50 at [factormeals.com/TSF50](https://factormeals.com/TSF50) to get 50% off.

**Sponsor:** Hey, friends, just interrupting this conversation one more time to share about one of our amazing partners, [ButcherBox](#). Y'all, I love ButcherBox. I love it because it helps me not have to think hard if I want to make a quick meal at home. I always have lots of protein options stocked in the freezer. You know I care about protein, which means less trips to the grocery store because I don't love going there. And just makes my life a little bit easier. Have you seen on social media right now that people are trying to eat through their freezer? That has been my ButcherBox salvation, as I've always got protein in my freezer.

ButcherBox is high-quality meat and seafood that you can trust because it's 100% grass-fed beef, free-range organic chicken, and pork-raised crate-free and wild-caught seafood. It's humanely raised with no antibiotics or added hormones, and there's always free shipping on my order. That is a no-brainer. I can curate a customized plan, and ButcherBox always has the best deals.

With ButcherBox, you don't have to worry about what's for dinner. ButcherBox is offering our friends their choice of a weeknight meal essential, three pounds of chicken thighs, two pounds of ground beef, or one pound of premium steak tips, okay? You get that for free in every order for a whole year, you guys. Plus, get \$20 off your first order. Sign up today at [butcherbox.com/TSF](https://butcherbox.com/TSF) and use the code TSF to choose your free offer and get \$20 off.

Okay, friends, now back to our conversation with Tim.

[00:28:02] <music>

**Annie:** Today's the day after Valentine's Day. You talking about this. You talk very openly about what the Bible says about sex outside of marriage, inside of marriage.

**Tim:** Yes, absolutely.

**Annie:** The whole thing.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** It's really interesting because... you and I agree. Before we get into this, you and I agree. It is really interesting to hear you talk about sex and say a lot of the things we heard in purity culture and that people reject the whole thing. And I don't even like purity culture language. I think it's unfair to... Our parents were not trying, and our youth pastors were not trying to wound us. They were trying-

**Tim:** They were trying to help.

**Annie:** ...to help us live lives that modeled after what God's asked us to do.

**Tim:** That's what they could.

**Annie:** I have issues with the whole language of that. But anyway, what we were taught then is very similar to what you're teaching.

**Tim:** Absolutely correct.

**Annie:** But you don't back down on that at all. We did two episodes last summer about sex, and we got chirped at so hard around the ones where they said, "Don't have sex."

**Tim:** Wow.



**Annie:** And I'm okay with people having beliefs around that. Talk to me about the sexual ethic that you believe the Bible still represents even though purity culture is having such... people are so against what we were taught. We've thrown out the baby with the bathwater a little bit.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** Is that what you think?

**Tim:** Yeah. So first of all, I don't like the fact that we as believers have been so tiptoed and eggshell-y around the whole conversation of sex and sexuality. It was made by God. Sex was made for believers, and it was made for marriage between one man and one woman. And in that context, it is absolutely glorious.

All sex outside of what I just mentioned is inglorious. It doesn't mean it's not good, because sex is good. He doesn't make it bad for those that are not married, and then only good for those that are married. Sex is good. Period. But you can't enjoy it, and it won't be honorable, and lets us in the confines of marriage between a man and a woman.

**Annie:** And people who have sex outside of that feel like whenever we talk about it that we're shaming them.

**Tim:** I'm not shaming them.

**Annie:** I know.

**Tim:** And if you're an unbeliever, I'm not even talking to you.

**Annie:** What map are you using? You aren't even on our map.

**Tim:** I'm not even talking to you. But if you call yourself a believer-

**Annie:** Yeah, that's interesting.

**Tim:** ...and you are engaging in sexual activity and you're not married, it's dishonorable to both God and your body. That's just the book. There's no way around that. Yeah, exactly. So it doesn't matter... You can like it, I hope you like it. I was a young adult pastor, so I dealt with this every four and a half weeks.

**Annie:** Sure.

**Tim:** All I did every summer is try to keep people from having sex in their 20s. So they would come in, sit down, and they'd both have their head down, "Pastor, we fell." And I'm like, Okay. And I would say, "Did you like it? And it would be so disruptive.

**Annie:** Like, I can't answer that.

**Tim:** They're full of shame. Like, "Did you like it?" and so she drops her head, he looks away. And I'm like, "Okay, so tell us how you got here." "One thing led to another and the next thing you know..." That's not how sex works. It's not the next thing you know. The next thing you know, you get hit by a car. The next thing you know, you can get shot. The next thing you know, you can't have sex. That's not the way sex works.

I said, so let's put boundaries around, and then let's remember why marriage is the best place for sex. And giving them that reminder was their way to either you're not marriage material, but it was fun. Or, yes, we wanna get married and we're not gonna do it again until our wedding day. And that's the covenant.

