

Hey, Harry Reid, Is This Baptist Preacher a Liar Too?

Matthew Morgan was crumpled on the pavement, laying in a pool of blood. Bones had torn through his flesh. His left foot was nearly severed. As he lapsed into and out of consciousness, a jarring thought crossed the Baptist preacher's mind: He no longer had health insurance.

"That was one of the first thoughts I had after I got hit," Matthew told me in a telephone interview from his home in Indianola, Miss.

Matthew is a bivocational pastor. He ministers to two congregations and works a full-time job at the Indianola Pecan House. The 27-year-old is married and has four children. His oldest is 5; the youngest is 1. And on Feb. 17, he became a victim of Obamacare.

Matthew Morgan was a creature of habit. Every morning before the sun rose over the Mississippi Delta, he would lace up his running shoes and pound the pavement with three other runners. Twelve-mile runs were the norm, but on the 17th, they decided on a lighter run. The nine-mile run that day would take them deep into the countryside.

It was Monday. It was 5:45 a.m. The runners had just reached the turnaround point. Two were setting the pace. Matthew and another runner trailed behind. He saw a car approaching, and Matthew crossed over to the other side. It was a move that would soon have life-altering implications.

"I remember hearing tires squeal," he told me. "I turned around and saw very dim headlights. I tried to move out of the way."

But it was too late.

The 1999 Dodge Ram slammed into the young preacher. He was thrown onto the hood of the truck. His head swung around and busted out the passenger's side window. And then he was dumped onto the pavement.

"As soon as I was hit, I felt my leg break," he said. "I hit the ground in the fetal position."

Blood was everywhere. Bones were sticking out of his arm and leg. His injuries were graphic and grotesque. His left leg was shattered, ankle broken, the tibia completely ripped away. A bit of skin was the only thing holding his foot together. His left arm was broken.

Not once did Matthew lose consciousness. He remembers everything. And for a moment, he was alone in the darkness on that quiet stretch of country road. On one side was farmland. On the other a bayou.

"I remember praying, 'Lord, I don't mind coming home, but I feel like I have a little more work to do here,'" he said.

Using his broken arm, Matthew was able to pull the phone from his other arm and call his wife.

"I did not want to call her, but I had to," he said. "I told her I was broken all up. I had been hit by a truck and needed her to come and get me."

The other runners heard his screams and came to his side. Help was summoned—but it would take nearly 45 minutes for the ambulance to arrive. One of the runners called her husband—a doctor. Another doctor was also alerted.

The pain was unbearable. But there was nothing they could do but wait and pray.

"It was the most amazing worship service I ever had in my life," he told me. "Through the grace of God, I was able to be sustained out there."

The doctors arrived first and assessed that Matthew was in grave danger of losing his foot. They would have to reduce the compress fracture on site—in the middle of the road—without any medication.

“He took my foot and put it back on my leg,” he said. “He put everything back in place and wrapped it up.”

A bit later, the police and paramedics arrived and rushed the preacher to the nearest hospital, miles away. He was allowed to come home after a week in the hospital, but he still has to endure eight hours of daily antibiotic treatments. He’s confined to a wheelchair, and he faces more surgery in the coming days.

As if that’s not enough to worry about, Matthew has to figure out how to pay for his medical treatment. Because of the Affordable Care Act, he doesn’t have health insurance—and he’s now on the hook for more than \$100,000 in bills.

Matthew and his wife used to have insurance through Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Like many Americans, they received a letter in 2013 informing them of a hike in premiums. The couple had been paying \$550 per month for their plan, and Blue Cross was raising the rate by more than 15 percent. Even though they liked their insurance plan, Matthew said it was no longer in their budget.

“It was a significant increase that we could not afford,” he said. “We had to let it go and find something new that would be better for us financially.”

The Morgans tried to sign up for Obamacare on the website, but Matthew said that was a fruitless effort.

“We couldn’t get on the website,” he said. “That was one of our issues as we shopped around. Then we received the notification from the Internal Revenue Service that we would be penalized if we didn’t have health insurance. We were in

the process of trying to get it as soon as possible. The website being down did not help.”

The Morgans eventually found an insurance plan. It goes into effect in April—too late to help with their current predicament.

“The only reason our other insurance became expensive is when the Affordable Care Act came into play,” he told me. “I would still have the same health insurance if Obamacare had not been around.”

A few weeks ago, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said there is no such thing as Obamacare horror stories.

“There’s plenty of horror stories being told, all of them untrue—but they’re being told all over America,” Reid said in a speech on the Senate floor. “Republicans may need tall tales and outright lies to convince people that Obamacare’s bad for them, but Democrats—we don’t have to make things up.”

So is Matthew Morgan a liar, Sen. Reid? Are you trying to tell us that this Baptist preacher from Mississippi made up his story? Are you trying to say he doesn’t have an Obamacare horror story?

Maybe instead of playing partisan politics, Harry Reid could catch the next flight down to the Mississippi Delta and give this young preacher a helping hand—maybe mow the grass or buy a bag of groceries.

Matthew Morgan is a victim of Obamacare—one of many. But Democrats would like you to believe that people like Matthew are liars. Those are Harry Reid’s words.

I’d rather put my trust in a Baptist preacher than a leader of political party that booed God.

Editor’s note: A fund has been set up to help the Morgan family. Donations marked “Attn: The Matthew Morgan Fund” may

be sent to North Greenwood Baptist Church, 615 Grand Blvd., Greenwood, Miss., 38930.

Todd Starnes *is host of Fox News & Commentary, heard on hundreds of radio stations. Sign up for his American Dispatch newsletter, be sure to join his Facebook page, and follow him on Twitter. His latest book is God Less America.*