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[00:01:05] <music>

Annie: Hi, friends. Welcome to another very special episode of the That Sounds Fun podcast. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today. Happy Father's Day weekend to all the dads out there. Happy Father's Day to my dad, Mr. F. Downs, the best in the biz. Man, I'm excited for this conversation today.

But before we dive in, I want to tell you about one of our incredible partners. This show is sponsored by BetterHelp. Even though we think summer is going to slow things down, we pack so much in sometimes that it's just as crazy as the rest of the year.

Remember, it's important to take time to slow down and reset. The first day of the week can be a reset. The first day of a new month can be a reset. And there's always time to take inventory and make changes.

What also helps slow down, prioritize, and reset is counseling. Whether you're considering starting therapy or maybe looking for a change, let me tell you about BetterHelp. It's entirely online, super convenient, and flexible to your schedule.

Plus, getting started is so easy. You just fill out a quick questionnaire—y'all know we love a quiz—and you'll be matched with a licensed therapist. Plus, you can

switch therapists anytime at no extra cost so you can make sure to find the right match for you.

So take a moment for yourself. Visit betterhelp.com/thatsoundsfun today to get 10% off your first month. That's betterhelp.com/thatsoundsfun.

Intro: Today on the show, I get to talk with my friend Willie Robertson. Y'all, I'm so excited for you to hear this one, especially as we head into Father's Day weekend. Although Willie might be best known as a member of the Duck Dynasty, he is most passionate about his role as a gospeler.

Over the years, he has shared the good news of Jesus with others as he encourages us to do the same in his brand new book, *Gospeler*. We also talk about the book of Acts in this episode. So if you want to go back and listen to our Let's Read the Gospels series on Acts, we've linked that playlist in the show notes below. It was every day of the month of May.

Here is my conversation with one of my favorite friends, one of my favorite dads, Willie Robertson.

[00:03:10] <music>

Annie: Welcome to That Sounds Fun. I can't believe this is your first time.

Willie: Annie D., I'm in the house.

Annie: I know. Thank you for coming.

Willie: Thank you for inviting me.

Annie: Oh, gosh, of course. I'm so excited to talk about this book.

Willie: Now that I quasi-live in Nashville-

Annie: I mean, you are here so much.

Willie: I don't know. It's been like I'm here every month. Everything is going through Nashville now.

Annie: Why do you think that is? What do you think that's about?

- Willie:** Well, I guess everybody's stationing up here. Like I know a ton of my friends have moved here, you know. And yeah, just a lot of stuff that I do, I guess, is connected in some way because it's not all just... like it's all kind of different things.
- Annie:** Yeah. And it feels a little bit like there's this new permission... Correct me if I'm wrong.
- Willie:** Really?
- Annie:** you've been in my life long enough. You know, I mean it. I feel like there's this new thing happening where people are going, Hey, we're going to make the Faith Forward stuff we believe in making. And if this city doesn't want us to make it or if this city won't help us make it, we'll go make it in Nashville. We'll build a thing there. We'll make it in West Monroe.
- Willie:** I would agree. I would agree.
- Annie:** It just feels like this permission to like, hey, come down here and we'll help you.
- Willie:** It's easier, you know, when you're around the people that are for that and at least are not a hindrance. And yeah, Nashville's a great place. But yeah, it's a different side of it. It's not the touristy... like back in the day on the show, we would come a lot. We would, you know, do all the, like we're downtown and doing a lot of stuff there. So, yeah, I like the quiet version.
- Annie:** I like the arts that are like... you know, we have people here making movies. We have people here obviously making music, but a lot more writers, a lot more... it just feels like, okay, God, I'm paying attention that you're making us an exporter in bigger ways than we've ever been as a city.
- Willie:** And it's so fun. Because I stay in Franklin and I see someone every time. Like either meet someone, see someone on that. Like it's insane how many people come through here with different kinds of projects and say, yeah, it's fun.
- Annie:** It's really interesting. The thing I'm not going to do to our audience, but I would die to do is I have so many business questions for you about as people who run businesses that make way for gospel work, but aren't like... So Duck Commander, a gospel bit. And you say this in the book, in *Gospeler* or that, like, when you said to your dad, let's do this TV show, he said, "Nobody's going to care." And then you said, "It'll help spread the gospel," and his eyes looked up.
- Willie:** That's the only way I got him to do it.

Annie: That's right. So y'all have companies that don't so direct gospel work, but make way for gospel work?

Willie: Correct. And hopefully the book... Because I think people see me not as a pastor for sure, and I was a church worker just as a regular guy, you know, runs a business. But how we mesh all that faith, it's just impossible to separate it.

Annie: Yeah. Because so many of our friends listening, they're going to a job that isn't in church. I go to a job that isn't in a church. How do we show up at our business and things succeed and things fail and we show up at our business, but what we want to be doing is more gospel work? How do we sit in our desk every day knowing what we're wanting to do is gospel work? How do we reconcile all that?

Willie: Well, I think you don't toss away hard work, knowing that there's a job, you know. I think sometimes we may not do that as well. And then we're like, well, you're not as good a worker. I think some people get weird with it, you know? You become so strange that people are like, I can't really talk to that person. You can do that about anything. You could be weird about relationships or other things that you're into.

But if that is the number one thing in your life, if it's going to spill out, ooze out, be the aroma of Christ, then it's going to be hard to separate that. I think believers should be attractive in that way. If you have the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, guidance, I mean, all these things are attractive and people generally want to be around people that are spewing out that as opposed to, you know, the first list in Galatians 5, which is the acts of sinful nature.

I mean, most people would say, yeah, you know, somebody who's selfish or has a fit of rage, you don't want to hang out with those people.

Annie: Do you know that I'm living part-time in New York this year?

Willie: Oh, yeah.

Annie: I'm doing-

Willie: Well, that sounds fun.

Annie: I know, right? It's a different life. It's a different life.

Willie: That sounds miserable.

Annie: I'm enjoying it so far. It's just a totally different thing. There's a coffee shop-

Willie: Do you like it?

Annie: I really like it. I think it's fun. It's stretching different muscles.

Willie: And I shouldn't judge. I haven't lived in New York, but I do... I mean, I used to love going to New York. We've only been once since COVID.

Annie: There's a lot of things I like about it. And one of them is there is a coffee shop that is mainstream. I mean, it's just a coffee shop. And I walked in the first time and I was like, "Hold on, there's something different. This is a Christian coffee shop." I mean, you know, in quotes.

So I'm kind of looking around and I sit down and I get my... the guys behind the counter are real nice. And I'm like, "I think there's some Jesus up in here." And then I start eavesdropping and the two people around me are having gospel conversations. And I was like, oh, now I know. So either this is run by Christians or this is just frequented by Christians, but the spirit felt different.

