

**Episode Title:** Chrissy Metz's Second Act

**Episode Summary:** In this week's episode, Sid Evans, Editor-in-Chief of Southern Living Magazine, interviews Chrissy Metz, an actress, author, and musician whom many of you know from the hit television show *This Is Us*. Today, Chrissy talks about her mother's baking, her Grandmother's influence on her faith, her new wine label Joyful Heart, and the response she gets from fans of her character and her story.

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## **Episode Transcript:**

**(Biscuits and Jam Theme begins)**

**Sid Voice Over:** Welcome to Biscuits and Jam, from Southern Living. I'm Sid Evans, editor-in-chief of Southern Living Magazine, and my guest today is an actress, author, and musician whom many of you know from the hit television show 'This Is Us.' Chrissy Metz has been widely celebrated for her role as Kate Pearson, an aspiring singer who struggles with her confidence—and dreams of a career in music. In real life, Chrissy has had that dream since she was a little girl in Gainesville, Florida, singing along to Whitney Houston records—and now she's embarking on a successful music career of her own. Fresh off of a tour of performances around the country, Metz is writing songs, spending time in Nashville, and charting a course for life after the show. She's also been busy writing. As a followup to her 2018 New York Times Bestseller, 'This Is Me: Loving the Person You Are Today,' she's coming out with a children's book called 'When I Talk to God, I Talk About You,' a story about the unconditional love between a parent and child. Today on the show, Chrissy talks about her mother's baking, her Grandmother's influence on her faith, her new wine label Joyful Heart, and the response she gets from fans of her character and her story. All that and more this week on Biscuits & Jam.

**(Music fades)**

**Sid Evans:** Chrissy Metz, welcome to Biscuits and Jam.

**Chrissy Metz:** Hi.

**Sid Evans:** Well, Chrissy, I wanna take you back to Gainesville for a minute and I always think of Gainesville as a college town. And a very hot town. (laughs) But what was it like for you to grow up there as a kid?

**Chrissy Metz:** You know, it's funny. I think you mean hot as in temperature. I remember just, like, loathing PE, like, having to run the mile in, like, elementary, middle school, high school, I was like, "It's too hot. Kids should not be outside when it's this hot." I'm so grateful that I got to grow up in a semi-small town. I mean, it wasn't, like, a one stoplight town. But it was definitely a smaller town and I remember, like, walking to school and, like, feeding the horses on the way with carrots and apples. And I had such a beautiful experience, you know? I made tons of really great friends. And we would go to the springs on the weekends and we'd go camping, and go to the beach. And since Gainesville is sort of central, obviously, in Florida, it was just a really sweet town, and everybody was cool, and, I mean, it's grown significantly as of course most cities have. But it was nice 'cause it was big enough, 'cause it was a college town, but it was also small enough that it felt very communal at the same time.

**Sid Evans:** Do you still have family there?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh yeah. All my family is still there. Yeah. Gainesville and High Springs area, which is about 20 minutes from Gainesville, really.

**Sid Evans:** Well, so you have said that your mother was an incredible baker.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah.

**Sid Evans:** Tell me about some of the things that she loved to bake.

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh gosh. Well, she made cakes. Every woman in my family – they can obviously cook, but they are really great bakers. And I like to think I can do a little something, but not like my mom. She was like a MacGyver in the kitchen.

**Chrissy Metz:** But how she put the things together, I'll never know. But yeah, she would always make these beautiful, like elaborate wedding cakes on the weekends for friends or clients of, of hers. I felt like breakfast was so extravagant, and it really wasn't 'cause it was slim pickings for a little bit. But I, it always felt like she knew how to make us, you know, feel good and loved through food and... Yeah, I just remember, like, a lot of biscuits and gravy, and eggs, and all that yummy breakfast stuff. I'm obsessed with breakfast. It was just always so special, like no matter what she made – pies, and cakes, and pastries, and biscuits. Yeah. Really good. (laughs)

**Sid Evans:** Well, so we're kind of approaching the holiday season. Were the holidays something that she got really excited about? Was that a big thing in your family?