Anytime I did premarital counseling, the fourth question I always ask is if you've had sex. I always buried it. If they didn't, I could tell by their body language and their mouth. If they did, even if they lied, their body language told the truth. And if they did, the only thing I would tell them is, hey, I hope you enjoyed it. I hope you took a picture, mental snapshot. As long as I'm doing your premarital, you can't do it again until you get married. I will check in with you and hold you accountable every single week that we do this. And three strikes and you're out. It's not difficult when it's in the light. It's difficult if it's hidden. If it's a secret it's difficult. But if it's in the light, it's not.

**Annie:** One of the things I've really enjoyed, put that in quotes, in the last year is like, let's have this conversation about sex, especially, you're a married guy, I'm an unmarried woman. And I'm like, we have got to talk about that we are all bodies. I still have a body.

**Tim:** That's absolutely correct.

**Annie:** So I've had to sort out for 43 years what to do with my body.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** ...and figure out what does it look like to honor God with what I've been taught, with what the Bible says, with what I'm feeling, with what He's saying and doing, and where I want to go.

**Tim:** That's good.

**Annie:** So I like talking about it because I'm like, we've got to help these other... there are so many friends of ours, yours and mine, who are 38 and single-

**Tim:** It's very true. Very true.

**Annie:** ...and they're like, the Bible didn't talk to me about being past 14.

**Tim:** That's right.

**Annie:** Like, the Bible didn't talk to me-

**Tim:** That's really funny.

**Annie:** Right?

**Tim:** It's so true.

**Annie:** Zachariah and Elizabeth didn't have a baby till they were in their 80s, but they didn't start sleeping together in their 80s.

**Tim:** That's right. That's exactly right.

**Annie:** A lot of my peers... So will you talk for a second to the singles? Talk to our friends in their 30s, 40s, 50s who are not married, they're going, "Annie and Tim, give me a break."

**Tim:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Annie:** "I am lonely. I'm pissed and I'm going to do what I want to do because I'm old."

**Tim:** So this is the conversation that I love to have. This is the conversation that I wish that more churches had in their small groups, but they stay too surface, because if they go off the little sermon plan, like, we're talking about faith in the Pastor's Sermon series this month, and it's like, I'm horny. It's like, oh no, we're in Hebrews 11. We have to stay here.

What you just said is two-thirds of this whole thing for singles. And I've had a lot of single people always say, well, it's easy for you to say, Tim, because you're going home to your wife. But my memory ain't short. I've been married for 25 years. My memory is not short. I know exactly what it means to be single. I don't know what

it means to be single and old. I do know what it means to be single, though, and having to keep yourself. I also know what it means to have a wife who is going through some things and there's a prolonged period. So a lot of people think that abstinence is only for single people.

**Annie:** Oh, we got to talk about this. Like sexual purity is only if you're not having sex? No, it ain't.

**Tim:** No.

**Annie:** So my biggest encouragement to singles is you are training your body single for the way it will operate married.

**Annie:** That's it.

**Tim:** Point blank. Period. If you want to know why the sacrifice is important, if you have a desire to be married, it's because whatever you're training your body to do single is what it will still do married.

**Annie:** That's the word.

**Tim:** Our bodies are machines. They are programmable. And if you program your body for your vibrator, when you get married, whether your husband is into it or not, you will continue. You will not put your wand away. If you have programmed your body to pornography, then whether your wife or your husband is ready to be intimate or not, you can always go to porn.

So in your singleness, you are training your body and its sexual desires on how it's going to operate if you choose to get married. Now, if you want to play the, I'm old enough and I'm grown and can't nobody get in my business, okay, but how many pieces of your heart do you want running around the city?

**Annie:** I'll tell you one of the weddings I did, the couple lived together and were sleeping together and they decided to be in separate bedrooms. Much like you, I just said, hey, You gotta quit that.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure. Absolutely.

**Annie:** And they both have jobs that keep them on the road. And I said, what you are doing right now is showing each other that if I'm not with you, I'm not having sex.

**Tim:** Yeah, that's good.

**Annie:** So you're modeling it every night you're in your house because whatever you do in this house is what you'll do in the hotel. So you're modeling it. So you're right. The training of your body is so important. So our friends listening are like, Okay, but I'm going to be 104 and have never had sex.

**Tim:** That's going to be somebody's reality. At some point, you have to grieve what you're not going to get.

**Annie:** My counselor and I did that about being... I was never a mom or a wife in my 20s. I was never a mom or a wife in my 30s. You gotta grieve that.

**Tim:** So I have this story that is just spectacular because I didn't get slapped in the face. So I was an associate campus pastor at Gateway Church. It was Mother's Day. And afterwards, I was in the meet and greet section, this young lady comes up to me tears streaming down her face. And she's like, "I hate Mother's Day. It is a painful reminder for me that I don't have children and I'm not married. And that's all I've ever asked God for. I hate that Gateway even celebrates it and has the mother stand and you give them roses. All you're doing is digging a dagger deeper into my heart and my soul."

