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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors. This show is sponsored by [BetterHelp](#). We all have stuff we carry around, right? So whether it's big stressors or little worries that just won't go away, but here's the thing, keeping it all bottled up is not good for anyone.

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Intro: Oh, I am so happy to have our guest on the show today. It has been a long time coming. I get to talk with my friend Darren Mulligan from the band We Are Messengers. Now, if you're not familiar with Darren, let me tell you, you are in for a treat. His love for God and his love for people, uh.

He's an incredibly talented musician, and his music with We Are Messengers has touched countless lives. Today we talk about his new album, *Where the Joy Is*, we talk all about Ireland, because that is where he is recording from, and about what God is up to right now in his life and the lives of the people around him, and I think in our lives, too. It is really good.

I like to warn you, and I think this is true, this is a note-taking episode, so make sure you have the ability to take notes somewhere. Here's my conversation with my friend, Darren Mulligan, from We Are Messengers.

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- Annie:** Darren Mulligan, welcome to That Sounds Fun. I can't believe this is your first time.
- Darren:** Yeah. No, I've been a big fan of you and of the podcast for a long time. So honored to be here. Thank you.
- Annie:** You know, it is mutual. Okay, so we are starting this year, our 10th year, by asking, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell us what you are doing for fun right now.
- Darren:** Well, I live in a little cottage in the hills of Tyrone in Ireland, buried between two mountains. Right now I'm looking out the window at the top of this mountain that my daddy grew up on in a one-room stone house and I'm demolishing part of a shed to build a home for my family. That's what I'm doing.
- Annie:** Y'all literally, you just told me before we started, you do not even have electricity in that home.
- Darren:** No, no electricity. We are the last house before you cross into the Republic of Ireland, and the first house when you cross into Northern Ireland. We are too far from the grid, so we've got a big diesel generator, solar panels. I just live in the most wonderful wee place, a very quiet life. Nobody cares about what I do or about who I am, except that I'm the son of Francie and Carmel Mulligan, and they know me at my best and my worst.
- Annie:** How far is a grocery store?
- Darren:** Not too bad. Like a proper grocery store that you can buy more than six things, in probably like 20 minutes, 25 minutes.
- Annie:** Oh, that's not bad.
- Darren:** No, no. So no, it's perfect.
- Annie:** Okay, so I'm 43, I think we're close-ish in age.
- Darren:** Yeah, I'm older.
- Annie:** Okay. I mean, you live on the line between two countries that were and continue it sometimes to be in discord, and especially when we were teenagers. And if you've lived right there your whole life, you've lived kind of in a war zone your whole life. I mean, has it been that intense?

Darren: Well, yeah, I've lived on both sides of the border. You know, I grew up in the Republic. So I'm an Irishman through and through. But where my house is right now, the roads were blown up here. I couldn't have traveled here when I was a young man because you couldn't have crossed the road five miles from my house.

Our house is an old Church of Ireland schoolhouse, so all stone, and it belongs to a little Church of Ireland up the road. That church of Ireland is off the grid too. There's a lot of music videos we shot there. But interestingly, that church, I grew up Roman Catholic, I would never have stood in a church like that ever had I not come to know Jesus.

And the people that live five miles from here would have been my enemies, but now they're my brothers. So seeing how God transforms communities. The problem is, in Northern Ireland, much like America, people try to co-opt Jesus into their political program. And Jesus isn't for doing that. Jesus says, "I'm going this way, you come follow me."

Annie: Yeah, that's right. I mean, honestly, for better or for worse, it gives me a little hope that that's not an American-only trait. So that makes me feel a little bit better that that's a human trait versus an American trait.

Darren: Yeah, it definitely is. Listen, everyone's been trying to co-op Jesus since He walked the earth. And long before Him, men tried to co-op the gods for their favor. The thing with Jesus is every time we try and pinpoint Him, every time we try and get Him to follow our agenda, He says, "No, you follow me. I'll call your name and you follow." He doesn't follow narratives. He doesn't follow agendas. He doesn't follow my will. The Lord is going, He's moving, and this whole thing He's invited us to go for a walk, and that walk will transform the world.

Annie: I sat with a coach of mine right before this, just an hour ago, and I said, "I feel like there are three paths and they are all dark. All I need the Lord to do..." I said, "I'm not even trying for success, I'm just trying for obedience. But all three paths feel dark." What do you do when you can't figure out which path is the one Jesus is on?

Darren: Annie, you've caught me at the best time.

Annie: Okay, good.

Darren: If I would have been in this podcast three, four years ago, you would have caught me in a very dark season in my life. Where I am now I have a sense of peace and contentment and joy that I always thought belonged to somebody else, not to me. I never thought I could have it or hold it.

And what I realized I was doing was before Jesus rescued me, I was trying to fill my life with promiscuity and violence and drunkenness and blasphemy and all these things. And they never brought me joy. And then when Jesus rescued me, I tried to fill my life with being good, with being self-righteous, with being holier than thou. And what I found was that left me just as miserable as living a life of debauchery. So what I have decided to do in the last three years...

Annie: With less fun, probably, honestly.

Darren: Oh, way less fun. Way less fun. So what I decided to do three years ago was I said I was going to study the scriptures every day. I came to Matthew 11:28-30, and Jesus is walking. You always find Him walking or sitting and talking. In that, He says, "Come follow me, learn to walk in the unforced rhythms of my grace, and you will find rest for your weary soul.

So the path can seem dark a lot when we're too far behind Jesus, right? So I'm like, Jesus, you go ahead. I'm going to hang here for a while and dwell in my sin and my circumstance. And I can't see the light. The light's too far away. Then sometimes I catch up with Jesus and I say, "Jesus, thanks for the ride. Now I'm going to run on ahead." And then I look back and I still can't see the light. It's too far away.

So all I do every day, Annie, is very simply in the morning I get up, I read, I talk with Jesus, I try and live a really ordinary, decent, kind life. And I have found great joy in the simplicity of just going for a walk with Jesus. Nothing more, nothing less. That's the way I'm going to live the rest of my life.

Annie: How does that play out...? I mean, because you're touring, you're a nationally known, I mean, internationally known artist. Y'all have number-one songs in Australia. I mean, like y'all are just everywhere. But you spend a ton of time in the U.S. and even based here sometimes. When life requires you to move that fast... I'm thinking of our friends who are surgeons or our friends listening who are moms of four and who have got really fast-paced life. And you do, too.

Darren: I do.

Annie: When you're not off the grid.

Darren: No.

Annie: So how do you do it?

Darren: I have a crazy life, Annie, honestly. In the last couple of years, I have cut back and I've spent more time at home, for sure. But I just got off a plane three days ago.