**Chrissy Metz:** Yes. I mean, my mom would have a Christmas tree in every room of the house if she could.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** and she's still that way. She loves to decorate. She loves decorations. and we always would make cookies, you know, leading up to actual Christmas Day, and give 'em to the neighbors or eat them all ourselves. But we also made, like, chocolates and bourbon balls and stuff. And I'll never forget, I think I was, like, in sixth or seventh grade. And I was like, "Mom, there's real alcohol in these?" And she was like, "Chrissy, they're called bourbon balls." And I'm like, "I had no idea." (laughs)

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** I always remember that. But yeah, leading up to any, you know, Thanksgiving, we always cook a ton and have our little traditions. And then of course, Christmas dinner and, you know, all the cookies and stuff.

**Sid Evans:** That was a place for your mom to shine?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh yeah, for sure.

**Chrissy Metz:** My mom's originally from Buffalo, New York. But my stepfather is from the South, and I think that a lot of what he liked was kind of introduced into the family, which was kinda cool 'cause it was like this melding of two worlds in a way. But uh, she really, I think, found a lot of joy in making us happy too. But cooking and baking is such a labor of love. I mean, let's just take deviled eggs for instance.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** It takes so long to make a deviled egg and they're gone in a split second.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** I'm like, oh my gosh. What ha-where? Yeah.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Sid Evans:** Well, I wanna ask you about your grandmother also. You've talked about being really close with her, and I think this is your grandmother on your mother's side, who you call Grams.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yes.

**Sid Evans:** Tell me a little bit about her and the influence she had on you.

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh my goodness. Yeah, my Grams. September 5th was her, was her birthday. And so every year it's like, it's so hard to not have her. But I have her. You know? She's always with me. But she really instilled my conscious contact with God. I don't know, she really bolstered my self confidence, and she was always so encouraging and loving. And I'm so grateful 'cause I think that so much of what she did for

me really got me through the really tough, tough years. Especially living in Los Angeles with absolutely no money and really no sense of direction, it felt like. She just really changed my life, and I'm just so grateful because I really felt like she was my first, sort of, I don't wanna say fan, but the, the first person I truly felt like really saw something in me that I never saw in myself. Like, she had been through a ton. And I remember when she was diagnosed with cancer, she was like, "Yeah, okay. Just get it out." And not a tear. I don't think I could ever be that way. But she was tough, a tough cookie and also so selfless. She was always there for me, and always wrote me, like, the sweetest notes, and letters and cards in her beautiful handwriting from her Catholic school days.

**Sid Evans:** Well, you talk about her introducing you to your faith. And you've been very open about your faith and it seems woven into everything that you do. Was the church a big part of your life growing up? Or was that more something that you just did with her?

**Chrissy Metz:** I was raised Catholic and we, you know, went through all of the, the catechism and our confirmation, and and all those steps and whether it was organized religion or not, like, I always had a connection to God. And I think that it was definitely cultivated through my grandmother. And then of course instilled with my mom, and then we would all go to church together. But you know, as people get older, sometimes for whatever reasons, I would end up just going to church by myself. And so I think a lot of that had to do with my grandma sort of instilling what my relationship with God looks like, and having a personal relationship. And it doesn't always look like everyone else's, you know? And it, like, it's not supposed to. So we didn't always go to church together, but I definitely went because it was something that was necessary for me. And I think that was because of my grandma, for sure.

**Sid Evans:** Yeah. Did the church have anything to do with you discovering music?

**Chrissy Metz:** You know, it's interesting. my dad and my mom were very into music. And we would listen to all genres of music in Japan. Like when his buddies come over, we'd have, like, baseball tournaments or we'd go camping.

**Sid Evans:** And he was in the Navy?

**Chrissy Metz:** Yes. My dad was in the Navy. Yes.

**Sid Evans:** Yeah.

**Chrissy Metz:** And so it's interesting because my grandma always said singing at church is like praying twice. And I always thought that was such a beautiful sentiment because I love to sing. And I love the music, even, I love the exciting gospel and that exciting jumping in the, in the pews kind of music. But I also love the really beautiful soft hymns as well in the Catholic church. And so I think that it definitely helped me in my pursuit of music. But it's funny, I never even thought about that right until you asked me.

**Sid Evans:** Well, it's something I hear a lot, you know, talking to artists on this podcast. And so many of them grew up in the church, in one way or another. And that was kind of their first exposure to music.

