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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. Are we in legends week or what? I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today.

Before we dive into this conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors. This show is sponsored by [BetterHelp](#). October is the season for wearing masks and costumes, but some of us feel like we wear a mask and hide more often than we want to at work and social settings and relationship around our family. Therapy can help you learn to process and accept all parts of yourself so you can take off the mask. Because masks can be worn for Halloween fun, but not for our emotional life, you guys.

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Intro: All right today on the show as we continue Legends Week, as we continue the week that we honor the music that started for us in the 90s, but it's still blessing us today, y'all are in for another treat because I get to talk with my friends Michael Tait and Adam Agee from Newsboys.

I love these dudes. I've wanted to have them on the show for a long time, so I cannot wait for you to hear this conversation. I know you recognize Michael Tait's name because Michael Tait was in DC Talk. Somebody call Eddie Kaufholz because you know how he feels about DC Talk. We are so honored to have them both on today.

Part one of their latest album *Worldwide Revival* is out right now and part two comes out tomorrow with over 10 million records sold, you guys. I know you are no stranger to Newsboys or DC Talk. I think we can really learn something about faithfulness and obedience through these long careers in Christian music. I mean, what is the Lord teaching us this week about long obedience in the same direction? We are listening, Lord. So here is my conversation with my friends Michael Tait and Adam Agee of Newsboys.

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Annie: You guys, welcome to That Sounds Fun.

Michael: Hey, what's up?

Annie: I mean, Newsboys are here at That Sounds Fun. That is beyond what my little brain would have ever dreamed happened. So thank you for doing this.

Michael: Hey, what's going down?

Annie: I mean, Tait, listen, you don't know... You know we've been friends for years. You don't know we've been friends since I was in like middle school. Is that your whole life, though?

Michael: I hear it all the time.

Annie: I'm sure.

Michael: We'll be in airports, Adam and I and the band will be in airports, I could stop probably more than I should. And I'm like, "Hey, you soundtrack to my life for you with this." I was like, it's always humbling, but it's also like, what the heck? How did I get 58 years old?

Annie: And you're still just like running so fast with the Lord.

Michael: Yeah. Keyword: with the Lord.

Annie: You haven't quit. Because what I'm seeing and this is true in your life, too, Adam, I mean, what one of the things is I've done my research before today besides just being a person who's known y'all forever. You have taken care of yourself and you have not walked away from the Lord. And both are required, like physical health, emotional health, spiritual health. So will both of y'all kind of talk about that a little bit? Talk about how that's been a part... how you... I mean, Adam, you've been in music for 25 years?

Adam: Yes.

Annie: And 30?

Michael: 30 plus. Yeah.

Annie: Yeah. So talk a little bit about all the health you've chosen.

Michael: All the health?

Annie: Yeah. Like the mental, emotional, physical.

Michael: My gosh, it's a book. Well, it could be a book. I want to write a book one day about... borrowing from Jesus Freak, I'm gonna write a book, Before We Were Freaks. You know, Before We Were Freaks. Or freak incidents. But in reality, yeah, it hasn't always been roses. It has always been, you know, on the up and up. I've had my time, my shirt, my time to down for sure. I have definitely walked with the Lord close at times and not so close at times.

Bono once said, I love it, every man or woman is either running towards God or from God. There's no middle ground. And every time I've been running from God. I'd rather run towards him because running from Him, the hand of God... you don't want to fall into the hands of angry God. And God has a way of getting your attention. But I've had my moments for sure.

I lived in L.A. for just a few years working with Ben Moody from Evanescence and I went out there really to pursue... you know, after DC Talk took a break in 2000, 2001 intermission, which never really came to fruition or came back around. Who knows what might happen on the road? But that aside, I often say in L.A., if you don't choose a side to side, we'll choose you, Annie. And that's a fact.

I got out there and got in some of the crazy circles and musician circles and actor circles and social circles. And you saw that thing slip. And, you know, you might go out with this group one night and you find yourself in situations that's questionable. And you kind of go, Oh, no, I shouldn't but I guess, well, just, you know, one little sip, so to speak, you know, whatever it is. And before you know it it's a downward spiral.

So those are the times in my life where I look back and I go... of course, on a physical side, I go, what would my mom and dad say? You know, before you mention God or your friends, before God, you go, what would my friends say? What would Toby and Kevin say? What would Adam Agee, my best buddies and Newsboys, etc.? And then all of a sudden you kind of go, but more importantly, not to be so tribal, what would Jesus say? The only person that matters, you know?

And I found myself in this place where I could choose depression and sit back and go, well, I failed, which I did on a physical level, certain things with what my plans were to go out there and do and my agenda. I didn't reach the goal. It didn't happen. But looking back now, it was God. Thank you, Lord, because you saved me in those moments because I would definitely not be here today if I stayed in some of

those circles, hung with some of those people, been influenced deeper on some of those roads I walked down, avenues I walked down. It'd be another story right now, Annie Downs.

Annie: Wow. Tait, I think so many of us — I'm 44 — so many of us in this age bracket, a lot of us love to hear this because there is a story that there isn't another side when you have questions or there isn't another side when you have struggles. And you're like, No, listen, just keep going. Just walk to the other side. And Jesus is there on the other side of the hard stuff, too.

Adam, talk about your journey a little bit about that. How have you seen... when you've had the hard seasons, like Tait's talking about, when you've had those questions and yet here you sit 20 years into doing ministry just about full time, whether you'd have called it that or not, and you're still walking with the Lord, too.

Adam: For me, it was in college. I was going to go to college and play basketball and I'd played sports all growing up and just kept getting hurt. So I picked up a guitar when I was 19 for the first time ever and started singing and playing. And it was just one of those things. I picked it up super quick, started playing in church, started playing in our youth group or whatever.

I'd grown up as a preacher's kid, so I was in church every time the doors were open. But that was really the first time that I felt like, okay, I have a choice right here now. I'm 19 years old. I have a choice to make my faith my own and to give this gift right back to God that He's given me. It was an obvious thing. It was obvious that He had given me an ability to pick up guitar real quick.

