

# Luke 5:17-26 // Jesus Cares About My Deepest Needs

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Preacher: Graham Daniels

[0:00] 1,032 of the church Bibles. We're coming in sort of in the middle of chapter 5.! So we're reading from chapter 5, verse 17, page 1032.

Luke chapter 5, beginning at verse 17. One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there.

They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal those who were ill.

Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat, and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lured him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, Friend, your sins are forgiven. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy?

[1:14] Who can forgive sins but God alone? Jesus knew what they were thinking, and asked, Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?

Which is easier, to say your sins are forgiven, or to say, Get up and walk? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

So he said to the paralyzed man, I tell you, Get up, take your mat, and go home. Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on, and went home, praising God.

Everyone was amazed, and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe, and said, We have seen remarkable things today. Thanks be to God for his word.

Well, I call the title of this, Jesus cares about my very, very, very, very, doesn't say that on the sheet, very, very, very, very, deepest needs.

[2:29] And having listened to Fraser, which is pretty magnificent, listening to their stories, because weren't you struck, well, that's rhetorical, I was struck, by the marvelous combination of, intellectual coherence, to be a Christian, is intellectually coherent, and yet at the same time, existentially profound, changes you, changes who you are.

Take something out, and put something in, that changes, your whole way of being. It's a fantastic combination. And so, at the heart of the Christian faith, are those two things.

And in the story tonight, if you're, I'm a visitor here, as you heard, and if you're a guest too, then, we're going to work through this story, and that's all that happens here now, at this point.

I've got a story on page 1032. It's a story that tries to highlight, who Jesus is, and what he wants to do for us. So the best thing to do, is to dive in, and have a go at it.

Let's do it together. I won't ask you anything, obviously, that's embarrassing. Welsh people would do that, but obviously, I wouldn't do it to you, that would be embarrassing. But I've got three headings with it, and we'll just dive into it.

[3:50] Here's my big idea. Jesus cares about my very deepest needs. Here's where the story starts, on page 1032. Jesus is gaining a remarkable reputation.

Luke wrote this account, one of the four accounts of the life of Jesus. He collated eyewitness data, and captured it in a written form. So here's one of his stories.

Verse 17. One day, Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law, were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee, and from Judea and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was with Jesus, to heal the sick.

So have a look at those words, because there's stuff in there, that may not make sense. Pretty straightforward in the first clause, that Jesus is a teacher. He's not educated formally. He wasn't part of the system. And yet, this guy appears, somewhere in his early 30s, and people are saying, and you see it, if you read Luke's all the way through, Luke's account all the way through, people are saying, we've never heard anybody like this.

[4:52] He's unbelievable. He's probably the greatest teacher we've ever heard. And the religious and civic authorities of Israel have no idea where he came from.

It's a tiny country. He hasn't come through the educational system. He hasn't got a title like Pharisee, or teacher of the law, which you see there.

These are, they're a combination really, of academics, meet civic leaders. They work underneath the authority of Rome.

Rome is the empire that owns the country. But these people have a degree of latitude to run the country, so long as they know their boundaries. Jesus is causing all kinds of problems.

Because they really don't know if he's going to be an insurrectionist, if he's going to cost them their jobs, because they've got a cushy number working under Roman rule.

[5:49] They've got the best jobs in the country. And he could make a real mess of it. It's a real problem. Which is why, in those lines of 17, note the second sentence, they'd come from every village in the country.

Galilee, that's meant to show that it's a real concern. The leaders of the country had come from everywhere. Every village of the north, Galilee, from Judea, and Jerusalem, the capital city. So there'd obviously been, a sort of, WhatsApp group message, saying, listen, listen, we've heard, that he's going to be at this place. That's what the intel tells us.

Get everybody there. Don't make a fuss about it. No more texting. Don't go on social media. Just get there. Get there. Because we're going to find out what he's up to.

There's probably going to be a crowd. Be discreet. Show up. We'll see what he's doing. That's the vibe, that's going on, in these early stories, in Luke's account, as he introduces us to Jesus.

[6:59] And then there's an extraordinary event, and we're meant to see it as extraordinary. There it is in line 18. Some men came, carrying a paralysed man on a mat, and tried to take him into the house, to lay him before Jesus.

In 17, it says he could heal the sick. But don't automatically, if you wouldn't say you're a Christian, or you're not used to thinking about this, don't automatically shut this down. Because, of course, if it was you or me, we'd have to be some kind of charlatan magician to duck and dive, and pretend we can do things that we can't, to gain authority.

However, if you did make the world, and you're responsible for 200 billion galaxies, presumably, it's not too big a deal to fix somebody's body that's broken. So don't just go, no, he can't do it, he can't do it.