Willie: Wow.

Annie: And I thought, oh, this is... and then I come to find out it's owned by guys from a church. And so it is. So I think it's really interesting when we think about businesses that everywhere you go, the aroma of Christ goes with you. I mean, I've experienced that profoundly.

Willie: And that's all over the world. There's places that, yeah, you'll go in and you'll be like... which back home in West Monroe, there's overtly Christian grocery stores, like plays worship music.

Annie: That's right. That's why it stands out in New York. Because you walk in and you're like, it's not dark in here. Somebody turned the lights on. I can see. What is this place? It's unreal.

Willie: Well, I mean, I like places like that because you have to really... you know, this book's appropriate for that, you know. Because it's not easy. It's not like everybody's speaking the same language. And yeah, you've got to have some conversations about it. And it's not like everybody's, you know-

I think sometimes like back home, it just seems like everyone goes to church, even though that's not true. But you're kind of applauded for that and you expect that. So you go to the places, you're like, okay, this is different. You're going to have to have some fun conversations.

Annie: That's right. And you know every time I hear a gospel conversation at a coffee shop in New York, I'm looking at those men's ring fingers. I'm like, "You married? You married?" Because you up here and you talk about the Bible in public. I'm interested. They usually are.

Willie: You have a lot more people up there.

Annie: That's right. I got a bigger pool of fish. When I spoke in Alaska one time, they said the ratio is like 10 to one male to female. And they said, the odds are good, but the goods are odd.

Willie: Ah, that's awesome.

Annie: That was so good.

Willie: That is amazing.

Annie: So tell me what you do. This may not have happened to y'all, but tell me what you do when you do have this gospel-centric life, but your work may not be gospel-centric and something fails. I've been walking through what if this doesn't go the way I thought it would about part of business. And part of what I wrestle with is, this is gospel money that's going to get lost in this. How do you deal with the failures of business as a gospel person?

Willie: Well, failures, I mean, that's part of it. That's part of the deal.

Annie: It just feels terrible.

Willie: Well, yeah, it does. But you know, if one works, then it works. Think about TV, like our show was a hit, but think about how many are not yet. But it makes it funner when you know that you hit, when you know that you worked hard and something worked. But you never know, but that's all part of it.

I think you just roll with it. I think you just say, hey, that's chalk up what we learned, and try not to put all your eggs in one basket. But you know, it's just going to happen. And that's not promised. I think sometimes people get that mixed up and it's like, oh, well God's behind me, it's going to work.

Annie: I'm going to make a lot of money off of this. because the Lord knows.

Willie: It's like, no, not necessarily. I've seen a lot of things not work out. And that's one of the things I loved about dad in the business was he was always... This is one of the things that was so remarkable. And this is something you wouldn't think. He was so

content back before it was ever... Because I remember when the show came out and people was like, "Willie, how's it feel to be an overnight sensation?" I said, "Well, we started the business about 40 years ago. I don't know what your idea of overnight is, but this seemed like it took a long time to take off."

But Phil was just so content, man. He had everything he felt like he needed. It wasn't this just drive and push and we've got to be. It was like, Hey, we've got food. We get to live the way we want. It was a lot different. There wasn't this big rat race.

And so I appreciate that because it allowed the time for me to kind of get my head where it needed to be, where I was like, Okay, now I can take over the business. I'm glad he didn't sell it before. Because he had an offer like in the 80s for like a million bucks.

Annie: Wow.

Willie: And looking back, I was like, "How did he not sell this thing?" And ironically enough, the company that was going to buy it went bankrupt the next year.

Annie: No way.

Willie: And he didn't sell it.

Annie: And he didn't sell it.

Willie: Because I didn't come in till I was 30. Because I never dreamed I would even work here. I was like, When I get out of here, I'm out of here. I'm never coming back. You know, I'd done this as a kid. And then Korie and I got married at 20. Then I went to college. I didn't plan on that either. Korie's dad thought it'd be a good idea. Got me a college education.

So we came back and I actually worked for her family and then-

Annie: At the camp.

Willie: At the camp. That's where I worked. And so did that. And then worked for the church some and just kind of was like, ah. And then I was able to see Duck come kind of from afar. I was like I think there's something here, you know?

And Korie's family was so smart at business and I thought we could just take over. So I went down, had a meeting, we ended up taking over the business at about 30 and then it was a whole new... I was like, all right, I gotta learn.

And you were talking about failure. I had to make sure... the deck was kind of stacked against me because they had this old debt and I guess through the show now you kind of see what I was trying to work with as far as my family. Great TV, not exactly great production work. I was like, "If this thing fails..." And we were all in. We were like, "This will be bankrupt or bust," you know? And so, yeah, just kind of learn how to sell business and then also expand and make things bigger.

One of the big keys to that was networking and working with other companies, which Dad had never done. Dad was always just kind of this mysterious dude in the woods. Even in our industry, nobody really knew him. They knew he preached and they knew he had this beard and he lived down the end of the river and he was good at duck hunting, that's about it. So I started making all these relationships.

And then the big thing I did was I got people to sponsor us and give us money to use their products. Man, I was like the hero. They were like, they're gonna pay us money to wear their clothes? And we get free clothes.

Annie: And the clothes are free, so I don't have to buy clothes.

Willie: Free shells and free guns? They're like, this guy's brilliant, you know? Dad was like, "Hey, keep it going, son. Keep it going." And I remember... I'll give Korie a shout-out for this. Our first TV deal was on the Outdoor Channel. It was with a company called Benelli Shotguns. They were like, "We'll pay for the production. You guys, your business should be helped and all this, and it'll be a good deal." And I said, "Okay."

So Kori says, "Well, I think they should pay y'all money." I said, "Korie, don't get greedy. They're paying for production." She goes, "Well, you don't know until you ask." She goes, "Can I ask in the meeting?" I said, "Okay, you can ask, but if this gets weird in any way, abort the mission."

Annie: Yeah, back up.

Willie: Back up. "I don't want to lose this deal." So we're in the meeting and the guy goes, "Okay, well I think we'll start filming." And Korie said, "Oh, one more thing." And I'm like, "Oh no." She goes, "I think y'all should pay the guys a talent fee." I'd never heard this word "talent fee". And he goes, "Oh." He said, "What are you thinking?" And she said, "I was thinking \$30,000 a piece." And I went, "Oh." I mean, I was making \$20-something thousand dollars at the time for my salary.

Annie: Wow.

Willie: And she said \$30,000. And the guy goes, "Okay, yeah, no problem." And I went, "Dang it, we should have said \$50,000. We should have said \$50,000. That was way too easy." So then here's me as a CEO. So Korie gets this deal, so we come home, I go into Dad's living room, we're all there, and I stood up and I said, "Guess what I just got us for this TV show? \$30,000!" And we literally... everybody just jumped up and down, and we were just screaming. We were like, We did it, we made it. We all just doubled our salaries to do a TV show.

