

I Got the Plan Right, But I Messed Up on the Timing
by Pastor Tim Dilena

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I Got the Plan Right, But I Messed Up on the Timing

by Pastor Tim Dilena, Senior Pastor

Many believers know exactly what God wants them to do—they know the plan—but struggle with the timing. The hardest part of walking with God is often not direction but patience.

Jacob knew what God wanted him to do. He knew he was supposed to return home. He had the right plan—but he moved six years too early. In Genesis 30, Jacob decided it was time to leave Laban's house. But in Genesis 31, six years later, God finally said, 'Now go.' Between those two chapters, God was doing something deep inside of Jacob. What Jacob saw as delay, God saw as development.

Jacob was frustrated. Laban had cheated him, changed his wages ten times, and moved the goalposts repeatedly. Jacob assumed that difficulty meant it was time

to leave. But difficulty is not directional. Difficulty doesn't mean God is done—it means God is doing something deeper. Many times, when life gets hard, we think it's a signal to move on. But for the child of God, hardship isn't a sign to pack up—it's a chance to grow up. God doesn't lead us by frustration; He leads us by His voice.

Hardship isn't a sign to pack up—it's a chance to grow up.

In that long waiting period, God was teaching Jacob integrity. When Laban offered him the worst of the flock—the



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I Got the Plan Right, But I Messed Up on the Timing

(continued)

speckled and spotted animals—Jacob trusted that God would bless him anyway. Jacob said to Laban, “My honesty will answer for me later.” Sometimes God asks us to keep quiet when everything in us wants to speak. Sometimes He tells us, “Don’t defend yourself. I’ll defend you.”

**My honesty will
answer for me later.**

The hardest part of that verse isn’t honesty—it’s later. We want God to fix things now, to make things right now, to show everyone the truth now. But the God who delays is the God who develops.

There’s an old story about a famous violinist who commissioned a custom instrument. When it arrived, he played it once and, frustrated with the sound, smashed it on the floor. The maker picked up the broken pieces, rebuilt it, and sent it back. The tone was richer, fuller, and more beautiful than before. That’s what God does in our lives. Sometimes He

breaks what we thought was complete because He wants to change the tone of our hearts. Jacob’s next season required a new sound—humility, dependence, brokenness.

When Jacob finally left in God’s timing, he discovered what obedience produces: protection, direction, and transformation. Had Jacob left early, he would have missed all of that. God’s timing wasn’t just about location—it was about formation.

Every one of us faces moments where we want to move before God says go. We get weary of waiting, tired of the struggle, and start planning our own exit strategies. But frustration is a terrible compass. If Jacob had left early, he would have carried his pain into the next season. God’s delays protect us from transmitting what He wants to transform.

**You may have the plan
right, but the miracle
is in the timing.**

Jacob lived another seventy years after this story—years of reconciliation,

blessing, and legacy. All of that fruit came from those six hidden years of obedience. God used the waiting to prepare Jacob for what was ahead.

C.S. Lewis said, “God who foresaw your tribulation has armed you to go through it—not without pain, but without stain.” Waiting isn’t easy. But when we surrender to God’s timing, we come out refined, not ruined.

In John 7, Jesus told His disciples, “Your time is always now. My time has not yet come.” That’s how most of us live—always now. But God’s clock doesn’t run on ours. We may have the plan right, but God’s miracle is in the timing. Sometimes He’ll keep us where we are longer than we want, breaking us like that violin, only to rebuild us with a new sound.

If you’re in a hard place right now—a “Laban season”—hold steady. Don’t let hardship push you out before God’s voice calls you forward. You might have the plan right, but you’ll only see the miracle when you get the timing right. God isn’t late. He’s deepening you. He’s shaping your tone. He’s preparing you for the next thing. Because when you leave on His timing—not yours—you won’t just leave with a plan; you’ll leave with power. ■



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The Lighthouse: Where God's Love Shines in the Darkest Places

by Glenda Hampton

In the heart of one of India's red-light districts, where despair once seemed to have the final word, a quiet movement of hope began to take root. What started as a simple prayer walk in 2007 has grown into a ministry that now touches the lives of women and children once trapped in unimaginable darkness. This is a story of faith in action—of ordinary people stepping into broken places, and of God's transforming love bringing light, dignity, and new beginnings to those the world had forgotten.