These people weren't thick. They knew people couldn't do this. And yet, this was what people were saying about him, and people had seen it. So these guys show up, 18, and sure enough, as he's teaching, along come a bunch of friends, with a guy, who simply can't walk.

They're carrying him, stretcher-like, and they try to take him into the house, who knows how big it is, where Jesus is talking. But they can't get in. It's heaving.

[8:21] It's jam-packed, so they can't get through. So they're probably thinking, blimey, we have come a flipping long way here. Boiling hot.

We bought old matey with us. Not going home. He weighs a ton. So obviously, somebody in the group's gone, I'll tell you what we could do.

Because of the architecture, in the country, and the way things were built, it's a flat roof, and you could break through the roof. Someone's gone, get him through the roof.

Shut up. Don't be ridiculous. I mean, that's not in the story. Ridiculous. There's people in there.

Packed in there. What are you thinking about? Well, listen, we've just carried him. In the ages.

Everybody says, this guy can do ridiculous things. Get him in. So anyway, however it got to the point, they're on the roof. There they are, on the roof. Obviously, they must scrape away at this roof.

[9:24] And you've got to picture it now. Everybody's stuffed in there. Front row, Pharisees, teachers of the law like that. Eyeballing him.

Watching what he's going to do. Everyone's probably doing this, aren't they? Dear me.

Dear, dear me. Shall we get out? Hole. Obviously, now going right.

Let's get him right in front. Let's get him right down there. I don't know. I'm pointing to the water.

Let's get him right down there. They lower the mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd.

There it is. You see it? 19. Right in front of Jesus. It's a dramatic story. I wish I could tell it better. It's meant to be a dramatic story.

And you've got to picture the religious and civic authorities glaring. Cross. Why are all these people following this bloke?

[10:23] It's going to be the consequence of this. What a mess. But I'm assuming it's electrifying as this is going on. Electrifying. And then something absolutely crazy happens.

And here's the second part of it. Jesus creates a conflict on purpose. Surely. See what you think when we read it. He must be creating conflict here. Line 20.

When Jesus saw their faith he said friend your sins are forgiven. We've used that word a lot tonight sins. Be patient with me.

I'll come back to breaking that word down in a minute. But notice how often it comes up in the dialogue here. So hold on and we'll come back to it.

Just note its frequency. Friend your sins are forgiven. The Pharisees and teachers of the law the leaders of the society note began thinking to themselves not speaking to themselves thinking to themselves who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy who can forgive sins but God alone.

[11:39] Obviously they're rolling eyes aren't they? We all know the body language don't we? even if they're trying to keep it back you know you know what it's like when somebody really winds you up it's not happening is it?

Like you try and be porker face but you know a little tick gives you away doesn't it? He can see I don't think this is particularly supernatural do you with human architecture who can forgive and they just cross they just cross but they're rightly cross I mean these people haven't done anything to Jesus if one of them I don't know dropped a brick on his head through the roof Jesus has got the right to say I know that was an accident I forgive you of course he's got the right to say that if you do something me or me to you then one of us can reciprocate if we were the injured by saying that's fine leave it forgiven but Jesus doesn't know this blog and Jesus uses language that says your sins are forgiven not just you've done something to me as an individual human being that's fine it's done forget it he's making a ridiculous claim he's talking about the whole man's life and he's saying everything about you

I forgive you but it's just a bloke saying it and these people know everybody knows everybody in the room knows it's a Jewish community they know that nobody can forgive sins because God knows that every human being has turned their back on God and there's a huge infrastructure in place of priests and sacrifices and ceremonies so that God will not judge humanity because of our brokenness and our rebellion against him they've all grown up in such a system so it's absurd for any human being to say everybody else's sins are forgiven because only God can do it and he set up a system by which it happens so it's blasphemy it's shocking it's beyond shocking because this man has now just claimed to do what the

God of Israel alone can do that's what's happening in the story it's blasphemous unless it's true unless God is in the room in this human being unless God has appeared in his son which is the claim of the four accounts of the life of Jesus that Jesus is God in human form and the question this evening every time we look at a story like this I think maybe two questions which are pivotal questions if you're going to assess the claims of the Christian faith number one is there a God does he exist is there such a being at all and number two of two well if there is how can we know what he's like because if we've got to get to know how he's like to get to know him because we don't know what to do with him or about him unless we get an insight into who he is and what he wants and how it works and the claims of