**Annie:** So many women feel that.

**Tim:** So she's pouring her emotions out in front of me, and the Holy Spirit gives me a word for her. Two words, actually. And when He gives me the word, she's still talking and she's just, you know, pouring out this grievance. And the Holy Spirit gives me two words for her, and I'm literally having a conversation with the Holy Spirit while I'm containing this woman. And the conversation I'm having with the Holy Spirit is, I'm not telling her that. I promise you I'm not saying that. Like, I'm going to disobey you today. And my quiet time is going to be torment tomorrow but I don't care. I promise you I'm disobeying you on this one. And He wouldn't get off me. And He goes, "Tell her, tell her, tell her."

And I finally I said, "I feel like the Holy Spirit gave me a word for you," and her eyes kind of gave me a glimmer of hope, right? And I was like, "Make that glimmer go." That's the wrong glimmer, girl. So she goes, "Okay." And I said, "You're not going to like the word, though." She goes, "Okay." And I said, "No, you're really not going to like what the Lord told me to tell you." And she goes, "Just tell me." And I said, "Drop it." And she said, "What?"

And you know when you obey the Lord, the first thing that comes out of your mouth is obedience, and then the boldness comes, right? Yeah, that's right. And she goes, "I'm sorry, what?" And I went, "Drop it." And she goes, "Drop it? Drop it? Drop it? Okay."

**Annie:** Wow.

**Tim:** "All right, I'll drop it." And that woman dried her tears, gave me the biggest hug, and walked off.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Tim:** We ain't gonna always get what we want.

**Annie:** Listen, that's for married, single, mom, dad, everybody. You aren't gonna get everything you want.

**Tim:** There's a lot of married couples who can't have children.

**Annie:** That's it. That's what I think a lot. I think when I get this, there's gonna be another thing I want because I ate breakfast and I want lunch. So, I'm a wantier.

**Tim:** The misconception with us being believers is that our prayers are incantations. And they are not. This is called the wowie zowie button. [wowie zowie] And it's when you blow my mind. Our prayers are not incantations.

**Tim:** They are not incantations.

**Annie:** That's so good, Tim.

**Tim:** You are not about to get everything you want. Have you read the Bible? Did you read it all the way through? Everybody ain't getting what they want.

**Annie:** I mean, Anna lived with her husband seven years and that's it. Like she never desired it again. Yeah, right.

**Tim:** I just feel like we can make our requests known and then we have to hold the tension that some of those requests is not in His will for us. And you may have to go to 15 weddings and have 15 different bridesmaids' dresses with 14 shades of olive and green and peach and orchard and whatever else they're doing and you may go home and you may never get married. That is a reality. And you could.

**Annie:** Yeah, that's right.

**Tim:** But if your relationship with Jesus is contingent upon this happening and that not happening, child, you picked the wrong relationship because He ain't doing it.

**Annie:** The "drop it" is so powerful because you aren't saying, don't ever pray about it again.

**Tim:** No.

**Annie:** You're saying, this expectation you have on God, you got to let that go. Because then you get to run in the life He's given you.

**Tim:** Exactly. Because here's the thing, He already heard you.

**Annie:** Hey, that's it.

**Tim:** That part.

**Annie:** That's it.

**Tim:** Right?

**Annie:** Yeah.

**Tim:** And if you want to know if Jesus, who said Himself, "I'm tempted at all points yet without sin," if you want to know if He can actually relate to that, remember He was in a garden, He made a request three times that went unanswered, and He dropped it.

**Annie:** Yeah, He dropped it.

**Tim:** And He went straight to the cross. I believe this is the reason why in 2 Corinthians 12 when Paul has a request that he made three times to the Lord about his thorn, Jesus Himself responds. Not an angel. Not the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself. Those words are in red. I think it's the furthest thing we see in red until Revelations. It is Jesus saying, "My grace is sufficient for you. Like, bro, I know what it is to pray three times and not get. Drop it. Just drop it.

So Paul literally takes that prayer request off of the list. Imagine like going back to your like prayer group and going, "Hey, take that prayer request off." "Oh my God, did god answer it?" "No. I'm just not bringing it up no more and you shouldn't either. I'm over it. I dropped it. Dropped it. Dropped it."

**Annie:** "He heard me."

**Tim:** "He heard me." Absolutely.

**Annie:** That's tough.

**Tim:** It is tough.

**Annie:** It is scary.

**Tim:** I've done it. I know what it feels like.

**Annie:** What my life is at 43, I could never have dreamed. I couldn't have dreamed. What I could dream is wife, mom, teaching elementary school forever. Like I dreamed the life that I thought when I was 23.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** So the last time I started going out with somebody, I remember after the first date, I came back and... well, you don't know me. I was like, "You know me, Tim, because you know me enough. I came back and I was like, "Well, here he is. Here he is, Lord." And I just said to Lord, "I wouldn't have done it any different. Now that he's here..." he's not here, we're done. "But now that he's here, I wouldn't have done any different." And I thought, I can't believe I'm saying that. But I haven't dropped praying it, but I have dropped the "of course you're going to do this."

**Tim:** See, that's good. You're holding it with an open hand.

**Annie:** I still hope you do this, but the doors you're opening, I'm running through those.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure.

