

PLANTED; WEEK 2
The Other Side
Judah Smith

Welcome today to all of our Life Church Campuses, to those of you at our Network church family, we love you guys so, so much, and those of you all over the world at church online, it's always an honor to have you with us. Today, I've got a very special treat for you. I like to bring in some of the best communicators from all over the world. This week, I want you to hear from a tremendous man of God with a great family. This guy is 31 years of age and is leading one of the largest churches in Seattle and really in that part of the country. He is the pastor of the City Church, ministering to over 6,000 people a weekend. He speaks internationally around the world, is thought of one of the greatest leaders to the next generation. He is a great man of God, he married way above his head, which all great men do! I'd love for you to give honor today and welcome one of the top young communicators in our world today. Please welcome Pastor Judah Smith.

Well, it's good to be with you today, Life Church and all of the Network Churches and around the world that are watching. What a privilege to say the least, for not only myself, but my wife, to be here and we hear incredible reports that are told, even in the Northwest of what God is doing here at Life Church, and all of the Network Churches. It's awesome to be alive today to see what God is doing.

But sometimes you need an outsider to tell you how good you have it, especially for Life Church, and even the Network Churches; how blessed is this community, how blessed is this church to have amazing leaders and pastors. I want you to know that we don't always get all of the speakers out in the Northwest part of the United States of America, sometimes they don't come out our way, we are so lost and searching for God! But, it was an amazing time we had having Pastor Craig and Pastor Andy Stanley share with us at a Catalyst one day event. I think we should tell Pastor's Craig and Amy Groeschel how much we appreciate their leadership in Life Church and all of the Network Churches! Come on, we are blessed to say the least. You make sure you take care of them, pray for them, cover them and the best is yet to come. The best is yet to come! Come on!

Well, I believe I have a word for you and I'm excited! I love the Bible. I know this is a Bible church, and I know all those that are watching around the world, you love the Bible. We are Bible people, amen?

Go with me to the Gospel of Mark. I want to share a message with you from the Gospel of Mark. I pray today that as you leave church that you are more in love with Jesus, and that you are more in love with the church that He is building. I believe we can't disassociate Jesus

from what He's doing and what He is building, which is His house. To love Jesus is to love His house. Can I hear an amen? Now you have to bear with me, I'm used to a lot of amens, so I expect a lot of amens out there and a lot of amens here today! Okay!

Mark, Chapter four in verse 35; we are going to look at two storms in the Gospel of Mark. Mark 4:35 says:

On the day, when evening had come, He (Jesus) said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" Mark 4:35-41

Now notice quickly, Chapter 5:1 says:

Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. Mark 5:1

Then they came to the other side of the sea...then they came to the other side. I want to encourage you to underline that word, then. Then they came to the other side of the sea.

Now leap frog with me to Mark, Chapter six; just a few pages over, Mark 6:45. Another storm now is brewing. It says in verse 45:

Immediately He (Jesus) made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray. Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by. And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was (Patrick Swayze! Just kidding!) a ghost and cried out; for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." Mark 6:45-51

I love Jesus, He's crazy! Be of good cheer; meanwhile the waves are crashing, the wind is howling and here's Jesus, "Be of good cheer!" If I'm in the boat I'm yelling back, "Why?" There's no reason to be of good cheer!

Jesus says:

It is I; do not be afraid. Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. Mark 6:51

Notice verse 52:

For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened. Mark 6:52

Their heart was hardened. Now the very next verse:

When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there. Mark 6:52-53

I also want to draw attention in the text to the word 'when', there in verse 53; then and when.

I want to title this message The Other Side. And I believe there is the other side for each person listening today. God has another level, God has a miracle brewing for you, a breakthrough; there is another side to what you are currently going through. We will talk more, but join me now all over the world, all of the Network Churches, all of Life Churches. Let's pray together and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us the person of the Lord Jesus.

Father, we thank you for the Holy Spirit; He is our helper. We ask now Holy Spirit, that you would show us the beauty and the majesty and the sufficiency of Jesus. Help us to see Jesus as we study this Bible, this great and amazing book. We thank you for your grace. Thank you Lord that I no doubt married the most beautiful woman in the world. In Jesus name, and everybody said, Amen! You agree.