And then I came home and picked my kids up from school and started to build a house.

But I think it's routines. Routines are really important. I'll give you an example. We just finished a tour called the Worth the Joyous Tour, right?

Annie: Yeah.

Darren: On that tour, I was surrounded by men and women who every day, the first thing they did was open the Bible. Not because I told them to or they had to, but because that was their heart.

Annie: I was about to ask you, is that part of your tour leadership where you're like, we start with reading the Bible? No.

Darren: No, no.

Annie: Wow.

Darren: I surrounded myself with men and women who are better humans than I am, you know? And so what it allowed us to do is when we first walked into the building and we met all these people coming to, you know, think here's another Christian band that we have to serve, our people met them as going, we're coming into your house and we want to serve you. Everybody, the crew, the production, the bus drivers, the truck drivers. The routine of doing that has led us to treat people with kindness, with decency. And make no mistake about it, Annie. We don't suffer foolishness. We're not playing with it, you know.

But that routine of reading, of praying, of eating meals together, even when I'm not with my family, but with my road family, that thing allows the lights to stay on. Because if I'm not doing that, I go dark very, very quickly and I go to really bad places in my mind and in my heart. I got to stay close to Jesus through routines of reading, praying.

And it doesn't have to be all day long. It's 10 minutes, 15 minutes. It's riding my bike down to the coffee shop before the show going, "Jesus, I am really, really exhausted. Can you hang out with me for a few minutes before we do this?" And He always turns up. He always turns up.

Annie: I think a lot of times we think of our spiritual rhythms as like "have tos" and we have to do this, we have to do that. Like we gotta go to church, and we gotta read our Bibles. And times like you're talking about, and seasons like I'm in where we

have big decisions to make, I'm like, this is my actual only hope. The actual only thing I've got is that I can sit with Jesus and hopefully He will direct me.

Darren: Annie, how much does Jesus love you? Now think about it. You talk about Him all the time, you write about Him all the time, you do all this stuff, right? But you started doing all this stuff because you realized you were deeply loved, fully and completely, by a perfect, wonderful Jesus, all right?

So even if you make a choice that may be right or wrong, God's not waiting around the corner with a big stick to hit you because you made the wrong choice. He's kind. He's like me when my kids make a bad choice. I don't cut them off. I say, "Hey, here's another way. Come on back over here." I think the fear is gone for me, Annie, in big decisions because I realize I've got a good Father who truly cares. And I do the best I can and I go for a walk with Jesus, and I often end up in the best place that I didn't know I could ever be.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, that is... Luckily, I still have a tissue in my pocket from my earlier meeting, so we're just gonna use it for my eyes. Yeah, that's it. That's it. When I was listening... I mean, you know I'm a huge fan of your music. It started because I am a fan of you as a person, and then I thought I should also listen to his music.

And so as I started listening, particularly to the *Where the Joy Is* album, I mean, almost every song kind of gives this like, Hey, I know this is hard, but you're going to make it. Hey, I know this is hard, but you're going to make it. Hey, I know this feels impossible, it's not impossible. I know you want to give up, don't give up. Why did you write a whole album about that?

Darren: Because, and I'm going to cry now, because God has utterly changed my life. I have walked with Jesus for 16 years, and for 13 of those years, I was haunted with a deep loneliness. I was haunted with a deep sense of... sorrow, disappointment, shame.

And when I went for this walk in the last three years, one morning I woke up and the sadness was gone. He had taken all my mourning, he had turned it to laughter; he had taken all my sorrow, He turned it to joy, and he'd really turned my feet towards dancing.

And we've been this band over the years that have spoken openly about suicide, suicidal ideation, depression, abuse, all kinds of things. I wanted our audience to know that sometimes this side of heaven, everything is made well. Because in my life, I was thinking that it's only going to be well when I get to glory, you know, on the other side of eternity.

But actually, something happened to me, Annie, and I'm not the man I was two years, three years ago. I feel like I've been born again again because I have taken Jesus at His word. And I realized that joy wasn't just for someone else, it was for a baldy, hairy Irishman who can be rough around the edges, who can be intense, who can be hard to handle. But I sleep so well at night. I laugh so hard. I smile wide. I go for walks out here and there's soft rain that falls and your face doesn't get wet and I talk with Jesus.

And when I'm on the road playing for our audience, I'm not manipulating them, I'm not trying to make them like me to buy some lousy t-shirt. I've got to the point in our career where I choose to do it, not because I have to, but because I love to see the lights come on. Everything has utterly changed in that album.

That album sounds exactly like what's going on in my heart and in my head. And it's the first time I've ever done it. I've been writing music for so long. You said 10 years for you, for the show. This is 10 years for the band as well.

Annie: Oh, wow. 2014, the Lord had a lot of stuff berthed in that year.

Darren: My goodness. But I feel like I'm just getting started. You-

Annie: Same.

Darren: Exactly. I saw you with the move. I realize, you know, you went up to New York. God's doing something. And I think all He's doing, Annie, is taking you for a walk and it's beautiful.

Annie: Did something happen three years ago? Did you have a moment? Or was it literally like, when I look back on it, I realized I started praying differently. And you don't have to tell us what you don't want to tell us, but when my friends are listening, I'm thinking, we're all going, well, I want that moment. So is there something I need to do? Or does it just happen? Or was there a catalyst?

Darren: Well, suffering is always the catalyst to great joy.

Annie: That's it. That's it. Suffering is always the catalyst to great joy.

Darren: It is always. And it's Romans 5, suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character leads to hope. And Matthew 12 says that hope is Jesus. Suffering, okay, led me to Jesus in a different way.

But I would say this, I got sick and tired of being sick and tired. I got sick and tired of falling for the same old demons, returning to my old patterns of sin. Like a dog

returns to its vomit, I returned to my sin. And I realized that me trying to be good, trying to be better, wasn't changing anything. And I realized that I had to fully cast my hope on Jesus.

I had to take Him at His word. Because you know what? The number one records didn't do it. The gold records didn't do it. The having some money in the bank didn't do it. The being righteous didn't do it. I had to acknowledge one day I was sitting... yeah, no one's asked me the question so I'll give you the answer. One day I was sitting in a hotel room and I was reading the Psalms and all I could do was fall on the floor on my face and I said, "God, I've sinned against you and against you alone. I am a man full of iniquity. Could anybody love me?" And Jesus has loved me really, really well.

Annie: Wow. That's really kind of you to tell us. Thank you.

Darren: You're welcome.

Annie: That's really generous of you.

