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Annie: Are you ready for a better tomorrow? Listen, y'all know I love listening to podcasts and my friend Hannah Brown is the host of the Better Tomorrow podcast. And if you're not already listening, you are going to love it.

You may know Hannah's name for her time on TV as *The Bachelorette* or competing on *Dancing with the Stars*. Her new podcast is an opportunity to make a genuine friend and also hear from guests that you love to learn about.

Hannah covers topics such as confidence, faith, love, self-care, all while challenging and inspiring herself and her audience. It is such a fun podcast to listen to. I absolutely love it. I absolutely love Hannah. She is so honest about her growth and her experiences and who she's becoming, and that really comes through. If you loved her on TV, you're gonna love her on podcast.

So listen and subscribe to Better Tomorrow every Wednesday wherever you are listening to this.

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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.

Hey, if you get a chance right now, could you just take a second and rate and review the show? It would mean so much to us, and it helps the show get in front of friends who have never listened to That Sounds Fun before. So just a little five-star review and a couple words while you are listening to the show today would mean a lot.

Before we dive into this conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors. This show is sponsored by BetterHelp. Listen, now that summer is starting for a lot of you, I hope that means a little bit of a slower pace and some fun coming your way too.

All the stresses year round, big and small, build up and we don't have a way to process them. And that is why no matter the season or the state of my calendar, tis the season to prioritize time for counseling.

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Intro: Today on the show, I get to talk with my friend Latasha Morrison. She's the New York Times bestselling author of *Be the Bridge*, which is also the name of the nonprofit organization she runs that's dedicated to fostering racial unity. You can go back and hear her on Episode 175 of the podcast or check out her podcast, *Be the Bridge*.

Tasha is such a gift to this world and brings so much insight and education to the work of racial reconciliation.

Today I get to talk to her about her brand new book, *Brown Faces, White Spaces*. Y'all, this book is really helpful. It's a needed resource. Tasha is really challenging us to become active participants in this work of restoration and redemption. I was really honored to get to talk to her about this book. So here's my conversation with my friend Latasha Morrison.

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Annie: Okay, here we go! Tasha Morrison, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Latasha: Oh my God, it's so great to be here. Oh my goodness.

Annie: I'm so happy you're here. I'm just annoyed that we both realized you'll be in Nashville tomorrow and we're doing this over Riverside today.

Latasha: I know. I mean, I just... I don't even know. I didn't even realize it until I sat down and I'm like, "Wait a minute, I'm going to be in Nashville."

Annie: Tasha, let me know what I know about your life is you know where you are today and you know if you need to pack and that's about it. And that's fine.

Latasha: Yes, that is so true. That is so true. I'm like, I'm here. I'm present. And yeah, it's good.

Annie: That's right. That's who you are.

Latasha: It's good. It's okay.

Annie: Okay, it's the 10th year of That Sounds Fun. So we are starting each episode by asking our guests, tell me what sounds fun to you right now, Tasha. What are you doing for fun outside of launching a book?

Latasha: Oh my gosh, that is so good. I have not had any fun, but I did... I'm like, oh my God, oh my God.

Annie: You're like, Life is not so fun per se.

Latasha: Life isn't so fun per se. But I would say, you know what brings me joy and what I like to do for fun is walking my dog and meeting people in the neighborhood. Because there's a lot of people that you meet. When you're walking by yourself, it's one thing. People typically don't talk. But if you have children or if you have a dog and you're walking, people will stop.

So I've had so many conversations and met so many people just from walking my little dog. Plus, my little dog is mean. He is mean, y'all. He is not a bridge builder. He is tearing a bridge down. T'Challa tears the bridge down.

Annie: I was about to say, tell everybody his name. T'Challa.

Latasha: Yes. So I'm always apologizing because he's barking at everyone else's dog. Although he even goes to doggy daycare. It doesn't help.

Annie: Still can't behave.

Latasha: I've invested so much money in training. So basically, it's really me that's broken, not really him.

Annie: You're like, "My whole life, T'Challa, is building bridges. Get it together."

Latasha: I'm like, "Please stop, T'Challa. Please stop." And guess who he barks at the most? He barks at White men. I said, "Challa, now you can't be doing that. You are not..."

Annie: Do you know what? I had a dog for one week and I met so many neighbors in that one week.

Latasha: I remember.

Annie: It's crazy.

Latasha: I know everyone over here, everyone knows my dog. Even when I go into one of the stores around here, the lady, she'll say, "Where's your little dog?" So sometimes I take him into the store. And even when he's not with me, she's like, "You don't have your little, how's he doing?" And I'm like, "Oh my God, like she knows me."

Annie: He's famous. He's famous in the neighborhood.

Latasha: He is famous.

Annie: Everybody knows.

Latasha: Everybody knows.

Annie: Okay, so it's been a couple of years since you were on the show, Tasha.

Latasha: I know.

Annie: So before we jump into your new book that is very... it is an excellently written book. I mean, I am so impressed with the scholarliness and the depth of this book. But I'll give you all the flowers about that in a minute. Okay, update us. The last time you were on the show, you were living in Atlanta. Are you still in Atlanta? How's your life? You got a dog. Like, tell us about Tasha.

Latasha: Okay, I am still in Atlanta. I am still single.

Annie: We're working it out.

Latasha: I'm like, Okay, okay, God. So it's one of those things. But I am content and doing well. I love the life that I get to live. I am fulfilled in my work, in my life. I have wonderful friends. I have a great staff. There's really nothing to complain about. I feel I am whole, you know? I am whole. So I think that's where I am.

When we had this conversation last, we were living in a little different... same world, but it was a little different culture happening. Every time I write a book, it's like for such a time as this. And this book took so long because it's so much research. It's so much research. That's why it took so long. But I like to look at the gaps of where we lack information or where there is a lack of understanding of death.