How many of you have ever been on a road trip? Now for us as Americans, we probably pride ourselves in being the home of the road trip. How many of you have ever been on a road trip? You can go ahead and raise your hand, road trip.

I grew up in the hood to tell you the truth! Don't let these skinny jeans fool you! I grew up in the hood and we had bars on every window and every door. I was proud of our house because our bars matched the trim of the house and that's what made us the real rich family on the block! So road trips were how we went, we didn't go in jet airplanes, Dad took us driving. I lived in a place in the Northwest part of the United States of America, I grew up in Portland Oregon. And we would drive from Portland Oregon to Bend Oregon. It was approximately a two and a half to three hour drive. And that was our perpetual drive in the summer time for vacation.

So I had one sibling, my sister, who was a bit of a dictator but I love her! She would sit in the back, Dad was driving, Mom had shotgun. Children don't go to conventions or conferences to learn this particular phrase, it's just like universally, globally understood and accepted. When on a road trip, there is a classic question or phrase that is always used by children anywhere and everywhere. It was approximately 45 minutes into each road trip every single summer; I would ask the question, "Dad!" There would be silence.

"Dad!"

"Yes my son."

"Are we there yet?"

And sometimes there would just be silence in the front seat as if to say, "Help me God, my children are idiots!"

Like if I'm the Dad, my response is; "What do you think, are we there yet? The car has not stopped! When the car stops, when I open the door and I pull you out, how about then we are there? What do you mean, 'Are we there yet?' Of course we are not there yet!"

The truth is, I knew we weren't there yet, that's not the point right? I mean, I didn't know that we were in Detroit Lake or Salem, but I knew we weren't in Bend, Oregon because I knew what Bend, Oregon looked like! I knew when we were going to be there, but the point that I thought actually possibly for a chance we were there, I knew we weren't there! The point was, "Hey Dad; I've done everything that I know how to do. Now I'm bored!" We need to coordinate when I'm done doing what I'm doing and you arrive in where we are supposed to be going! Right, like I've counted all of the cows, I've played eye spy with my little eyes, we played the slug bug game! Okay, I've listened to both sides of my Amy Grant cassette on my yellow Sony Walkman! Don't act like you know what I'm talking about! I even threw a little bit of Petra. I mean, I grew up Christian okay, just bear with me?! I mean, it's like, "Dad, I've done it all! What else do I do? What do you mean we are not there yet? I've run out of toys, _____ and games! I'm out! Are we there yet?"

"No son, we are not there!"

Have you ever asked God that question?

"God, are we there yet? God..God..God..God.., hello..hello..hello.., are you there? God are we there yet?"

I don't know how God responds to you, but I hear God in a very deep, vibrato voice; that's what makes Him God to me!

‘Yes, my child!’

You know, maybe God feels like, ‘Hey, what's up?’

You know, I don't know, but that just doesn't sound like God to me!

But, have you ever asked God the question, ‘Are we there yet?’

Wherever there is, we know we are not there yet, right? We know that. Some of us, we've been following Jesus for awhile. We know that we are not there, but that's not the point is it? The point is, ‘Lord, I know that you've got me on a plan, a purpose, a pathway to destiny. I have a grand sense in my heart that you are taking me somewhere, but I just need to know, ‘Are we there yet?’ Because I've done everything I know how to do. I've upped my daily prayer time daily by like 12.2 minutes per day! I've read through my One Year Bible three times this year! Yes! And on average now, I invite three people per day to church. Last year I was averaging one and a half people per day. I've done everything I know how to do. I've got all of my spiritual disciplines where they need to be. Shouldn't I be here by now?

Here's the question that I want us to consider; what do you do when you're not where you used to be, but you're not where you're supposed to be? What do you do in the meantime? We don't talk much about the meantime, because the meantime doesn't make headlines in any culture or in any country. Like here in America, Sports Center does not show the meantime. Sports Center does not show the athlete eating his Wheaties in the morning, we just see him dunking the ball. We just see him scoring touchdowns, we see him hitting the hockey puck in the neck, which is a really unfortunate sport to watch, but anyways! I would appreciate an amen, but, sorry Canada and sorry for taking all of your teams in America! But anyways, we're a highlight oriented society. I mean globe, we want the highlights, and we want to live from one highlight to the next highlight. One promotion to the next promotion. Not much is made of the meantime.