First time really singing other than just like a couple, you know, little choir things in church here and there. Nothing really. And then all of a sudden I'm singing and writing songs and playing guitar and then we start a band.

Annie: Oh my gosh, both of y'all wrote so many of the songs on this album. I went and looked, I was like, Oh, y'all both wrote on... one of you wrote on every song.

Adam: We figured we might as well. But I started playing music and I made a conscious decision. I was like, "I'm gonna use this for what God wants me to use it for." And as a 19 year old kid I was like, "You know what, I'm gonna, I'm gonna write music about my life, my family, my friends, and about my faith. It was just a part of who I am, who I was.

The journey has been pretty wild. I mean, we had our punk rock band that lasted for almost 15 years, which is unheard of.

- Annie:** Which our literal, one of our teammates came over in the shirt that she's had since 2009.
- Adam:** She was a super fan. And apparently still is.
- Annie:** The joy of her is she only does things at that level.
- Adam:** I love that.
- Annie:** She only loves that hard, everything she loves. She only loves about eight things. Like she doesn't do that about everything, but y'all were one of the things.
- Adam:** I'm honored to be one of those eight things.
- Annie:** Because you knew her as soon as you saw her.
- Adam:** Absolutely. She's fantastic. She was the best fan, like the best, the best. But yeah, we did our thing. As a punk rock band, we didn't, we never made any money. We were just so poor and the opposite. We were in debt. We didn't make any money. We just made debt. So as we started growing up and having kids and just life things, priorities changed. And so I was like, I can't keep doing this if I'm going to provide for my family. And so I was basically-
- Annie:** And were you living here at the time? Were you already in Nashville?
- Adam:** Yeah. And so I was just like, I gotta give it up. I gotta go get a real job. Then as I'm doing that, it's like Audio Adrenaline calls me and Mark Stuart's like, "Hey, we want you to sing, write a record. We're raising money for the Hands and Feet Project down in Haiti." And I was like, "Well, okay, God, I guess I'll keep going."
- Annie:** Wow.
- Adam:** We did that for a couple of years and then that kind of ran its course and we weren't going to really tour much anymore. So I'm like, "Okay, I guess I'm just going to go back and get a real job." And then somehow, some way God kind of brought me back. It's a wild story. It's a long story. I guess I can tell.
- Annie:** Yeah.
- Adam:** So we were going to do this tour in 2017, I believe it was Big Church Night Out.
- Michael:** Big Church Night Out, yeah.

Annie: And it was going to be Newsboys and Audio?

Adam: No, it's just Newsboys. Audio's done at this point. And I'm just like, "I'm solo. I've had some songs that I wanted to release as a little EP, but it doesn't matter. Because it's Newsboys tour and it's a bunch of other artists and I'm not playing music at all. I'm going out and I'm setting up the table for the child sponsorship on the tour." So I'm not playing any music.

Annie: You're literally just working for the non-profit.

Adam: Just working for the non-profit. Because that's all I had at the moment. And I'm like, "Well, I guess I'll just do that while I figure out what other job I'm going to do. And so I go, I'm getting ready to do it. And like a couple of weeks before it was Roy Morgan, who was running the tour with Premiere back at the time. He's like, "Why is Adam on this tour and not singing?" And so he's like, "Why don't you just do an opening song to open up the night?"

Michael: I don't know, this tour is awesome, Adam.

Adam: I know, yeah. You don't even know me.

Annie: You don't know this story, Tait?

Michael: I know.

Adam: Yeah, it's crazy because he's like, "Why don't you just do an opening song?" "Okay, I'll do an opening song." And then a week goes by, he's like, "Hey, can you just host the night? We need an emcee, maybe to kind of talk in between bands and so on." "Okay, I can do that." And he's like, "Well, do you have any other... because we've got a ministry moment in this section. Do you have something you could talk about?" I'm like, "Yeah, we build houses in Mexico. I could sing that thing you do... or sing, not a thing, but sing *How Great Is Our God* in Spanish, if you want to do like a cool moment." He's like, "Yeah, do that." Okay.

And so I wind up doing that. And then I'm doing that on the tour, doing a couple of songs, plus doing all the table repping. And then the speaker had to go off the road, like he had an issue at home-

Annie: For the nonprofit?

Adam: For the nonprofit. So I jump in and I'm speaking on behalf of the nonprofit.

Annie: So now you're doing the pitch-

- Adam:** I'm emceeing, I'm doing two songs. I'm on stage for more time than any of the artists.
- Annie:** You're like the Jimmy Fallon of the show.
- Adam:** Yeah, exactly. And I'm just kind of-
- Annie:** Adam!
- Adam:** ...this is wild. And so I wind up just finishing out the tour, doing all those things and then the rest is history. I did a couple more tours with Newsboys, speaking, and just kind of opening up the show. And then I guess the apprenticeship was over a couple years ago, and they decided to add me into the band. So I'm still here.
- Annie:** I mean, it's such a wild... I do need y'all to explain to all of us. Tait, you were in DC Talk when I was in high school and I was listening to DC Talk and Newsboys. And now you're in Newsboys. I need y'all to explain Newsboys to us, because the guys I saw doing Newsboys are not who we would go see today.
- Michael:** Well, three guys.
- Adam:** It turns out three of them-
- Annie:** Three of them. The other three.
- Adam:** Jeff and Jody and Duncan have been... no, they don't... That's why they're still around.
- Annie:** Okay. So the other three guys were in it.
- Michael:** 30-plus years.
- Adam:** They've been in there over 30 years.
- Annie:** Okay. So explain how you got in there then.
- Michael:** I got a call after my LA debacle. I come home, tail between my leg, really not sure what I wanted to do. My mom was still alive at the time in DC, and I owned our family home in DC, so I'm gonna check on the house. I go to DC, I'm laying on the couch one night... I went to a movie with my niece, came home, my mom goes, "Some Australian guy called you, asked you to call him back." I looked at my phone, my message, it was from Wes Campbell. Hadn't seen Wes in 25 plus years,

as far as I hung out with him. Since Toby and I, and Kevin came to now for DC Talk, for Newsboys, or DC Talk. We toured together in 1990. Newsboys opened for DC Talk.

