

The Wednesday Word, August 5, 2026: Guilty As Charged - Part 2

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There is an awfully confused caricature of God which often crops up in the thinking of those who are not Gospel-centred. God is viewed, by them, as being the God of the clenched fist and angry frown who peers over the side of Heaven with a magnifying glass in one hand and a club in the other just waiting for us to step out of line. But nothing could be farther from the truth. For example, in Matthew 12:20 we discover some excellent truth about God. Jesus, as you know, is the best self-portrait God ever painted and in Matthew 12 we discover that He will neither break the bruised reed nor extinguish the smoking flax. If anything was ever a picture of weakness it is the bruised reed. It's been walked all over and crushed. That's the way so many of us feel. We messed up! We failed! We couldn't keep the marriage together! We can't keep away from porn. We are guilty as charged. But the grace of God towards us is so amazing that we discover despite being in this beaten down condition, Jesus will not break us. For every failure Satan wants to smother us with guilt, but our Father in Heaven covers us with grace. Even in our greatest failures, Christ's grace remains unchanged and His throne of grace remains unshaken. I suspect this may make some of our self-righteous reader's squirm. Alas, for them the welcome of grace goes only to the strongest and is denied to the weakest---spiritual Darwinism at its best!

God's grace in Christ is unfathomably huge. However, if we sit around all day meditating on our past sins then we shut out the Gospel and live in condemnation. We may well mourn over our sins and their blackness, but now, as believers, we must always refuse to be condemned and guilt-ridden by them. We must learn to not define who we are by what we have and haven't done.

As we begin to become Christ-occupied we embrace that He has both lived and died for us. Being Christ occupied enables faith and confidence to grow in our hearts. We begin to see that Christ alone is our entire hope and righteousness. Faith sees and embraces that He is full of mercy, grace and compassion for His children. He will not crush you. The old Hymn says it well,

“There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in his justice,
which is more than liberty.
There is welcome for the sinner,

and more graces for the good;
there is mercy with the Savior;
there is healing in his blood.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such kind judgment given.
There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that has been shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.

For the love of God is broader
than the measure of man's mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful,
we should take him at his word;
and our life would be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord."

But we make His love too narrow
By false limits of our own;
And we magnify His strictness
With a zeal He will not own.
Was there ever kinder shepherd
Half so gentle, half so sweet,
As the Savior who would have us
Come and gather at His feet?"

And that's the Gospel Truth!