Jesus Christ are straightforward yeah there's definitely a God and if you want to know who he is and what he wants and what he's come to do and what he's going to do in the world look at Jesus Christ look at Jesus Christ and you'll know and that's what's behind the baptisms a woman and a man who work out how to have a relationship with God because Jesus Christ has shown them and

for many of you tonight you'll say yeah I got that that's me and others will say I've got a friend I've come with a friend I'm here because of a friend I'm getting my head around this this is a bit new to me being in a room like this well as you've heard a couple of times already the best thing you can do isn't to go on a one hit wonder but to come back to church and say well I'm going to feel this out and get a feel of the community and see what it's like and see how coherent the belief system is and actually see if it does make a difference test it out go a week at a time

[16:25] Jesus makes the claim and then he confronts his shocked listeners look at line 22 Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked why are you thinking these things in your hearts he's read their script but then I just think this is marvellous I mean if God has become a human being presumably he can think like lightning fast right but what's this 23 he says I tell you what then what's easier then what's the easiest thing to say your sins are forgiven or get up and walk because of course people could be saying what a blagger right in front of his nose they've put a body that can't move he's all talk isn't he all this reputation about him this unbelievable power that we've never seen in a human being before and now he's been caught out because somebody's put a body right in front of him in a crowd let's see what he's got in his locker now and he goes your sins are forgiven that is lame mate that is lame do your job we came to see you do your job you butler and you've been caught and there's no way out your sins are forgiven look what he's done he just caused carnage he just called theological carnage and hopefully now he's going to get out of it and get away before he's nailed down before he's

I didn't mean that I really didn't mean that I really didn't mean that I really did it before he's cornered and they say you can't do it can you you can't do it the power of the Lord's present the healer you can't do it and of course he thinks he's read the script doesn't he so he says which is easiest then I see your sins are forgiven you think I'm a black or get up and walk I see I get it and imagine when he looks at them now 24 and a half halfway through imagine him looking at the paralyzed man and saying hey Bert off you go Avanti see him because that's what he does right note the first line of 25 immediately immediately the whole point is this is no fluke the man's on his feet immediately he stood up in front of them took what he had been lying on he's clever he's sensible isn't he that's a good conservation he's taking his mat with him didn't just leave it hanging around or take it to the tip he's taking it home fair play careful and went home praising God of course he was the man's been healed so what a moment

Jesus isn't a blagger he's not covering his sneakiness with brilliant oratory he can and will do miraculous things but here's the point don't you think in the story but the whole thing about studying the Bible is that don't listen to the person at the front as if they must know everything that you don't because clearly that's silly the reason we have a Bible rather than somebody's opinions being spouted here every week is that actually we go to the Bible and say if there is a God what can we know about him and the Bible is where we find it out so that's why we read it and that's why people at the front say go and look at what the Bible says take a Bible away think about what we can know about God through Christ and so at this point Jesus has said that the most important thing that any human being can have even more important even more important than the physical healing of this man this is axiomatic point is that somehow your sins are forgiven nothing trumps that for importance nothing that's what he's really going after now as we come to the last part of this talk because that raises the question and I've mentioned it already what is this thing about sins and sin you know and a contemporary idiom will say don't eat that chocolate you've had enough today don't be a sinner don't be sinful little white sins you know and then a man is murdered in prison last week because he had been arrested and tried and found guilty of murdering two little girls some years ago and we might say that is so sinful what that man did so wicked so the word is fluid it moves culturally we use it in different ways it's a religious word it's a serious word but then it's a light-hearted word what is it why is it so important why has

Jesus said the most important thing I can do is to sort out your sin problem and immediately it's offensive isn't it a little bit are you saying that's me well the last line of the story goes like this everyone was amazed and gave praise to God they were filled with awe and said we have seen remarkable things today well they certainly had Jesus had said he could forgive sin and just in case

they doubted that he could he healed the guy who wanted his body fixed but he left them with the underlying point that the greatest problem you and I face is sin so let's draw this in the new testament the bible is clear the bible you have in your hands the story of Jesus is crystal clear that he came to die for you and me obviously when I say you I'm not exonerating myself he came to die because you and

I have a sickness called sin this sickness has multiple symptoms the disease has thousands of symptoms the symptoms that I exhibit may not be yours we may have different symptoms but the disease is that the middle of a human being's life with children you would say small s small n massive I in the middle God made you and me and we say to him lovely you're fine I'm willing to have a listen I'm willing to pop along think about you but by the way it's my life bud and I'll run it my way it's my life keep your hands off it leave me alone I'm a bright woman I'm a top guy I've got my faults no problem but it's my world not yours so keep out of my life happy to do the odd religious thing happy to try and be a better person but I'm not having it it's my life and you're not getting it off me

[23:43] I don't care if you made me it's mine big eye the big eye and the eye and I thought you captured this just brilliantly once you know the big eye is there and you say to Jesus get rid of it it's like it opens up a massive space right it's unbelievable this is the existential bit oh Jesus is true he lived he died he beat death he's alive again the existential bit of the reality when he gets hold of the big eye is that he goes in and he says that's in the way of my friendship with you let me in and when the eye goes oh my gosh the space that's left to get to know your saviour is magnificent and Jesus claims to forgive sins the great writer C.S.

