



16: MY TEETH HURT DADDY (Luke 5:17-26)

Our two year old daughter Madi likes to yell at us. A lot.

A few weeks ago she was on a uniquely shrill and painful yelling streak. Nothing was going right. Madi has a huge personality and a rowdy temper also, so when she's upset at home everyone knows it, sometimes even a block down the road from our house! I think this kiddo has my wild and crazy DNA please pray for us!

We tried to give her food. She yelled "nooooo!" and threw it on the floor. Even her favorites- cheese sticks, apple juice, and potato chips weren't good enough! We read Elmo to her, put Elmo on the TV, and sang Elmo songs to her. That didn't work either, and it usually does! After all, there's something mesmerizing about that red monster muppet puppet!

We got frustrated with her. We put her in time outs as she yelled and screamed. We checked her diaper often. We scolded her. Nothing would solve it. Nothing would work. Exhausted, the day was finally over and I was trying to put Madi to bed. I'm the one in our family that puts her to bed every night that I can. I read her a book and sing to her until she falls asleep every night that I'm able to do so, and I make it a priority so it happens most nights.

And still, at bedtime, Madi was screaming, yelling, and angry. Exasperated, I asked her firmly, “What is the matter with you???”

“Teef... Hurt Daddy... My teef hurt...” She replied.

Tears of repentance from the Spirit filled my eyes as my countenance towards her changed. “Oh Madi, I’m so so so sorry! I’ll get you some milk and some Ibuprofen!” She laughed with glee that she was being understood! I went into our kitchen and filled up a two year old sized dose of children’s Motrin and filled up a sippy cup with whole milk. I brought it to her. “Thank you Daddy”, she said. From there I was able to play guitar and sing to her as her pain ceased a little and she drifted off to sleep.

Madi was doing a lot of things that day. She had a lot of symptoms of something wrong. She was acting out. She was misbehaving. She wasn’t listening. She was yelling. She was being unreasonable. She was frustrating my wife and I.

But why? Because her teeth were in major pain. Many toddlers show no signs of pain while teething. However, when their two year old molars come through, it can be particularly painful, leading to crankiness and irritability.¹ Madi’s young age combined with what she was experiencing gave her every right to act the way she was... Well... sort of! But Sarah and I were misdiagnosing her problem. When we got to the root it all made sense and all her other problems came into focus.

Lots of people do lots of silly things. We judge each other. We falsely accuse each other. We rip each other down with our words. We gossip about one another. We slander one another. We let hatred fill our hearts. We let greed fill our hearts. We pursue destructive addictions despite the wish that we could change. We run to sexual pleasure or materialism to numb the pain. We act passive aggressive. We act aggressive. We act fake. We hyper spiritualize. We shun. We seek our own agenda.

But at the root of all our crazy behavior, we really just want to be forgiven. We want to know we’re fully forgiven. We want this to be a reality. We want cosmic, eternal forgiveness, and we want to experience forgiveness between ourselves and those around us. It’s a deep longing within all of us.

And Jesus offers us full forgiveness. Nobody else in the Universe does. And not only do those of us who don’t believe in Him need and yearn for this forgiveness, but those of

¹ <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/322488>

us who do believe in Him need to constantly be reminded of this forgiveness that He offers!

Not only does Jesus offer full forgiveness to us. He makes full forgiveness supernaturally possible within us. Because of the Holy Spirit living in us He is able to forgive others through us in ways that we simply would never do on our own. (Matt. 6:14-15; 18:15-35; 26:28, Luke 17:1-4; 23:34) We gotta lean into Him not only to be able to correctly diagnose the problems of others, but to have Him correctly diagnose the problems within ourselves! (Matt. 7:1-6)

And Jesus didn't just come to heal our forgiveness problem- which is one of the biggest things He could possibly cosmically heal! He physically healed people. He treated the root problems and the symptoms. All the time.