From Darkness to Hope: A Journey of Compassion in India's Red-Light District

In 2007, I traveled to one of India's red-light areas, and what I saw there horrified me. The conditions were beyond anything I could have imagined. Ninety-five percent of the women trapped in the flesh trade had been smuggled across the Nepali and Bangladeshi borders. Children born in the brothels were forced into child labor and prostitution.

As I walked through those narrow alleys, one question burned in my heart: How can one human being be so inhuman to another? The answer came as I reflected—when a society loses the understanding that every human being carries an eternal soul, it becomes unthinkable what people are capable of doing to one another.

A Spiritual Encounter in the Midst of Darkness

During that visit, I was one of four women taking part in a prayer walk through the gullies of the area. Surrounded by unimaginable darkness, I suddenly became aware of a peace and security that can only come from the presence of the Lord.

The Holy Spirit opened my eyes to see the situation from heaven's

perspective. The stronghold of the area seemed fearful—the enemy had taken squatter's rights, ruling through lies and intimidation. Yet, as children of the King, we carried the authority of the risen Christ. Through His power, we were called to take back what the devil had stolen—the precious women and children trapped in this earthly hell. We were called to find the hidden jewels of India.



Small Steps of Faith

Partnering with a local church, we began taking small but meaningful steps of faith. We brought in short-term teams to flood the area with love and light. We held health and medical camps as a way to reach the women and hear their stories.

In 2008, we purchased a small room and opened a beauty salon, creating a safe and dignified space for women to gather, work, and dream of a different future.

A Place of Hope for the Children

Many of the women came with their small children, setting them in our laps and begging us to take them away from that place. They didn't want their children to endure the same life they had been forced into.

By 2012, our focus had shifted toward caring for the children and holding weekly evangelistic meetings with the women. The beauty salon was transformed into a fully functioning kitchen, where nutritious meals were prepared daily. We also purchased a larger room and turned it into a classroom, which we lovingly named "The Lighthouse."

At The Lighthouse, children of all ages come each day to study, play, pray, sing, learn Scripture, and enjoy a warm, home-cooked meal. What began as a small act of faith has become a haven of hope—a beacon shining in the midst of darkness, and a living testimony to God's redeeming power.

Through the relationships built at The Lighthouse, we have been able to rescue 30 children who now live in one of our three family-style homes. Rather than operating an orphanage, we intentionally keep each home small, housing no more than ten children with loving house parents.

Some of the children who first came to us between the ages of five and nine are now young adults attending college—living proof



that love, stability, and faith can break the cycle of exploitation and transform lives for generations to come.

The Work Continues

Though the challenges remain, the light of Christ now shines brightly in a place once dominated by darkness. Every prayer, every act of compassion, and every step of faith continues to bring freedom and healing to those still waiting to be rescued.

Faith Behind the Walls

How *The 260 Journey* Is Transforming Lives on Death Row

Sometimes the greatest stories of transformation unfold in the most unexpected places. Recently, Pastor Tim received a message from a ministry worker serving daily on death row—one that powerfully illustrates how God's Word continues to move hearts through *The 260 Journey*.

Two weeks ago, this worker shared that he had led the officer assigned as his daily escort, along with the officer's wife, to Christ. He began discipling them using *The 260 Journey*, a life-changing study through the New Testament that has guided thousands in reading God's Word with fresh eyes. The impact was immediate—the officer began leading daily devotionals with eight inmates on death row, who all testified to the visible change they've seen in him.

The story didn't stop there. Another officer, after attending a weeklong seminar, asked to start sharing about Jesus with the inmates himself. And recently, the ministry worker reconnected an inmate with his son—after ten years of silence. Both father and son have rededicated their lives to Christ, and now they're walking through *The 260 Journey* together from different sides of the prison wall.

Meanwhile, testimonies like these continue to pour in from around

the world. Each story reminds us that when God's Word goes forth, it never returns void.