I had no idea what we were gonna do. But that was the beginning of what was going to be... Have we not done that TV show on Outdoor Channel, that's the producer that saw that, sent a generic email to Duck Commander, to whom it may concern, I've watched that show and I think you'll have a giant show on your hands. We met up, we made a sizzle reel, pitched it to A&E, A&E picks it up, Duck Dynasty was made.

Annie: I mean, can you ever imagine back then, Tread Lively? I mean, now y'all are the producers sending emails and saying, Hey, have y'all thought about...?" Y'all are getting sizzle reels from me, from people going like, Hey, what do we... I mean, can you ever imagine it had gone like that?

Willie: No. I didn't even think a show would, like... it was Korie's idea too to do reality TV because she watched reality TV. None of us watched. I still don't watch it. And she said, "Willie, you and your family need to do a reality TV show. And I was like, Really? And she was like, Yeah. And I said, "Korie, we're just normal people." And Korie said, "Willie, y'all ain't normal." And I said, "You don't think we're normal?" She was like, "No." She was like, "I'm married in this family, y'all are not normal." And she was like, "You're Uncle Si?" And I was like, "Okay, you got one there.

Annie: Man, watching the Unsung Hero guys come through and interview with Uncle Si, and... I mean, the videos from that are hilarious.

Willie: Oh, he's just... The first thing I wanted to do at Duck Commander, this was my first move as CEO. I'm looking at the... so we had like four workers. Yeah, well one of the workers slept on the couch because we're still doing the business. We didn't have a warehouse. We were still in the living room of Mom and Dad's house.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Willie: So one of our workers-

Annie: Business without warehouse.

Willie: Oh, yeah, we were still there when I took over. One of our workers slept on the couch for like three hours in the afternoon. Like I'm on the phone, he's over there belching and farting. I was like, "This is not a real business. I wish we could have started the show back then when we were all in the house." And so I go to dad and I said, "Dad, look, I know your brother works for us. We just probably need to let him go." And Phil would not let me fire him. He said, "No, no, keep Si around. He makes them reads. No one else do that job." And I was like, "Oh, God."

So I started in the production filming, because we were doing videos, and I said, "Don't film Si. This is what I do." And I was like, "Thank the Lord I didn't fire Si. Because by the time Duck Dynasty happened, pure gold. Pure gold." Which taught me a lesson of business.

Sometimes, in your company, you have a diamond in the rough, you got him in the wrong spot. And once Si got in the right spot, Oh, it was just... because he was a machine. I mean, he was the funnest guy to work with. Like when we would do the scenes, energy level, 100%.

And you got to remember, Duck Dynasty started when Phil and Kay and Si were in their mid-60s. So talk about a new lease on life.

Annie: Yeah, no kidding.

Willie: Si was retired. He was like... I mean, I think mom and dad... all of them were like, "We're done. We're done in life. We've done our career. We're over." And then they had this whole new thing happen. And then Si becomes one of the most well-known people in America.

Annie: He's Uncle Si to everybody.

Willie: He's Uncle Si, yeah. He was in the military. He was a career military guy. He was a greenskeeper guy at a golf course. And then Phil hired him. So he drug up to West Monroe and then bang, man, then he's just a whole new lease on life. So you just never know. I think sometimes we think like, Oh, my whole thing's over and I'm like, you have no idea what God might have in store for you.

Annie: That's right.

[00:20:24] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Thrive Cosmetics](#). Y'all already know I'm a fan. These

eyelashes will tell you that. Thrive Cosmetics is my favorite. It is the makeup in the turquoise tubes that you see all over the internet and my face.

You've heard me talk the most about their mascara because I truly love it, but Thrive Cosmetics has a full line of makeup for every day. Their whole line has clean, skin-loving ingredients with foolproof products that make it easy for any skill level to apply.

One of the incredible parts of Thrive Cosmetics is that for every product purchased, they donate products and funds to help communities thrive. I love that.

Now, let's talk about their Infinity Waterproof Eyebrow Liner for a second, y'all. It's a super easy-to-use waterproof pencil that holds like a wax, but it blends like a powder. Just... Who can believe? Y'all, you're gonna love it. You just line your brows to give them a little structure.

You can create these natural-looking strokes of hair to fill in sparse brows. It comes with a spoolie brush to lift and tame brows after applying the pencil. There are eight shades to choose from that adjust to your natural brow hair color for a perfect match every time.

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

Refresh your everyday look with Thrive Cosmetics, luxury beauty that gives back. Right now, you can get an exclusive 10% off your first order at thrivecosmetics.com/tsf. That's thrivecosmetics.com/tsf for 10% off your first order.

And remember we always link all these codes in the show notes below. So you don't have to memorize it. You can just look right there below, and we will send you right to getting this makeup that you need.

Okay, now back to our conversation with Willie.

[00:22:20] <music>

Annie: One of the things I thought when I watched *The Blind*, which I hope our friends listening have already seen it, but if not, it is such a good movie. I thought the humility of Phil to let y'all tell that story.

Willie: Huge.

Annie: I mean, truly. In about the same week, I got my first viewing of *The Blind* and my first viewing of *Unsung Hero*, and I was like, these two 70-year-old men are sure letting their families tell a story about their decision-making. So will you talk about that humility? Is that grown in him, or is that how you've always known him to be?

Willie: I think so. Well, it's the same thing we talked about earlier. I think he may have been a little unsure, and the response was like, "Well, Phil, this could help people obey the gospel." And Phil goes, "Well, if it helps save some," he gives us a thumbs up again and says, "go ahead."

Because you think about Christianity, and I think even in life, even outside of Christianity, hopefully we've learned over the time, the past is behind you. You've got to look forward. Leave it behind. Unless they make a movie about it and then it's going to live in perpetuity like the worst season of your life is going to be played out.

And it was hard for him. I think that we were opening up stuff that I'm sure even for Mom and Dad just their marriage and... you know that's hard to go back. Phil, he was embarrassed even by watching it. In fact, we watched it once and we were doing another screening and I said, "Hey, Dad, we're gonna show the movie again." And Phil said, "No, I'm good." He said, "I've already seen it once, that's enough." Yeah, that was enough for him. That had to be really difficult, and so I was proud that he... But again, it was all for the sake... It's not that... they've always been open about their life and their past, but I think just watching it like that and reliving all that stuff, it was hard. But again, he did it for that.

Annie: And you tell hard parts of your story in the Gospel, too.

Willie: I did. Because when I talk to someone about the gospel, oftentimes we will talk about... we'll get into their story. And usually it involves some of that stuff. If you're going to talk about what you need to talk about.