We've been moving through the book of Luke. The next healing that happened in the gospel of Luke is that of a paralytic man in Luke 5:17 - 26. Mark 2:1 tells us this miracle took place in Capernaum.²

17 On one of those days while (Jesus) was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea, and also from Jerusalem. And the Lord's power to heal was in him. (Luke 5:17)

Pharisees and teachers of the law (better known as scribes) had joined the crowd. The Pharisees were one of four religious parties in Judaism (Sadducees, Zealots, and Essenes were the others). They were a non priestly, lay separatist movement that tried to stay faithful to the Mosaic Law. They developed many traditions and oral rulings to establish how the Law should be applied in their generation. Such judgments were made by the trained scribes who were a part of the sect. These leaders were now watching Jesus suspiciously.³

Some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law were religiously judgmental and legalistic. Despite the fact that many wonderful things were happening with Jesus, they were apprehensive, and waiting for Jesus to blow it. Maybe they were really just hoping that Jesus **would** blow it. Afterall- He was destroying their theological paradigms and replacing them with the true way and heart of God!

And we'll see here that Jesus didn't care what they thought of Him, because they had impure motives. If Christ abides in us, and we're doing things in the power of Christ that

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are making an impact for Christ, there will inevitably be religious folks that don't like it. We can't ever focus on trying to please the religiously judgmental! Instead, we've got to keep on faithfully following the Holy Spirit's lead to continue doing what He's leading us to do!

Jesus, in the face of religious and social pressure, had a scenario unfold before Him. He was about to see someone's symptoms. He was about to see someone's need, and He was about to respond to the need.

18 Just then some men came, carrying on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed. They tried to bring him in and set him down before him. 19 Since they could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the roof tiles into the middle of the crowd before Jesus. (Luke 5:18-19)

As Jesus was teaching, a group of men tried to bring a paralyzed man to him for healing, but the crowd was too large. Therefore, they went on the roof, either by a ladder or built-in steps that allowed access to the top of an ancient house. Working their way through the tiles, they lowered the man before Jesus. Getting a hole in the roof would have involved working through a muddy layer above the roof beams.⁴

It wasn't easy to get this paralyzed man to Jesus. These men could have easily given up and told the man he was out of luck. These men could have not even tried in the first place. But no, these men fought for and advocated for this paralyzed man...

There is someone that God has put in your life to advocate for!

Back in September of 2004, I was a year and a half into following Jesus. I had just been married in August of 2004 and was young, inexperienced, and had no clue how to be a good man or husband to my wife. Aside from one relapse I had been fully sober from drugs and drunkenness for four years. That's when Doug Ley stepped into my life.

Doug started meeting with me. His wife, Paula, started meeting with my wife Sarah.

Doug advocated for me. Doug ripped through the muddy layer above the roof beams and lowered me into the presence of Jesus. I wasn't paralyzed, but I had so much to learn, and so many roots of faith to establish. I had so many sins for Jesus to sanctify outta me! I hadn't grown up in the Church and was basically trying to figure things out on my own.

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And Doug met with me every week. Doug taught me the Bible. Doug shared his life with me- all the struggles of his past and present. He wasn't fake and religious with me, he was *raw* with me. And I grew like crazy in Christ as a result. Doug taught me spiritual disciplines of prayer and Bible reading to the point where I began getting into the Word daily. Doug supported me in mission to people who didn't know God. Doug let me confess when I struggled in our marriage, when I struggled with impatience or anger. Doug let me in on his weaknesses and celebrated areas where I had strength he didn't have. Again, Doug advocated for me. He didn't seize authority over me or flex in my face. By the character that Christ had implanted in him, he naturally led me by example, with grace and truth, transparently, and magnetically.

ENGAGE FOR A MOMENT. WHO HAS GOD PUT IN YOUR LIFE TO ADVOCATE FOR? TO DISCIPLE? TO BUILD UP IN CHRIST?

There is someone that God has put in your life to advocate for! Jesus didn't call us to give lip service to Him, slap bumper stickers on our cars for Him, show up in Church on a Sunday and give Him a few hours, then forget about Him and just live for ourselves. Jesus shed His blood so that we would give away our lives. We're not meant to pray in lonely silos, separated from the people of God and from the people who God is on mission to! There is someone, or a few people, that each one of us can be discipling, to invite them into a lifelong relationship with Jesus. That person or those people God is calling us to may know Jesus now or come to know Him later. We need to ask Him who He's leading us into the orbit of! He'll make it clear!