So I call him back. "Hey, how's it going? What's up? What are you up to?" He says, "Peter Foley is taking a sabbatical. Can you do a few months as lead singer?" And I thought, "That's really weird." It had to be God. And looking back now, I'll jump ahead real quick, there's no way. Peter Foley, he didn't tell me at the time, he wouldn't overwhelm me. But Peter was leaving, because he was worn out. 20 plus years, 25 records, the guy was just worn out. He wanted to come off the road.

So I got told that about six months into my-

Annie: The sabbatical fill-in.

Michael: Exactly. And long story boring, it just worked out. I needed them in my life for lots of reasons, and they needed me. And what a great match.

Annie: Yes, it is.

Michael: Who knew that I would ever be the lead singer of this band? We were such frenemies back in the day.

Annie: Yeah, tell me. That's what I want... Yes. Talk to me about that. Talk to me about the feeling of Michael Tait from DC Talk, and now Michael Tait from Newsboys.

Michael: Well, Newsboys, I'll say this now, because I can say it from this perspective. They were always on our heels. They go gold, we go platinum. We had a shirt that said, Yo, They had a shirt that said, OI. O-I. They copied us. Facts. Facts. But I will say so much, years ago, I don't know if Adam knows this story, but Wes Campbell took a photo of us on the road, and it was me acting like I was the lead singer of the band in 1991, maybe.

Adam: That's crazy. I did not know that.

Michael: It was a picture of me, and I'm the guy, and Peter's on drums. And God works in mysterious and mischievous ways, because jump ahead two and a half decades, and here I am.

Annie: Man, what a beautiful "God works in mischievous ways". That is a much more fun. And that is the truth of that guy.

Michael: It's true, right? People must love being God. Good job, God. It's like, come on, bro. It's just funny.

Annie: I know.

Michael: How?

Annie: I mean, even thinking about us being on that same flight two years ago, and being like, "Come on the pod." People say to me all the time, certain people they want on the podcast, including y'all. And what I can't say is, I know we've been trying to sort this out since November of '22. There are people in the pipeline. They're all coming.

Michael: What are we? August 24? Almost two years.

Annie: Yeah, almost two years. That's right. We try to get it in less than two years. That's the goal.

Michael: That's the goal.

Annie: Okay. I want to know what y'all see out on the road, because Newsboys tours all the time.

Michael: Yeah, we do.

Annie: Y'all are touring a ton.

Michael: Yeah.

Annie: What do you see out on the road that God is doing that I'm not seeing just being...? I live here, and I live part-time in New York. And so I want to know what y'all are seeing across the country. What are people saying at shows? What are they responding to? What are you hearing about what God's doing?

Michael: Yeah, Adam, Agee, what do you hear?

Adam: I think part of the reason that we titled our new album, *Worldwide Revival*, is because that is what we get to see. We get a front row seat to all these little revivals that are cropping up in different communities. We hear about them, and then we get to go talk with some of these pastors and some of these people that are just involved in these get-togethers in these places that we tour.

And so we feel like our job is to help either spark a revival everywhere we go or help fan the flame of what's going on. That's been cool to get a front row seat to some of that.

The coolest thing, I think, is when we meet people after the show or whatever, we get to see generations at our shows.

Annie: I bet you do.

Adam: Where it's like a grandma was like, Newsboys was my first concert, and I brought my daughter, and now my daughter has a kid, and this is their first Newsboys concert, or their first concert is Newsboys. It's cool that all those generations can connect with the music on some level, some songs, like whatever, stylistically or anything, but the message is the same. But it's really cool to see generations coming to shows.

Annie: Does it feel different than what you saw 20 years ago?

Adam: Well, yeah. I mean, our audience was like 14 to 16-year-old girls, and so it was really different. It was fun. But we didn't really have as many parents. And that's the wild thing about Newsboys is the age range is just... everybody.

Annie: Oh, I'm sure.

Adam: And it's unlike anything I've ever seen touring.

Annie: Wow. What do you see in Tait? What do you see God doing different now than when you were opening for Newsboys in 1990?

Michael: I see a spark and an uptick in the youth as far as their commitment. I wouldn't say there's as many as there were back in my day, but the ones that are here are here, and they're on fire. They came to play ball, and they're not messing around. It's no half-stepping. It's not lukewarm. It's like hot or cold. And thank God they're hot at our concerts. They've come and fired up.

Then also, too, the message that we share has never changed, but the method changes. And we definitely have tried to be... People say, "How come Newsboys is still around? How come you guys are in the 30...? How long are you going to be around for?" I go, well, how long are the stones going to be around for? I mean, as long as you keep showing up to work, showing up hungry, showing up, faithful, showing up diligent, God's going to keep using this thing.

We have massive crowds. The crowds aren't as massive, but with age and with, of course, hopefully, spiritual maturity, you realize, Hey, it's just all part of the game, part of the process. It's not about the quantity. It's about the quality. What are you putting out to the people?

Annie: We tour the podcast sometimes, and on my last run, our promoter that was with us every day at lunch would say, "I want you to switch now." Every day he said it. "I want you to switch now from trying to get people in seats and switch to serving the people who are going to be in the seats."

Michael: That's good.

Annie: And that was such a gift to me, right? It was... Uncle C, he did it for us. It was such a gift for me when Uncle C would say it because he would... It did that thing of like, okay, it actually doesn't matter how many people are out there now. I'm supposed to serve everyone who is out there and the size where I can be trapped in the...

Michael: We all can.

Annie: And y'all got to look at the money too. It's a money... I mean, we got to get people in the room because we want to pay everybody well who's traveling with us and all the things. And so that as the headliners, y'all and I, in that you have that moment of like, I've got to know things. And then you go, And also the Lord will put people in seats. And therefore.

I've been so interested thinking about who you see now. I mean, the generations thing has got to be so unique.

Michael: That's crazy.