Darren: I was going to make some self-deprecating joke, but you know what? I have realized that I have a short time to let people know that you can change, you can turn around, you can make different choices. And the end of those choices and the suffering and the hardship and the repentance is a joy that the world cannot take from you ever again.

I'm not talking happiness, Annie, you know the difference. We've been around the happiness thing, it always runs away laughing at us. But joy is that steady presence of God in the dead of night when the monsters come, and He's there, and He's taking all my monsters out back, and He's kicking them in the head, and I'm having a party as He does it.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. That's right. The interesting thing as you're telling this timeline is I feel like you and I met for the first time at Momentum probably around that window at some point.

Darren: Yeah.

Annie: What has always stood by, and I made a note of this, what has always stayed with me is how I watched you walk around and speak to everyone in the green room because you were playing, We Are Messengers was playing right around when I was speaking.

And you were walking around and speaking to everyone, and I couldn't hear what you were saying to everyone, but when you came to me, you prophesied. You spoke into, Hey, here's what God's asked you to do... I mean, I could practically retell you what you said to me that day. I mean, just like, "Hey, you're called to something, and you need to go after the thing you're called to. How do you do that?"

I mean, talk to us about hearing God and being prophetic in other people's lives on the day you meet them. That's the day that a), you got my loyalty for life. Because I was like, well, he hears God. And even if he doesn't, he is brave enough to think this might be what God would have for this woman today. So what's the courage behind that? What's the hearing God behind that courage?

Darren: Well, a couple of things. One is I don't do that for everyone. But I do know this, that in every room I'm in, God's always trying to find one person, right? And so I may have talked to many people, but you were the only person that I give a word to.

Annie: Wow.

Darren: I'll tell you why that is, is because I have learned not to speak unless I'm certain it's God, right? Because you can cause great damage with your words. So be careful. I've also learned that it must line up with the scripture. There must be something in scripture that bears witness of those words.

I'm also not ashamed. You have to understand, Annie, Jesus found me when I was sleeping in the backs of cars with strange women.

Annie: Wow.

Darren: Do you know? He loved me when I couldn't look at myself in the mirror. I have nothing to be ashamed of. I told Him that I would do what he asked me to do. So sometimes I do that, and I do feel nervous and I feel embarrassed and I feel weird, but I push on nonetheless. Because just like you asked me the question, what was it that happened three years ago? That'll change my day today because it's the first time it's been asked. That'll change my whole day. That's prophecy in a different way. You're asking the question. And if you're not brave enough to do that, you're never going to see that fruit.

So I see even this conversation today. For me, this is fruit. This is watching a little seed that was planted a few years ago and God's grown it into something even sweeter. So I think don't be ashamed, don't be embarrassed, don't be nervous, but be careful with your words.

In my life, I've hurt too many people with words. And in these last, you know, three, four, five years, I'm very careful. I only speak if I know it's true and if it's kind and if it's edifying and if it's going to encourage, even if it's hard. Like I don't need people to tickle my ears. I need them to tell me the truth. But do it with love. Do it with love and I'll receive it all day long.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. It also is such a proof in the pudding that you're in Scripture. I mean, because oftentimes if I'm in a situation where I'm like, Ooh, I think the Lord wants me to encourage that person, it helps a lot if I have been reading the Bible because I go, well, actually what I'm thinking about is what I read this morning. What I'm thinking about is what I heard on a podcast today or a sermon today. And that always kind of takes my nerves down about 30%. Actually, all I'm doing is repeating what I heard. It's just back in my mind when I'm sitting here.

Darren: You know, Annie, I keep talking about this going for a walk with Jesus.

Annie: Yeah, it's beautiful.

Darren: If you go for a walk really closely with Him, you're going to know how he speaks, you're going to know how He responds. So, in a way, it's not like you have to pray before you speak. If you've been around the one you love, you're going to know what they would do in that situation, right?

So when I'm with someone who needs clothing, I will clothe them. When someone is poor and I can help, I will help. When my sister needs encouragement and something to help her walk on, I go, what would Jesus do? It's not wizardry. It's literally what you said. It's reading the scriptures, knowing the voice of God through the scriptures, and then applying that to your life. Walk like He walks, live like He lives, love like He loves, and talk like He talks. And you cannot go wrong. But what we have... Sorry, I keep looking out the window, Annie. It's so beautiful. Sorry. Well-

Annie: You know I used to live in Scotland, so I'm practically picturing. I mean, I can see the greens. I can see a version of the other island version of the green when you're looking out the window.

Darren: It's greeny and brown, and it's like the highlands, but smaller. But yeah, I think for me, one of the issues we have right now is we have biblical illiteracy is at an all-time high, right? So our young people, in particular, are taking a lot of their theology from worship leaders and rock and roll singers and podcasters, and very few of them are going for deep, long walks with Jesus.

Eugene Peterson talks about a quiet obedience in the same direction, a long obedience in the same direction. If we had that, I wouldn't hurt so many people. I would know my Father's voice, I would know His style, how to do it, and I would do it well.

And I have watched you, Annie. Your character is what God has been forming in these seasons, and your character actually inspires me. I have watched you and what you have done, and I have looked at you and gone, You know what, I'd like to be like Annie. I think maybe that's the gift of getting older. The more we walk with Jesus, the more we become like Him.

And no matter how many people remind you of who you were, Annie, right, you are who you are today, not who you were then. And neither am I.

Annie: And that moment in that, at that conference in Orlando, I had never been on that stage before. I was in front of a bunch of... I was in front of a bunch of radio people. And if we're just going to tell the whole honest truth, radio people don't always love podcasters, right? There's a lot of feelings between these two groups of people. So I had all these nerves about, like, am I meant to win these people over into liking me? And am I supposed to convince them that I'm one of the good guys in this medium that isn't helping them succeed all the time?

And your moment of coming over and being like, "Hey, the Lord's called you in a lot of ways to this, and today is not an accident," it felt like Jesus walking with me onto that stage.

Darren: There you go.

Annie: The other thing I learned from you that day was this like, you have no idea when someone else needs just to push, and your words just are going like, Hey, this is right where you're supposed to be. This is right where you're supposed to be.

My business coach did that for me in the chair next to me an hour ago where he was like, Hey, this is part of it. This is right where you're supposed to be. So I'm glad to publicly thank you for reminding me I was right where I was supposed to be and that I'm allowed to keep forming and changing and being part of... I love our big community of people who make music and podcast and radio and books and all the things. And you just reminded me that day what a beautiful thing we get to be in the middle of.