**Annie:** I can ask, seek, and knock all to live long day, but there's also three open ones.

**Tim:** That's right.

**Annie:** So why don't I go through those and see what happens?

**Tim:** Yes, absolutely.

**Annie:** I mean, that's got to be how you ended up leaving pastoring for podcasting.

**Tim:** I hold everything with an open hand. I don't white-knuckle anything.

**Annie:** It is a gift to get to live without everything you want.



**Tim:** It is. Paul says, I have learned, whatever state I'm in, to be content. This prefaces, I can do all things. I can do all things through Christ. It's not like superhero incantation magic stuff. I was in a Bible study one time on a Wednesday night and I was like, Do you believe in... we're all Pentecostals, right, so we're all...

**Annie:** Yeah.

**Tim:** "Do you believe you can do all things?" "Yeah." "I mean, do you truly believe you can do all...? And I'm like, do you believe this scripture?" And everybody's going crazy. I worked them into a frenzy and I said, "Then fly home."

**Annie:** Just fly. No walking.

**Tim:** Like fly home. I said, "If you don't have the right context to the scripture, it will not work for your life."

**Annie:** Oh, wow.

**Tim:** "And if you think all things means that you can become a millionaire overnight and not put in the work, that you're gonna have a great marriage and you're not gonna have communication, that your kids are gonna honor God but you haven't reflected in your life." No, that's not what it means. He's learned that whatever state he is in, he's content. If I got money, content. If I don't have money, content. I got a good car, content. Forgot to ride the bus, content. I walked here today.

**Annie:** Yeah, you did. I was like, what? You walked here?

**Tim:** Because I'm content. It's a 20-minute walk. I am content that whatever state I'm in I will be okay.

**Annie:** So then he follows up with "I can do all things"?

**Tim:** That's absolutely correct.

**Annie:** So now, instead of switching to "I can fly out of this building because I can do all things", I'm learning this real time with you, what he's saying is, "in the state that I'm in and what God has handed me, anything he brings, I can do."

**Tim:** I can do. That's why Paul's writing his happiest letters from prison. Who has the nerve to be like, "Oh my goodness, it's the best time right now, Philippi."

**Annie:** And it's not prisons like our prisons.

**Tim:** No, no, no, no.

**Annie:** They weren't light.

**Tim:** This wasn't federal prison. This was a Roman prison. So that level of contentment is a beautiful, attractive thing for us to aspire to. The happiest believers I know are the believers that are content. Juliette and I have two kids. We lost three.

**Annie:** Both boys.

**Tim:** Both boys. We lost three. Juliette's been pregnant five times. Our first was lost. Then we had Nathan. Then we lost two more. Then we had Noah. We are content. We would have been a family of seven. We're a family of four. We are content. We grieved it. We cried it. We did all the things.

**Annie:** That's the thing. We get to hold them both.

**Tim:** My younger brother, Miles, we're 17 months apart, we were almost Irish twins. We were very, very close. He was killed in a car accident on September 17th of 2004. I told God I would never preach for Him again. I had never felt pain like that before. It was the darkest four and a half months of my life.

And then I realized that he doesn't owe me an answer. I was demanding an answer. Yes, and then I realized, oh my god, He's a King and He doesn't owe me one. Not that I didn't grieve or that I didn't... And I also realized He wasn't petty. Because I called Him all out of His name. I told Him in no uncertain terms, "I'm done with You" and He remains faithful.

**Annie:** Yeah, that's it. That's it. You said it the other day He's kind to the... Oh, what's the verse? You said it on the podcast. He is kind to the wicked and the ungrateful.

**Tim:** That's exactly right. He loves us. He absolutely loves us. So I learned more about Him as Father and not this legalistic kind of image that He's a stepfather that you have to like really be on eggshells around like, that's mommy's husband and I just want him to love me. Maybe he'll adopt me one day. It's already done. He already did all of it.

[00:48:29] <music>

**Annie:** Most of you have probably heard me sing the praises of [Prose](#) and their truly custom-made-to-order hair care. But switching to a custom routine was one of the best things I have done for my hair and the results just keep getting better.

Prose has given over 1 million consultations with their in-depth hair quiz, which is how I got started because you know we love a quiz. You just answer questions on everything, from the climate where you live to the issues you're having with your hair, your hair type and texture, your eating habits. And then they analyze 85 personal factors and hand-picked clean ingredients that get you closer to your hair goals with every single wash.

Their made-to-order hair care is the absolute best. They've got a "review and refine" tool that you can use if any of your answers change along the way. And if you're not 100% positive that Prose is the best hair care you've tried, they will take the products back, no questions asked.

Custom-made-to-order hair care from Prose has your name all over it. Take your free in-depth hair consultation, get 50% off your first subscription order today, plus 15% off and free shipping every subscription order after that. Go to [Prose.com/thatsoundsfun](https://prose.com/thatsoundsfun). That's [prose.com/thatsoundsfun](https://prose.com/thatsoundsfun) for your free in-depth hair consultation and 50% off your first subscription order.