Annie: Because they've loved both of y'all. I mean, Hayley is a perfect example. They've loved the work you've done for 30 years of their lives. That is wild. Do you think that generation behind us thinks of God differently than we did when we were listening to DC Talk and Jesus Freak? Do they think about God differently? He was so a part of my culture.

Michael: I mean, there's obviously this time trap, time passes on. Every generation has their own little thing and they stick for whatever it is. But I think a guy to go to for this question is probably Adam Agee, who has a teenager.

Adam: I do.

Annie: Oh, there you go.

Adam: I have a 17-year-old daughter. I think that kids nowadays have so much access to information not from their parents and not from their church or their school. I mean, the one or two news channels that we had and church and school and parents, that's where we got 99% of our info.

Annie: I did not know what my friends did in the summer until it was in the yearbook the next year.

Adam: No, exactly.

Annie: We just did not know.

Michael: Now you know what happens in Africa.

Annie: Right. The day of, right.

Adam: Now you're connected to everybody across the globe and you are inundated with info from every different walk of life and every possible outcome. And so you see all this stuff and you have to choose early. Like, am I going to believe this stuff that my parents told me growing up? Is it real? Or do I want to go chase this, this, this, this, this, this, this? Because it's all right there. And you can go down the rabbit hole.

Michael: My parents are old and removed, but this girl is 17 like me and she lives in Europe and she knows better than my dad.

Annie: Sure.

Adam: All kids. I mean, we did when we were young.

Annie: Yeah, we just didn't have it.

Adam: Our parents didn't know anything. It's just like, whatever. I get it. I probably don't compared to what she knows now. But yeah, I think they have the access. The information that they have is just crazy. I think they grow up so much faster that, you know, they're dealing with stuff whenever... Like my son's 11 and he's dealing with stuff that I didn't deal with until I got to high school. It's crazy. I don't know. They have to grow up quicker.

But what it does, like you said earlier, is it does create that just absolute necessity to have it. You know, if they want it and they are on fire, 100%. You see it in some of

these movements with some of these younger artists and some of the young kids that are just on fire 100%.

I think there are a lot of kids that are trying a bunch of different stuff and they will eventually find out that it doesn't satisfy and it doesn't work and everybody's on their own journey. So sometimes you hope that your kids figure it out sooner than later. But some kids got to... they got to fall before they can fly. And that's just, that's just the way it is.

[00:22:59] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Hiya Health](#). In a season where everyone's handing out candy, let's make sure MiniBFFs aren't getting candy when they take their vitamins.

So many kids' vitamins are filled with five grams of sugar and can contribute to a variety of health issues. So we love Hiya Health because it's the pediatrician-approved chewable vitamin that is made with zero sugar and zero gummy junk. Hiya is designed for kids two and up and sent straight to your door so you have one less thing to worry about.

It also comes in these really cute glass bottles that are reusable and your kids get to decorate them with stickers. And right now their bottles are available in Barbie pink with a limited edition Barbie unboxing experience that comes with a Barbie bottle and Barbie stickers. That is adorable.

We've worked out a special deal with Hiya for their bestselling children's vitamin. You get 50% off your first order. To claim this deal, you must go to [HiyaHealth.com/ThatSoundsFun](#). Go to [hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun](#) and get your kids the full body nourishment they need to grow into healthy adults.

Sponsor: Listen, I need y'all to know I love [Prose](#) so much that I keep bottles of their shampoo and conditioner in both New York and Nashville because no matter what city I'm in at the time, I do not want to skip washing my hair with my favorite custom hair care.

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Micah: Hi.

Sarah: Hello.

Micah: Oh no, I was talking to them.

Sarah: Oh.

Micah: Yeah. We're supposed to be telling them about our podcast.

Sarah: Okay, can you start again?

Micah: Yeah. Hello, we are Micah and-

Sarah: Sarah.

Micah: Hosts of the Fortitude Podcast. You may know us from TikTok or Instagram where we love to have fun and bring joy to people.

Sarah: But we've also been through some life experiences that have tested and strengthened us as individuals and as husband and wife.

Micah: Yeah, like grief, addiction, gay husband, miscarriage.

Sarah: And that's just to name a few. But we believe we are called to share about the ways our faith has pulled us through difficulty and the lessons we've learned along the way.

Micah: We're going to be answering your questions and having guests on to talk about relationships, faith, mentality, ultimately all the things in life that make up the human experience.

Sarah: Because when you're in a tough season, it is so important to know that you're not alone and you are capable of making it to the other side.

Micah: You can follow and subscribe to us on YouTube, Spotify, Apple, or anywhere you can listen to a podcast.

Sarah: We love you all and hope each week you will come away encouraged, hopeful, and equipped with something that helps you grow.

Annie: Okay, now back to our conversation with Tait and Adam.

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Annie: How does having music that is faith music matter in a home and in a family? Because I don't have kids, but I was one. But talk about how that matters in your family that there is music like y'all's. There's so much good Christian music right now that's not cheesy.

Adam: Well, that's part of what... going back to even what I said earlier about giving my music to God.

My wife, we've been married for 23 years, and so she just every step along the way was like, just make music that our kids can listen to.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Adam: You know, not in a demanding way, but just in a "this is what we should be called to do." Don't go writing stuff that's... if your kids can't listen to it, then what are you doing? Like, what are you chasing?

Annie: Wow, that's a great help in the making.

Adam: And so it doesn't necessarily 100% have to be like Bible verses made into music, but it can be just something that's gonna point them in the right direction. So I think having a personal catalog of 100-plus songs that they can listen to, and they think it's kind of cool because dad's made the music, so that's cool. My son's got all the... or both of them actually have all the new album on their playlists and everything, so it's cool.

But yeah, I think from the minute we started, like one of our things that we said was we want to make great music. But there's so much music out there that the lyrics are degrading and just depressing.

Michael: Not uplifting.

Adam: Whatever you fill your head with is what's going to come out. So we wanted ours to be positive, uplifting, and then hopefully point people to the King.

Annie: I'd love for you both to answer this. What do you know about God now that you didn't know when you were starting your music career? What do you know about Him after working for Him, traveling around and seeing what He's doing? What do you know about Him now that you didn't know when you started?