For instance, history typically does not record the meantime. I mean, the Bible doesn't even record all of the meantime. Jesus, from 12 to 30 is the meantime and it mattered, it mattered! He had to go through puberty, He had to discover armpit hair! He had to deal with a little bit of acne. He had to work retail with His father. He had to work retail, people! You've got to be God to work retail!

So what happens is that often times in church we talk about what God has brought out and where He's taking you, but wait, what do I do in the meantime? And that's what really caught my attention in these two stories in the Gospel of Mark, it uses these two ambiguous words that sometimes we read over and we just don't think about. It says, ‘then they crossed over.’ Then Mark six says ‘When they cross.’ So, when is

then? It's when it is! So you can do your research on these two particular passages and you'll discover that there is no exact timetable. We don't know exactly how long it took for the disciples in that boat to go from one side to the other side.

A lot of people want to know, 'Now just tell me the seven nonnegotiable, indispensable, indisputable steps I can take to ensure that I get my spiritual breakthrough.'

So, before we know it, we turn the meantime into whoever knows the secret password makes it to the next level. And before we know it, our relationship with God becomes like we are relating to a vending machine. We find out the codes, we punch it in, we get what we want. That's not a relationship. Like, what makes my marriage sexy, is that my wife is unpredictable! Let me rephrase that, women are unpredictable! My God, Lord help us! And all of the men said, 'Amen!' Jesus have mercy!

The basis of relationship is that there is people involved who are unpredictable. Oh sure, God is predictable from Genesis to Revelation, but there is a lot of wiggle room in there and He will surprise you. We start _____ it down to seven steps that will get you to where you need to go. Where do you need God then, if we have the seven steps? I've discovered that people who are trying to get to the other side, wherever the other side is; it might be a healing, it might be a miracle, it might be a manifestation of a ministry, it might be a blessing on your business, it might be dreams and visions coming to fruition. All of these things, and when we start making it just these seven steps, and then we tell everybody that if you just do these seven things, God will ensure those seven things don't work for that person. Lest He become nothing more than a vending machine. This is a relationship, God is a person. We must look to Him; not just to concepts, but to Christ, to the person of the Lord Jesus.

The question still remains; what do I do in the meantime? We don't talk a lot about that. Like, I've been a pastor to young people for 10 years for my father, it was the greatest job in the world, and I still miss it a lot! It was awesome being a youth pastor and then Dad tricked me and gave me the church and it was a smoke and mirrors!

But you know, young people, God calls young people. I mean there are people right now listening to this message and they are young and God's calling them and saying; 'Some day you'll preach, and someday you'll do this!' And their hearts are pounding and their palms are sweaty and they are going, 'Man, I think God is giving me a vision for my future!'

But what we don't tell a lot of these young people is that from here to here can be years! For Jesus, a lot of years! For Paul; Paul get's knocked off a donkey, he hears the audible voice of Jesus Christ, 'Who

are you Lord?'

ìI'm Jesus, who you've been persecuting! It's hard for you to kick against the goads.î

How many of you think at that point, Saul, who will become Paul, is probably ready to preach? I mean, if you heard the audible voice of God and He pulled you out of your Prius, and He said; 'Look, I've called you!'

I mean you'd be, trust me, He would pull you out of your Prius, especially if you're a man, because He wants you to be a man! But anyways, you know, I'm just teasing! I love Prius' they are....no I don't!

But I mean, you'd be ready to preach too, you just had an audible encounter with God! God says, ìNo!î For three years you go to Arabia and Damascus and you'll be silent. Wow! Evidently, the meantime matters to God. So what do we do in the meantime? I promise you I didn't come up with this because I saw somebody and thought, 'Oh, they need this!' I'm telling you, I only deal the stuff I use and this has changed my life! I'm pastor of an entire church that is the middle of a meantime, it's called transition. So, what do we do? Does the meantime not matter? Do we just hope and wish and pray and beg someday that the next highlight will come along? Or do we realize there is value and significance in the meantime? What do you do when you're not where you used to be, but you're not where your supposed to be? Something inside of you says this, 'God called me here and He told us to go..., so what do I do now?'