Lewis says among the Jews there turned up a man who started talking about being God he claimed he could forgive sins he said he had always existed he said he was coming into the world to judge it at the end of time and when you grasp that you will see that what this man claims was quite simply the most shocking thing that has ever been uttered by human lips unless it's true you can't call Jesus Christ the great teacher or a brilliant role model or a brilliant moral exemplar in history he's either a lunatic or a liar or you're staring at the God of the universe looking straight at you tonight which is he my friend which is he are you sure you're clear have you really given it the attention it must deserve are you certain on your stance well you're pretty bold to come to a church tonight if you're ambivalent fair play to you

I don't fancy walking in somewhere where I don't know who they are and what's going on you've got some nerve to do it fair play I don't know who's who but at this point now as we close this part of the evening I think there are four things that sin makes us according to the Bible it makes us unclean before God sorry it's really offensive but those who faced up to it know that Jesus came to die on a cross as the only human being who never sinned who never had a big eye when he died on the cross the only one who was ever clean before God took the place of those of us who were dirty before him I'll do it personally so I'm not throwing it at you without looking at myself before God sin makes me unclean and when Jesus dies on that cross he dies the only one who was ever perfect before God clean as a whistle and he died for me and he paid a human being who turns to Christ is clean before their creator secondly I'm guilty before God of putting myself at the center of the world when he is the creator and he is the Lord when he dies on the cross he declares those who believe him not guilty innocent if tonight you know Christ as your savior you are clean and innocent before God it is a remarkable place to be the consequence of that is that where you were once alienated you are now reconciled you know him you feel him you've been welcomed into his presence the wall is broken down it's personal it's relational you're in his family and you know he loves you it moves the heart and there's at least one more thing it's a biblical picture it's a metaphor you're liberated you're freed you it's as if you were in slavery to sin it was bondage to sin you can't get out of the things that cripple you you hate them you can't bear them you wish you didn't do them it's driving you crazy and Jesus says let me in let me in because

I will free you I will work with you I will change you I love you too much I love you too much says Jesus to leave you as you are I'm going to work at it with you for the rest of your life come on you and me together let me liberate you and sin means that all those four things without him will make us unclean guilty before God unreconciled and in slavery and in slavery and when Jesus dies on

the cross and smashes death to bits a human being who believes that he did it for them is clean innocent reconciled and free free free to attack life free to dream dreams of changing the world because they know that the creator of the world and the lord of the universe lives in them and finally loves them you don't spell

[29:19] Christianity D-O you spell it D-O-N-E it's not what I do it's what Jesus has done it's a gift it's free it's justice and love meeting on a cross when Jesus goes there and he says I've done it you take it this is the gospel it is mercy not effort that's at the heart of the Christian faith and I commend you to the good news of Jesus Christ if you know that you follow Jesus tonight you know you've trusted him you know he's your savior and your lord remember this the reason you come to church once a week on a Sunday together is to remember it because your brain forgets it in 15 seconds on Monday morning oh I'm rubbish

I don't deserve to be a Christian I'm the worst Christian in the world I'm hopeless what good am I to God everyone's better than me what stupid nonsense it is but our muscle memory does it right oh I'm such a screw up oh God can't love me idiot because we're all idiots because our muscle memory keeps doing it and we have to keep coming here to go stop that you fool remember remember he paid the contracts done the price is paid the deals done he's never going away you can never out fail him so Christians want to remember that week after week because you forget so fast and if you'd say well that's not me and I don't like you either you toughy well don't shoot the messenger I'm representing Jesus Christ who does call you a sinner and does say that justice must be done and you will face him one day you will meet him he'll call you out on it you will see him face to face on the other side of the grave and he's urging you tonight to say I want to be because you died and beat death I want you to be my saviour and my lord and

I want to be clean innocent reconciled and free come on Jesus that's what I want ask him and he will definitely grant it because that's why he came shall I say a prayer for us and then we'll get along do you see we got to the end of the story took a while though thank you heavenly father for your kindness to us thank you for a brilliant experience of watching Fraser be baptized show us what the death to the old me and the beginning of a new life represents thank you for their stories lord we've all got our own story to tell and when we go to bed tonight may each one of us have that unique story but may you be at the centre of the unique story as we turn and trust in Jesus Christ who forgives our sins amen