Darren: Yeah, we get a chance to speak to culture, to speak to Christian culture and to speak to the broader culture. I think culture will listen a lot more closely if we learn how to do it with kindness and we learn how to do it with gracefulness and poise and

ease. And I haven't always done that because I'm not like you in that regard. I'm not such a sweet, articulate, well-formed lady. I'm a bit of a pillager. God has given me a Viking ax to share the gospels. But you can wield an ax with love and kindness too and...

Annie: That's right.

Darren: I don't know. I'm not afraid of getting older, Annie. I was thinking today, I came on the podcast and I was looking at my beard and I was like, Oh, it's a bit gray. Maybe I should get some of the Just For Men in. And I'm like, "Really? This is my own T-shirt. I am not branding. It is the only thing that was clean under my bed this morning. So I don't think we need more impressive men and more impressive women. I think we need a more impressive view of the goodness of God. And that's what this album, that's what my life is about at the moment.

[00:27:48] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our amazing partners, [ButcherBox](#). Okay, picture this. You're at the grocery store trying to find the perfect cut of meat or seafood. It can be overwhelming, right?

But with ButcherBox, those days are over. They've got everything you need. From 100% grass-fed beef to free-range organic chicken and wild-caught seafood. And here's the best part. It's all delivered right to your doorstep with free shipping always. Convenience? Check. Value? Double check.

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Sign up today at butcherbox.com/TSF and use the code TSF, like That Sounds Fun, to choose your free-for-a-year offer, plus get \$20 off your first order.

Sponsor: And I have another amazing partner to tell you about, [KiwiCo](#). Y'all know I love summer. I was built for it. I just think it's magical. I love that, even as an adult, it just feels like time to play.

So let me tell you about something that is going to be an absolute hit in your household this summer. KiwiCo's Summer Adventure Series. I'm already counting down the days to when I can do some of these kits with my nephew Sammy on our big fam vacay this summer.

There's this really cool bottle rocket kit where he builds his own rocket and launches it in the sky. I cannot wait to see the look on his face. As someone who loves seeing my miniBFFs learn and explore, it is so cool to see how these projects spark curiosity and creativity in kids.

What I love most about KiwiCo is that they offer something for everyone, from toddlers to teens. And let me tell you, the quality of these projects, top notch. These are real engineering, science, and art projects designed to educate and inspire.

Plus, as a busy aunt, I appreciate how KiwiCo takes the guesswork out of finding engaging activities for kids. With the Summer Adventure Series, everything is conveniently delivered right to your doorstep, so you can spend less time planning and more time bonding with the little ones.

So friends, if you're looking to build the best summer ever, I highly recommend checking out KiwiCo's Summer Adventure Series. And here's the best part. You can get 20% off your summer adventure at kiwico.com/funsummer. That's kiwico.com/funsummer for 20% off your next summer expedition.

Sponsor: Y'all, we all love something that is customized to us, getting our favorite outfit tailored to fit just right, getting a custom piece of art for your house, listening to a playlist that's customized for us based on what we like to listen to. So why not use custom hair care?

We all have different hair textures and types and switching to a custom hair care routine has been so helpful for me. My hair looks healthier and shinier. Plus, [Prose](#) also has custom skincare, which is so great because we definitely all have different needs for our skin, too.

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Okay, now back to our conversation with Darren.

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Annie: When you were out on the *Where the Joy Is* tour, what were you seeing God do out on that? I mean, I was getting to watch it on Instagram, on social media, and you show a lot the moments where you get to speak into whatever's going on in that audience, and every night it seemed different. And you didn't have a paragraph that you'd memorized. It was like, what's going on in the room and what is the Holy Spirit doing in this city?

So what did you kind of see...? I mean, the tour went to Australia, the tour went international. What do you see God doing across the world right now?

Darren: It blew me away. We started out in New Zealand and then we did a full Australia tour, U.S.. We're heading to South Africa later this year, Europe, back to the U.S..

But what God is doing with this band is a really ordinary thing. The world doesn't revolve around my band, or my songs, or me as an artist.

Annie: Nor me, yes.

Darren: The local church is the hope of the world, and Christ is at the center of that. Everything revolves around him, right? So what I'm seeing is that no matter whether we're in Kansas City, or New York City, or we're in Sydney, or Auckland, or wherever we're going to be, Durban, human beings are the same. I'm telling you. I've been all over the world. You have too. Loneliness is the same. Heartache is the same. Hurting is the same. Everyone's arms look the same when the monsters come, right?

God has used us to be a band for very ordinary people wrestling with life, death, and the in-between, and in a very practical way. What we're seeing continuously at our shows it's people of all ethnicities, young, old, middle-aged. Because we're not a worship team, so it's not a bunch of teenagers, they're there. We're not a cool band, so it's not a bunch of 15-year-olds, but they're there. Everyone's there. And it looks kind of the way I hoped it would look. It's not cool, but it's real, and it's messy.

And we stop the show when we need to, and we sing when we need to, and we talk when we need to. We never call them fans. That's despicable. They're our audience.

Annie: Me neither. I'm like, we're friends. I don't want fans. I'm not out here to make fans. Ew. That word does not... We don't even use it in meetings internally. We do not use that word. I'm not looking for any of that. So I'm with you.

Darren: I love that. Me and the boys are the same. We refuse to. So what I'm seeing is people... a lot of mental health issues, right? And they're coming to the show, and because we've changed and that, we're not just sitting with them in it. Now we're able to do a song like *Maybe It's Okay*, which I would have cried my way through for six years. Now I'm smiling my way through it.

Annie: Wow.

Darren: And at the end of it, I'm getting to this place where I'm like, okay, Jesus, what are we hunting down, right?

Annie: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Darren: Even this lady the other day came to the show, she had been sitting, lying on her brother's grave. He had taken his life and she was lying on his grave with a pistol in her mouth. And the lyrics to one of our songs, *Come What May*, ran through her head. And she got up off the grave, took the gun out of her mouth, went home and bought a ticket, and came to our show so she could tell me what God has done.

Annie: Oh my gracious.

Darren: So we're seeing this all of the time. Not just guns, but we're seeing people who've been sexually abused go, you know what, I can forgive the person who hurt me. It doesn't make it right, but it affords me the freedom to keep living.

We've seen some cool healings. That's been cool. I'm not in any healing ministry, but God's been doing it. And we have seen... Oh, Annie, I'm sorry. We've seen the freaking lights come on in thousands of people's eyes all across the world. Not because we're the best band in the world. We're not. But because they trust us that we're not going to lie to them.

And you said it, we're not going to treat every city the same. I'm not reading from a script. We're not playing from the same setlist. We're trusting that every city is different. Every room is different. And what you do well, Annie, apart from all of your talent, is you're able to be present, right?

Annie: Thank you. Yeah.