See, a lot of people have a misconception. They think that only the spiritually elite make it through the meantime. So, it becomes this in church culture, or in church life, we look to people who have really had a breakthrough financially, physically, relationally or emotionally, or whatever it might be. And we think they have got the secret. There's the password again, there's the mathematical equation again. They've got the secret or they just pray more than I do, or they are more spiritual than I am. Only the spiritually elite and so a lot of people have just conclude, I'm never going to make it through this storm, I'm never going to make it to the other side, I'm never going to be able to pastor that church, my business is never going to get off the ground floor, it's never going to happen, that dream is never going to be fulfilled, because I'm just not spiritual enough. Only the spiritually elite make it to the other side.

But the Bible says in Mark 6:52, it says that the guys in the boat that Jesus handpicked to put on the boat and crossover this body of water to take them on a mission, God has a mission on the other side. He's not just meandering His voice through a body of water. He has a mission on the other side. And these guys He picked, the Bible says in

Mark 6:52, 'Their hearts are hardened.' These guys are hardhearted jokers. And the very next verse says, 'then they crossed over to the other side.' Now, those two verses should not go together! If I'm God and we discover they have hard hearts, we turn the ship around and we go back to the shore where we started and I tell them all, you are being traded, you're being replaced and I'm going to find some softhearted, kind, meek, mild people! Not you insensitive, self-centered, self-serving guys. But not Jesus, He takes the hardhearted all the way across. He takes the hardhearted. Wow! So then, we just got, I mean, the text begs us to ask; what is it that they did do to make it to the other side? Because that's what everybody wants to know! I mean, how do I get to the other side?

Listen to me, God is a good God and I know you know this at Life Church. God is a good all of the time, He wants to do good things. He wants to take bad things and turn them for your good. God wants to see the desire of your heart which He put there in the first place, fulfilled. But Judah, what do I do in the meantime? How do I access the other side?

I only found one thing in this passage that we can hang our hat on today. The one thing. What is it that they did to access the other side and extend the mission of their Savior? What did they do? There is only one thing that I found. Now, you can do further study and research in the original text and the original language and you can email later. But, I only found one thing. And here's the one thing:

THEY SIMPLY STAYED IN THE BOAT!

That's what they did, they stayed in the boat! It's funny, it seems so small and insignificant doesn't it, just staying in the boat? But man it's amazing, the longer you stay around Jesus, the more significant just staying around Jesus becomes. Just stay in the boat. Translation for us today; stay in the house, stay in the church. There's going to be temptations.

First of all, let's celebrate that we are not where we used to be. I mean, we can stop right there and just have a celebration! I'm not who I used to be, I don't think like I used think, I don't talk like I used to talk, I'm not the husband I used to be, I'm not the Dad I used to be; I'm not who I used to be! Thank you God! But at the same time, I know in my heart there is more. The best is yet to come. Around this bend, God has even greater things for your life, for more life, for my life, for this church, God's got more!

So, what do I do in the meantime? You know what I'm convinced. I'm convinced people do too much in the meantime. Especially guys, we are the worst. Because we are programed to fix problems, especially female problems. Like, our wives come to us and they start crying. We are like, who did it? What's his name? What's her name? I'll fix it! And

she's like, I just want you to listen to me! It's like, what? That's all, just listen? You know, guys don't do that! Like, if I have a problem, I don't want a guy just to listen, I want him to go pick a fight with me, you know! But guys, we just pull up our bootstraps; I'm going to fix it, I'm going to do this. And what happens often times; in fact, there's men listening right now, you have a wife, you have children and you've been in the meantime and you are just concluding, 'I'm going to handle it, I'm going to take care of it, I'm going to deal with it, I'm going to fix it!' And you end up trying to do too much. And all your straining can't get you to where God wants you to be. You have got to rest. You've got to trust. You've got to have faith that He's the captain of the ship.