**Chrissy Metz:** Music for me was always very private 'cause I was so afraid to share it, or to share my voice. And I think a lot of it had to do with not ever feeling heard. And I felt like my grandma heard me, and she had time to hear me. And so in that way, she probably heard me sing and really, you know, thought it was, was good, and loved hearing me sing. But I was too afraid of my own shadow to ever do it in front of people until I guess, under the guise of, "Oh well you're not gonna be judging me because we're in church" (laughs)...so

**Sid Evans:** Right. (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz**Yeah.

**Sid Evans:** Well, Chrissy, so you came out with a bestselling book in 2018, called 'This Is Me: Loving The Person You Are Today.' And you wrote about going through some pretty tough things as a kid. Your parents' divorce, some physical abuse. Were music and acting an escape for you from all that?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh, sure. Music was something that got me through the really, really difficult times where I felt misunderstood, I felt like the outcast. I felt like the black sheep in my family. You know, I'm one of five kids and my mom remarrying, and not really feeling like I was a part of the family. And whether it was of my doing or I just didn't understand myself, or puberty, you know, whatever. It was always there. And so I'd write poetry or I'd sing, you know, make my little tapes and listen to different songs that either made me happy or I was able to just, you know, cry my eyes out if I needed to. (laughs) Um, and as far as acting goes, it's funny, I was always sorta the entertaining diplomat of my family. So I'm always the one, the people pleaser who is, like, trying to keep it together and make everybody else happy, so I would imitate different actors – Robin Williams, or Jim Carey – or quote movies a lot. But I never thought I was gonna be an actor. I'm just a girl from a small town. Like, no. That's not gonna happen. So, more singing than, than acting, for sure.

**Sid Evans:** Was there an artist who you listened to that really kind of lit you up? You know, one, one musician who just made a really big impression on you and maybe made you want to be a singer.

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh boy. I mean, I could go back as far as, like, The Supremes and Aretha. and then heading into sort of more contemporary, like Faith Hill and Trisha Yearwood and Whitney Houston. and it's so interesting because, as a kid, you sing, like, very grown up songs. And it's not only until now that you're like, "Oh, that's what they were singing about?"

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** Even, like, "The Greatest Love of All." I was just listening to that and I'm like, "Ah, the greatest love of all is loving yourself." Like, uh, guys? I know, everybody, I'm late to the party. I had no

idea. When you're like, 12, 13 years old, I'm like, "This is what she's singing about." And it was so inspirational. I mean, I guess I got the sentiment. You know? But I didn't understand until a couple years ago that I was like, "Ah! This is what she was singing about!"

**Sid Evans:** (laughs) Well, you know, music is a lifetime of discovery. And every time you hear it, it sounds a little bit different. You take something a little bit different away from it. (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** Mm-hmm. No, it's true. It's true. That is so absolutely true.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** That was just a, an example. But don't judge me. (laughs)

**Sid Evans:** (laughs) So, Chrissy, you spent the last six years or so playing Kate on 'This Is Us.' And I'm a fan. I've seen all of them. And for a lotta people, I think Kate's struggles felt like their struggles.

**Chrissy Metz:** Mm-hmm.

**Sid Evans:** What are some things that you've heard from fans about what that character meant to them?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh boy. You're gonna get me crying. So I've heard so many really deep confessions of, you know, one mom said that her daughter was suicidal and that she never understood her daughter until the show. And I was like, "Wow." Like, Dan Fogelman had this incredible idea for this woman who was going through so much and doing it imperfectly. And I think, as a whole, as society, as a person, none of us do anything perfectly 'cause we're not. We are imperfect beings. And so to see that on a network television show was really special. But to hear someone say, "My daughter was suicidal and seeing that you got through it as this character, that she could get through it and that she's not just her weight, and she's not just her body. And for me to understand her, and to understand that the food is not the issue. It's the symptom." And I was like, I mean, I have cried with more strangers in grocery stores and bathrooms (laughs) and airports...

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** I never thought it would be this way. And that's when you know, like, you're doing something bigger than you. And so, a little boy I met on a airplane, he wasn't 12 or 13. He wrote me a little note and his mom wrote a note, and she said, "We're actually going to a eating disorder clinic." And that her son had an eating disorder at 12 years old. And that he was so inspired by the growth that Kate was going through that he knew that he wanted to fix it. And I'm like, I'm literally sobbing on the airplane. And the woman next to me is like, "Who are you?" (laughs) And I'm like, "It's not me, it's the show that I'm on." And she's like, "Oh, I guess I gotta watch the show."