This was actually the first book that I wanted to write, you know, originally.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Latasha: Yeah. I had this title for a while because it was the life that I was living during that time. I love Atlanta, you know, I'm back here. I've been back here for a while now. But some people still think I'm in Texas. So, everyone, I do not live in Texas any longer.

Annie: That's Jennie Allen's fault.

Latasha: Yeah. I don't live in Texas. I enjoyed my time while I was in Texas. I will always love Austin. It's like a second home. I met so many wonderful people there. A lot of the stories I use I talk about from Texas because that was my experience and my life at that time. But there were just as much good that happened in Texas for me.

I talk about one of those stories in the book, you know, one of those good stories. I know people like to hear that little... you know, they got to get some hope and some good stories. So yeah.

Annie: I think it's really interesting, Tasha. As we jump into this conversation, the title of the book is *Brown Faces, White Spaces*. I think you taught me early on, and this is true about you and me being single, too. We didn't volunteer to teach everyone about singleness until we did, right? Until I did. Until I went, "You know what? I actually will talk to married people about singleness." And all of our Black and Brown friends did not volunteer to teach us about their lives except you have, Tasha.

I mean, you have decided that you will bring your full self to this conversation to help those of us who are White to hear a bigger, better story of the kingdom of God. So I'm going to ask you to teach us a lot today, but I also want to remind our friends not all of our friends are volunteering to be teachers, but Tasha is.

Latasha: Very good.

Annie: Thank you so... Annie, you see, that was so good that you said that, because I was going to say that.

Annie: Oh, you were?

Latasha: I was gonna say that. And you said it. Like, don't have this expectation that everyone is gonna teach you and they want to teach you. And then also just because it's a Brown face, it doesn't mean that they're also qualified. We're not a monolith and our lived experiences are different. And this happens a lot where you give people a mic because they're brown and maybe they think they know, and they do more harm. I've seen that. I've seen that happen time and time again. And so it doesn't...

Annie: That's true for single people too.

Latasha: Yeah. Like being... See, so good. I love that comparison, that analogy of that. Because, you know, being Brown doesn't make you an expert, you know? I'm not even an expert. I'm continuing to, somewhat, because I've written a couple of books, but...

Annie: Yeah, I was about to say, Tasha, technically. Technically you are.

Latasha: But I'm just saying I'm still teachable and I'm still learning. I learn something daily. And so I think that's something for us to remember. But I love that analogy as it relates to even singleness. Like, you know, we're not a monolith. We're very different. You may ask someone my age to sing on, they may have a whole different story. Some people who are single my age they don't want to get married. I still have a desire, you know? So we're very different. So I like that analogy.

Annie: You have taught me so, so much. But one of the core tenets that I have never forgotten is don't assume everyone wants to be your teacher.

Latasha: Exactly.

Annie: And everyone does not have to be our teacher. We are allowed to just live our lives and not help anyone else understand our seat. I mean, I've been unmarried and a public person for a decade and never wanted to talk about it until things started shifting and I felt invited by the Lord and by some friends to kind of like, "Hey Annie, you're an expert. You've put in your 10,000 hours. So you can talk about it."

Latasha: Yes. I mean, it's something and I mean, it's a conversation. And then there's people, if you've never been married or divorced, it's like a whole thing, you know?

Annie: Yeah. That's beautiful.

Latasha: But you have to be brave and courageous to talk about all of it.

Annie: I'm thinking back to when I taught school. In a world where the teacher next to me is not white, and I'm listening to this conversation between Annie and Tasha, and the teacher next door to me, the other fifth-grade teacher has a very different lived experience. If I am curious about her life, or maybe it's another mom at the preschool, or it's your coworker, or it's the pastor at one of the other staff members at your church, is the move, is the invitation to go, hey, I would love to talk about this, are you willing? Or is it, I have curiosity after I've listened to this podcast, will

you listen and us talk about it? How do we approach our friends who haven't volunteered to be teachers, but we would love to learn from?

Latasha: Assume that the answer is going to be no. And so don't even start from there. I think it's great to start from, "You know what? We both have kids in the fifth grade, or we both have kids in the third grade, or we're both married, or we're both teachers. You know what? Let's go to lunch. Let me get to know you." It's a part of who we are. You know what I'm saying? It's a part of our identity.

A lot of times we'll show up and then sometimes we are just not. Especially in this day and age now, you're going to find probably less people that would be willing to talk about this with White people than probably even five years ago or six years ago.

Annie: Really?

Latasha: Yeah, because of all the things that's happening where people don't feel safe, and they feel like a lot of the curiosity has been performative. And so you'll probably find less people, you know...

Annie: Because they're like, I'm not going to have this conversation with you because what are you going to do with it?

Latasha: Exactly. It's like a waste of time for me to share my heart and just so you... you're going to benefit, but where is it going to go, you know? Because a lot of this is trauma. A lot of this is triggering, is trauma. I was just talking to my mom. She was just saying some things, and I could tell it was coming from a place that was really hurt. I didn't grow up, and my mom didn't talk about this a lot, because they kind of stuffed it down, and they were kind of blind to it. It was just kind of move-on type mentality. But because of the work that I do and things that have been happening over the last 10 years or so, they talk about this more.

And I was just listening to my mom, and she was saying some things and I could tell she was just really hurt. And she was like, "You don't know, Tasha. You don't know what I lived through, what we've been through." And she just feels like things are going backwards. So things are very triggering.