Darren: Even in this conversation, I see you. You're present with me, even though you have a million things swirling. We have learned how to be present with our audience. And we've realized they're not coming out to see us, we're coming out to see them.

Annie: Yeah, oh, that's good. We're coming out to see them. I learned that when I was on tour with some other people. I learned the phrase of, we don't do this one show four times this weekend, we do four shows this weekend.

Darren: Yes. and it's their first time seeing us.

Annie: That's right. It's their first time. And the Lord is not doing the same thing in Chicago that He's doing in Nashville. So for me to bring the exact same conversation without any listening to the Holy Spirit, it's that mixing... I'm sure y'all do the same, I know you do the same, of like, we're going to prep and we're going to show up with our set list. But the only way the Holy Spirit actually gets to call an audible is if I have a plan. If I have no plan, I am panicked. So if I've got a plan, and then I say, "But Holy Spirit, you come and do. You know what I don't know about this room. So come and do what only you can do." And that's what makes the difference.

Who else in the band? Who's in We Are Messengers?

Darren: It's changed so much over the years.

Annie: But always you.

Darren: Always me. Here's the thing. It's always been me, right? The reason it's not called Darren Mulligan is because when I sat on the record label 10 years ago, I said, I don't want to call it after me because I'm going to let everybody down. And what we don't need is another white middle-aged Christian musician to give Jesus a bad reputation.

Annie: Wow.

Darren: I said, let's make it about something broader than me. So people will come and go. And I've been here all the way through. It may not always be like that. Maybe one day I'll step aside and it'll continue without me. But right now in the band and in the production team and in our wider team... Annie, you know Nashville, you know what it's like. Right now everybody in my team, I trust them with everything I have. I'm not afraid of letting things go. In my life, I've been too closed-handed. I've tried

to micromanage everything. I've tried to be in every situation. And I've stepped away from all of it because these men and women have better character than I do. They love God. They love their communities. I got good people. And I don't know how I got here because I didn't deserve any of it, but somehow the Lord has surrounded me. And I hope they never change because our band is nasty. They're so good.

Annie: Yeah, they're so good.

Darren: And I feel sometimes like a cretin on stage playing with them. I'm like, Doo doo doo. But God has been really kind. That's a long answer. I'm sorry.

Annie: No, it's great. That's not a long answer at all. I think you feel the same way. I know I've talked to CAIN about this. I feel this way when I'm on the road. Like the part I do is the very small part of everybody... the people behind the board, the people who are setting up merch, I mean, the tour manager, we're one team. I just do the stage part. They do the hard work.

Darren: They do.

Annie: One of the things you've set up beautifully is We Are Messenger is Darren plus everyone you see on stage, everyone you don't see, the bus drivers who are sleeping. We are all this.

Darren: We are all this. We're all messengers. And that's the thing is how sweet are the feet of the messengers who carry the good news of Jesus. I want to be good news. Annie, I have not always been good news, but I sure as heck am good news right now. This team is good news. We are leaving rooms and cities better than we found them.

And my ego is gone. Hear me out on this, right? You need a certain amount of ego when you're young, right, because you've got to believe you're good at something before you're good at something.

Annie: Yeah, you have to bet on yourself first.

Darren: Yeah. And you need a certain... a little bit... we'll call it narcissism, right? A kind of narcissism where you're a little bit self-obsessed, you're doing your thing, you're building this thing. The problem sometimes for artists is that that narcissism becomes who we are and then everybody else is objectified and seen as a means to an end for us to achieving what we want to achieve.

And I'm not like that because I'm fully satisfied. Oh, sorry, I need to cry. My heart is full. I could not have any more of the goodness of God in my life if I tried. So I don't need to manipulate or coax or claw or grind. I work hard because I always work hard. But it is amazing how free a man gets when he lets the ego go and when he lets the narcissism go. And free men act like free men. They walk up to women like Annie F. Downs and they say kind things to her because they have nothing to lose and the whole world to gain.

Annie: So someone's listening that's 25 and is starting, either they're associate pastor at their church or they are starting a music career or a writing career. And at 25, you better bet on yourself because you got to convince everybody that you're a good bet. How do we start chipping away at that ego? How has that worked for you? I think suffering has helped me. How do we start chipping that away if we could chip it away by choice early?

Darren: I think suffering is a really good door to all of that, but you can't choose your suffering. You have to learn what to do with your suffering. I think biblical literacy disciplines with Jesus, always walking with Jesus, of course. I really hope that a 25-year-old man or woman will have the intelligence and the wisdom to listen to older people.

Now, not everything an older person says is wisdom, that's for sure. But at the very least, they have experience of living that is worth listening to. I think that's one of the sadnesses, as I watch this modern generation, is that you have people out there, like you, who have lived and who have wisdom, and have so much to give. And if people will listen and humble themselves, they will avoid the mistakes we made.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Darren: And I see that. One of the things I want to do is I want to leave young artists better than how I found them. I want to open doors for them through our band, through our success. But some of them don't want to be helped and some of them don't want to take advice and some of them want to think that they know everything.

And I do have an issue with that because I've got four young people in my house down at the bottom of the hill and they take a lot of their theology from Christian music and worship music and podcasts. We got to be careful, because every word we speak, someone's listening, someone's applying it to how they view God.

So 25-year-old, can I encourage you? Read every day so you get to know Jesus and surround yourself with a few older people who love you and who want to give you guidance and counsel. And don't be too prideful to take it because it might just save your entire career.

Annie: That's right. I had this conversation two nights ago at dinner, Darren, where a younger woman I don't really know has kind of gone off the rails. And a mutual friend called me and said, "Do you know her? Can you speak into her life? Can you help?" And I thought, "If she says I have a voice with her, I will absolutely sit with her. I don't know her."

So the conversation I'm now having with my peers is, if you went off the rails, who would you want us to call? Like, who's the person older than you that if something... if us talking directly to you wasn't working, who do we tattle to? And I said, Here's who you tattle to for me, my mentor, Nancy. You can call Pastor Kevin. You can call my parents. But I hope if you came to me, I would listen."

So what you're saying of these younger people, I'm experiencing that too even at 43 of going, do I know who to call if my friends went off the rails? And do my friends know who to call if I did it?

Darren: That's good.

Annie: Because acting like we don't need an older voice in our lives is one of the first open doors that gets us in trouble, I think.

Darren: Oh, listen, when I came to Jesus here in Monaghan, so Monaghan's my hometown in Ireland, I still go to the same church that my wife led me to Jesus in.

Annie: Your wife led you to Jesus?

Darren: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: Well done. I need to do more sharing of the gospel. That's what I'm doing wrong, Darren.