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** And, you know, people who have had tumultuous relationships with a previous significant other, and confronting that past, and really moving forward. People have shared the most... Wow, I mean, you can tell it's very overwhelming for me because, you just realize we're so much more alike than we are different as people.

**Sid Evans:** Mm-hmm.

**Chrissy Metz:** So yeah, I mean, I just thought I was gonna have a really great job and be able to pay my bills. And to be on a show that literally has changed my life, my heart, my mind, my soul, my spirit, and to see other people's change is just absolutely incredible.

**Sid Evans:** Mm. Well, there's just such a sense of purpose with that show. And it seems like it, you know, addresses so many different issues. Every time a (laughs) new one would come out, it was talking about something else that might affect you in some way. And yeah it seems like it really obviously reached a lotta people.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah. I mean, from paternity issues, to miscarriage, to panic and anxiety, to family dynamics, and illness and death. If you're a human being, you have experienced what the Pearsons have experienced as a family and as characters. So yeah. It's a, a dream job. An absolute dream job.

**Sid Evans:** Do you ever hear from young actresses who are inspired by that character and by your career?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh yeah. A lot. A couple girls that came to the meet and greets on my tour or, you know, just random people I happen to meet around are like, "Do you have any advice? I'm an actress." And it's so exciting 'cause I was a talent agent for nine years. So I know what both sides of the business looks like. And so I feel like I can really sort of put people at ease, but also encourage and support them in their journey because, you know I always tell 'em, nothing's personal. It's not always in your time. And just know that, like, you do have to put the work in. But also, understand what your intentions are. If it's just fame and fortune, forget it 'cause that's fleeting. Like (laughs) and you might not ever get it. But why do you wanna do it? And what is the purpose behind whatever character you're playing? And yeah, I definitely try to share what my experience has been. Because on paper, it doesn't really make sense. And so if I can do it, I feel like anybody can do it.

**(Instrumental music break of Biscuits and Jam theme)**

**Voice over from Sid:** I'll be back with more from Chrissy Metz after the break.

**(Music fades)**

**(AD BREAK)**

**(Instrumental music break of Biscuits and Jam theme)**

**Voice over from Sid:** Welcome back to Biscuits & Jam, from Southern Living. I'm Sid Evans, and today I'm talking with singer, author, and actress Chrissy Metz.

**(Music fades)**

**Sid Evans:** Chrissy, you played a character who was yearning to be a musician. And who wanted to sing like her mother did.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah.

**Sid Evans:** And Mandy Moore, who played your mom, also has a career in music. She's actually got a new album out as well. Did the two of you bond over music in real life?

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah. you know she's such a committed performer. Most of the time that we've been in, um, scenes together, she has her prosthetics on. Because she's playing a 66 year old woman. So it's interesting. We definitely bonded through music, and we love music. But at the same time, she's, she was very focused. So Chris and I, who played Toby, Chris Sullivan and I, we really talk about music a ton. And he's also a singer and a songwriter, and came from the Broadway world as well. And so we'd often sing and be silly. And I think it was 'cause it was a different dynamic and a different relationship. Whereas with Rebecca and Kate, there was definitely this line that we had to hold because of how the script was written. But we definitely, outside of acting, outside of the show, we would jam and have the same interest in music. And obviously her husband, Taylor Goldsmith, is an incredible musician, in the band Dawes. And Taylor's dad's a singer, and even at their wedding reception, they had Jackson Brown And so yeah, music is sort of definitely a through line throughout our friendship. And I got to see her at the Ryman, which was really special 'cause I've never seen her in concert. And to see her after 10 years, you know, doing what she grew up doing while she was pregnant, and after coming off of the show, it was very special. So there is definitely a musical kinship.

**Sid Evans:** Well, there's just music that runs through that entire show in so many ways. And your character has a child on the show named Jack, who's blind, but he ends up becoming a very successful musician. As an artist yourself, what did that storyline mean to you?