Michael: That He really, truly loves Michael DeWayne Tait and all of my countless chief of sinner baggage. He does. That's the part. Because when you go to... As you get older, you go through life and you have moments where you weren't so as shiny as people thought you were and are and should be, because a believer you are.

Annie: That's right. Public Christian props.

Michael: Exactly. Like you kind of go, well, right now I don't like me. And you know what? I bet God don't like me that much. And then you realize when you look back, we actually stopped the mat and slow down and go, He's crazy about you. That's why you're still here, viable, going forward. The list goes on. I go, you look back and you just see all the times He's brought you through stuff and carried you through it. It's like, Oh my gosh. Then the light comes on and you just break down with like, If I only knew then what I know now, my gosh. Epiphany.

Adam: I'd say just the level of trust as with any real relationship, but especially spiritually, the level of trust is just so infinitely farther along and much more than it was at the beginning. Because you're like, I trust God. And you're like, Well, I haven't really gone through anything to where I had to actually 100% trust Him and put it all out there.

Being 44 as well and gone through all these different iterations of playing music and whatever, I've had to trust him with whatever happens.

Annie: Oh my gosh. All those ups and downs for both of you to be like, This is over, now I'm in this. This is over, now I do this. I mean that you'd have to, "Okay, God."

Adam: Yeah. And He just proves it over and over again. He's like, "I got you. Whether you're good or bad, I got you."

Annie: That's right. Because both of you and both the stories you've told today have these really profound endings that were not endings. So what a gift to remind us that endings may not be endings. Which by the way, you did kind of say who knows

what happens in the future with DC Talk. Is that a true thing? Who knows what might happen?

Michael: Good Lord.

Adam: Another cruise hopefully.

Michael: We're done with cruises, I think.

Annie: Has Newsboys done a cruise?

Adam: No, but we're wanting to.

Annie: Okay. So the new album, for starters, I listened to it yesterday. I listened to it today. It is very good.

Adam: Aww, thank you.

Michael: Thank you.

Annie: It is very good. I told you, I looked up who was writing them because I was like, who... I mean, my question was who's writing this depth. I mean, Newsboys has always been very good. So this isn't a them, you, whatever. This is a deep album. And it's part one. So there's coming a part two?

Michael: Yes.

Adam: Right.

Annie: Okay. Great. So part one, we can listen to on... I mean, I listened on Spotify today. But will you talk a little bit about what's the theme here? I have some guesses of what the theme here is on *Worldwide Revival*. Is there a theme I don't know what... what are y'all doing writing all these songs together?

Adam: I mean, I actually, we just get in the room with great writers and then we just put our names on it.

Annie: You were with some great other writers.

Adam: We were.

Michael: Of course.

Adam: That's the good thing about being a Newsboys is you get to write with the best of the best. But you know what's funny is, I mean, we started out with a song called *Heaven on Earth* and-

Michael: A little template there.

Adam: ...pinned by the-

Michael: Daniel Bashta.

Adam: ...Daniel Bashta, who wrote *God's Not Dead*.

Annie: Used to be my worship pastor at my church 20 years ago in Marietta Georgia.

Adam: Cool connection to kind of get things kicked off. And it's just inspired by this Billy Graham quote where he talks about how you can experience heaven on earth here and now if you put your faith in Jesus. You don't have to wait until eternal life.

And so we started writing a bunch of songs just to write great songs. We didn't really have a full theme in mind. So we wrote 50 songs in this album.

Michael: At least.

Annie: You are lying.

Adam: No, totally.

Annie: So far we've got 10?

Michael: Eight.

Annie: Sorry, bad math.

Adam: So there's a lot that you will never hear. But we started writing and this theme of... it's kind of like heaven on earth. It's like we don't have to wait. We want to experience this now.

Annie: That's how it feels. It feels like justice, peace, together. I mean, it just feels like a real... like the world could be better album.

Adam: And so we want to bring heaven to earth right now. And we want that to feed into everything that we're writing, everything through that lens. So then you get into

worldwide revival and it's this, like you said, Tait's like, I want something to say "revival starts at home". So in the bridge it says "started in our homes".

Annie: Yes. I thought that was really profound.

Adam: And so going from our homes to across the street, to our neighborhoods, to our state, to our nation, to our world. It's like this is where it begins. And the message is, is still heaven on earth. That's still the message going through this revival. And then, you know, like how many times is the song that you were just basically talking about?

Michael: That song hugs you and loves you because-

Annie: It absolutely does.

Michael: It's almost as if God says to you and to me in my times where I'm like, "God, I really screwed up this time." And He goes, Tati, how many times have I told you to forgive your brother? How many times have I... well, I love you endlessly. Am I proud when you mess, when you do stupid stuff? No. But does it break my heart? Yes. But baby, I love you. You're mine. I made you in my image. Think about that. You matter to Me.

So the record hits this vertical thing with songs like *Heaven on Earth* and, you know, this worship kind of... but there's also songs that are very tangible, like living life on the planet. As my grandma would say, sometimes you're so heavenly minded, you're not earthly good. You don't want to be just all heavenly minded. You got to keep it... The cross is vertical and horizontal.

Songs like How Many Times, songs like Color talk about the human condition and the issues surrounding the human condition. And the record, once again, that's the beat of having Adam in the band. It brought another whole thought side to the writing process too, because there's another brain in the band, Newsboys, who are in the cockpit. Other people come along, you know, they're part of it, but we're like, we have to fly the plane. So what do we want to say? And what are we saying?

Annie: I'm glad that that's what y'all hear when you hear your own album too, because that was my experience. When I listened, I just thought, Oh, this whole thing is telling me, the heaven on earth is the right language. The whole thing is saying, like, that's what Jesus taught us to pray for a reason, that we actually have some agency in it being better here. And I thought, man, as we are walking toward an election, as we are doing all in the US, it just feels like this is kind of an album that's like, "We can do this. We can do this. We can do this."

Adam: The election thing is kind of a funny thing too, because we have a song on there called In God We Trust.