Experience The 260 Journey

If you haven't yet started *The 260 Journey*, there's no better time. Dive into this powerful 260-day devotional that walks through the New Testament one chapter at a time. It's perfect for personal devotion, small groups, or church-wide discipleship.

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From the Stage to the Sanctuary

Nathaniel's Story of Redemption

I'm blessed to be part of the staff here at TSC. I want to share my testimony of how God brought me from the world's stage to His house of worship.

I was born and raised Pentecostal in Spanish Harlem, taught from childhood to honor the Father. But as a teenager, rebellion crept in. I dropped out of school and chased a dream of becoming a rapper. For years, I poured my life into music—performing, writing, and pursuing fame. Eventually, I got my break. But no matter how high I climbed, I never felt fulfilled. The more success I had, the emptier I became. I was caught in a battle for my soul, blinded by greed, using the very gift God gave me for my own glory.

Through it all, my parents never stopped praying. Their faith and their words stayed with me, even when I was far from God. I tasted everything the world had to offer—and found myself completely alone. Then, one day, the Holy Spirit whispered, "It's time for you to come home."

By God's grace, I came to Times Square Church. My mom prayed for my travels, and I started life over again, knowing the road ahead would not be easy. The devil thought he had me—and my brother too. But for five months, I prayed for him. And one day, he walked through those same doors. Hallelujah! He said, "Nate, I followed you in the world, and now I'll follow you to Christ."

Now I stand here today, testifying of God's power and mercy. I came here broken, scarred by life, but I met Jesus, who took my wrongs and made them right. I came as a single man, but God had a plan—He led me to my wife, a woman of God from the choir. Hallelujah!

I once used people for my own gain, but now I live to serve. Jesus became my Lord—and my boss—and gave me a job in His house. I went from being famous in the tents of the wicked to being a doorkeeper in the house of God.

I'm not holier than anyone. There are scriptures I can't even quote from memory, but my heart says daily, "Here I am, Lord. I surrender all." My story isn't over, but as long as I have breath, I'll keep saying it:

"Glory to God. Hallelujah."

Be part of the story.

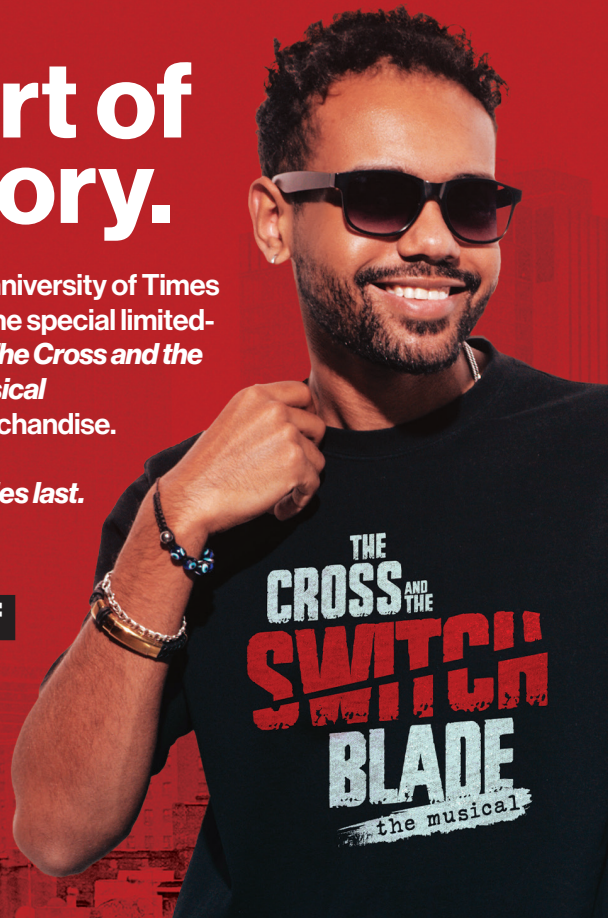
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TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of "The Cross and the Switchblade." It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

CONTACT

212.541.6300 | info@tsc.nyc

CHURCH LOCATION

237 West 51st Street | NY, NY 10019

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