So a part of this book, when I say *Brown Faces, White Spaces*, is telling that story, but also it is a way to honor my elders. It's a way to honor those bridge builders before me. It's a way to honor those who have survived systemic racism and still surviving. So I wanted to give my people their flowers while they're still here with us. By the time this comes out, you'll see my book trailer. My book trailer is my 94-year-old aunt, you know?

Annie: Wow.

Latasha: Yeah, yeah. She's 94. Her mind is sharp.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Latasha: She remembers everything. She remembers all of her nieces and nephews' birthdays. How do you do that at 94?

Annie: How do you do that? I can't do that at 43 and I got one nephew.

Latasha: I cannot. I cannot.

Annie: I cannot keep up.

Latasha: I cannot keep up. And she does. And so I wanted to capture her story and just the stories of a lot of my friends whose parents who are baby boomers that grew up, that were born into segregation, born into the Jim Crow era, for them to tell their stories because people are trying to deny their stories now. That was some of the inspiration behind the book. And also the tour and everything that we're doing around it is really sharing our elders' stories, you know? Because that is life-giving for them to be able to talk about their experience and to have people give them the gift of listening.

Annie: I mean, the truest thing that our listeners will know is when I tab a book like this, there are stories to be told. I mean, I just loved how often you talk about your family. I mean, telling stories of your great-uncle and your great-great-grandfather and these parts of their story.

In fact, I wrote this question. I don't write a lot of questions down because I'm usually just talking to my friends, but when it comes to my brain... So when I read some of your stories that your ancestors, their experiences, and particularly some of the laws that feel, to my brain, they feel insane. Now you go like, how was that ever? How was that ever? Segregated bathrooms come to my mind. Where was the science? How did we ever?

My question, Tasha, is can you identify things that are ingrained in our brains now about segregation or about the racial connection between our different races in a decade or in two generations? They'll go, that is insane.

Latasha: I think a couple of things. I was at UGA speaking this past week.

Annie: Go Dawgs!

Latasha: I know. I was at the Wesley. Wesley.

Annie: Oh, you spoke at Wesley?

Latasha: Yeah.

Annie: Wow.

Latasha: And so I was speaking to-

Annie: You know, that's the ministry I went to my whole time I was at Georgia.

Latasha: Really?

Annie: It shaped me. I worked there for a year. I mean, it's like the most shaping ministry of my life.

Latasha: I met two of the people, they've been doing Be the Bridge groups there, this generation, they don't want the okey-doke. You know what I'm saying? They want authenticity, they want truth, they want Jesus, and they want to love all of God's creation. I was just talking to them. I was coming from the Sermon on the Mount.

But one of the things that I told them, I said, there was a time where we couldn't even worship together like we're doing now. And their eyes kind of looked at me. And a part of it is like, I like that innocence, but then the thing is, I need you to know that. I need you to know that this is also a part of our history, because I think some of the things that we're going to look back and see, you know, when we say 50 years from now, hopefully, we will be in a better place and not reverting back to some of the sinful natures and the sinful structures that we've had.

But I think this whole idea of wokeness and DEI, I think that's going to be like a joke to people. Like, Oh my God, like, I can't believe that. Especially when you understand why DEI was put into place. Like, you know, it's not something that's about merit. It was something to right a wrong. And it was just as imperfect as it is. It was just one way of saying that because of the structures and the systems that we live in, and because they have been unfair to many, we're going to put a safeguard in there to give accountability.

Sometimes we have to help people help themselves. Look at it. The very states now with the rollback have been states that were formerly slave states. So you have to look at that history, look at where it's happening in. That's one of the things that I

think we'll look back and say like, oh my God, I can't believe that there were cultural wars over this type of thing because we look back at bathrooms.

When I look back at bathrooms, it's not just bathrooms, Annie. It's cemeteries. It's insurance. But I think the one that should get us the most is that it was churches. It was Christian organizations. It was revivals. It was seminaries. That's the one. It's one thing when we say it's the bathrooms, but when we say it was Christian organizations, it was the church, it was your seminary.

Most of us didn't get access to many of these institutions until the 60s. Annie, I was born in 1973. Being born in 1973, I was just a few years... I was the first one in my family, my immediate family that was born with the full set of rights where I was born.

Annie: Oh my gosh, when I read that in the book.

Latasha: Right, right. I was born right after desegregation. And now, listen, a lot of places, because they were resistant to desegregation, there are places that did not desegregate legally until well into the 70s and the 80s. And then I name a place-

Annie: Oh my gosh, the first class was 2021. The first desegregated high school class was 2021. When I tell you I was like this, huh? I mean, I was... so forgive me that I didn't even know that. I mean, that's one of the things this book did for me, is it did what you just said about the people at Wesley, like, don't just be shocked, you need to know. You need to know. I mean, I had no idea that there were high schools in America that desegregated since the last presidential election.

Latasha: Right. I mean, Annie, listen, a lot of this, a lot of this you have to realize, because what I've seen in our work with Be the Bridge is that when people are presented... Now people who are, I would say, God-fearing people who love Jesus, who want to live according to His word, and they want to love the other and love their neighbor as well. What I've seen is people respond. They respond with empathy. They respond with, what do I do? You know what I'm saying? You know, kind of like yourself.

And so I think that is the fear. And so that is why you don't know is because when you do know-

Annie: You got to do something.

Latasha: Exactly. And there's a response. So that challenges power, that creates fear. So you have to look at people were afraid. When we look at 2020, this is what started all of this. The whole grievance is because when we looked around in the 60s, when we

were marching for civil rights, it was a lot of Brown people. It were other people who were on the fringes, in the margins.

When we looked at 2020, which was not only in America, it was global that happened. It was global. People were marching in Norway. I'm like, what? What? So I'm just saying that was fearful to a lot of people that want to uphold the status quo in a sense, because that created fear because those marches in places were not Brown people. They were Christians, they were congregations, denominations, people linking arms. You think about Asian Americans, Native Americans, Black Americans, White Americans.