Annie: Yes, you do. I was like, is this about to be political?

Adam: And you think that. As soon as you see the title, you're like, "Oh, here it comes." But it's actually not. It's not a political song at all. But a funny story about writing that one is we got the script for the new *God's Not Dead* movie a year ago. And so I remember vividly. I'm in the Toyota dealership waiting for my car to get its oil changed and I'm reading the script. And I'm like, Okay.

So I just make a bunch of notes in my phone about like, "Okay, this could be a song. And they asked us to write a song for the movie. And I was like, "This could be it, this could be it, this could be it. Then fast forward a couple months, we bring in our buddy, Paul Duncan from LA and we're in the studio with Colby, we're like, "Okay, let's sit down and write a song maybe for this movie. What do you think?" And I always ask the other writers, like, what ideas do you have? Do you have anything? They're actually good at what they do.

Annie: So do you.

Adam: What do you got? So Paul's like, well, I don't know if it'll work, but I've been kicking around this idea of In God We Trust. And I just kind of laughed. And I pulled out my phone, I showed him the very first note that I had made and it said, "In God We Trust." And so I said, "Well, let's write that one." And so we did. They wound up calling the movie, *God's Not Dead: In God We Trust*.

Annie: You named a movie! Let's go!

Adam: In many ways.

Annie: Yeah.

Adam: But-

Annie: Tell that to the guy who thought he was just going to be the compassion rep or whatever, you know, now you're naming movies.

Adam: You never know, man. You never know. And we were very careful because with a phrase like that, that has been kind of morphed into something that may be-

Annie: Championed by a lot of people.

Adam: Maybe it doesn't necessarily mean that, but we just wanted to get to the roots of what does that actually mean? And it means that we put wholly and 100% our faith in God. You can't put it in people. You can't put it in candidates. That's for sure. You can't put it in anything that is of this world. And so if our faith is 100% in God, then at least we have a fighting chance.

Annie: I love that that one starts out when we don't trust in horses. We don't trust in kings and kingdoms. At a church on Sunday, we sang that old hymn, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. And it says kings and kingdoms will all pass away-

Michael: There is something about that name. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

Annie: But you know what part we don't want to talk about is kingdoms passing away. That's uncomfortable. And that's scary. So I had that moment, I was saying, I was like, Oh, I've sang this my whole life and I've never thought about like, what I'm actually saying is what makes me comfortable in my government and country could pass away.

[00:38:23] <music>

Woman: Hey, I'm [00:38:32] together with my husband, we have two boys and two dogs and raising a child with additional needs. Our day to day experience isn't being talked about in everyday life. And I see a gap in those leading people who are neurodivergent. Whether you're a parent, a friend, a teacher, or a neighbor, we can all journey together to better understand the neurodiverse world.

I created this podcast to have conversations over a cup of tea or coffee, helping to bring awareness about how neurodivergent people experience the world, as well as families who are raising children with different needs.

This podcast will share practical help, tips, and the joys, struggles and differences and being neurodivergent or raising a child who is. Each week, I will spend 30 minutes talking and interviewing others in the neurodiverse space and giving you the opportunity to learn and grow and feel seen and heard by how we interact with each other and the world. We are so glad you're here. Make sure to hit the follow button. So when our first episode drops on October 17, it will automatically come straight into your podcasting feed.

Annie: One of the things we love about Single Purpose League is that it has become this community of friends that we get to process with and ask hard questions together and encourage one another. And as Advent approaches, the question we often wrestle with is how to wait with anticipation for the birth of Christ when we're already waiting for God to answer our prayers.

This is why we created this year's Advent study, *Stay Tuned: An Advent Series For Those Already Waiting*. And as I wrote this study, I was thinking about how so many of us have unanswered prayers and how long we have been waiting. Whether you're married or single, you have unanswered prayers is my guess.

And I was specifically thinking about our single friends and our friends in Single Purpose League. It's time for us to talk about the unique challenge of entering the holiday season without your prayers answered and with your hope on the line. Stay tuned is for anyone who's waiting for God to answer their prayers. But there is specific attention and heart in this study for our friends who are not married today.

So if you are single today, this is your invitation to grab our Stay Tuned Advent study. It's available in digital and in print this year. And come join Single Purpose League because we're going to go through this study day by day together. It's audio. It's video. It's a guidebook. I think you're really going to love it.

You can find all the information about Single Purpose League at singlepurposeleague.com and all the information about Advent at anniefdowns.com/advent.

Raj: I'm Raj Nair, host of the Can I Trust the Bible? podcast. Now, did the events recorded in the Bible actually happen? Is the Bible trustworthy and reliable? Well, join me on this comprehensive Christian apologetics journey as we talk with experts and renowned apologists to provide compelling evidence that will strengthen your Christian faith. Make sure to follow Can I Trust the Bible? on your favorite listening platform and join me every Tuesday as we discover why you can have rock solid trust in the Bible.

Annie: And now back to finish up our conversation with Tait and Adam.

[00:41:46] <music>

Annie: Artistically, what makes you enjoy the movies and like being a part of the movie side and the music side?

Adam: Tell her about your acting the first time you did it.

Michael: I was going to say it's not about the acting because that is not-

Annie: It's not my gift either.

Michael: It's not my gift either.

Annie: I'm very good at being me. I'm not very good at being anybody else apparently.

Michael: Adam talked about... we were laughing the first time. Ten years ago, we were filming *God's Not Dead* Part One, didn't know what it was going to do. Ended up being like number three movie in the country, which is mind-blowing. And that's before Christian movies really started taking off like on a wider scale.

But the day we got to the shoot, I think it was in Texas, and we were exhausted. Had our usual Newsboys four day weekend. At the end of a long tour, we're worn out. We thought we're going to pop in there, do some little cheesy Christian thing, whatever, and have a couple of handheld cams. No. Annie, it was a full on freaking movie set. Like cameras, makeup people, wardrobe people, like probably a hundred people in the building.

Adam: And you had been given a script full of lines.

Michael: I'm getting there. Given a script, most likely a script you're having fun either. We had looked at that script no more than you looked at that script.