Part of me sharing that, one was to say, Wait a minute, I think I know him. What's he doing talking about the gospel? I remember back then he said this or did this. And I think that's a big neutralizer. That holds so many people back from what they can do in Christianity, because they're like, No, I can't.

Annie: I'm disqualified.

Willie: I'm disqualified. I'm out. In fact, part of the book, part of me writing it was I was teaching this class on sharing your faith, and I realized there were so many people that just disqualified themselves right out of the gate. One is that, one is my past, one is I'm no person to tell anybody else anything. And there were others like, I

don't know the Bible well enough, and it's not my gift, and I'm shy. So there was a lot of reasons.

So I said, Well, let's see if we can knock some of those out. In fact, in that chapter, I talk about Peter. And that's the thing with Peter that's always...

Annie: I wrote Peter in an exclamation point. I love what you say about him.

Willie: It's my favorite, because that resonates so much, because I think you may forget that when you read Acts 1, Peter's the one up... Even before Acts 1, Acts chapter one, Peter's up trying to replace Judas. So he's taking charge. And what was amazing, nobody questioned, nobody said, who made you the leader of this thing?

Annie: That's right.

Willie: Because in my Bible, you turn about two pages backwards, and there he is denying even knowing Jesus. And so I thought, wow. He didn't take the five-year plan and let me go hang out somewhere else. Even though I think when he went back to that boat, I think he was done. I think he was like, "I'm just gonna..." And Jesus did go have a pep talk with him, which was amazing because he was like, "No, we have a job. We got a job to do."

And so he was able to go, "You know what, that's over." And then bang, he's up in Acts chapter one. Acts chapter two, obviously, who gets up? Peter gets up and then starts preaching.

Annie: Wouldn't even tell a girl by her fireplace that he knew Jesus, and then gets up and 3,000 people get saved.

Willie: It's such a lesson to me. It's like, yeah, I've done things that I'm certainly not proud of. But there's a story to tell, and part of that is part of your story. That's the beautiful nature, I think, of Christianity is that you're not out. It's not like, oh, that's it. And so I try to tell these stories, like with marriage, in other words, like, okay, we can see it there, okay, I see that, you know, like...

Annie: I like how you talk... I mean, you say in the book that you often use marriage as the lead-in for these conversations, especially with married men you're talking to, because Jesus uses it so much.

Willie: Well, and remember Paul, when he says the mystery of marriage, this is this relationship, two becoming one. When you think about it like that, you're like, ah. When somebody says, "Well, it's not my gift," I say, "Well, okay, how about you

tell your spouse that for the rest of your life you're never going to mention their name ever to anyone because it's not your gift."

Annie: Because you're a little shy.

Willie: See how that goes, you know?

Annie: Yeah.

Willie: That's kind of absurd. When I'm talking... I've probably referenced Korie four or five times just talking here because when you have a relationship like that, it just comes out, because you're like, Oh, we were just talking. So I feel like when you have that relationship with Jesus, it's the same way. It's going to be really hard to just separate that and give people reasons why. I think that's a great analogy. It's not the only one, but it's one that I use a lot, because it just makes a lot of sense of what that would be like.

And then even in Christianity, just like in marriage, Korie and I have had bad times, bad days, bad weeks, maybe a bad month. But through it all, 32 years, we're still married. So this relationship is still here, can still improve, and it still grows. And it can go backwards as well. It can get-

Annie: I mean, I really respected when you wrote about that in the book and talked about, "Hey, we were in a bad season in the show, and I had to pull back. And I was listening to worship music and I was just-

Willie: That's all I was doing.

Annie: I mean, that's a big deal.

Willie: It was lonely because of being in the spotlight. Because even church was weird. It was so hard to, you know... it's just... It's like there's nowhere to go. It's like, where do I go where nobody's looking at me in any way? And a lot of that was probably my own head, but still it was real.

Annie: It only has to happen once for you to think it could happen any other time.

Willie: Yeah, it's still real. So you're really cautious about what you tell, who you talk to. Because you realize it's like, Ooh, guess what? I just found out, you know.

Annie: You remember what you asked me the first time we met?

Willie: Me?

- Annie:** You said, how do you know my kids? At Lee's house, we were at that barbecue for Sadie's kickoff. You said, how do you know my kids? And I said, Oh, we met at this thing and this thing. You said, Okay.
- Willie:** Oh, I forgot that.
- Annie:** That's good. That's a dad whose kids are in public life and is saying like, Hey, I know you're in public life to some degree too, but I want to know what your motive is here for being friends with my family.
- Willie:** Oh, that's hilarious. I didn't even remember that. I'm sorry.
- Annie:** Why?
- Willie:** I'm sorry if I was rude.
- Annie:** You weren't. I didn't take it all that way. I thought that's a great question. Also, you're like, this 30-year-old single girl is bro-ing out with my son and my new daughter-in-law. I need some understanding. And it was great. I loved it. But it did remind me that y'all have dealt with a public-facing life that has at some point gotten you in situations where you went. It would be unwise to automatically trust.
- Willie:** Yeah, for sure. Actually such a high level of... as quick as it was, but it was just like... it was so, you know... it wasn't just a show. I know a lot of people with a TV show. This was a show that a lot of people watched. And you're so recognizable, so it's really hard to hide. So it's like people see you and like, you know... Like I always got stared at before. You know, sometimes people are like, well, who is this guy? But then when you get famous, it's like, then they know... it still happens, but it's not near like it was. But yeah, we had been through the... you couldn't go anywhere. But I understood.
- Annie:** Obama knowing who you are. My gosh.
- Willie:** It helped me with the book. It helps me deal with people who are famous, for sure. Because I was like, "Oh, thank you. Now I know." Because I used to study the Bible with people who were famous, and they'd be like, "Well, you don't know what this is like, which was true." And that was awesome because I'd be like, Oh, I kind of know a little bit what that's like now.
- Annie:** I think you really do.

Willie: Yeah, it gets lonely. You kind of just hideout, and it's a different way. I mean, I'm not complaining.

Annie: No, no, no. I don't hear you complaining. It's just the reality of it.

Willie: ...People who complain. But yeah, it's just different, because people treat you differently. So you don't know if somebody's being nice to you because... you know, is this just because of this or, you know?

Annie: Listen, dating, you can imagine. It takes about three days and I go, Oh, real Annie's going to disappoint you because you really like Annie F. Downs and she's only got so much bandwidth. She runs out. She's a product sometimes, you know? So yeah, I get that.

I listened to a podcast the other day and the host was talking about this new Google-type search where you can search people's faces. And she said, what that means is that now every time we're in public, there's a chance someone's listening to your conversation. And the host, the other host says, I think that's what it's like for famous people all the time. And I thought, yeah, I don't talk about anything in restaurants assuming no one cares. I'm sure you don't either, right? Like you don't go into a restaurant, just talk all willy nilly, because there's a chance somebody cares sitting around you what you're saying.