Some of the marches I went to, Black people were the minority. That was powerful and it was beautiful. I know people who were not Christians who said for the first time in their life, they had hope. There was an opportunity there, and we missed it. And a lot of those fringe ideals started within the church that kind of snuffed the life out of what God was doing, bringing His people together, uniting us, not just physically, but mentally, emotionally, spiritually.

It was drawing people unto God because the love that we have for one another points back to our Father. And I think that's what people were seeing in that, because I do this because of my faith. It is my faith that is shaping my politics. It's not the other way around. And I think that's really key. It was a beautiful thing. And we're not there in 2024 where we were in 2020.

There were a lot of other things happening at that time where we were at home, it was the pandemic, it was all these things happening but it made us very sensitive. And I just feel like we missed a great opportunity. But God is always about restoration and redemption.

I don't like to call myself this, but I was... you know, this year was very hard for me. Like you saw me back in February. And it was like, you know, like this year, I told 2024 to act right. And-

Annie: And you did. I know.

Latasha: And it didn't.

Annie: And it did not. It did not obey.

Latasha: It did not obey. I lost my friend. I lost my friend this year. And I was just really... This is hard work. I need to do something different, Lord. This is just difficult. Like, people don't want to learn. People don't want to grow. People don't want to do better, you know? So some of that, you know, just in that, you want to, like... At

times, you do want to give up. Because we're fighting centuries-old issues, and you sometimes can feel hopeless in it.

I think one of the things that I realized is that the messages, the books that I write are very prophetic and they're truth-telling. And people never want to hear the truth because guess what? The truth makes you free and people don't want to hear it. And that rejection is hard for me. It's hard.

Annie: I know, I know. Tasha, when I was reading... So if we're removing our podcasting hats and putting on our friend hats, when I was reading the book, I thought, Tasha is saying hard stuff and I don't want people to be mad at her. I don't want people to be mad at you. I want them to pick up *Brown Faces, White Spaces*, and love you the way they love you at the end of *Be the Bridge*.

Latasha: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: Right? And it's a different message. *Be the Bridge* is this book that goes, look, you can do it. You can do it. Like, look, let me help you do this. And *Brown Faces, White Spaces* says, I told you you could do it. Now let me show you where to do it. Right? I mean, is that a fair assessment of the book?

Latasha: Yeah. It's book number two. It's the next part. It's the next part of the transformational pathway. You know, that transformational pathway of awareness, acknowledgment, lament, repentance-

Annie: Preparation, dedication, liberation.

Latasha: Yes, yes, yes. That's a part of it. That's a part of reproduction. You know, the preparation, dedication, and liberation. And so we want liberty and justice for all. Jesus is about the liberating business. Let's not politicize that word. Our gospel is liberating.

Annie: People are gonna love reading through that, how you wove... throughout the whole thing you're like, Okay, now in this area of culture, Jesus meant to liberate people. Let me show you how. In this area of culture... Like when you talk about sickness... I mean, I had a pretty profound experience during COVID, Tasha, of realizing that I was watching... This is a bell curve and it's an overarching statement. But it felt like... I mean, you say it in the book, when America gets a cold, Brown people get pneumonia.

Latasha: Right.

Annie: And I felt that during COVID. I thought, there are people who have money to, and this could be racial or socioeconomic. But COVID could be handled better the more resources you had. And then I went, oh my gosh, is this the entire medical field? In your chapter about healthcare, you're like, yeah, Annie, this is the whole medical field.

[00:29:54] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation to tell you about one of our incredible partners, bear me shouting from the rooftops, [Beam](#). You guys today, my friends get a special discount on Beam Dream powder. They're science-backed, healthy hot cocoa for sleep with no added sugar. Better sleep has never tasted better.

Y'all beams, Dream powder is out here changing my sleep and my dad's sleep and my friend's sleep. I just love it. I just tried their vanilla chai flavor, it was good. But they also have chocolate, peanut butter, cinnamon, cocoa, and let me tell you the other ones that are on my counter, white chocolate, peppermint, mint chip. I am telling you, this is the sponsor for me. I love it so much.

It's only 15 calories and zero grams of sugar. You just mix the powder into hot water or milk, froth it, and enjoy it before bed. I usually do like... I heat the water up in my kettle, and then I just mix it up and put a little bit of milk on top, and it is... oh, it is so good. If you're having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, this stuff works.

But other sleep aids can leave you feeling groggy the next day, and Dream has this all-natural, powerful blend of Reishi, magnesium, L-theanine, apigenin, and melatonin that help you fall asleep, stay asleep, but you don't wake up groggy. You wake up feeling so refreshed.

If you want to try Beam's best-selling dream powder, please do. You can get up to 40% off for a limited time when you go to [shopbeam.com/fun](#) and use the code FUN at checkout. That's [shopbeam.com/fun](#) and use the code fun for up to 40% off.

Sponsor: And I have another partner to tell you about, [Storyworth](#). You know, there are some stories about my dad that I could listen to over and over again. I'm so glad I gave him and my mom Storyworth so I can keep these stories forever.

With Father's Day just around the corner, this would be such a great gift for your dad or any father figure in your life. Here's how it works. Every week, Storyworth emails your loved one a thought-provoking question, and you actually get to help choose the prompts.

I would go in about once a month and pick the four prompts I want my parents to answer. It's questions like, what was your favorite childhood toy? Or tell us about your first job. They simply responded to the email with a story. It could be long or short, funny or nostalgic, and the choice is theirs.