Instead of sitting back, and like the Pharisees and scribes, spending all our energy critiquing people around us for their flaws and misgivings, while just taking care of ourselves, we need to get into the grit of discipleship. This will change our perspective. This will annihilate our religious hubris! We need to be like the men around this paralyzed man who were actively living out faith and mission! People out there need us to advocate for them, to bust down barriers to get them fully to Jesus!

And what did Jesus say when he saw this paralyzed man and those advocating for him?

20 Seeing their faith he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." (Luke 5:20)

Jesus saw "their faith," a remark that is easy to move past. Faith in this text must have meant the visible expression of faith, not a mere attitude, since Jesus saw it in the

actions of the men. As a result, Jesus acted, giving the man much more than he was seeking. He declared his sins to be forgiven.⁵

This village of friends around this paralyzed man saw his symptoms, saw his desperate plight physically, and removed barriers to advocate for him, bringing him into the presence of Jesus.

Jesus gave the man the thing he needed the most. He gave him forgiveness. He pardoned him from his sins.

Christ follower- do you remember when Jesus pardoned you from your sins, past, present and future? Do you remember when He wiped them out for good? Do you remember that moment of being “seized with a great affection” of mercy, grace, peace, joy, truth, and freedom in His Name? The reason we celebrate that gospel of hope again and again is because it’s the core reality of our living and breathing as disciples of Christ!

ENGAGE FOR A MOMENT... THINK ABOUT THE DAY THAT JESUS FORGAVE YOU OF EVERYTHING!

And of course, the critical scribes and Pharisees around Jesus didn’t like what they heard.

21 Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, “Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Luke 5:21)

The Pharisees and scribes began to think about the theological implications of what Jesus just said. They knew that only God forgives sin; so to claim to do what only God could do was blasphemy, a slander against God.⁶ Really, they started with the (correct) assumption that God alone could forgive sins, and they arrived at the (correct) conclusion that Jesus was making himself equal to God. Coming from any other man, his claim would **indeed** be blasphemy. But not from the Son of God.⁷ Yet there was a severe hang up- they didn’t believe Him to be who He was!

We don’t want to get in the way of God’s goodness like the scribes and Pharisees were in this situation. Here was this paralyzed man, who had had an act of great love from his friends bring him face to face with the Messiah. Jesus had just pardoned this man from

⁵NIV Application Commentary Copyright © 1996 by Darrel L. Bock.

⁶NIV Application Commentary Copyright © 1996 by Darrel L. Bock.

⁷CSB Tony Evans Study Bible Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers.

one of the greatest problems he'd ever had. He forgave and pardoned him from his sins. Hardened by pride, all that the religious people could do was attempt to theologically dismantle the wonderful thing that was happening in front of them.

Don't be so hardened by religious pride that you critique the good things of God!

And anyways, Jesus was a step ahead of them as usual;

22 But perceiving their thoughts, Jesus replied to them, "Why are you thinking this in your hearts? 23 Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? 24 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he told the paralyzed man, "I tell you: Get up, take your stretcher, and go home. 25 Immediately he got up before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God." (Luke 5:22-25)

Whenever Luke reported what someone was thinking, instruction from Jesus usually followed. Jesus asked the Pharisees to ponder a question that was really a dilemma. Is it easier to declare sins are forgiven or tell a paralytic to get up and walk? Logic tells us that it is easier to say one's sins are forgiven, since that cannot be seen; but in fact that is more difficult, since one must have the authority to do that. Then Jesus linked the two issues together. He acted so that the audience could know the Son of Man had authority to forgive sins. He told the man to walk. He enabled the hard thing — having the paralyzed man get up and walk — in order to show the even harder thing — the power to forgive sin.⁸

Big point- Jesus ministered to, cared for, and healed the entirety of this man.

