

A Review of *Future Grace* by John Piper
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*Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!*

But what is this amazing grace? How does it work? How is it appropriated? Why do we need it? What is the relationship of God's promises to His grace? What does God desire to be to us, for us, and in us? In *Future Grace*, John Piper answers these questions and many more. Piper's ultimate purpose in this book is that the living God would be prized, pursued and praised above all things. The overriding principles, and the burdens of his heart, that Piper wants us to understand are that,

"God is most glorified in us when we are *most satisfied in Him*."

"The faith that justifies also sanctifies, because the nature of faith is *to be satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus*."

Piper's aim and purpose in expounding the nature and the glories of grace is that we would understand that the Christian life *is one of faith*. Faith in the One who loved us and gave himself for us. That "saving faith means, in its essence, prizing the superior worth of all that God is for us in Jesus." That faith is the key to heaven, the key to a cleansed heart, the key to holiness, and that without practical holiness, no one will see the Lord. But that the holiness of God can only be achieved through an active and living faith in the God of future grace.

Piper is a systematic theologian, preacher, and revivalist in the tradition of Jonathan Edwards and other great puritans who loved and pursued the Word of God, and the God of the Word. As such, he presents the elements of grace and faith in a carefully arranged and logical manner. His presentation methodology is to set forth a premise regarding the Lord's grace, then explain, illuminate and clarify its meaning and intention in two or three chapters. Piper then presents one chapter to apply and drive home the principle for its intended purpose and effect in our minds and hearts and lives.

Piper concludes each major premise and section with a chapter of application aimed at combating the root cause of our sin and sins: *unbelief*. Piper shows how to overcome the excessive vanity and worldliness, which generates anxiety in our hearts. He reveals that the knowledge and belief that God is our only sufficiency and satisfaction, now and in the future, is the antidote to the pride that alienates from God. How can we understand the place of shame, its crippling effects, and how to be free of it? How do we "wait with God in the unplanned place of obedience, and walk with God at the unplanned pace of obedience when the specter of impatience rises in our hearts? This world offers us much, and seductively lays out its "charms" to us. These are the things of covetousness that compete for our contentment in God. Piper challenges us to flee the idolatry of covetousness through living by faith in future grace. Bitterness can rise up in us from many avenues, especially from the injustices dealt to us by others. Piper sets forth to us that the only cure for this virulent and infectious disease is by trusting in the future grace of God to settle all our accounts justly, at the proper time, and by treasuring as a rare and costly jewel the forgiveness we have in Jesus Christ. Piper argues that "the *ultimate* cause of all spiritual depression is unbelief", and that the only liberty to be found from its insidious grip on us is "by preaching truth to ourselves about God and his promised future". Piper warns us of the dangers of lust, and its consequences. The power of this pernicious evil is broken only when "our thirst for joy and meaning and passion are satisfied by the presence and promises of Christ".

Gentle reader, if you are afraid of truth, of conviction, of change, then this book is not for you. But, if you hunger and thirst for righteousness, and the grace and knowledge of the living God, then you will come away from this book with your soul satisfied ... with all that God is for you in Jesus.

*'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.*

John Newton