And as the stories come in over the course of the year, you receive copies via email. I didn't read any of them. I waited until we got to the very end. But it allows you to relive these cherished moments together.

After the year is up, Storyworth compiles all these precious memories and photos into a beautiful hardcover book. It's a keepsake that you'll treasure forever. Don't tell my cousins. But everyone's getting a copy of my parents, my sisters, my cousins. Everyone's getting a copy of the book. It is so beautiful. I'm so thankful for it.

So give all the fathers or father figures in your life a unique, heartfelt gift that you'll all cherish for years: Storyworth. Right now, save \$10 on your first purchase when you go to storyworth.com/thatsoundsfun. That's storyworth.com/thatsoundsfun to save \$10 on your first purchase.

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 surprise 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.

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

Okay, now back to our conversation with Tasha.

[00:34:20] <music>

Annie: As I'm reading, Tasha, I want to tell people the different topics. Because my question... you talk about education, healthcare, the justice system, the marketplace, the military, property ownership, entertainment, sports, and the church. So we read this whole book, and you tell us in the book, don't go fast, go slow.

Latasha: Yeah.

Annie: When we're done reading the book, am I supposed to do something in every category? Am I supposed to pick a category and give my life to it? Am I supposed to look at where I'm already plugged in? We'll back up and talk through some of them, but spoil the ending a little bit. What do we do?

Latasha: Well, I think one of the great things with that, there's questions at the end of each chapter.

Annie: Every chapter. And they're so deep, Tasha. They aren't like, what did you think about page five?

Latasha: No.

Annie: Yeah, you were not kidding with those questions.

Latasha: No. And I'm going to have some part two to that coming out.

Annie: Oh, good.

Latasha: Because I want people to sit in this because we always say within our organization that this is a marathon, it's not a sprint. And people want to sprint through this. We like the right now, let me fix it, da, da, da, da, da, let me rush to the end. But what I want people to do-

Annie: Yeah, that is exactly what I want, Tasha. You are right.

Latasha: Like for you, Annie, think about the spaces that you're in. So you think about, okay, so some people who are reading this, they're in the healthcare space. So that's going to be the space that they have interest in and saying, how do I be a liberator within this space? How can I help educate people? How do I dig deeper into this? Because each of these sections could have been a book by itself.

Annie: Literally.

Latasha: Yes.

Annie: Maybe someday you'll do that. Maybe you'll break it out and do eight or nine, however many it is, different mini-books.

Latasha: There's some books out there that people can pick up and read. But then also this book is filled with scripture. So every book is not going to give you hope and scripture and pointing you back to Jesus. I think there's going to be educators.

So I would say pick: What's what presses your heart? Where is the conviction? Choose that particular system and lean into that system. Like, for you, probably church is one that stands out to you, and your work is within the faith-based space. And so that could be one that you lean into more and continue to learn and to grow and to build conversation around.

I want people to have book clubs around it. I want you to put your head together with other people and think about this. Because, listen, we cannot settle. We cannot settle for the way things are. We cannot settle for where some are flourishing and others aren't.

To me, this work has to be conviction. So my prayer is that the Holy Spirit would convict people as they read, because I think that's the only sustaining power and grace. Because if not, it's like we pick it up while it's in the news, or we pick it up while it's popular and we don't want to be left behind, or we pick it up when it's the end thing to do, and then we put it down. But with us would be the bridge. We're here when it's on the news and when it's not. We're not reactive. We are proactive. This is our life work that we're investing in. And this is stuff that people don't want to invest in. And doing this work as a female leader of an organization, you know how that is. You know how that is.

So not only am I dealing with racist systems, but I'm also dealing with sexist systems and all of that. Those are hard things. That's a hard calling. Jesus and I, man, let me tell you, I'd be like, what in the world?

Annie: Like, could I have had another job? Could I have done something? I know. I know.

Latasha: I'm like, you know, Target is looking really good sometimes.

Annie: Listen, there is a fabric store down the street behind the Baja Burrito over here and every time I walk by, I'm like, I think I want a job there. I think I want to cut fabric for people who make quilts and baby outfits.

Latasha: Oh my gosh.

Annie: Tasha, I'll tell you the one I felt most convicted about that we can talk about, if you're willing.

Latasha: Okay.

Annie: I mean, you know, I don't have any family in the military, so I read that one, and I learned... Again, I think reading the whole thing is important. But I run two businesses. I am in the marketplace. And I will tell you, every time I post a picture of our staff, I want to do a lot of excuses of, well, we've interviewed a lot of different people and we're trying and it matters to us.

And I feel the conviction of, do you have a staff that represents the kingdom of God? Because if I want to do work for everyone, then I need people helping me lead and create work that is for everyone. So I do feel that conviction, Tasha. And I think that the most because I think I am modeling how to run a company for a lot of people.

One of the challenges you write about in the book I'd love for you to speak into is often as business leaders or as... yeah, I'm just gonna talk about me and I hope that people can connect. As a business leader often, it feels like the people that are Black and Brown and other races have not had the opportunity to grow in the sphere and so they look less qualified. Well, they just haven't had as many opportunities.

So will you talk about that? How do we hire thinking of that when the less opportunity is a part of the problem? I think you have to be very intentional and strategic. Then a lot of times when I talk about Brown Face, White Space, a lot of times when we come into that space, if we're the only one, it doesn't become a safe space, you know?

Annie: That's what Jennie Allen talked about. And she said, if you're going to hire diverse, do multiple at one time so that everyone feels safe.

Latasha: Yes. Those are just things that I kind of coach on. What I would say is you have to look at the layers of your organization. And you have to look at, Okay, what would it be like if I have Brown people working for me? So this is beyond. Because there are a lot of people that would love the opportunity. So there's people that are going to hear this and say, Okay, are y'all hired? But a lot of times we hire from proximity. We hire people that know someone that knows someone, and a lot of time those people look like them. And so that's how we like to hire because we want to keep what we say our DNA.