If I hit up Doordash on my phone app to order some Chipotle for a gathering of people I had over at my house, I would expect someone to get the food from the Chipotle, bring it to my door, ring the doorbell, and split. And I'd be satisfied with that.

Now if that Doordasher decided, out of the goodness of their heart, to find out how many people I had at the gathering, and to go and buy me paper plates for all my food, and then got the food from Chipotle, brought it to my house, sat everyone down at our table, and individually handed each item out to each person that ordered it on a plate they got for us, I would be shocked and blown away! I would say, "dang, this Doordasher went above and beyond in their service to me and my crew today!"

⁸NIV Application Commentary Copyright © 1996 by Darrel L. Bock.

And Jesus is better than any Doordasher or Chik Fil-A Drive through worker! He ain't just gonna hand you a chicken sandwich and say "my pleasure" all the time! If you surrender your life in trust over to Him fully He is gonna **serve** you any way He needs to to seal up the truth of God into your heart and mind! He ain't no genie. He ain't gonna do whatever you say. He ain't gonna give you all that you selfishly want. He will definitely give you what you **need** when you full-on trust and abide in Him!

And when you bring your entire self, all the struggles, bruises, and flaws, right up into Jesus's face, sometimes He's going to blow you away! He might physically heal you, He might not. He might fill you with a joy you've never known before. One thing is for sure- if you fully hand over your life to Him He **will** forgive you of all your sins!

I have a friend that gave their life to Jesus about five years ago. Before my friend came fully to Christ, Jesus took away his addiction to methamphetamine. Jesus removed demonic voices that were screaming in his brain for him to cut himself and kill himself. My friend gave his life over to Jesus in surrender. Now he's been sober for five years. Now he's moving his way up in his job. Now he's parenting his kids again and being a husband to his wife. I'll say it again- Jesus can heal the whole of our beings!

I'm not sure what this paralyzed man expected of Jesus, but I sure don't think he thought that he was going to depart from that encounter fully physically healed and eternally pardoned!

But the man did get spiritually forgiven, miraculously healed, then got up, and went home to glorify God.

Jesus has authority on earth to do **anything**. Jesus can do anything **He** wants. Jesus won't do everything **we** want.

But Jesus does want to forgive your sins. **Today**. You don't have to question if that is true or not.

The other day I stopped in at Kenny Lambert's store "Just a Dad From Akron". I had a dude walk up to me and ask me for something that people don't normally ask me for! He came up to me and said, "Yo man, I need your spiritual counsel!" I asked him what had been happening in his life and he shared. I related to what he said he was going through because I had been through it in my days before following Jesus, and done the same things and been in the same situation as he was in that moment, due to similar mistakes that he and I had made. The dude literally went on to tell me that really he just wants to know he's forgiven for what he did. He also asked me to pray for him.

So I prayed for him right in that moment. Then I went on to tell him that if he wants to be forgiven for what he did, that Jesus would forgive him for everything he had ever done—past, present and future. That Jesus died and rose again to give him that as a total free gift. I told him there was nothing he had to do to get that forgiveness, and all he had to do is accept it.

And I'm telling you the same thing today. If you want to be forgiven of all that you've ever done wrong, and begin a journey towards eternity with God where He'll cleanse you and change you to have more of Jesus living in you every day by the power of the Holy Spirit, then you're 100% invited to that! You don't have to do anything except receive Jesus! He has authority in heaven and earth to fully forgive and pardon your sins today! He will do it! Just ask Him to! After all, He came to earth miraculously, born of a virgin, and grew up, both human and divine. He never sinned or went against God in any way but always lived for, obeyed, and followed Him. He was put to death by His own people, He died and was buried. Three days later He rose again. He appeared in bodily form to many of His disciples. He ascended to heaven. He will come back one day and wipe out sin forever and ever. He has authority over it all! He will send the Holy Spirit to live, breathe, move, and shape you into all that He's meant you to be! Trust Him and give your all to Him!

Back to the end of our section of Luke 5- How did people react to Jesus's miraculous healing of a paralyzed man?