**Chrissy Metz:** Ah. Actually, I was at dinner the other night and there was a group of people who were coming in from all over, doing a conference. And they worked for a company that brought people with disabilities back into the workforce, whether it was, you know, just getting them set up or getting back into the swing of things after a disability or a problem that they were having. And she was like, "You don't know what that character meant to many people I talked to, and what we do. And while you're in it

and you're shooting the show, you know how special it is because the little boy who played Jack – Johnny is his name, Johnny Kincaid. What a brilliant kid. I mean, he was only three years old and I can't even believe what he was capable of. And then, to have a visual impairment. And then I realized, not only is Johnny being seen as an actor, as a person, as a, as a human, but then other people are feeling seen and heard while they're watching the show. And that it also helps you to understand that no matter whatever the cards are dealt, whatever your cards are, you can do what you wanna do. And so even as an actor, and as an artist, and as a singer with any odds stacked against you, it's like no, if you really want something, you really can have it. And these characters are full-fledged people who still can pursue what they love. And it was just very s- tender and sweet that Rebecca didn't have a chance to fulfill her music dreams, nor did Kate, but Jack got to. And that you can change, like, this generational sort of trauma, and you can instill confidence and love into your children. And it was beyond special. And that's why I think Dan Fogelman is an absolute genius, our writer and creator. He's just a genius and he doesn't get enough credit for it. But that's beside the point.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs) Well, to see that and to see how that story could have so many layers of meaning, like you say, it made a big impact on me. I can tell you that.

**Chrissy Metz:** Awww I'm glad.

**Sid Evans:** Well, so I wanna ask you about your own music and there's one song in particular that I wanted to talk about called "Girl Go," which you came out with last year. There's a line in there that says, "You're gonna hear a bunch of nos, but that's just how it goes." And it almost sounds like you're singing to a younger version of yourself. Is that fair?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh, definitely. I had the very good fortune of writing that song with Faren Rachels and Lainey Wilson. And they're both girls who are from small towns. One in Georgia, one in Louisiana, and me, Florida. And I was like, "I want something anthemic that feels like, like an open letter or like a diary entry, or something that you need to hear yourself. Or coming from, you know, our younger selves." And that's really what it ended up being it's it's... one girl came up to me and she said, "I listened to it while I was packing up my car and I'm just moving out to, to Los Angeles 'cause I wanna be an actress. And I'm gonna do it like you did." And I'm like you never know if your words are going to impact somebody so much that, like, it inspires them as they're packing to leave home just like I did. You know? And you hope that your words will become an inspiration or a sort of a love letter of sorts to other people. you write a song 'cause it comes from honesty, but just never know. So yeah, it's really nice to, to hear those, those stories.

**Chrissy Metz's song, "Girl Go," fades in and we hear the following at full volume:**

*And when they try to tell you who you are and what you're not  
You might never get used to it, but it's never gonna stop  
You're gonna hear a bunch of "nos"  
But that's just how it goes*

*Girl, go*

**(Song fades out)**

**Sid Evans:** A couple of years ago, you came out with a song called "Actress" and I wanted to ask you about that one too. and this is kind of a classic country breakup song. Talk to me about how that one came to be.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah. So Matt McGinn and Niccolite Hayford, two amazing writers in town, like, amazing... I had recently gone through a breakup and was, I don't wanna say happy about the breakup, but I learned so much from it and felt so, like, cathartic and for me, once I've gotten over something or I think I've gotten over something, or at least to a point of it, I'm like, "Oh, let's write about it. Let's talk about it." And then once we started writing it, I was like, "Oh, maybe I'm not over all the breakups that I've had." Because that, for me, is really embedded in my abandonment issues. And so I always take it personally that this person left me, and that I wasn't good enough, I wasn't this enough, I was too much of that. And I think a lot of people can relate to that. But also, realizing that we all sort of put on brave faces... We all know what it's like to pretend, to be an actor or to be an actress, that, like, everything is fine. And so Matt McGinn was like, "Oh, do you think that writing a song called 'Actress' is too on-the-nose?" And I was like, "Hmm. May- maybe?"

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** And he's like, "But you're an actress. And I think if we could do it in a smart way, it could be really special." And I was like, "Okay, I'm in." And I was like, "We could make it a sad breakup song. I'm in." And it just all sort of fell out, and it was so cool because so many people relate to that and we're all going through something. We're all hurting and we might not even know that anybody's going through it. So yeah, it's one of those songs that I, I love to sing. It's so theatrical and relatable.