Annie: No,

Michael: We didn't know one word of that script.

Annie: And they were just ready to go-

Michael: Ready to go.

Annie: ...and you're like, "I don't know my lines." We're torn, worn out, trying to hide our bags, under eyes, get there and they go, they say, "Action." We're like, "We're not ready for this." So we looked at the line, got the idea of it, paraphrasing there and the prayer I pray, thank God.... they had a script for the prayer, but I just pray off the cuff because I can do that. But acting it out, nah, we weren't ready. I think Duncan got it probably the quickest. Me, Jeff, and Jody were.

Adam: Duncan did a good job. Jeff did a good job.

Annie: Did *God's Not Dead* get you on an IMDb or did you already have one?

Adam: I think it's Newsboys on there.

Michael: Pretty much.

Annie: Yeah.

Michael: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: I got to tell you on my history with the song *God's Not Dead* because Daniel was our worship leader. We were singing that song at youth camp.

Michael: What?

Annie: Yeah. It was like-

Adam: Like a lion?

Annie: Yeah, like a lion. I mean, we were singing that when we were... you know, easily early 2000, like 2003, four or five, right back then. And then all of a sudden, we're like, Oh, everyone in the actual world knows this song now. And this is like our local guy's song he had written. It's really cool.

Michael: I tease Daniel all the time about how we send his kids to college.

Annie: I think you're sending his grandkids to college. So I think you've done a fair thing there. No kidding. I just think it's amazing. Do you ever get tired of singing some of the older stuff?

Michael: I mean, certain songs, yeah. But honestly, why do we believe in *God's Not Dead*? I've never gotten tired of singing them.

Adam: Tait's favorite songs are some of the really old ones that Peter sang.

Annie: Really? No, that's a lie. You're lying.

Adam: That's why he brought me into the band.

Annie: He's like, "Here's one you're going to handle."

Michael: No, no. Adam is a breath of fresh air for sure. But I still enjoy *He Reigns*. I still enjoy *Something Beautiful*.

Adam: *Something Beautiful*.

Michael: *Something Beautiful*, yeah, for sure.

Annie: Oh, I love that one.

Michael: But Peter's songs are so quirky.

Annie: Which ones are you singing?

Michael: Yeah, Adam.

Adam: Well-

Michael: There's the question.

Adam: We do a little throwback moment. We play like 24 or five songs.

Michael: A night.

Adam: A night.

Annie: Y'all.

Adam: Yeah.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Michael: Four nights in a row.

Adam: So we do a little throwback section where we do some acoustic versions of like *Shine*. We do *In the Light*-

Michael: *In the Light*.

Adam: ...from another band.

Michael: From another band, yeah.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Y'all bring it all in.

Michael: Adam, what'd you say?

Annie: I love *In the Light*.

Michael: You just added a...

Adam: We do-

Michael: *Take Me to Your Leader.*

Adam: *Take Me to Your Leader.*

Annie: Really?

Adam: *Breakfast.*

Annie: *Take Me to Your Leader. Oh, Breakfast?*

Adam: Totally.

Annie: Oh, come on.

Adam: And then like *It Is You* and *Amazing Love*. So we do quite a few of the old ones.

Annie: That's great. That way those grandmas in there, that was their first show, are getting to hear it. And the moms and dads. That's a treat.

Adam: It is cool because Jeff kind of sets it up like talking about how the three guys have been in the band for 30 years and people don't realize that.

Annie: I mean, 30 years.

Adam: People still think Newsboys is like a revolving door and it's...

Annie: Because Lead Singer changed so much.

Adam: It's really not though. Tait's been there for 15 years.

Michael: 15 years. Yeah.

Annie: 15 years?

Adam: I know. Yeah.

Michael: Hi, cameras.

Adam: Like, who does anything for 15 years? That's a long time.

Annie: That's half the existence of the band.

Adam: Yeah.

Michael: Oh, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Annie: That's eye-opening. That is amazing. And then the other guys being in there for over 30 years. It's like people don't understand the longevity of that. It's really cool to get to share that with everybody each night.

Annie: I mean, Tait, that is wild because I would think... people assume you've been in DC Talk for 65 years and Newsboys for two. And that's not even close to the math.

Michael: No.

Annie: It was probably closer to even Stevens at this point.

Michael: I was surprised at DC Talk. Toby and I were laughing a few months back about how we lasted 10 years because we were such... it was like Three Dog Night, the band. Kevin Mac, Toby Mac, Michael Tait. It's like all just so driven in our own little ways. Coming together was tough at times. That's now public knowledge. You know, we didn't always get along.

Annie: Sure, sure.

Michael: And you know what? It's called being human.

Annie: I was about to say, what band or workplace does?

Michael: Exactly.

Adam: Yeah, we have Fight Club on our bus every now and then too.

Michael: We do. We do.

Annie: Okay, I'm glad you brought the bus because this is one of my questions I had to ask. Because we are all older, our life is not the way it was when you were 20 in bus life. So I want to know what's bougie about your bus life. What is "hey, I am old and I've done this a long time. So therefore we're going to have..." what? What's bougie?

Michael: What's bougie? Probably our bunks.

Annie: All of y'all have really nice bunks.

Adam: Nice beds in our bunks.

Michael: Yeah, nice beds, yeah.

Annie: So condo bunks or three?

Adam: No. We got 12 people. We bring our crew on our bus.

Michael: Yeah.

Annie: Y'all are one bus?

Michael: Yeah. Because we have to be with the crew.

Annie: Well done.

Michael: We want to keep it all in the family.

Annie: So front lounge, back lounge, 12 bunks.

Adam: Yeah, front lounge. Tait and I are in the front lounge usually. I kind of float back and forth.

Michael: You kind of float too, yeah, sure.

Adam: I'm kind of the hybrid, you know, I try to keep the peace.

Annie: Hang out with everybody. So when you say there's nice beds, you mean you've like put in your own mattresses?

Adam: No, we had to fight for good mattresses to be put in.

Annie: Okay, okay.

Michael: And we own the bus. We bought the bus so I can get another one. We don't let them get old and worn out. Our buses are super nice inside.