Darren: She led me to Jesus a few weeks before we got married. What's really cool is after that we went into a period of discipleship with some people in our church, and they were older people, and I learned so, so much. There's so much wisdom and value in having a multi-generational community. And we lose that.

Oh, something super cool. Wait till I tell you this, Annie. Not many people know this. 16 years ago, I was an adulterer, drunk, all those things. My girlfriend had a radical encounter with Jesus in Dublin, and I was in America at the time playing in a rock and roll band. She got saved, led me to Jesus a few weeks before we got married. I was an atheist at the time, that's a whole other story.

A year after that she led my little brother to Jesus, Mark, and Mark is a deacon at her church and he's got a wonderful family. And then two years ago my little brother led my older sister, Deidre, to Jesus. So me and Deidre and Heidi and Mark were out on the street in Monaghan on Sunday handing out leaflets with our kids telling people about Jesus in our hometown.

Last year I was sitting in Nashville and my daddy called me on the phone, and he said, "Darren, me and your mommy want to tell you something. We want to tell you that we've repented of our sin and we've given our lives to Jesus at 77 years old."

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Darren: So they're going to be baptized here in our church that I came to know Jesus in, in a couple of months. You want to know *Where the Joy Is*. The joy also comes in realizing that even in the middle of all of your mistakes and all of the damage and the hurt, Jesus is obscenely faithful, ridiculously kind, and doing what He said He was going to do. He's taking care of business, you know.

Annie: Wow. And we just get to be a part of it if we want.

Darren: We get to go for the walk.

Annie: Yeah.

Darren: You know? It's a matter of, do you want to go? Do you want to go? He says, Come follow me. And you got to say yay or nay. I want to go walking, Annie, for the rest of my days. I want to walk. I want to be close enough to reach out and touch the hem of His garment. I want to be close enough to hear what He's whispering, but not ahead of them and not too far behind. Which means that today is enough. This conversation is enough for now. And what happens next will happen next.

[00:48:14] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about another one of our amazing partners, [Hiya Health](#). You know it. Typical kids' vitamins are basically candy in disguise, right? They're cute, but they're packed with sugar and other gummy junk that I do not want my miniBFFs to have.

But that's why we love partnering with Hiya Health. These pediatrician-approved chewable vitamins are super-powered and made with zero sugar and zero gummy junk. Yep, they taste amazing and are perfect for even the pickiest eaters.

A lot of my miniBFFs love them, and I love knowing they're getting the nourishment they need without any of the junk. Plus, the fun part, decorating the glass bottle with stickers that come with your first order. They are so cute.

We've worked out a special deal with Hiya Health for their best-selling children's vitamin. Receive 50%, 5-0, off your first order. To claim this deal, you must go to [Hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun](https://hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun). That's Hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun, and get your kids the full body nourishment they need to grow into healthy adults.

Sponsor: Shout out to [Claritin](https://claritin.com) for supporting this episode and providing us with some samples. So if you have read That Sounds Fun, you probably remember the story of me trying to get a dog and then realizing I was allergic. Sad day. This is why I'm glad I found Claritin D because an allergy attack is literally the worst. So I am thankful to have it on hand around my friends, pets, and other things.

Luckily for those of us who live with the symptoms of allergies, we can live Claritin-clear with Claritin D. It's designed for serious allergy sufferers. Claritin D has two powerful ingredients in just one pill. This double-action combination of prescription-strength allergy medicine and the best decongestant available relieves sneezing, a runny nose, itchy and watery eyes, and itchy nose and throat, and sinus congestion and pressure with ease. Amen to that.

There are also a lot of seasonal allergy sufferers over here at AFD Inc. and at the That Sounds Fun Network. So Claritin D really works for this crew.

Ready to live life as if you don't have allergies? It is time to live Claritin-clear. Fast and powerful relief is just a quick trip away. So you can find Claritin D at your pharmacy counter. Just ask a pharmacist for Claritin D at the pharmacy counter. And you don't even need a prescription. Just go to [Claritin.com](https://claritin.com) right now and you can get a discount so you can live Claritin-clear. Use as directed.

Sponsor: Y'all, I love when my [Thrive Market](https://thrivemarket.com) box shows up at my door because it means some of my favorite snacks and cleaning supplies have arrived. And I didn't even have to leave my house. Thrive Market has these protein shakes that I am addicted to. Plus, I'm on a bit of a gluten-free journey, as you know, so they have a ton of gluten-free snacks that I love, like all the Simple Mills crackers and Siete chips.

I save money on every order. There is a deals page that I always check out, almost daily. It's embarrassing. I typically save about 30% on every order.

Here's the other thing I love. Thrive Market only allows trusted, top-quality ingredients while restricting 1,000-plus harmful ingredients like artificial flavors, high-fructose corn syrup, and more. Whether you're looking for organic kid snacks

or low-sugar alternatives or high-protein essentials, you can curate your own shopping experience with a few clicks and trust that you're getting quality products so you can shop worry-free.

Save time and money and shop Thrive Market today. Go to thrivemarket.com/thatoundsfun for 30% off your first order plus a free \$60 gift. That's thrivemarket.com/thatoundsfun. [Thrivemarket.com/thatoundsfun](https://thrivemarket.com/thatoundsfun).

And now back to finish up our conversation with Darren.

[00:51:53] <music>

Annie: My last question is, someone today is like, "Okay, I'm going to get in a rhythm of reading the Bible. Like I'm going to at least try tomorrow." Where do you have someone whose Bible is dusty or they don't even hold one, they've just got you version on their phone, which is great, I'm fine with that, where do you want them to start? Where's a great place to like, And how much would you say to read? Do we read a chapter? Do we read a book? What do we do?

Darren: I would start in the Gospel of John. I just love the love that he speaks for Jesus with. It's really accessible. And I would say read as much as you want and read as little as you want. The last thing you want to do is turn it into a chore, you know? It's okay to fall asleep with the Bible on your hands. I can tell you, I can scroll through arm wrestling videos for hours, right? Like hours literally watching that competition where men slap each other.

Annie: That is so Irish of you. That is so Irish. Just to watch people arm wrestle.

Darren: It's amazing. But I open the Bible and I can be like, you know, desperately tired in two minutes. So I would say go easy on yourself. This going for a walk with Jesus is exactly that. Like when you go for a walk with your best friend, you don't feel like this, like, Oh, I've got to go for a walk with, you know, Mary or Jamie, whoever it is. It's an honor to do it. You know it's going to be good for you. Treat the Bible like it tastes good, even the hard parts.

I was reading with my kids last night the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus talks about, blessed are those who mourn, they'll be comforted. Blessed are the poor in spirit. He says all these wonderful things to encourage the poor and the broken and the hurting, right?