I mean, just even just language like that. I mean, I hear churches say that all the time. So you're basically excluding groups of people that are not your DNA.

Annie: I mean, Tasha, when we have a job opportunity, I said thoroughbreds run with thoroughbreds. That is what I said to our staff. Because that is true that if you're a good worker, the chances your friends are too. But I need you to be thinking outside of just your friend group into people, into more diverse spaces. And I need to be thinking into more diverse spaces.

Latasha: Exactly.

Annie: So the tension is holding both of those. But I do trust that the friends of my coworkers are impressive people. But the likelihood of them looking like me is 100% or 85%.

Latasha: Exactly.

Annie: And then when we come into those places, it's more of assimilation. We want you to be like us, think like us, do like us versus where... No, diversity is a beautiful thing. That's the beauty of acts, all of the people coming together from different backgrounds. The common denominator was Jesus, but language was different. Worship was different. Style, how they dress was different. All of these things were different. And it wasn't about them coming into assimilating, but it was about more of them falling under the new kingdom.

And what did that new kingdom look like? And you see those challenges that Peter had in that. You see those challenges that Paul had to work through within this new kingdom, this new covenant now that was being set up, this new church that was being set up. So some of the things, it wasn't that the old was passing away, but there was a newness that was entering in.

I think that's the beauty that we have to look at, is that there's something that I, and being a Brown face in predominantly White spaces, there was something that I was bringing. In one space, there was more rejection. In the last space that I was in, it was more welcoming. They were open to the challenges or the things in my perspective and what I was gonna say and my experiences being different because it helped them grow as a person.

They weren't trying to make me something that was just like them, but it was kind of like, be you, Tasha. And I want you to be you, and I want you to pour into this because we're missing it here. If our mission and vision is to reach this community, this community doesn't look just like us. I see this all the time. If you're saying you want to reach all Christians... You know what I'm saying?

Annie: Yeah.

Latasha: We put this broad stroke on it. But if you're saying you want to reach a more diverse community as Annie Downs, then you're going to have to do things differently and you're going to have to think differently and bring people around you that can help you with that. and be open. Because I think what we do is when we feel uncomfortable with something, we feel that discomfort is wrong. Instead of thinking like, Okay, this may be a little conviction that's making me uncomfortable. And we were like, no, we're uncomfortable. But that challenge is hard.

So you have to tap into what is equitable, what is equality, all of these things. And ask yourself why. Why am I so resistant to this? I think that's just the self-work that we have to do because all of this work begins with you as an individual. It starts with you looking at yourself in the mirror and really dealing with it. I mean, there's things that I have to look at myself in the mirror and deal with and remind myself of this because that's why I call it this brown face, because I want it to be more inclusive. And I start the book off like, this is my experience.

Now, I can only write as a Black woman. But I wanted to be inclusive and tell other stories, but I can't tell everybody's story. You know what I'm saying? That is not my job. I can't do that. I empower you to tell your story. But I did want to be as inclusive as I could be to say, Hey, this is not just a Black issue, but this is a BIPOC issue. I explained that at the beginning of the book, too.

Annie: So do you hope that BIPOC friends read this as well as White friends, or is this a book for White people?

Latasha: No, this is a book for everybody. This is a book for everybody. So what I like to do is I'm highlighting Brown stories. One of my friends who's Afro-Latina that read this, she was like, "I love reading this and being able to also see myself and tell our stories and lift up the stories of our community." Then as for White people and Brown people, it's an opportunity for us to learn because look, a lot of us are educated in the same schools.

So a lot of the stuff that you didn't know about the marketplace or the judicial system, guess what? There are Brown people who didn't know that information either.

Annie: Because they were sitting with me in class.

Latasha: Exactly, exactly. So we are learning together. So this is a book for everyone. But I think it's going to resonate with certain people, especially if you're Brown and you

work in White spaces. But then also as a white person, if you are someone that wants to be more inclusive, and that you want to have more diversity because you understand that that makes us better, that makes us truer to living out the calling of Jesus, living out the work in our faith.

So I think that's one of the things. And I think that's why I do this. Because as a Brown girl, I could just write totally for Brown people. That's it. But I want my brothers and sisters that don't look like me to also be a part of this journey and to grow. So that's why I do this.

This is a part of my unique call. I think it's a both/and conversation. I think there are certain things that are needed for the BIPOC community, and then I can break that down for the Black community. There are certain things that we need right now, that there are people that are going to speak into those things.

Then there's certain things like myself as a bridge builder and as a change agent, that where I kind of merge both, I do kind of both and. So I want Brown people to see themselves and to be able to pick up this book and say, Hey, I've learned something and I'm not alone in this.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. Our Brown friends who are living in white spaces are gonna be like, Oh my gosh, look, Okay. I'm not the only one that's doing this today.

Latasha: But you're also getting to learn and hear. It's like you're getting a shortcut, in a sense, because you're getting to hear... you know how we used to say... We used to say this growing up. This is an A and B conversation. See your way out.

Annie: See your way out.

Latasha: So you're getting the opportunity to have a front-row seat to an A and B conversation as a White person to learn and to grow and say, you know what, in order to be more effective, I need to lean into this. Then as I lean into this, I can create more of a brave space where other people could be a part of. Because I'm telling you, just as sure as we're saying it now, there are people that they desire to be bridge builders into White spaces.

I think that number has declined more so because of what has happened over the last several years. I talk about that story in there with a lot of my friends. But I think there are some people who wear, Hey, I'm called to this space.