Willie: Well, yeah. Yeah. You know what's interesting too is someone may not be sure who I am and then I'll start talking and they'll be like, "Oh, I knew that was you when I heard your voice." I'm like, Oh man, that's going to be hard.

Annie: Dude.

Willie: Started to change my voice.

Annie: Darian Coffin with the mask on? They were like, Annie F. Downs? I was like, yeah, yeah, yeah, I know my voice goes before me. Yeah, it's interesting. And it's a gift, because we also are gospel-er people. And so talk about how you've seen a difference, because everybody that listens to us has followers, because they're on social media. So what does it mean that we have any amount of followers, 10 to 10 million, and we're gospel people?

Willie: Well, it means you have at least a pool of people to try to help disciple. Here's the deal. The Great Commission, Matthew 28, make disciples, baptize people, teach people. I just wanted to be those three things, because I know a lot of people, they're not anywhere near those three things. So if you're gonna be around those three things, so the making the disciple part, if you're gonna be doing any of those

three things, you're gonna have to open your mouth and help. So it's hard to be quiet.

So I feel like whether it's followers or non-followers or whatever, if I'm in that, sometimes it may be the teaching, sometimes it may be the disciple-making, sometimes it's the baptizing people. But yeah, I'm just trying to, at my age now... and that was one of the things I wanted to do in my 50s, was really teach more. So this was one of the bucket list things to do, was actually to teach and pass it on. Because I'm feeling that more, especially just naturally, like with my son-in-laws, my daughter-in-laws, my grandkids now. And you're like, there's so much. I'm like, oh, there's so much I wanted to tell you this.

There'll be a lot of other things. But with this book, this is what it was all about. I think I was just meant to write this and meant to share, at least put these stories down, just so that at least we wouldn't forget. So that's part of being a storyteller. That's why I told that John 4, Jesus at the woman at the well, master class.

In fact, this is for people who are like, I can't do that. The big question Jesus asked this woman, who he shouldn't have been talking to, and they weren't from the same origins, the big question was, can I get her a drink of water? That was the question. That's where it started.

Now the story ends with the whole village coming to know Jesus Christ. It started with, can I get a drink of water? So if you can ask that question, then you can, you know... and then he gets into her story, right? So he starts talking about spiritual things she doesn't understand, which is normal. I think sometimes we're shocked, like, can you believe they're doing that? I'm like, well, yeah, they're not believers. They don't have a clue what you're talking about. He gets into her story. She gives him part of the story, which is understandable. She just met the guy.

And he's like, no. But why did he keep digging in? Because I think he knew, if you're not going to deal with this, you're never going to understand it unless you're going to have to deal with, you know. Because everybody knew, you know, even in Nashville.

Annie: Right, right.

Willie: You let me go through five or six marriages. Everybody's going to know. So he wanted that dealt with. And then when she went back to the village, one of the coolest parts of the story to me is she said, "Y'all have got to go meet this guy. He told me everything I ever did." That should have been a negative. It was a positive.

Annie: Yes, that's right. Wow.

Willie: See the release. I would be like, Hey, watch out. Don't talk to that guy because he knows everything you did. I'd be like, You may want to avoid him. And that became a positive. And then they went out and did that. And then they all became believers.

So she was actually one of the first gospelers there was early in the book of John, this woman. So it's a great way of how you talk to people and how you deal with people and have that conversation. And that was from Jesus himself.

Annie: You talk about in the book... I felt so convicted in the Sin Cellar chapter where you talk about never run from an opportunity. And it is that can I have a glass of water? I mean, it's a story about baptism. Do you want to retell it? I mean, it's just a beautiful about Charlie where you're just like, he just said, I'll never get baptized. I've never been baptized. You said, Korie... Like you just went for it.

Willie: In my phone he's Charlie get some towels. We were talking, because it was a Christian... He had come with a Christian speaker and... baptism is one of the things I use a lot because it's a great conversation starter and we get right to the-

Annie: Because it kind of skips over, what do you think about Jesus? Have you ever been baptized?

Willie: Yeah, we get right to it. And so I think for a lot of people it's a scary subject, but I love it. I love talking about it because we can get in their story right there. And you kind of know the context then. So I'll say, Hey, have you ever been baptized? So if someone says no, I'm like, oh, that's interesting. And so do you have a relationship with Jesus? And the answer may be yes or no or whatever. But you see the wheels turning, and then it's like... I just love it. Or they'll say, yeah, when I was, you know... I was like, oh, great. Is that when your relationship started? "Yeah." And my next question is usually always the same: How's it been since then? And then we start hearing that story. And then we start down that road.

I had a guy come up to me the other day. I was in the airport in Atlanta. He goes, "Hey, I know who you are." I said, "Hey, what's up, buddy?" He goes, "Love y'all. I love what you do." I said, "Oh, thank you." And he goes, "I ain't exactly living the way I should."

Annie: Wow.

Willie: And I said, "Why would you say that?" I said, "Why would you say that to me?" And we're standing at the Sky Club. He's looking at me and I go, "Sit down, I wanna hear, I wanna know why you would tell me that." And so he sits down, he's

like, "I mean, I don't mean to take your time." I said, "No, I got nothing going on." And then we got in, 30-minute story right there. And we started talking about he was hurt by the church.

That's the thing. That's why these conversations... This is not science. This is not... because I can tell one person one thing, and I can tell another person the same thing, one reacts completely different than the other. So with that guy, I said, "Hey, you could be part of a church community, and you could have community and fellowship." And somebody would be like, "Oh, that's what I've been looking for." And somebody else goes, "That scares me to death. I hate that. I hate even the mention of it."

So why is Paul praying that the mystery of the gospel comes out of his mouth more clearly? Paul knew the gospel better than anybody. Why is he still asking for prayers? Because he knew. He's like, why are these people... why are they not getting it? Why do these people get it and these people don't? And so it's like this mystery. And he wants to...

Then the idea of become all things to all men so that you can snatch them from the fire. That's the idea. So as I'm having conversations, some things that work for others, like if I talk about physical death, some people, like Big Bill in the story, that word, it's what finally came through to him when he actually thought about that. But I've told that to other people, and they're like, especially younger people, like don't even think like that, don't even have that, and you're like, okay, that didn't...

Bill was a great example because I kept having to go back and trying to, you know... and I think the Holy Spirit's working as well. It's like, how could we get into this conversation? But yeah, that night with Charles, I just asked him. And then he was like, "I've thought about this a lot."

And so he's been thinking about it, and then... because once he kind of got absorbed into a church, he had questions, but he was like, "I don't know if I can ask this, and everybody just assumed. The guy he was with was like, I had no idea. And then it really opened up for him, kind of where he was and how it started. Because I think how it starts is important. At least it seems that way in the New Testament. Yeah, I kind of lay that out.