***Chrissy Metz's song, "Actress," fades in and we hear the following at full volume:***

*Thank God I'm an actress  
He don't know what's on my mind  
And even though I'm laughin'  
I ain't havin' a good time  
And that's the real him happy  
But for me it's just a lie  
He won't ever know, ever know tonight  
Thank God I'm an actress*

**(Song fades out)**

**Sid Evans:** Well, so you've just been out on the road, on this tour. And you've performed all over the country. For someone who spent so much of her career in front of television cameras, what's it been like for you to be in front of these live audiences?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh boy. Whoa. It's so scary. Every night, I'm like...I don't wanna do this. I'm like, "Who's out there? Is it sold out? Do, do I have to go out there? I, I'm okay." (laughs) everyone's like, "Chrissy." And it was so crazy because the more I got into it, the more fearful I was. And I'm like, "What is this? What in the world is this?" And so I had to journal and, you know, go to therapy about it because I was like, is it that I'm doing something I've always wanted to do? And so I know I'm really good at self-sabotaging? So, like, how can I mess this up? Once I just put myself on the stage and I was like, "Chrissy, all you have to do is be yourself and that's good enough," I was then able to show everybody else in those chairs, like, you're good enough. You know? I think people are looking at me or they're thinking a certain thing and I'm like, "Chrissy, they're not, you know, they're here to see you. They actually spent their very hard earned money to come see you. They want to see you." You know? And my thing is, I just don't wanna disappoint anyone. And I'm like, I disappoint somebody by not suiting up and showing up. So get on the stage and figure it out, and just be present. But it is very different because, I mean, sure I could say, "Oh, guys, can we start that again?" But typically, with live music, you're not gonna necessarily (laughs) start the song over as you do with the multiple takes that you have on a TV show or a film. So it's definitely working a new muscle and cultivating a new muscle. But it is the scariest, but also the most fulfilling that I have felt in a very, very long time. And also, I'm not a character. I'm myself and these are songs that I've co-written, and these are my stories. It's, it's very exposing and I feel very vulnerable. But luckily, I'm very comfortable with that.

**Sid Evans:** Well, so music is not your only outlet. You have a new children's book coming out early next year. And it's called 'When I Talk to God, I Talk About You.'

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah.

**Sid Evans:** As someone who's written a memoir and who loves a good story, what made you wanna talk directly to children?

**Chrissy Metz:** Well, I taught preschool and I have nine nieces and nephews. And I think for me, as a child, I didn't always feel heard. And I didn't always feel seen. Our parents do the best they can with what they have. And when they know better, they do better. That's sort of the evolution of humans. But I sort of sat and thought, "What would I have liked to have heard?" Or "What did I hear from my grandmother that was so im- important and was instilled in my heart and my spirit and my soul that, like, really helped me?" And then also, I had so many friends who were interested in adopting or having children of their own. And I just thought it would be such a sweet sentiment to learn through the parent, whether they're biological or not, of how to sort of have that conscious contact with God. And not in a way of, like, "This is how you're supposed to do it," but say, "You know, when I talk to God, I talk about you. And you know that you can talk to God too." And that it was so important for me to establish that relationship that I thought, "Oh, well, maybe if we could help kids do that, and they could feel it before they can

understand it, that maybe it could be a cute children's book." And so Bradley, my boyfriend, and I, we both shared the same sentiments and we were like, "Oh, let's, let's try." I just think children really are our future. And I know that sounds so cheesy, but it's true. You know? Like, that's where it all starts. If you tend the garden, you know, only beautiful things can grow. And that starts with children. So that was really the impetus behind it.

**Sid Evans:** Well, I know you must be very excited to see that come out.

**Chrissy Metz:** I am. I am. And Lisa Fields is our, um, illustrator. And what she captivated in the eyes of those beautiful woodland creatures of all the animals, oh, it's so sweet. So tender. So yeah, I'm very excited.

**Sid Evans:** So, Chrissy, in the not for children department, you have a wine label.

**Chrissy Metz**(laughs) Yeah.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs) It's called Joyful Heart.

**Chrissy Metz:** Mm-hmm.

**Sid Evans:** And some of the proceeds from that go to support World Central Kitchen.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yes.

**Sid Evans:** Which is a group that helps people in need, from hurricane and flood victims to the war in Ukraine. It's also an expression of your faith.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah.