I was just with the young lady, Sierra, at UGA. She's a Brown face in a White space. And she was like, "Tasha, you're the second Brown face to speak here." Some of that I know is because that Brown face was in that space. And I was on her

radar. She wanted to create this bridge-building space because there are Brown students on that college campus that love Jesus too and that want to be a part of a faith community. But when we're not thinking about them, they get left out.

So having people like her is an asset. Now, hopefully, you can have more than one person, but even if I get down to the layers of that, people in those positions, they have to raise support. A lot of times, Brown people, we don't have the social capital in order to raise support. So we don't even look to jobs like that where you have to raise support.

So it's like sometimes systems and models have to change in order for us to be inclusive. And that's what we don't want. We want to do things the way we've done it, the way we've always done it, and say, then why can't you do it this way? And you need to assimilate into this pattern of thinking.

I just don't think a lot of those organizations are going to be around unless they start shifting, because millennials now... you're on the border of being a millennial, Annie, right?

Annie: Yeah. I'm 43. So I think I'm the very youngest. Or the oldest.

Latasha: The oldest.

Annie: I'm the oldest. I'm the oldest, yeah.

Latasha: I was like, wait a minute, wait.

Annie: You're like, Annie, you wish this. No, yeah, I'm the very oldest.

Latasha: So even with that, that is, you are actually the most diverse group.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Latasha: So think about what that looks like in another 10 years or so. So you're one of the most diverse groups. Think about the systems. And then the Gen Z and Gen Alpha are even more diverse than you.

Annie: Yes. Yes, that's right.

Latasha: And now Millennials outnumber Baby Boomers in our society. Times are shifting. So this is the thing. We better wake up and understand and stop trying to cheat our way through this and thinking we can suppress people.

Annie: And let the next group handle it.

Latasha: Yeah. "We're going to change the rules now. We're going to change the rules." That's not going to happen. We need to learn and grow. Every time in the Book of Acts, when you see this, you see how the church grew and how they flourished and how they were helping take care of the needs of one another. You see that constantly, how many times that's repeated in the Book of Acts.

It's just incredible what living in a world where all are flourishing. I don't want a better world just for my... individualistically, for my family to be okay. I care about Annie's family. I care about my neighbors. I care about the people across the street from me.

So just as a Brown person, because I want equity and equality, it's not that I don't want it for you either. And so we have to stop thinking that it's either or. It's about that, you know?

[00:54:15] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Thrive Causemetics](#). If you're putting together little graduation gifts for girls in your life, oh, this is a great idea, throw in some Thrive Causemetics makeup. They will love it.

Y'all know I am a loyalist to Thrive Causemetics Liquid Lash Extensions Mascara because it's truly the best out there but Thrive Causemetics has a full line of makeup for any look you're going for. Their whole line has clean, skin-loving ingredients with foolproof products that make it easy for any skill level to apply. You'll also love their highlighter stick, which is made to brighten and open your eyes. It's called the Brilliant Eye Brightener, and it looks like it gives you an instant eye lift. It's so bright and fun. You just apply it to the inner corner of your eyes, and it magically makes you look rested.

I mean, if you're drinking your Beam, you should be rested, but this will help and without a lot of effort. What's cool, too, is you can also use it as an eyeshadow for perfect daytime glow, or use the metallic shades for an easy smoky eye. It is literally a foolproof formula that makes it extremely easy to apply and blend. And it comes in 16 different shades.

Thrive Causemetics is certified 100% vegan and cruelty-free. They have thousands of five-star reviews, including one for me, so it's really no wonder you see their makeup trending everywhere. But have you given it a try?

One of the best parts of Thrive Causemetics is that for every product purchase, they donate products and funds to help communities thrive. So refresh your everyday look with Thrive Causemetics, luxury beauty that gives back. Right now, you can get an exclusive 10% off your first order at thrivecausemetics.com/TSF. That's Thrivecausemetics.com/TSF for 10% off your first order.

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. Like, 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. With Prose, it is all about personalization. You do their in-depth consultation, and they come up with your made-to-order products. There are millions of possible formulas, but only one is uniquely yours or mine.

Prose isn't just better for you, it's better for the planet. They're a certified B Corp, they're cruelty-free, and they're the first and only carbon-neutral custom beauty brand. Prose is so confident that they will bring out your best hair and skin that they're offering an exclusive trial of 50% off your first subscription order, you guys. Just go to prose.com/thatsoundsfun so you get your free consultation then 50% off at prose.com/thatsoundsfun. That's prose.com/thatsoundsfun.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Tasha.

[00:57:16] <music>

Annie: At Church of the City in New York, every week they read a generosity kind of prayer. And I don't have it memorized, but this one part says, "I want to be so generous that it can be said that none are needy among us." And every time that is the one line that catches me and just go, okay, who's the us? I mean, I'm not like calling out Church of the City. I'm saying like in my life, if I'm saying that about my life, if I want to say there's none needy around me, who does that mean?

That means the spiritually needy, that means the financially needy, that means the food needy? Like how do I need to live so that I see them? Because that's it, Tasha.

Latasha: Yes.

Annie: I mean, when there are homeless people on the street, what I want to do is not look at them. Because if I cannot look, then I don't have to solve the problem. It is like a discipline of like, look right here, right now, this is a real person made in the image of God and God loves them as much as He loves you. And so if we can do that.

Latasha: That problem is solvable. We could solve that issue. I went to South Korea in 2022, and just even from my experience there, you did not see houselessness like you see in the United States. They take care of their people. I went with a person who had family members there, and so I got a different experience. It wasn't just a touristy. But her cousin, she was just going back to work. She had been on maternity leave for a year, and now her husband was going on his paternal leave.

