

How a Judge Showed the Love of God

I read a story this morning about a North Carolina judge who showed a unique bit of compassion.

The alcoholic veteran before him was guilty of lying about a urine test to his probation officer. He had served his country and was trying desperately to rebuild his life. But his PTSD made it very hard to overcome some of his worst habits.

The judge gave justice in the form of a 24-hour stay in jail. But then he did something amazing. The judge showed up in the one-person cell to spend the night with the guilty man. He didn't want the veteran to suffer through a difficult night alone.

You can read the entire story in *The Washington Post* [here](#).

This is the way Jesus loves you.

It's not a perfect illustration, but it gives a pretty good picture of what Christ does in the lives of His children.

He is just. He doesn't take your sin lightly. He knows that there are consequences for your sin, and He is the righteous judge who deals with it accordingly.

He is gracious. In spite of his judgment, Christ looks for every way to give you a second chance. He is generous with His forgiveness.

He is present. This is where the illustration of the judge in North Carolina really works. Just like this compassionate judge, our God is a compassionate God. He walks through the dark times with you.

When you are hurting, He is there, hurting and crying with you.

When you are rebellious, He patiently waits for you. Never holding back His love.

When you take the smallest steps to return home, He is the loving Father, running down the road to greet you and welcome you back with a celebration.

Finally, when you are going through our darkest times, He is sitting on the bed beside you, reminding you that He has been there. He has felt what you feel. And He is never going to leave your side.

That's good news, indeed!

*Adapted from , a ministry founded by **Barrett and Jenifer Johnson**. After serving in the local church for 25 years, Barrett and Jenifer launched INFO for Families as a ministry designed to encourage people through speaking, personal coaching and resource development. Barrett served for 15 years in youth ministry before serving for eight years as the Family Minister at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Atlanta, one of the largest churches in the South. He has degrees from Texas A&M University and Southwestern Seminary, but he and Jenifer have received their best education through the no-holds-barred nature of everyday family life.*