**Sid Evans:** So tell me why you wanted to start this and what's different about it.

**Chrissy Metz:** I always thought wine was very pretentious. I was like, "I don't understand it. It's too fancy for me." And Bradley was really into it. And you know, every once in a while, I'll have a sip there and I'll have a glass there. And I would always bring it to someone's house, you know, when they're having a party, or we'd have Sunday dinners. It's always something you bring. But I was like, "I wanna understand it." Because there's so much beautiful science behind it, and such hard work. And the farming that goes into cultivating, like, a beautiful vineyard and where the sun's coming from and, I mean, everything. And it was just so fascinating. And so when the opportunity presented itself, I was like, "Yes. I'm so into it." I think you always try to leave something better than you found it. So whether it's you bring love or you bring your joyful heart, I was like, "It has to have a good message. It has to give back. And then I have to like it." (laughs) And I have to find it to not be pretentious. Nicole Walsh, who is the winemaker, she's incredible. I was like, "I just want to enjoy it." I think it's very important to be proud of what you're

leaving at someone's house. You know, there's so many bottles of wine people don't ever drink. And so I was very particular. I was like, "I want this, and this, and not that." And so it was very interesting during the process of how I wanted it to be blended and, and the label making, and the name and, and, and the message. And so it was just really something I never expected to be doing. I can drink maybe a glass. And I'm like, "That's enough." And it's a cute little thing with some cute cheese. You know? Or however you like to have it. With a, a nice meal. And so I'm really excited. (laughs)

**Sid Evans:** (laughs) Well, you'll have to send me some.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yes. Are you a red or a white? What do you prefer?

**Sid Evans:** I'm more of a white person. The red keeps me up at night, for some reason. (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** I get it. I get it. Like, everybody has different reactions to it. Okay. Well, we'll definitely send you some white then.

**Sid Evans:** (laughs) Well, Chrissy, I just have one more question for you.

**Chrissy Metz:** Sure.

**Sid Evans:** What does it mean to you to be Southern?

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh my goodness. You know, it's so funny because people are like, "You're not from the South. You're from Florida." I'm like, "I am an hour away from Georgia." We used to drive up to Valdosta to get Krystal Burgers. I am from the South. So I always have to make that disclaimer. But for me, what it means is, like, there is this sort of essence of people who, there's just, like, this very warm welcoming attitude of communing, of wanting to help, of wanting to give back. I mean, I'm not kidding. A tree fell down in the front yard and before anybody even knew it, there was somebody out with a chainsaw and somebody cleaning it up. And you just don't see that often. And I feel like I don't really see that, except for in the South. The Southern hospitality, and it's a real thing. And so for me, it means love. It means caring and being there for someone. And it doesn't, you know, doesn't have to be in grand gestures. But whether somebody's grabbing your mail for you or when you drop your groceries instead of stepping over, like they did in LA when I first moved there, you know, helping you pick them up. It feels like it's care and love.

**Sid Evans:** And you know it when you feel it.

**Chrissy Metz:** Yeah. It's different. I mean, just for the way that somebody answers the phone, or wants to help you... I had to get a tire repaired and the woman was like, "Honey, let me tell you what you don't wanna do. You cannot wait. You cannot wait until October. Just come in."

**Sid Evans:** (laughs)

**Chrissy Metz:** "We're gonna make time for you." And I was like, "Thank you!" Like, there's just something, just something different.

**Sid Evans:** Well, Chrissy Metz, thanks so much for being on Biscuits and Jam.

**Chrissy Metz:** Oh, thank you for having me. I'm so excited. Thank you.

**(Biscuits and Jam Theme begins)**

**Voiceover from Sid:** Thanks for listening to my conversation with Chrissy Metz. Make sure to visit [chrissymetzmusic.com](http://chrissymetzmusic.com) for new songs, videos, and more. Southern Living is based in Birmingham, Alabama. Be sure to follow Biscuits & Jam on Apple Podcasts, Spotify or wherever you listen. And we'd love your feedback. If you could rate this podcast and leave us a review we'd really appreciate it. You can also find us online at [southernliving.com/biscuitsandjam](http://southernliving.com/biscuitsandjam) Make sure to come back here on November 1st for my conversation with Erin and Ben Napier from HGTV's 'Home Town.'

**(Music fades)**