**Sponsor:** So I'm traveling between Nashville and New York a lot this year, as you know, but I'm trying to keep both places stocked with the basic grocery essentials that I always want to have on hand. And [Thrive Market](https://thrivemarket.com) for real is my go-to for getting all of my favorite things.

Plus I just can't beat the convenience of picking out everything online than my order showing up on my doorstep. I do my best to keep healthy options around, so I really love that Thrive Market carries brands with the highest quality ingredients.

Their online filtering system allows me to sort based on what I'm looking for. Whether I'm searching for organic snacks or low sugar alternatives or gluten-free options, I can curate my own shopping experience really easily.

They also have a deals page to look through, and as a Thrive Market member, I save money on every single grocery order, like an average of 30% each time, you guys. Plus, when you join Thrive Market, you're also helping a family in need with their one-for-one membership matching program, which I love.

Join in on the savings with Thrive Market today and get 30% off your first order, plus a free \$60 gift. Go to [thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun](https://thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun) for 30% off your first order plus a free \$60 gift. That's [thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun](https://thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun).

**Sponsor:** Okay, friends, are you like me and find yourself feeling discouraged or defeated sometimes? Does it ever seem like you just keep running into resistance no matter what you try? When things aren't working out the way we hoped they'd work out

and we start feeling fatigued and waiting on God to answer our prayers or to help us realize our dreams, it can start to feel like everything in life requires so much exhausting effort that leads nowhere, right?

Well, we've been talking about seasons a lot around here, and what if the season of harvest that you're hoping for is closer than you think? In his book, *Don't Give Up Just Yet*, my friend Nick Connolly, we all know and love his wife, Jess Connolly. She's been on the pod a lot. And y'all listen, Nick is helping us learn how to choose persistence in the face of resistance and find renewed energy and faith to outlast the onslaught of tough circumstances that we face.

He's teaching us so generously how to hold out so we can see the abundant promises God has for us. Here's the message: Don't give up just yet. Breakthrough is closer than you think. *Don't Give Up Just Yet* from our friend Nick Connolly is now available wherever you love to buy books, so be sure to grab your copy.

And now back to finish up this conversation with Tim Ross.

[00:52:04] <music>

**Annie:** I'm thinking of a friend I sat with in New York and we talked about how God doesn't promise understanding, but everything has meaning. So if you can find the meaning to why it happened or why the things... like there is meaning in everything. God doesn't do anything, but we aren't going to get understanding.

**Tim:** Oh, I wish I had that quote in '04. That's beautiful.

**Annie:** I thought what she said was beautiful, too. I just thought, Man, that is really helpful to go. I can drop it about getting understanding.

**Tim:** That's right.

**Annie:** My sister and her husband had a baby two years ago that lived two months. They will never be understanding. I will never understand why TJ isn't still with us. His life can have deep meaning.

**Tim:** Absolutely.

**Annie:** So we will go, Okay, let's chase the meaning over what God... what's the purpose? What could God be doing? And drop the understanding.

**Tim:** I've done a lot of funerals.

- Annie:** I have not. I've so far only gotten to do weddings, so I'm grateful.
- Tim:** The youngest body that I've ever eulogized was 18 hours old.
- Annie:** Oh, gosh.
- Tim:** Twins born, one lived, one died. I've never seen a casket that tiny and hearts that broken. And I'm like, "Lord, there's no eulogy." And he's like, Yes, there is. I remember eulogizing from this title, What a difference a day makes.
- Annie:** Wow. That's it. What a difference a day makes.
- Tim:** So you talk about meaning. I remember that vividly, that there was this life had meaning and it was 18 hours old.
- Annie:** Yes. What a difference a day makes.
- Tim:** What a difference a day makes.
- Annie:** Man, that plays true for all of us, right? That on your mirror with your dry-erase. What a difference a day makes.
- Tim:** What a difference a day makes.
- Annie:** I mean, it only takes one day for someone's life to matter to you.
- Tim:** That's absolutely correct.
- Annie:** And also, it only takes one day to meet the person you're going to end up with.
- Tim:** That's exactly right.
- Annie:** It only takes one day to get pregnant.
- Tim:** That's absolutely correct.
- Annie:** It only takes one day to get the right job.
- Tim:** That's right. Absolutely correct.
- Annie:** It only takes one day to find the next house on Zillow. Right?
- Tim:** It's so true. Yeah, it's so true.

**Annie:** The Lord is not fast, but He is sudden.

**Tim:** He is sudden.

**Annie:** He really is. Suddenly.

**Tim:** Yes, suddenly.

**Annie:** Suddenly.

**Tim:** Absolutely, yeah.

**Annie:** Okay, we got to talk for one minute about Welcome to the Basement. Everybody, here's what everybody's like, I need more. And I'm like, you got a podcast and Welcome to the Basement.

