

THE TRINITY REVIEW

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare [are] not fleshly but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And they will be ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

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Pied Piper

John W. Robbins

Who would have thought, 20 years ago, that Biblical Christianity would have virtually disappeared from many so-called Presbyterian and Reformed churches in the United States by the end of the millennium, and that in The Year of Our Lord 2002 the major theological battlefield in those churches would be the Gospel—the doctrine of justification by faith alone? Yet that is exactly what has happened.

This movement is, in principle, a rediscovery of the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation.

The ill wind of Neolegalism is blowing away many elders of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), and the micro-Presbyterian denominations. This Neolegalist wind is blowing from the general direction of Rome, and it carries the stench of the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation.

Rather than claiming to be Roman, however, this Neolegalist movement claims to be covenantal, Reformed—even Calvinist. It has already swept some seminary graduates back to Rome—Scott Hahn is one of the more famous—but now it is being brazenly propagated by teachers and preachers who do not have the courage (and perhaps not even the integrity) of Hahn, and so do not intend to leave their positions

of income and influence in order to enter the Roman Church-State. To all appearances, the proponents of this Neolegalist theology intend to stay in Protestant churches and, in effect, transform them into theological colonies of Rome.

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Of course they deny that they are doing any such thing, and assert they are rediscovering a “rich tradition” that the Reformation, or the usual interpretation of the Reformation, has obscured. One of their tactics is to reinterpret the Reformers, so that they said something different from the Romanists, but not much different. We, the Neolegalists tell us, have misunderstood the Reformers, and even the Apostle Paul himself.

In Reformed circles this movement is associated with names such as Norman Shepherd (Christian Reformed), formerly on the faculty of Westminster Seminary; Richard Gaffin (OPC), presently on the faculty of Westminster Seminary; John Frame (PCA), formerly on the faculty of Westminster Seminary, now on the faculty of Reformed Seminary; Peter Leithart (PCA), currently on the faculty of New St. Andrews College in Moscow, Idaho; Peter Lillback (PCA), currently on the faculties of Reformed Epis-

copal Seminary and Westminster Seminary; and many others.

This movement is a confluence of several winds of doctrine that *The Trinity Review* has been warning our readers about for decades: the Reconstructionism-Theonomy of Rushdoony, North, Bahnsen, and their disciples; the Theology of Paradox of Van Til and his disciples; the Neo-Orthodoxy of Barth and his disciples; and also the Redemptive-Historical hermeneutic of Vos and his disciples.

These winds of doctrine have combined into a bitter Nor'easter of Neolegalism that

- Denies or renders insignificant individual election to salvation (and zealously condemns individualism);
- Denies that faith is assent to understood propositions (and belittles or denies propositional and literal truth);
- Denies that faith alone justifies;
- Denies that knowledge is necessary for salvation (and condemns those who insist on knowledge as "gnostics");
- Denies the covenant of works;
- Denies the meritorious work of Christ;
- Denies the imputation of the active righteousness of Christ to believers;
- Asserts that water baptism regenerates, washes away sins, and is necessary for salvation;
- Asserts that believers can lose their justification and salvation;
- Asserts that the final justification of believers depends on their performance;
- Asserts that God accepts less than perfect obedience for fulfilling the conditions of salvation;
- Asserts that persons who are neither elect nor believers of the Gospel are nevertheless "members of the covenant";
- Asserts infant communion;
- Asserts that good works are necessary conditions to obtain or retain salvation;
- Asserts that chronological theology is superior to systematic theology;
- Asserts that eschatology is soteriology.

Because the various Neolegalists are still working out the implications of their false and Antichristian

premises, (1) not all Neolegalists have yet arrived at all these conclusions; (2) they disagree with each other on details; and (3) more conclusions are still being developed. But enough has been published already to recognize here a virtual rediscovery of the soteriology of Romanism.

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There are many academics¹ who have set forth the foundations of this new gospel over the last 25 years in academic articles and books, and they have been teaching in the universities and seminaries, inculcating these ideas in their students, who now occupy the pulpits and classrooms of nominally Protestant churches and schools. One of the men who have propagated significant elements of this Neolegalism in wider circles is John Piper, pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis. His direct influence is far greater than most of the men listed above, for Piper is a very popular and prolific speaker and author.