Annie: Oh man, this is the book to put in your hands and put in the hands of all of us. It is such a good, like, here are the steps of how you tell the story of your story and Jesus' story to people.

Willie: And I don't want it to be my opinion.

Annie: It isn't. I don't think it is. You just lay out the gospel.

Willie: It's the gospel.

Annie: You have a chart, Willie.

Willie: But here's why that's important. One of the number one things people say is, I don't know where to start. Like, I don't know where to start. Okay, let's talk about how we can start. But when I'm talking to someone, I want them to read this in the Bible, because it may be the first time they've ever read something from the Bible and applied it to their life. They may have heard a preacher talk, but they've never actually applied these things to their life.

And so I want them to then start that. Because they may not ever see me again for the rest of their life, and I need them connected to the Word, and then all the answers are in there. And so I need them connected there.. and then that's what's gonna help make them a disciple, is that. It's not me conning somebody into arguing somebody and winning the argument.

When I was younger, I used to do that, and it was just like, uh-uh. Like, if you want this, it's great. Plus, I'm not going to cheapen Jesus Christ down to that anyway. Like, Jesus said, Hey, here's what... Luke 14, like, I'll give you what this is going to look like and where it needs to be. And it's not all "and then your life's going to be awesome." It may not be.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Willie: It may be in Nashville, but it may not be in Yemen, may not be in Egypt. You know what I'm saying? North Korea. It may not be great. So I think we sometimes... I don't tell people like "and then everything's going to work out." No. You'll have a more peace, and you'll have a mission in life, and you'll know where you're at in eternity. I don't know what's going to happen in this life.

Annie: Between here and there.

Willie: I have no idea. You're talking about failures in business. Hey, we're not guaranteed any of this stuff. And we have a place, you know. I was doing another one this week, and someone said, "Well, man, what about the fear of rejection?" I'm like, "Well, the fear they had in the New Testament was death or jail. If you keep saying, you remember in the book of Acts, like, if you keep doing this, we're gonna throw you in jail, we're gonna kill you, we're gonna flog you, and yet they kept doing it.

So I think in America, if you're worried about, well, they may say ugly things to me, you know-

Annie: You'll be all right.

Willie: You'll be okay.

Annie: You'll be all right, yeah.

Willie: You'll be okay.

[00:42:51] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about one of our incredible partners, KiwiCo. Y'all, KiwiCo is doing their summer adventure series, and it is just adorable. You do not want to miss this one. I know it can be hard to find creative ways to keep kids busy and challenged when you're on summer break, but KiwiCo has you covered this summer. There's really something for kids of all ages.

There are different options based on age and different themes to choose from for each age group. For example, my nephew Sammy is four. So there are three different things I can choose from for his age. The great outdoors, which he will love, the natural world, which he also loves, and the science explorer. That guy loves talking about being an explorer, y'all. They are all so cute.

The Summer Adventure Series includes six crates, and they're shipped right to you. You can either receive all of your Summer Adventure crates at once or weekly for six weeks. Plus, it comes with everything you need.

Whether you've got littles or teenagers, KiwiCo's got something for everyone. And these hands-on science and art projects are both fun and educational. Each kit comes with enriching content and activities to make the learning experience even more fun.

KiwiCo encourages kids to get outside, explore, and stay off their screens. They get to build things like the nature walk lantern where they build this cute wooden lantern as they are learning about the changing seasons. Adorable. I mean, I wish we had these crates when I was growing up.

Build the best summer ever with KiwiCo. Get 20% off your summer adventure series at kiwico.com/funsummer. That's 20% off your summer adventure at kiwico.com/funsummer.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Willie.

[00:44:34] <music>

Annie: Coach me a little bit. I have a couple of groups of friends that are... so I'm 43, they're in their 20s. I don't know where their faiths are, we're just kind of getting to know each other, but they have kids. So would you start with... if you were sitting down at dinner with them... because I've thought, do I ask them about if they want to dedicate their kids? Is that a doorway in to start a conversation about like, "Where are y'all in your faith right now? And how do you see yourself parenting with what you believe?"

Willie: Where would you start with a young family? I think it could be anything. It's impossible. It's like, how would you write a song or come up with a melody? There's so many different ways and there's so many different things.

So I think we listen... The main thing I do is listen. Sometimes it'll be obvious. Like the guy telling me, "I don't think I'm living like I should." Sometimes it's obvious, and I'm like, "Well, here's the layup. Sometimes I hear something about fear, and so that gives me... you know, I'm scared to death of COVID.

Annie: So it's a choose-your-own-adventure kind of thing.

Willie: Well, then it's like, Oh, okay, why are you so scared? What's fearful about that? I think it's really hard when they don't give off any of that, you know, it's kind of hard to read. Then some of the things are just a simple ask.. But I think the kids would be a great, well, what do you... you know.

Annie: There's been conversations about... they've been coming to me with questions and thoughts on what does it look like to raise a Christian kid. And so it's been really interesting because I've been like, well, it kind of looks like them following what you believe. What do you believe?

Willie: I would probably definitely... I always just go to that person.

Annie: Got it.

Willie: I go to that person and say, what's it like for you? Because sometimes we do try, you know, people would try to, you know, this may not be for me, which, hey, I'll take that. I'll go with somebody else. Oh, you know how many times I preach to somebody? I'm preaching to this guy, but I'm talking to this guy.

Annie: Yeah, right, right.

Willie: It's a sneak attack. Like I do that. I do it with my dad. I was with a driver in Los Angeles and we started talking and I start telling him Dad's story. But I'm preaching to him, but it doesn't sound like I'm preaching to him. I'm just telling him. I was like, Oh, and my dad did this, then he did this, and then this happened, this happened, but the whole time, because it's so funny. Have you ever noticed... This is something I love noticing, because it happens all the time.

When you tell someone a story, how often do they apply it to themselves? Almost always.

Annie: Uh-huh. That's right. That's why Taylor Swift's songs do like they do. It's her story, but it's not like us.

Willie: When you start telling somebody, and then listen to the response when people go, well, if it were up to me... You think, well, how does that affect me? Yeah. And so it's the same way I feel like with this. Because I have atheist friends that I call, and sometimes I'll talk to them like they understand every... like they're in the club. I'll just be like, Oh, you know, I'm writing this book on sharing your faith. And they're just like, you're telling me this. But I just act like, Oh, you know, because if you've got any questions, you'll ask me.

I have atheist friends that I ask them questions about how to convert another friend who's an atheist. And I go, because you're an atheist, so maybe you'll help me get this guy. And it's so funny, they're like, well, now you're putting me in this slot. And I'm like, well, yeah, you're wearing it proud. That's fine. Maybe we can help this one, though.