**Tim:** Yes, absolutely correct.

**Annie:** This is the book... Tim, when I read this, I thought, the subtitle, An Upside-Down Guide to Greatness, I thought, this is the one we can hand our sons, that we can put in an Easter basket of our... mail it, put in a care package to our college-aged sons and daughters.

**Tim:** Yeah, for sure. Good Good.

**Annie:** It is the one that is like, hey, I'm giving everybody at the office something.

**Tim:** Right. Right. For sure.

**Annie:** This is the one you put to people.

**Tim:** Oh, thank you. That means a lot. Absolutely.

**Annie:** It's beautiful.

**Tim:** Thank you.

**Annie:** Who are you hoping picks this up?

**Tim:** I am hoping that someone who needs some practical answers and application on how to live a life for Jesus, I hope they pick up that book. I'm talking like really

basic, easy, everyday life type stuff. That's who I hope picks up that book. I need to live up my faith. It seems daunting to go make disciples of all nations. I don't even have a passport. But I do work with four of the people in a WeWork space and there's like six cubicles and I do peek my head over sometimes and what do I do? Buy them lunch. You know what I mean? It's pick the place, pick the person, you know, pick the piece.

**Annie:** Oh gosh, the piece part. The P-I-E-C-E, I was like, get out of here. That is good. That is one of my favorite things about this. I think all of our reader friends will love this, that you like, let's define terms. And you go, I'm not talking about being a person of peace, P-E-A-C-E, I'm saying find the piece of their life.

**Tim:** Find the piece of their life that's out of alignment, that needs to come back with God. That to be upset literally means to turn over. That's all upset means. I'm not out here trying to make people mad. But my life was turned upside down on January 14th of 1996. The Bible is the most upsetting book that's ever been written. Jesus had the most upsetting life that's ever been lived. And I've spent the rest of my days as an upset man trying to upset others.

**Annie:** Yeah, it's great. I loved the definition of that. In fact, hold on, I'll just read it. It's page 103. Hold on just a second. Where you say, "Upsetters must love Jesus, love people, be spirit-filled, do good, and love life." I just thought, Oh, I love it. And then you dig deeper into each of those. But I enjoy it so much.

I appreciate the ways you talk about things that I don't love talking about, and we don't always agree. But I think, well, here's what we're going the same place in the end. So it's worth listening. And our friendship can survive us not agreeing on everything.

**Tim:** I bet you it can.

**Annie:** Man, I'm so grateful that you do that. What's the thing you're not talking about that you're going to start talking about?

**Tim:** Ooh, the thing that I'm not talking about that I'm gonna start talking about, ooh, incongruence. Okay.

**Annie:** Just in our bodies, in our lives?

**Tim:** In our bodies, in our lives, and in the church.

**Annie:** Oh, okay.

**Tim:** Because what I realized from last year is that I was getting a lot of commentary reaction videos and everything around my congruence. I realized what was really disrupting you is you think I'm wrong, or you think this isn't biblical, or you think I got the scripture out of context on these things, but I am congruent in where I am right now, right, wrong, or indifferent.

But some of y'all that are making the commentary about me don't have that same congruency because you do use strong language. You do watch certain things. You do have a cigar coat and a bourbon on the weekend and then you preach on Sundays. And you have-

**Annie:** And you would say that's incongruent.

**Tim:** You're growing duplicity-

**Annie:** Ah, okay.

**Tim:** ...to the point every person I've seen in ministry that winds up having this incongruence, winds up turning into some form of Samson looking for Delilah to lay his head. And I'm like, I am in private who I am in public because I just showed you. So there's nothing more to learn about me. Whatever I'm doing now is what I'm really doing now. So that's what I'm starting to... I've been musing about it.

People think I talk flippantly. I don't. I think along. I used to tell the elders of Embassy City that you don't actually pay me to preach, you pay me to think. That's right.

**Annie:** You have to sit there a long time.

**Tim:** I think before I speak.

**Annie:** You speak fast. I do. But it's because you've been thinking before.

**Tim:** I thought this thing out. I could have thought it for seven months. So now that it's coming out of my mouth-

**Annie:** But now someone's asked a question. Now that you have these questions about me, I've been thinking about it.

**Tim:** Yeah, I've been thinking about it. So all the stuff they were coming at me with, I had thought about it a long time before I did it.

**Annie:** Interesting.



**Tim:** So it wasn't like I lost my temper and started using strong language. It was calculated. I meant exactly what I said, and I believe I have Bible to back me up on it. You know what I mean? So I believe the Bible's clear on some things. I've traveled around the world. When I go to England, I can't tell you how they talk in the pulpit. In Scotland and in Ireland.

So a lot of stuff is language. A lot of stuff is who won the last war. A lot of stuff is personal conviction. But it doesn't mean that it's a scriptural doctrine. So I'm like, I just wanna... why don't we just agree on where we can agree? Do you believe Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead? Do you believe that you need to repent, change your mind about the way you think, to be a follower of Jesus? If we agree on that, we are brothers and sisters.