But what people don't often read is the rest of it. Once you get out of there, Jesus starts attacking the idols you've made in your life. He starts attacking your lack of forgiveness, your love of money. He starts attacking your adultery and your

pornography. This walk with Jesus is beautiful, but it's really uncomfortable, and it's really messy, but it is really worth it because on the other side of all of that discomfort and tension and heartache and weirdness is peace.

The reason we're talking today and not years ago is because I always knew what you were talking about, but I never believed it was for me. And when you talk about that sounds fun, I didn't even know how to have fun anymore. My life is fun.

Do you know what sounds fun? Walking to the top of that hill with soft rain, with a breeze and listening to the birds. Going for avocado toast with my wife in the morning when I drop the kids off. Standing on the beach in Donegal with my kids with their bare feet, you know, running in the water. Sitting at my mom's house having dinner, you know, talking to my little brother, watching him playing drums in church on a Sunday morning and thinking about how good God is. Standing on the street corner, me, this guy with all these hundreds of thousands of records, standing on the street corner where nobody knows my name, handing out little tracts saying, what's the story with Jesus and watching my... Oh, I gotta brag in somewhere.

So we were doing this thing, right? So street evangelism. It's kind of a lost art. It doesn't really happen much in America, especially Tennessee. But my brother heads up evangelism at our church. And so we go in and they make some tea and coffee, and a couple of young ones sing in the town square.

Annie: Wow.

Darren: And then we take our little tracks and our little gospel of John. And I was standing at the entrance to the shopping center, the big shopping center with like six shops in it with my friend Julie, me, my youngest boy who's 5, and my second youngest who's 11, and this Croatian guy, walked past, and my little son said, "Sir, do you want our invitation?" And he said no. And then I was like, "Yeah, no, leave him." But then he went again and he said, "Sir, we also do a mother and toddlers group for moms-

Annie: The 5-year-old is saying this?

Darren: Yeah. My 11-year-old.

Annie: 11-year-old, okay.

Darren: And I was like, "No, don't do it. He already said no." And he turned around, he goes, "Do you? That's really interesting. Tell me about it." And so we got to share the gospel with this Croatian man because my 11-year-old son wasn't willing to

take "no" for an answer and wasn't willing to let me be too embarrassed to follow up with a second question.

My hope, Annie, is that my children, where I stop, you know that ceiling you always hear people talk about, that's where I want them to start. My kids, I want them to be better humans than I am, greater lovers of Jesus than I've ever been.

Last story. Sorry, I don't want to tell too many stories.

Annie: No, I'm having a great time.

Darren: Right. Listen, people buy the album. It's great, right? But aside from that, so yeah. Three years ago... I'll go back to my story. You asked me the question. One of the things that really changed me was my wife had taught my 14-year-old boy, my 13-year-old boy at the time, about pornography. She explained to him what it was, what happens, why people watch it, and what damage it causes.

And my son came to me with tears in his eyes, and he was so distraught. He said, Daddy, how could men watch that? And I was so proud of him because I'm like, how has he not watched porn? He's 13. I was just, this is amazing. And in that moment, I had a choice. I could play along with this and go, Hey, I don't know how people could watch it. Or I could say, "Son, you know me, your daddy, you know, the guy that you think is perfect. I'm not perfect. I've wrestled with pornography in my life too. I've made a lot of mistakes." And I said... I was trying to explain to him how sorry I was that I would let him down like that. And oh, I was only halfway through the conversation and he put his arms around me just like his mother did, you know, 13 years beforehand. Exactly the same. She did the same thing when I told her about my adulteries and stuff. And he put his arms around me and he said, "Daddy, I forgive you and I love you."

Annie: Wow.

Darren: What God has done in my life is he is setting me free from cycles of sin and shame and disappointment that I never thought I could be free of. And he has used other people and the word and His presence and His kindness to do it. And so if you're listening or watching this, there is hope that tomorrow will not be like today. It's a long, quiet obedience in the same direction towards Jesus. One day you'll wake up and joy will be yours.

Annie: Amen. Darren, is there anything we didn't say that you want to make sure we say?

Darren: Go buy the album?

- Annie:** Yeah. Oh yeah. Don't worry, I will tell them. I will tell them. Oh, that was...
- Darren:** I'm joking. Annie, I couldn't-
- Annie:** Yeah. Listen, we don't worry about that anymore, right? I mean, the Lord has all the money. As the Lord has dealt with my ego, He's also dealt with my need to be super concerned about everything that sells.
- Darren:** Do you know what? But that's the thing. Everything that sells, if you have to sell authenticity, you're not being authentic. You know, people used to say that to me, say, what we love about you though and your band is that you're authentic. And I was like, yeah, well, I don't know what else to be. But over time, I've watched in Christian culture, people feigning authenticity, and it drives me mental.
- Annie:** Right.
- Darren:** Just be yourself. It's okay to be yourself.
- Annie:** Be yourself, yes.
- Darren:** That's enough.
- Annie:** I know. Yeah, that is enough. Just be yourself. Because the thing that women can do, I think, more than men on the flip side is they think authenticity means you have to tell everything. So then you're also like, man, you got to have some wisdom as a leader and be fully you. And figuring out that is a journey, I think, that I'm always trying to be on.
- Darren:** No, being authentic doesn't mean... That's good, Annie. Can I just reiterate that? You do not have to tell everybody everything about yourself. That's not necessary to be authentic.
- Annie:** Yes, that's not the same thing.
- Darren:** I think being truly authentic is being present with people, being vulnerable, and being able to listen. Share what is appropriate, share what's right, but don't use your... Oh, here's a good one. Sorry. If you're young, people want some wisdom. Don't use the loss in your life to sell records.
- Annie:** That's very good.
- Darren:** That is cheap. I look down to that wee house down there. I can tell you a thousand stories about loss. But I will never, ever leverage the suffering of my family to be

more successful. But I will share the suffering of my family and in the quiet and in the hard places with people who have walked through the same thing.

Oh, sorry, second bit of wisdom. If you want it, here you go. Please, if you haven't experienced something, quit lecturing other people on what they should do with their suffering.

Annie: Dude, that is a word. Because it happens all the time from stages or in books where you're like, you haven't been through that. How would you... yeah.

Darren: Like I have people in the audience all the time come and say, "Darren, I've lost my son to suicide. What do I do?" And what I say to them is say, "I have no idea how much you hurt. I can't imagine it. So I'm not going to tell you what you should do." But I will say that I'm really sorry and go easy on yourself. That's it.