Now come on, let's remember, who was the One who tricked us to get in His boat in the first place? Who is the One that called us? Who is the One that saved us? Who is the One that put the desire and the dream inside of us? It was Jesus. What He started He will finish. Stay in the boat. Don't tell me they weren't tempted to jump ship! You know Peter was. You know Peter was straddled inside of that boat man, in a second! Because he's looking back at the beach where they came from and they are having a beach party, they've got beach balls in the air and they've got hot dogs, kosher of course! I mean they are loving life back there on the shore and when you look forward all you see is mounting waves and clouds that are getting more and more thick and grey by the minute! And there are going to be days like that. If we are going to fulfill the purpose of God and be who God's called us to be, if Life Church is to continue the purpose for which God has birthed you and instituted you in the earth and around the world, there's going to be days where behind you is bright and before you seems bleak and dark. But those are days that you must stay the course. And what that means for us, what it means for the mother who is the housewife and loves God and has been taking care of your babies, what it means for you is to stay in church, stay engaged, stay in the Word of God, trust that Jesus is working this together for good. One thing about storms, they don't last. They come and they go.

What do I do when I'm not where I used to be, but I'm not where I'm supposed to be? I will tell you what you do; you stay in the boat! Stay in the boat, stay in the house.

Galatians 6:9; I love this book, one of my favorite Books in all of the Bible, it says (and notice the corporate...come on Life Church):

And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Galatians 6:9

There's the ambiguity again, due season.

Hey preacher, when is due season?

It's when your season is due!

And when is that?

Well, it's due season! I don't know, I don't know!

Six years ago, it was a beautiful Saturday afternoon and I was taking photos as the best man in one of my best friend's wedding and my phone buzzed in my pocket. I picked it up, it's my Dad. He said, Son, are you in a place that I can talk?

I said, Well Dad, I'm in the middle of pictures.

He said, Step away a moment, I've got to tell you something.

He said, Son, I just had a routine check up and they've told me they have given me a diagnosis of multiple myeloma, and they have given me a maximum three years to live.

All of a sudden before you know it in an instant, waves crashing, clouds building, and you are in a storm.

Fast forward, it's been six years and Dad's still fighting the fight of faith. People try to give me answers, I don't need the answers. I need Jesus. We are in the meantime. Why isn't Dad healed? When I read my Bible, Jesus heals a lot of people, I think Jesus can still heal. Just in case you wondered how I see it. I believe He's the same yesterday, today and forever. He's still a healer. Why isn't Dad healed? I don't know! But it's not my job to answer all of the cosmic questions. It's my job to stay in the boat. Even with the waves mounting and the wind howling. It's my job to stay the course, to trust God. For if we don't lose heart (don't you lose heart), we will reap in due season. Whether in this life, or in the life to come, we shall reap! Notice, we shall reap. Sometimes when you don't feel like you are reaping, come to where we reap! See, it works both ways. The Bible says that when you weep I weep, because we are a church. But when you reap, I reap. Your success will spur my success. I need you to reap because your reaping inspires my reaping. Your miracle inspires my miracle. But we need one another, I am telling you, in times of storms, in the meantime, we need the house of God! The community that Jesus is building, to stay in the midst of fellow believers who say, I'm not going to let you jump ship, I'm not going to let you jump out of this boat. You are not who you used to be and you are going to be where you are supposed to be in due season! Somebody say amen!

I suppose we all need a friend in that boat who will say, 'You're not jumping today, I'm standing with you and you are going to make it.'

If you are in the meantime, it's the message God gave me, it's simple.

If you're in the meantime; 'Judah, I'm in the meantime, I'm not who I used to be or where I used to be, but I'm not where I'm supposed to be. What do I do in the meantime?'

You stay in the house and we shall reap if we don't lose heart. God is a good God.

Will you bow your heads with me. Close your eyes just for a moment. I want to pray for Life Church, Network Churches, and even those watching all around the world. I believe the love of Jesus can minister to you right where you are today.

Jesus, we thank you for your grace. God, we don't understand all of the waves and the wind, we don't understand all of the storms of this life, but we know that You are in our boat; You will never leave us and You will never forsake us.

Father, I pray for my brothers and sisters right now under the sound of my voice who find themselves in a meantime. Be closer to them than a brother. We thank You that You are the comforter, You are the deliverer, and You are the One who takes us through storms. I declare over all of Life Church today, yeah though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for our God is with us. He is with us individually and He is with us corporately as a community and a church. We thank You for Your grace. Bless your people today and assure them today of Your endless _____ love. In Jesus name. And all of God's people said, 'Amen!' God Bless you!