All these other accents that we have... Southern Baptist has an accent, Church of God in Christ has an accent, Assemblies of God has an accent, Baptist has an accent, Church of God of Privacy has an accent, non-denominational people have an accent. In the same way, a New Yorker has a different accent from a Californian in Minnesota, has a different from New Orleans, baby.

So there's a lot of accents in the body of Christ. But we're all still believers and brothers and sisters. So I'm trying to find the places and spaces where we can agree.

**Annie:** And be congruent.

**Tim:** And be congruent.

**Annie:** Recently, as things have come out about some of our friends for years, I said to a mutual friend, I was like, "That was my slippery slope." And he says, Annie, that is a long way from A to Z. And I said, but-

**Tim:** But that's how you get there.

**Annie:** I know.

**Tim:** That's how you get there.

**Annie:** And he said, "Your life has been more boring than you wish, but I bet you sleep really good at night."

**Tim:** Annie, oh my goodness, I can't even believe you said that.

**Annie:** And that's right. My life has been... I have not had some of the spicy twists and turns, but I don't have secrets either right now. I have, but I don't right now.

**Tim:** So we all have, right?

**Annie:** Certainly. We all go through having a secret life.

**Tim:** Some of us are brave enough to absolve ourselves from that. But you just said something that the Holy Spirit said to me several years ago. I saw a lot of incongruence in the church circles that I was in. And I remember being at a conference and I could not stomach coming to the session because of what I knew about this particular individual. And it was making me nauseous.

So I called Juliette in the hotel crying and I was like, "Babe, am I a hater? I don't want to feel like this." And she says, "Babe, you're not being a hater. You just can't handle knowing that this person is in this room."

**Annie:** There's two different things.

**Tim:** There's two different things. So I was going to the Lord and I was like, Why don't you do something? How is he still getting preaching engagements and I'm over here dying? And then the Lord let me have my little tantrum. And then the Holy Spirit said, "Hey, Tim, when you put your head on the pillow at night and they put their head on the pillow at night, who do you think falls to sleep faster? And it was about the only time I felt confident enough to say, "Oh, I know it's me." And the Holy Spirit says, "Then shut up."

**Annie:** Then drop it.

**Tim:** Then drop it. I know I sleep better because I'm congruent.

**Annie:** Yeah, that's right. Because when I'm not, I don't sleep well. Well, also, because do I think I'm the one who won't ever have an affair? No, I can do that. I could do that.

**Tim:** Annie, I try to tell people all the time, I don't trust my flesh, I do trust my disciplines.

**Annie:** I've heard you say it. You just follow your disciplines. I think you wrote about it.

**Tim:** The Holy Spirit convicts me of sin and I just have some disciplines because I know me.

- Annie:** Because I know me. Because you know what I haven't missed? A single sin. I have perfect attendance. Perfect attendance. So I know exactly who I am. I'm the only one. The Lord and I are the only ones. I mean, I've got blind spots, but He and I are the only ones that haven't missed any of them.
- Tim:** That's exactly right. Absolutely right. That's so funny.
- Annie:** I wish someone could convince me that there is a sin available that I won't pursue given enough boring time and energy.
- Tim:** Absolutely correct. We are all capable.
- Annie:** I'm so capable, dude.
- Tim:** Of all the things.
- Annie:** I'm so capable.
- Tim:** When I tell you all the things, all the things people... Yeah. Girl, we could talk all day.
- Annie:** All the things, yes.
- Tim:** That would be... I'm telling you, yeah.
- Annie:** So I'm like, one DM. Yeah. Dear everybody, one DM is the start.
- Tim:** Absolutely correct.
- Annie:** That is the little yes-
- Tim:** That's absolutely correct.
- Annie:** ...that's gonna get you to a big yes, and I did it.
- Tim:** Absolutely correct. I'll never forget when I was a young adult pastor... I was 30 when I became a young adult pastor, and the median age of our young adults was like maybe, 24, 23. And in the four years I was a young adult pastor, I was attracted to three of the young ladies. Now, attraction is not something you plan. All attraction is information. Attraction is not a sin, lust is.
- Annie:** That's right. What you do with it.

- Tim:** And our reactions to our attractions can be sinful. So you wind up doing counseling sessions with everybody when you're in that type of deal. It's like Grand Central Station. One person comes in and out. So they come out, they come in, and I'm like, "Wow, your parents are great collaborators."
- Annie:** Yeah, that's right. Your parents are great collaborators. Amen. What a great compliment.
- Tim:** Obviously I have enough professionalism to get through the counseling session. When they leave, I call my admin in and I said, "I cannot meet with her ever again. Assign her to a new pastor." And they're very defensive. "What did she do to you?" "She did nothing."
- Annie:** "She did nothing."
- Tim:** I said, "I found myself attracted to her and I think it's very unprofessional if I'm looking forward to counseling session."
- Annie:** That's it.
- Tim:** I shouldn't be looking forward to them. And I would be looking forward to seeing her again. And I don't need to know anything else about her.
- Annie:** That's it.
- Tim:** And then I go home to tell Juliette. And then I'm free.
- Annie:** And then you're free. That is the part people don't realize. The minute I sent the screenshot to Kelly, I went like, "I'm free." Anybody can do anything now.
- Tim:** Yeah, absolutely.
- Annie:** Because it's not a secret.
- Tim:** That's exactly right.
- Annie:** So if you find something about me on the internet and you post, I bet you're not the first who knows.
- Tim:** Yeah, exactly. I don't have no secrets.
- Annie:** Yeah, it just isn't-

**Tim:** There's nobody doing any gotchas on me-

**Annie:** You're so free.

**Tim:** ...like, Ha ha, you were on this podcast and I heard you using strong language. I did, and it was four of them. And then I said I stopped using it publicly.