Annie: So good.

Willie: So you never know which way and what that is. But I do think sometimes you just ask the question, because sometimes it'll sit there for a long time with people. Like I've had people come back to me a year later going, you remember that thing you said to me? And I'm like, Actually, I don't. They're like, you said this. And it's like, again, planting them seeds, just throwing them.

Annie: That's right.

Willie: Throwing them. Chunking them.

Annie: It's been one of the fun things about New York is as I make friends in New York, they don't feel the pressure to be Christian like people feel in Nashville. In

Nashville, if you're a Christian, that advances your career and your social life here, because that's what people want you to be. That's not true in New York. So that's really fun, because it leads to conversations where I talk to them out there in the club. I'm like, "Oh, how did I make that decision? Well, I just ask the Lord." And they're like, Okay. And you're right, it leaves them space to ask questions.

Willie: And the book is for this, too, because you're in this world as well. I think we think we're only doing something big if it's a big thing and it's a big giant. Read through the book of Acts. It's small conversations I love about Acts 2, I love about the rest of the book. So Acts chapter 2, if you're not aware, 3,000 people were converted. Peter preaches, and it's a giant gathering. Do you know how many times... did they ever go back in Acts and say, Let's recreate what happened on the dev...

Annie: No, they don't, do they?

Willie: Now, in America, do you think if that happened, do you think, have you ever been to a conference?

Annie: Hey, listen.

Willie: Like, let's do that. You know, let's do that again. Peter, get up and do that same thing you did. So isn't that amazing that you never see them trying to plan that out and say, we've got to get back to that.

Annie: You know, they don't ever repeat in there, do they?

Willie: I see groups of Christians, that's all they do. And we feel like, well, it has to happen, these big things. And then again, that disqualifies the church. So I was speaking recently at a church, and I said... so I have a new product coming out, some other new products for hunting stuff, and I said, If I was in this town, and I wanted to get the word out about my new product, and there was probably 1,500 people, and I pointed the preacher, I said, would I have him talk about it, or would I take the 1,500 of you to talk about it? All day long, you'll take the 1500.

So once the sermons start coming from the pew, once.. and now... I'm not saying now. You have the Bible. But I'm saying this can help you, even if you're at a place you're like, well I live in so-and-so, South Carolina is so dead here and there's no good churches. You can start that and start converting people around you at work. It's not always stranger too. I think sometimes it's like this whole thing's about just talking to strangers. Like that happened, like the Ethiopian, that was a stranger. But this can be with people that you know. Start with, you know-

Annie: That's how I live.

Willie: Your kids, your spouse, your aunts, your uncles, the people you work beside. You can just start with the people you know, and that'll fill up a lot of your time.

Annie: Listen, I just pay attention to who likes me. I'm like, if they don't believe what I believe and they like me, that's the Lord. That isn't me. The Lord's trying to do something. So that's when my antennae go up. I'm like, this person and I do not agree on anything. Why do they like me? I need to pay attention. They shouldn't.

Okay, last big question before what sounds fun to you. Every Christmas you mail me these nuts that are sweet and spicy and they are so freaking good, Willie Robertson. What are those? Am I not supposed to tell that publicly? Is that like a big secret? Because I'm telling you when that little box arrives.

Willie: I'm glad you said that, because you know I make all those by hand.

Annie: I believe it! I did not know.

Willie: I make every one of them by hand, and it's become quite the thing. I think I'm gonna have to sell them, because...

Annie: Please. I would buy a subscription.

Willie: Well, I have a... well, Henry Cloud, you know Henry Cloud.

Annie: Uh-huh.

Willie: So Henry Cloud's dog ate his. And he sends me the picture. He's got this giant dog and he ate the can and he goes, "Where can I buy these?" I said, "Henry, I made those. I made the can, I made the nuts." They're butterscotch pecans. It's an old recipe that came from my mom's side of the family. My mom's sister's husband, he's passed away, Uncle Wade. Uncle Wade made those and I was like, "I loved them."

Annie: They're so good.

Willie: I started making them and sending them to my friends and they're good.

Annie: My self-control is do not crush this and standing at your stove. I mean, I can tell you, I open the box of my stove and I'm like, "Do not crush these right now. Have a few."

Willie: And I don't really particularly like butterscotch, but the way, you know-

Annie: Oh, yeah. So if you'll sell those, I'll buy some.

Willie: It's a little system of, hey... yeah, I've got to figure out how to make them on a bigger scale. But yeah, it turned into a fun thing. Because remember they used to be in the little jars. Yeah, yeah. And now we've gotten up. Because we put more in there. Because a lot of my friends were like, Okay, I like the little-

Annie: Jars. That's it.

Willie: But it's like, we're all fighting over them. So we did the little cans this year. And so it was hysterical with making the little squirrels.

Annie: Oh my gosh, it was great. It was the best. Okay, is there anything we didn't talk about you want to make sure we cover?

Willie: Oh no, we just brushed the surface, I think it was...

Annie: I cannot wait for people to get this book, I think it is...

Willie: It's so fun now that people have read it. You know how you deal with these books, and then nobody's read it, and you're like, yeah. Then it's like... now people have actually read it, and so here in the comments. And yeah, my hope is that it just really inspires people, you know, too. Because it's not just us trying to do these giant things, it's just if we get a lot of people out sharing their faith and when it comes from them.

I think one of the worst places to have a conversation is at a church building. It's not set up for it. Like, you drive up there, you walk in, you chit-chat on the way in, and then you sit, you listen, for most people you sit and you listen, and then you get in your car and you leave. So you don't have a lot of conversations there. And so I think it's not that people can't be converted in that place, but like, churches have it all packaged in. It's like, wow, we'll do this, this, this, and then one last minute we're going to do one little thing, and it's not like... I feel like people walk out going, I may have done something, I don't know what exactly.

So it's so much better when there's a conversation. Again, back to marriage, I didn't get married that way. I didn't put two fingers up and go, yeah, I'm in. No, it was a whole thing. It was like, count the costs, here's what it's gonna be to be in this relationship. And then you've got your whole Christian life to learn.

But I think one of the things we do too, Annie, is we don't... I talk about this in the book. Nobody ever said that was part of the deal, going after other people. And I

lay that argument out pretty clearly. I think Jesus was saying, it may not be part of the deal, it may be the whole deal. Once you got it, great.

When Jesus called Peter, that's the only thing he said. "Hey, come follow me, I'm gonna teach you how to fish for people." And Peter's like, "Let's go." And the Zacchaeus was a real clue, because remember, he went to his house, and he says, "This is why the Son of Man came, seek and save what's lost. That's why I'm here." Because now we're not thinking about ourselves. Because I sit through a lot of services, and it's like, you need this. And it's so inside, it needs to be out. So I very rarely hear people go, all right, let's go. Now we're going to go get after other people.