26 Then everyone was astounded, and they were giving glory to God. And they were filled with awe and said, "We have seen incredible things today." (Luke 5:26)

The people saw the miraculous with their own eyes, and they were in awe of the God of the Universe! They gave glory and praise to God! They worshiped! They had their perspective thrust heavenward into the eternity and beauty of the Kingdom!

When we read texts like Luke 5:17-26 some of us, who are nerdy like me, can't help but think about what we should believe about miracles today. There are two different strains of belief in miracles, one is called "Cessationism" and the other "Continuationism". If you want to get an overview, read further on the difference between the two here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cessationism_versus_continuationism

I also found a very interesting side note in the Africa Bible Commentary. It says;

A significant development in Africa is the rise of the African Instituted Churches (AICs). These dynamic and growing churches seek to have a truly African Christianity, not one that is imported from the West, and lay great stress on the theology and ministry of healing. They preach miraculous healing, or healing by the power of the Holy Spirit, and revive the linking of faith with health, healing and medicine that existed in biblical times.

The church as a whole is called to situate its understanding of health and healing within the African world view, which perceives health as more than merely physical well-being. Most Africans have not lost touch in their subconscious self with the worldview that sees disease and misfortune as the result of malicious external factors. Fears of witchcraft, sorcery, taboos, curses, bad omens, malicious spirits and a host of other evil forces (often drawn from the interaction of traditional religions with Christianity and Islam with their devil, demons and jinn) are a reality to many Africans, regardless of education, socio-economic status or creed. Thus true health also involves spiritual, mental, physical, social and environmental harmony.

Any healing ministry in Africa that does not take African cosmology seriously is doomed to fail. The AICs have recognized this, and their healing does not aim to supplant medical treatment but to supplement it. Their prayers, visions, dreams, laying on of hands, use of holy water and oil, ashes, drums, staves and other rituals are aimed at dealing with practical problems of life, just as African traditional religion did and still does. In other words, in these churches the African world view is very much complemented by the biblical worldview and the healing is done in the name of the Triune God, and particularly of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. We, too, need to take the social context into account as we seek to understand illness and the mediation of healing.⁹

We in the American Western Church have a very scientifically tinted view of the supernatural. We must keep that in mind. However, God can move supernaturally within a legit biblical framework however He wants to. He, and His Word, are not limited by our theological boxes.

I have seen the link between physical and spiritual healing in my own life. Again, sometimes I just have a cold. Sometimes I just have a leg cramp. Sometimes I pull a muscle from exercise or over-exertion. But I've had a couple occasions where a physical ailment was also spiritual in nature.

⁹Africa Bible Commentary, Tokunboh Adeyemo, General Editor. Copyright © 2006, 2010, and 2022 by ABC Editorial Board.

For one- when I went to Fort Wayne, Indiana to be a part of a discipleship immersion for the first time with 3DM¹⁰ I was carrying a lot of weight with me. I was going through a period of time where some people were making me feel like I was a heretic because of my views on the Holy Spirit, racial justice issues, and the role of women in the Church. I had a few people who I had known for a while and really poured into just turn on me, critique everything I was doing, and refuse to forgive me no matter how many times I tried to repent of things they felt hurt by that I said or did.

During the three hour drive from Akron, Ohio to the immersion in Fort Wayne, Indiana in November of 2022, carrying the weight of all these things and the upcoming transition of our Church community into autonomy, my stomach was churning.

By the time I got to the immersion I felt sick. I'm not sure if it was the flu, or food poisoning, stress, demonic attack, or a combo of some of these things! I had to purchase Pepto Bismol, ginger ale and saltine crackers, and instead of enjoying the food the folks in Fort Wayne provided, I lived on that Bismol, Soda, Cracker Diet all day. I tried to eat other food but it wouldn't digest well. I still went to the first day of the immersion and made it through.

That night, I stayed at an AirBnB, and felt awful all night. It was a cheap room for \$30 a night in someone's house with other rooms they rented, and the cot I slept on wasn't the most comfortable thing in the world. But the cot wasn't the reason I was jacked up. I woke up in the middle of the night, sick to my stomach. I drank Pepto all evening and tried to get better and nothing was working. I prayed and prayed. I just continued to feel messed up.