Annie: There you go. There you go, yeah.

Michael: Because we live on the road, like you said.

Annie: You live there.

Michael: So it's very important.

Adam: It's got YouTube TV so I can watch golf and sports.

Annie: Other sports? What else?

Michael: NFL.

Adam: I'll watch NFL. Yeah, NFL. We'll watch NFL.

Michael: I'll watch the sports.

Annie: Are y'all so happy football's back?

Adam: Yes.

Annie: I went to a Franklin High School football game last Friday night and I was like, here we are.

Michael: I know.

Annie: Okay, we're good again.

Michael: Just the smell of the dirt on the field and the fall weather coming in during those nights.

Annie: That first Saturday morning when you get to like... when you're on the bus, the door opens and the cold air comes in.

Michael: 68 degrees, maybe 65, a little crisper or something.

Annie: You got college game day on TV. Nothing better. Nothing better.

Adam: We're all about it.

Annie: That's as bougie as your bus gets is your nice mattresses?

Adam: No. Okay, so we also have a tour manager who orders us food for. As soon as we get off stage we've got a nice little spread going. So that's pretty fancy.

Annie: I mean, what do we eat?

Michael: Everything from sushi to pizza.

Adam: Indian food is a big stay turn. We like some Indian food.

Annie: Okay. And you own the bus. That's a big difference. People don't know that most of us don't own buses.

Michael: Exactly.

Annie: To own the bus means you get to leave your stuff, you get to-

Michael: To own a bus means you live on the road.

Adam: But I don't recommend owning a bus. I've done it.

Annie: Yeah, it's not easy. But it is nice for your home being your home.

Adam: Yes.

Annie: What's always in the fridge?

Michael: Adam, is it Perrier?

Adam: Perrier. Jodi and I like our sparkling water. I think it's great. Shut up. Oh, the official drink of Newsboys is Fresca.

Annie: Oh, delicious.

Michael: Wild.

Annie: Wild. That is a wild take. It is non-stop Fresca on our bus.

Michael: It is pretty good.

Annie: Wild. CCM is going to pick that up because that is a wild truth.

Adam: It's big. It's big.

Annie: Okay.

Adam: That's always in the fridge. Actually, one of our fridges is broken. So it's now become Tait's closet. It's got shoes and clothes.

Annie: Oh my gosh. Two fridges, though. How? Where's the second one?

Adam: No, now we only have one.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's just a closet.

Michael: You missed what he said. He said, sweet as fish. The colored kind, of course.

Annie: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Michael: Different colors.

Annie: I mean, that's awesome. I think bougie bus life is one of my favorite things to ask people about it. Because you just have to figure out how to do your life out there.

Adam: You know what else is bougie about our bus? We have a shower on our bus.

Michael: Oh, yes.

Annie: Oh, that really works all the time.

Adam: It actually works.

Michael: It's nice, too.

Adam: It is a lifesaver.

Annie: Is it in the middle?

Adam: It's towards the back.

Annie: Okay. This is me not knowing enough about bus life. Can that work while you're moving?

Adam: Yeah.

Michael: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: Oh, so when y'all are done with the show, all 12 of you can just get on Stinky and work your way through.

Michael: We could. Yeah, most of us shower at the... I use the bus as my dressing room.

Adam: Those of us who do shower. Right.

- Michael:** What does that mean?
- Adam:** Why are you getting defensive? You like to be weird.
- Annie:** There's 10 other options. Why are you being weird?
- Michael:** I've been called the best-smelling man in Christian music three times.
- Adam:** That's all right.
- Annie:** Listen-
- Adam:** Some of us bathe and shower. Some of us do it with [Creed?].
- Michael:** It's darn enough, kids. It's darn enough.
- Adam:** We're going to have to cut this thing about five minutes ago. We've reached the end.
- Michael:** No, no, no.
- Adam:** Usually, we do shower either at the venue or like a hotel or something.
- Michael:** It's a nice clutch thing to have, though, on the bus. Like if you say the venue, then you can have a shower. Festivals and stuff like that.
- Michael:** Yes.
- Annie:** Yeah. Or if you're coming home from Houston and you want to get on the road.
- Adam:** Absolutely.
- Annie:** That's brilliant. Okay, what do we not say that y'all want to say? Anything we didn't say?
- Adam:** No. Just stream our album, please as many times as you can. Just put it on repeat as you go to bed.
- Annie:** In the background. Yeah, that's exactly right. I mean, it is an uplifting album that is also very like... motivating isn't the right word, but driving is the right word. It kind of drove me into my day. Good. I think it's a great... yeah, I really liked it or we would have not done this.

Adam: I appreciate that.

Annie: It's not fair to bring people on and be like, good to see y'all don't love your stuff. That would not be fair.

Adam: Let's not talk about it.

Annie: Well, y'all are welcome back anytime. Thank y'all for doing this today.

Michael: Thank you so much.

Annie: I really appreciate it.

Michael: I say once a year, at least.

Annie: Okay. We'll DM about it. We'll figure it out.

[00:52:02] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, don't you love them? They are the best. Okay, remember *Worldwide Revival* Part one is already out. Part two releases tomorrow. Add them to your playlist. Add them to what you're streaming in the morning, when you're waking up, when you're getting going during your day.

And make sure you're following Newsboys on social media. Tell them thank you so much for being on the show. And this is our chance with people like Newsboys, with people like Darlene Zschech, where we get to say, thank you, thank you, thank you for your years of investing in our spiritual lives through your songs.

Remember that all these guests we have on have people who chirp at them for things all the time. We get to be the people who bless them with our words. So take time and do that today.

If you have any questions from this episode, just drop in the Q&A box in your Spotify app, if you're a Spotify listener, or you can send them to us on Instagram @ThatSoundsFunPodcast. Make sure you're falling over there. We have lots of good things for you there.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that is how you can find me.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you and I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me... oh, it's just fall in New York, you guys. You can't beat it. You cannot beat it.

Y'all have a great weekend. I will too. And we'll see you back here on Monday with Danielle Walker.