According to his biography, John Stephen Piper was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1946. When he was young, his family moved to Greenville, South Carolina. At Wheaton College (1964-1968), Piper majored in Literature and minored in Philosophy. Studying Romantic Literature with C. S. Kilby, a C. S. Lewis scholar, "stimulated the poetic side of his nature," and today Piper "regularly writes poems to celebrate special family occasions as well as composing story-poems...for his congregation during the four weeks of Advent each year." Following college, Piper completed a Bachelor of Divinity degree at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California (1968-1971). While at Fuller, Piper took as many courses as he could from Daniel Fuller, whom he describes as the "most influential living teacher in his [my] life." Through Fuller, Piper discovered the writings of Jonathan Edwards, his "most influential dead teacher." Piper did his doctoral work in New Testament Studies at the University of Munich in West Germany (1971-1974). Upon completion of his doctorate he taught Biblical Studies at Bethel College

¹ A few of their names are N. T. Wright, James Dunn, Don Garlington, E. P. Sanders, and Daniel Fuller.

in St. Paul, Minnesota, for six years (1974-80). In 1980, “sensing an irresistible call of the Lord to preach,” Piper became the senior pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, where he has been ever since. Piper is the author of many books, including the subject of this essay, *The Purifying Power of Living by Faith in...Future Grace* (Multnomah and InterVarsity, 1995), hereafter *Future Grace*.

Daniel P. Fuller

Before we discuss Piper, however, we need to look briefly at his main mentor, Daniel Fuller. Fuller, Professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in California, a liberal institution whose faculty denies the inerrancy of Scripture,² is one of the most influential proponents of Neolegalism. His two books, *Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum?*³ and *The Unity of the Bible: Unfolding God’s Plan for Humanity*,⁴ have deeply influenced Piper and others. Fuller specially thanks Piper for his help in producing *The Unity of the Bible*,⁵ and Piper acknowledges his profound debt to Fuller in *Future Grace*. In his Foreword to *The Unity of the Bible*, Piper wrote:

No book besides the Bible has had a greater influence on my life than Daniel Fuller’s *The Unity of the Bible*. When I first read it as a classroom syllabus over twenty years ago, everything began to change.... God’s law stopped being at odds with the gospel. It stopped being a job description for earning wages under a so-called covenant of works (which I never could find in the Bible)....

This inability to see the covenant of works in Scripture is a common defect among Neolegalists. They assert that Adam could not have earned or merited eternal life for his obedience, because God does not deal with men on a works-principle, but solely by “grace.” Even in the Garden, before the Fall, God dealt with Adam solely on the principle of “grace,” not works. Therefore one covenant—which

they misleadingly call the “covenant of grace”—is what forms the “unity of the Bible.”

If Adam was not a party to the covenant of works, as these men assert, then neither was Christ, the Second and Last Adam. Therefore, Christ could not, did not, and was not supposed to pay the debts of, and earn salvation for, his people.

One consequence of this denial of the covenant of works is that if Adam was not a party to the covenant of works, as these men assert, then neither was Christ, the Second and Last Adam. Therefore, Christ could not, did not, and was not supposed to pay the debts of, and earn salvation for, his people. As the Second and Last Adam, Christ did not by his active and passive obedience fulfill the Law of God, pay the debts of his people, and merit their salvation. Thus the denial of the covenant of works is an attack on the justice of God: on the imputation of Adam’s sin to his children, on the active obedience and work of Christ, on the imputation of Christ’s active obedience and righteousness to believers. By denying that Adam and Christ, as federal heads of their respective races, were subject to the covenant of works before the court of God’s justice, not his grace, each Adam being required to fulfill the terms of the covenant, one failing miserably, and the other succeeding perfectly, the Neolegalists put all believers on probation, and make their salvation depend on their own evangelical obedience.

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This theological error may be traced back to Rome, via Arminianism and Barthianism.⁶

Fuller characterizes the justice principle that informs the covenant of works as “the highest kind of blasphemy”:

Were...covenant theolog[ians] to perceive that the obedience of faith is the only kind of obedience that is ever acceptable to the “God who

² See Harold Lindsell’s *The Battle for the Bible* for details.

³ Eerdmans, 1980.

⁴ Zondervan, 1992.

⁵ “And very special thanks are due to John Piper, senior pastor at Bethlehem Baptist Church of Minneapolis.... His writing of the Foreword reflects his deep investment in this work” (viii).