Most people that are converted are converted by who? People that just came to faith. Most of the conversions are within the first year. Isn't that strange? The longer we stay in this thing, the less we are of telling other people and getting... So something's off there.

Annie: Something's off.

Willie: If that's what we're doing, then something's off, because it certainly shouldn't be that way. It's not like that in other things in life. So somehow how we're doing it's a little off. So maybe this will help-

Annie: You're helping me.

Willie: ...kind of help correct, you know?

Annie: Yeah.

Willie: Yeah. This is our generation. So to teach and...

Annie: I'm going to keep one here in Nashville. I'm going to buy one for my apartment in New York. And that way anyone passing through either place gets a chance to go, what would it look like for me to do this today in the city I'm in? So I'm grateful. I have not done that with any other book in my life except Bob Sorge's *Secrets of a Secret Place*. That is the only other book I have in both places besides this.

Willie: Well, it came out of a heart of wanting to do that and just a weird... the way God put it all together, and... it was during COVID, and I couldn't travel, and so I opened my mouth, and they asked me to teach this class on it at this church, and so I started teaching. That's when I started. And I was telling another friend about it, and he said, you should put that in a book. He said, did you ever put that in a book?

He said, I've never quite seen it like that, and as simple as you put it, because I'm kind of a simple guy.

Annie: That's very helpful. Okay, so the last question we always ask, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you. Especially around Father's Day, that's when everybody's hearing this.

Willie: Oh, Father's Day is fun. You're probably not going to—well, no, you will believe this because you've been there. You know what's really fun to me? Like, Korie will say, like, when she's not there, like... so I'm at the house, I'm by myself, what do I do? What would I do for fun? I go get a cookbook, I find a recipe, and I'm like, I'm cooking this.

And I go to the grocery store, which is one of the funnest parts, you know, because I want to fill, and I get all the ingredients, and I will make a complete meal. I call them my practice meals. And I see if it's good and if I can do it. So I love cooking. I talk about in the book, it's so similar to me cooking, creating something, because it's all about somebody else. I don't cook just for myself, even though I just said I cook for my... but it's a practice meal so that I can say, and then I'll try it on the family and then say to your text and say, Dad, put that in the mix. And put that mix means it goes in the rotation of meals.

Annie: Oh, interesting.

Willie: And so we find meals that go into the... But I love, love to do that. It's so much like sharing your faith because the more you do it, and this is what I tell people, the more you do it, the more experience you get at it, the more you're talking to people. People are people. The problems are the same. Sin is sin. The message is the same. The methods may be different, but the message is the same.

But man, you'll get so comfortable. Like I could have talked to you this whole time while I was cooking a meal. Yeah, right, right. Like, you've been in my kitchen. So like, I can cook and talk. In fact, Louie Giglio one time, they were at our house and we were talking, I was cooking and he said, "I want you to do that at Passion City Church."

Annie: Oh, wow.

Willie: So he brought in a whole kitchen and I'm on stage and I'm cooking a meal and he and Shelley and Korie were on the couches and the whole time I'm cooking. Now, not the same with Korie. Korie can't talk and cook. She's staring at the back of a box, the smoke bell went out, she fights the stove. Like she's fighting this fire,

because she always has it too high. So I'll just go over and I'll just turn it down, and like, You don't have to go.

The only reason I do that is because that's how comfortable I've done it so many times. It's always gonna be different, you know, because food is different. You're like, I think this is... and it's so much like having a conversation people. You know, some people are like, just the damage is heavy and what they came out of it, say, where they're at's heavy, they're confused, they don't know. And we just have that conversation.

And then we really start taking on these qualities of Jesus as the great physician. Because you may feel like a doctor, like, well, here's the problem. I know a lot of biblical information, but at this time, here's a problem, here's a solution. You want in? You want out? And so Jesus is the great counselor. Because a lot of this is like counseling. You're trying to walk people through life. So you start taking all these attributes of Jesus, and then you start playing them out and living them out.

So that sounds fun to me would be just learning how to cook another good meal so that I can-

Annie: A test meal.

Willie: Yeah, because ultimately the super fun part is when you can lay it out for the kids and everybody, and then you all enjoy it. Growing up, we sat at that dinner table, and I'm so glad that that was memorialized at the end of that dinner table, because it was so much about that, just telling stories, hearing stories about the gospel and preaching the gospel and hunting and fishing and just all that stuff. So that sounds fun to me.

Annie: Great answer. Thank you for doing this, Willie. I appreciate it. I love you and your family. I'm really grateful for y'all, so thanks for making time for this.

Willie: Thank you for having me.

[01:00:20] <music>

Outro: Oh, friends, isn't he the best? I love Willie Robertson. Okay, so we have got two copies of *Gospeler*, his brand new book, Autographed by Willie. If you would like this to give to someone as a Father's Day gift, here's all you gotta do. Go to That Sounds Fun podcast Instagram, and we have got two copies to give away.

So you can get one, and you can tag a friend who will get one. So go and tag maybe a dad that you think would love to read the book, or another friend that would love

to give the book to someone in their family or to a friend of theirs. Or, listen, it's a great book. We're all going to want to read it. So you can win a copy, read it, and then give it for Father's Day and tag a friend as well. So we've got two copies to give away, one to you and one to your friend that you tag.

And make sure you grab a couple of copies of *Gospeler*. It is a really great book to have on hand to help people understand how to share the gospel, to understand what it means to share the gospel, and just some really easy handholds of how we talk about our faith. I learned a lot.

Make sure you're following Willie on social media as well. Tell him thanks so much for being on the show. If you like this episode, I think you're also going to love Episode 362 with Willie's daughter, Sadie Robertson-Huff, or Episode 477 with Granger Smith.

If you have any questions from this episode, you can just drop them in the Spotify Q&A box over on Spotify if that's where you listen, that's where I listen, or you can send them to us on Instagram @ThatSoundsFunPodcast. We'll answer them there.

If you need anything else from me, well, I am on my summer Sabbath. I am on a break, but you can keep up with the show on Instagram @ ThatSoundsFunPodcast. That's where all the new information is right now. Let us know what you think about this episode over there. And don't forget to go enter to win those two autographed copies of Willie's new book.

Y'all go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you and I'll do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is going to see Wicked. I've got some friends in town and we get to go see Mary Kate Morrissey as Elphaba. Oh, it's one of my very favorite things to do.

Y'all have a great week and we'll see you back here on Monday as we continue these really important, some of my very favorite episodes of the year are happening this month. And on Monday we're talking about Juneteenth. We're talking about racial reconciliation with the guys from Undivided, Chuck Mingo and Troy Anderson. We'll see y'all Monday.