They create incentives for people to have children. They've created this where the wife gets a year and the husband gets a year. I probably saw one person that was houseless and I visited three cities. I'm pretty sure they have their issues just like we have our issues. But it makes no sense for America to have the houseless issue that we have. And how scripture instructs us to take care of the needy.

And I know America is different from the church, okay? So that's two different things. But America is made up from systems and people that are in the church, you know what I'm saying?

Annie: Right. I mean, there's a world where the people who talk about us being a Christian nation may need to think about the homeless situation. You get to pick. You get to decide. Are we a Christian nation? If so-

Latasha: Then there's a totally different responsibility. And even if you say you're not, that still doesn't... we don't get a way out. As a Christian, we don't get a way out. So we have to live out, you know, Matthew. That is why I wrote this, you know?

I think one of the chapters, chapter four is called Liberty and Justice for Some.

Annie: With a question mark.

Latasha: With a question mark. That's on the justice system. And really looking at that. What I like to do in my books is I like to tell a personal story because I'm a storyteller and I like to be personable. I want people to glean from my story and to pull you in to help you understand the overarching issue.

Then I like to tell a historical story where these are things that happen. This is why we're here, so you can understand the why.

Annie: I mean, there are 50 pages of footnotes in this book, Tasha. Y'all did the research. I was like, gosh, how much more of the book? I'm on the last chapter. And I was like, Oh, the last 50 pages are notes. So every chapter has a pretty intense amount of research and that historical story.

Latasha: Yeah. I'm thinking about some of the ways to make some of the research available too. So I'm just thinking about that just so that people can do a deeper dive into.

Annie: I mean, you did it. Make us use our brain. You told us when to go read.

Latasha: Yeah. Go read it.

Annie: You told us right back here where everything's coming from. So you have done the work. It is ours to go actually do the reading.

Latasha: And I think you have the version... There's a QR code that's also pointing you to resources that Be the Bridge has created to help you dig deeper. So we have all of that right here. What I'm doing right here is I'm opening up the conversation. We have content that we've created for years now that takes you into a deeper dive.

We have a whole online academy that takes you into a deeper dive with that. So there's going to be QR codes. And then also the liberation stories. I think they're in there. Are there liberation stories in there? Yes! Oh my gosh, in every chapter. Yeah, the liberation stories of people.

Annie: Unbelievable. Talk about giving people flowers. You're like, you want to know what this looks like? Ask Derek and Paige Jackson. Because they went and did it. I love it.

Latasha: I like to do that because that also gives people a sense of hope. Because I know for me, I have to have hope in this world. The Lord has to remind me of my hope daily, because this can spiral into despair easily. And I see so many people, especially Brown people, my friends, that it almost make me cry because of where we are as a country, where I see so many brown people, especially African-Americans, that have spiraled into despair, where they're just like, burn it all down. Burn it down. I give up. I give up on the church. I give up on God's people and some which have given up on God.

That's heart-wrenching for me, but I can understand. This is the thing. I can see how you can get there if you don't take care of your heart. If you don't take care of your heart, I can see. So when I write, I like to give people some hope.

Annie: You do it. In *Brown Faces, White Spaces*, you give us instruction, correction, and hope.

Latasha: That's good.

Annie: I'm really grateful. Tasha, is there anything we didn't talk about you want to make sure we say?

Latasha: I think that was it. I just want people to buy the book, but also don't just keep it for yourself. Don't be individualistic about this. Think about someone else that you can take on this journey with you. Think about the one thing that you can do. Don't make it all complicated. But think about one thing that you can do. You can read this book with a group of friends.

There are other people that are maybe thinking like you and invite someone else into this. But just think of that next right thing that you can do. Just do that one thing and then think of another thing later.

Annie: I'm in a group text with seven businesswomen that we all run businesses. And when I finished the chapter on the marketplace, I thought, I need to have my girlfriends and I talk about this. About like, what are you doing in your sphere of running a business to be right in this and to be doing this well? So that's my next right thing, Tasha. You can ask me, keep up with me.

Latasha: And I would make myself available if you decided to do a Zoom with your friends, and we can talk about some really intentional things.

Annie: We will hire you. If we do that, we will hire you to coach, just like you are a coach.

Latasha: Yeah. So yeah.

Annie: Well, I love you, Tasha. Thank you for writing a book for me.

Latasha: Thank you so much for having me. Okay, great.

Annie: I'm really grateful.

Latasha: Good. I'm so glad.

Annie: You're the best.

Latasha: Thank you.

[01:05:45] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, don't you love her? Man, she has been such a gift to so many of us that want to learn and grow and be a part of this conversation. So make sure you grab your copy of *Brown Faces, White Spaces*, and go follow Tasha on social media. Tell her thank you for being on the show.

And if you liked this episode, I think you'll also love Episode 485 with Esau McCauley and literally any of our episodes as we talked about in the show with Mike Kelsey. Isn't he the best? Oh my gosh. I love Mike Kelsey.

We actually have an entire Spotify playlist of all the interviews that Mike Kelsey has done on our show. So make sure you check that out. It'll be linked in the show notes below.

If you have any questions from this episode, drop them in the Q&A box on your Spotify app, if you're a Spotify listener or send them to us on Instagram at That Sounds Fun podcast, 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, do something that sounds fun to you, and I will do the same. And honestly, today what sounds fun to me is today's the day I finish my Storyworth book for my family. So that's part of it. I'm gonna get on the couch, sit outside on the porch couch, and I am going to finish my Storyworth book so that we can get it to all of our family.

Y'all have a great weekend. We'll see you back here on Monday with one of your favorites and mine, our dear friend, Katherine Wolf. Y'all have a great weekend.