I went to the immersion the next day. I made it through the whole day again on a steady diet of Pepto, Ginger Ale and Saltines.

The next night I initially went to sleep well, with my stomach feeling better. But I woke up in the middle of the night with searing shoulder pain. The pain was so bad I couldn't rest. Staying in a rowdier part of an unfamiliar city, I googled nearby CVS Pharmacies and found an all night one. I got into my car at 2am and drove myself there. I bought Dual Action Advil and a package of frozen peas. I took the Advil, and finally fell asleep with the frozen peas on my shoulder all night.

I woke up on the third and final day of the immersion, the pea bag now all mushy and lukewarm. I cleaned myself up, made it to the gathering and finished our time there. My stomach wasn't fully better but had improved, and now I had shoulder pain going on.

¹⁰ <https://www.3dmovements.com/>

Before the send off during the last moments of my time there, a leader in 3DM, Paul Maconchie, whom I had never met in my life and hadn't interacted with during the entire time there, came to pray over me and my co-laborer Michelle- for our team at Streetlight Community Church as they sent us back to our context. Paul, someone gifted in prophetic gifting, looked me in the eye and told me (in his lovely British Accent), "I don't know if this means anything to you, but I sense from the Holy Spirit that there is a spirit of religious condemnation over your life right now. I just want to say that the Lord sees your faithfulness, and how you've been about doing the genuine work of the gospel and the Kingdom, and the Lord wants to break that spirit of religious condemnation in you. In fact, can I pray right now that it'll be broken in Jesus' Name?"

I had been going through the turmoil of feeling condemned by the many connected to the church we were a campus of. I had been feeling condemned by people in our own community. The Word from the Spirit through Paul couldn't have been more healing, helpful, encouraging, life giving, and right on time.

Paul then prayed. I kid you not, as he prayed, my shoulder pain got warm, and melted away, and my stomach issues got resolved. I got fully physically healed. Granted, it's also possible that the sickness resolved itself, and the Advil finally fully worked. I still took a little Pepto later that day to resolve any lingering stomach issues. But the fact that there was a dramatic shift in all of it right in that moment when Paul was praying for me? C'mon y'all- that's God.

Now like I said, I might have had some kind of flu. I might have had some kind of virus. I might have had food poisoning. It may have been stress from my life causing all the issues I was having. With the scriptures as my primary guide, I do also believe "The Body Keeps The Score" for sure.

But somehow, all the circumstances of my life, my physical state, my emotional state, my mental state, my psychological state, and my spiritual state all converged in that moment, and I was both physically and spiritually healed.

Since then, I still struggle with feeling religiously condemned when people mistreat me, slander me, gossip about me, or say judgemental things to me.

Since then, I've been sick in my stomach, drank Pepto Bismol all day, and lived on ginger ale and crackers along with it. I have had shoulder pain again that I took Advil to help treat.

But in that moment at that discipleship immersion in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Lord wanted to show me that one day He will heal me for good in eternity. He wanted me to enjoy a taste of my resurrected body that I'll one day live in forever! (1 Cor. 15)

Jesus also wanted to give this paralytic the same taste of resurrection that He gave me in November of 2022! My taste was a mild one! This guy was healed of something that seemed impossible to be healed from! Praise the Lord that He wants to show Himself in whatever way we need to get our attention! He is good like that!

And guess what- whatever your symptoms- your addictions, your sins, your mistakes, or the pain you have caused others and yourself- you can bring them all to Jesus right now. Jesus wants to forgive you. Jesus wants to pardon all your sins and throw them into the bottom of the sea. Jesus wants to drive demons out of you so you can hear from God. Jesus wants your eternal healing. Jesus might heal you physically. Jesus might heal you emotionally or mentally. He'll show up in whatever way He needs to to get your attention so you can be tethered to Him, in whom you can trust, for the rest of your temporal earthly and everlasting celestial life!