**Annie:** Because you're like, which person expects me to be perfect? You've come to the wrong place. So I'm not going to do this perfectly.

**Tim:** I've come to a conclusion for the Pharisees. My conclusion for the Pharisees is that they will accept all of your life, Annie, 2,000 years from now if they get to read it in hindsight. Because I don't even know if Peter could be our apostle in real time, because he denied Jesus. I don't even know if they would have let Him back into our churches. You know what I mean?

**Annie:** That's right.

**Tim:** Abraham lied. Moses murdered. I have no idea-

**Annie:** David. Gross.

**Tim:** David is out here slaughtering everybody. He gets plans for a temple. God's even like, "Your hands are too bloody." You know what I mean? But you get Uriah killed, you marry Bathsheba, Solomon... everybody's reading Proverbs one chapter a day, and this dude had like 1,200 women. You saw every one of your wives and concubines.

**Annie:** Proverbs 21 and also...

**Tim:** Which one of them women were you talking about? Who is the Proverbs 31 woman?

**Annie:** Which one?

**Tim:** So I just feel like we don't give grace for people's process in real-time. We can read it in hindsight when it's all over.

**Annie:** We'd love a finished story.

**Tim:** Yeah, we would love a finished story. But we don't do well, in general, it seems, in Christian communities, when people are going through the middle of their deal, right?

**Annie:** That's right.

**Tim:** Like, we're hands off and then we're hands off. Oh, this pastor fell, so he's not my friend anymore? Right. He's only not my friend if he can't see his sin.

**Annie:** Yeah, that's it.

**Tim:** That's the only person I'm distancing myself from. Like if you fell and you know it-

**Annie:** Yeah, and you still want to be in a relationship with me, yeah, okay, we can do something.

**Tim:** If you sin and you really know what you're stealing, my friend.

**Annie:** Oh, that's beautiful.

**Tim:** I just made that up.

**Annie:** That's a great song. That was weird.

**Annie:** No, it was beautiful.

**Tim:** You know what I mean?

**Annie:** Okay, Tim, you got to come back sometime, please.

**Tim:** You are a delight.

**Annie:** Oh, mutual. That's very kind of you. And also, this is too fun. This is too good.

**Tim:** Yes.

**Annie:** Thank you. I can't wait for people to get Welcome to the Basement. It's pre-orders now. It comes out February 27th.

**Tim:** That's right.

**Annie:** But thanks for writing this book. Thanks for what you do.

**Tim:** Thank you.

**Annie:** I really appreciate you.

**Tim:** I appreciate you too.

**Annie:** I'm grateful. I love you. Love you too.

**Tim:** Okay. Bye.

[01:08:23] <music>

**Outro:** You guys, isn't he the best? Listen, let's just talk about it. Let's just talk about it. Listen, we just... What a good dude. I am so grateful. When you sit down with someone and get to experience them in person, it takes what you've read online and what you've listened to in podcasts, and what you've read in a book and puts it in a person. And it's just amazing. What a great conversation. I'm so grateful for his honesty and his teaching. I enjoyed it a ton, as you can tell.

Hey, make sure you go get your copy of Welcome to the Basement. It's a great book to read, a great book to pass off to your friends and your family, great book to put in those Easter baskets. So go follow him on social media as well, tell him thank you again for being on the show.

If you have any questions from this episode, you can drop them in the Q&A, if you're listening on Spotify, that's what I am is a Spotify listener, or send them to us on Instagram @thatsoundsfunpodcast, and we'll do our best to answer them there. Don't forget to grab your tickets to the Ryman for August 11th. You're going to want to be here for that weekend in Nashville.

Again, the code you're going to use at anniefdowns.com/Ryman is TSF. Go get your tickets. Please get your tickets. I don't want you to miss out when we open up all the sales to all the world tomorrow.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that is how you can find me. And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you, and I will do the same.

Today what sounds fun to me is hearing back from you about this episode and also Maybe this is the time to confess something to a friend like I got to do a few weeks ago as well. So, you know what sounds fun to me? Living free. Y'all, living free is fun. So let's get about it.

Okay, y'all have a great weekend. We'll see you back here on Monday. Are you ready for this? With Savannah Guthrie, you guys. Oh my gosh, you're gonna love this conversation. So we'll see you back here on Monday.