But if you ask me about other things that I know, I'm going to tell you. But I think one of the reasons people love our band is because our songs don't lie. They tell you what is in our chest, what's in our head. We're not making things up so that you will like us.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. That's right. That serves us. And it's why you have the long career you have versus a short spike of a career that looks really fun for a year on Instagram or in arenas, and then in five years, we don't know where you are.

Darren: No. It's so funny, like our band, I was talking to our management the other day, we're 10 years in and our streaming just tripled this year. We're selling out a thousand seats every night all over the world.

Annie: Gosh.

Darren: And we've done it very quietly and steadily. We haven't...

Annie: A thousand seats a night is so many people.

Darren: It's so many people for us. And you can always look and go, well, why are you not doing arenas? I don't care about doing arenas. I actually don't... Here's another one. Someone came to me recently and said, "Do you want to do a show at Red Rocks?" I was like, "No, I don't." Then I was told, "You have to do it." And I was like-

Annie: I was about to say, I think I saw it on your tour, so how's it go? I've been thinking about it too, of when the rooms are smaller, you can see the faces.

Darren: You see the faces. A thousand people, 1,200 people in a theater is our sweet spot. Because it sounds great. It looks great. It's a rock and roll show, and you get to communicate with everyone.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Darren: But the reason why I don't care about Red Rocks or the Beacon Theater, or the Forum, all places we've played, is because I don't care about places, I care about people. I'm not looking for a cool Instagram post so that everyone can go, wow, he's done it.

Here's more wisdom. Take or leave it. Be careful what metric you measure your success by. You've got to decide early on what success looks like for you. And when you get there, stop looking for more.

Annie: That's right. Because if you don't have a win line, you will never be satisfied.

Darren: Never.

Annie: You'll never be satisfied.

Darren: And that's why we have an industry where you've all these middle-aged white geezers like me who are addicted to applause because they cannot get enough applause to satisfy the longings. Applause doesn't make me sleep, Annie. I got a good-looking blonde woman who holds me in the dead of night and I got an incredible Jesus. There's not enough applause in the world to replace that. I'm really privileged.

Annie: Because they're all going to go home. They all go home and we go to the hotel rooms by ourselves. I mean, one of my first moves, Darren, when I get to a speaking event is whatever snacks the event has left in my room I give to my assistant and put in their room. Because I'm like, I know how I feel when I get home. I know what happens if I am not careful. When the applause stops, I still want to be fed.

So if I don't get that stuff out of the room, then I am going to make choices that I regret the next day because I was still trying to feel fed. And instead you come home and you go, go to sleep, you did the job. You did what God brought you here to do. And if no one clapped or everyone clapped, it doesn't matter, go to sleep.

Darren: Annie, you just said... Americans are fond of thinking that everything they say is profound, right? Sorry, did I say that out loud?

Annie: You're allowed to say that here. That is one of the most profound things I have heard anyone ever articulate. I've never understood how to say that. That's why I write songs, to help articulate things that you cannot say. But what you just said, right, when the applause stops, I still want to be fed. Those cycles of shame I was having, when the applause would stop and I would find myself on my own, sitting, watching late night TV in a hotel room, it's because you weren't satisfied with Jesus. You needed applause and you needed to be fed.

Annie: That's right. But when you're satisfied and you're full, do you know what you get to do? You get to wash people's feet. Following Jesus is washing people's feet. Music, podcasts, radio, TV, Christian, you know, subculture, whatever it is, our primary job is the washing of feet of the saints and of those who are to become saints, not feeding ourselves more things we don't need.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. That's right. I'll never forget when you said earlier in the conversation, they're not showing up to see us, we're showing up to see them. That's it. We're not showing up for everybody to wash our feet with their applause.

Darren: No, I don't need it.

Annie: We're showing up to wash their feet.

Darren: It's an honor and a privilege. And that goes for... you watch signing lines, you watch enough signing lines happen. I don't do many signing lines anymore (a) because I need to protect myself to be rested so I'm able to do what I need from a team. I'll not give you the b, but I'll tell you this. I've watched enough signing lines where you watch men sign things and they'll sign for the good looking young blonde lady that comes up. They'll be all smiling and engaging, but as soon as someone comes up in a wheelchair with lacerations on their feet, they don't want to know that. Not interested in that.

You got to get to a place, you know, this is for young ones again, where you love everyone. You love them, no matter who they are, where they are, where they're from, what they've done, because that's the way Jesus has loved you. We got to get to a place where we wash feet, where we don't think that the world spills around us. And we have to remember. Worship music? I'm not a worship musician. I'm going to leave you. I promise you're busy, right?

Here, there are no more altars. The altars are done away with. Christ was the great sacrifice, the last altar. We don't get to create altars anymore. We invite people to tables, and at that table is prostitutes and beggars and thieves and the outcasts and the outsider and the immigrant, the lost, the lonely, the least. You and me, Annie.

All we're doing is ringing a bell saying, come all, come all. There's a place at the table for you.

Annie: Amen to that, my friend. Hey, please come back. You are welcome anytime here. You're such a gift. Thank you.

Darren: Thank you. I'm sorry I don't have much of a train of thought, but that's what I've done my entire career.

Annie: I know. I am here for it.

[01:09:24] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't he great? My gosh, he's so wise and generous and kind and so talented. I know a lot of y'all are already listening to We Are Messengers. But if you aren't, go now and listen to *Where the Joy Is*. Make sure you're following Darren @WeAreMessengers on social media. Tell him thank you so much for being on the show.

If you like this episode, I think you're also gonna love Episode 510 with Matt Maher or Episode 490 with Matt Redman. Those are two more of my favorites.

If you have any questions from this episode, just drop them in the Q&A box on your Spotify app, if you're a Spotify listener like me, or send them to us on Instagram @thatsoundsfunpodcast, we'll 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. Anywhere you may need me, that is where you can find me.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you, and I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me, I'm ready to do some spring cleaning, just like we talked about with Myquillyn Smith on Monday's episode. So that's some of my weekend.

Y'all have a great weekend. We'll see you back here... Oh, listen, Monday's episode, y'all are not ready for it. It is so good. So be back here with me on Monday with Pastor John Tyson. We'll see y'all then.

[01:10:42] <music>

Joel: Well, good day to you. It's Joel with For King & Country dropping in to let you know that our brand new film, *Unsung Hero*, is in theaters now.

Luke: It's Luke here. We've teamed up with the creators of Jesus Revolution to bring you this adventure of a lifetime. It's a powerful, true story about a family uniting, growing in their faith, and facing the impossible together.

Joel: In theaters now. UnsungHero.movie for more information.

Man: Rated PG. Parental guidance suggested.