⁶ The title of Fuller’s *Gospel and Law* is the same as a 1935 work by Barth, whom he quotes with approbation in order to assert the alleged dangers of Luther’s distinction between Law and Gospel.

will not give his glory to another” (Isa 42:8), they could make the blessing Adam was to receive after passing his probationary test a work of grace rather than the payment of debt, and therefore would not make themselves vulnerable to the charge that the kind of righteousness Adam and Christ were to perform was the highest kind of blasphemy.⁷

Fuller believes the covenant of works involves the “highest kind of blasphemy” because it implies that man can, by fulfilling the covenant of works, “put God in his debt.” By using a speculative notion of God’s dealings with man, rather than the actual covenantal arrangements revealed in Scripture in which God commits himself to punish and reward the disobedience and obedience of the First and Last Adams as the federal representatives of their races, Fuller eliminates the Bible’s doctrine of salvation, for divine justice disappears. All that remains is Barth’s confused “covenant of grace,” which includes all men.

Fuller wrote: “I would say that Moses was justified by the work, or obedience, of faith.... [There are] many passages in Scripture in which good works are made the instrumental cause of justification.”

By eliminating the antithesis between Law and Gospel, Fuller eliminates the Gospel:

I then had to accept the very drastic conclusion that the antithesis between law and gospel established by Luther, Calvin, and the covenant theologians could no longer stand up under the scrutiny of biblical theology.⁸

Fuller wrote: “I would say that Moses was justified by the work, or obedience, of faith.... [There are] many passages in Scripture in which good works are made the instrumental cause of justification.”⁹ Calvin, according to Fuller, had to go through exegetical and logical “contortions” and to “fly in the face of

Scripture’s plain language” in order to maintain the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone.¹⁰

John Piper

Pastor Piper’s popularity expands with each new publication he pens. In 1995 he published *The Purifying Power of Living by Faith in...Future Grace*. Piper’s pink prose—flowery, ambiguous, and suspiciously pious—flows for 400 pages in this book on sanctification, and its effect is to subvert the Reformation.

Fuller explicitly denies justification by faith alone and explicitly asserts justification by faith and works. Piper, his faithful student, arrives at the same conclusion.

Piper is a disciple of Daniel Fuller. Piper writes:

Daniel Fuller’s vision of the Christian life as an “obedience of faith” is the garden in which the plants of my ponderings have grown. Almost three decades of dialogue on the issues in this book have left a deep imprint. If I tried to show it with footnotes, they would be on almost every page. His major work, *The Unity of the Bible...*, is explanatory background to most of what I write (7).

As we have already seen, Fuller explicitly denies justification by faith alone and explicitly asserts justification by faith and works. Piper, his faithful student, trusted friend, and editor, arrives at the same conclusion. Piper denies justification by faith alone while professing to accept Biblical soteriology—which makes his work all the more dangerous. The most effective attack on truth, the most subversive attack on the doctrine of the completeness and efficacy of the work of Christ for the salvation of his people, is always couched in pious language and Biblical phraseology.

Piper’s focus, as one can tell from the title, is what he calls “future grace.” The phrases “future grace” and “faith in future grace” appear hundreds, if not thousands, of times in the book. It is a clever propaganda device that has been used many times: Repeat a phrase so often that the reader cannot get it out of his mind. But what does Piper mean by the

⁷ Daniel P. Fuller, “A Response on the Subjects of Works and Grace,” *Presbyterian: A Journal for the Eldership*, Volume IX, Numbers 1-2, Spring-Fall 1983, 76.

⁸ Fuller, *Gospel and Law*, xi.

⁹ Fuller, “A Response on the Subjects of Works and Grace,” 79.

¹⁰ Fuller, “A Response on the Subjects of Works and Grace,” 79.

phrase? In fact, what does he mean by “faith”? The answers are revealing. Here are his own words: “...the focus of my trust is what God promised to do for me in the future” (6).

This may not be the central error of Piper’s book, but it comes close. The focus of saving faith is not what God has promised to do for us in the future, but what God has already done for us in Christ. Christians preach and trust only Christ crucified, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Christ crucified is the sole focus of Biblical, saving, faith; it is the focus of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, by which we remember the Lord’s death; and it is the focus of worship in Heaven (see *Revelation* 5), with endless future ages before it. Piper wants to change that focus, from Christ crucified to something else. In attempting to change the focus of our faith, he avoids discussing, although he grudgingly admits, that all the benefits Christians receive from God are because of what Christ has already done on their behalf and in their place.¹¹ Piper’s admission is grudging, for he wants to argue that our future happiness, benefits, and final salvation depend upon our meeting conditions that God has established for receiving those blessings. In Piper’s Plan of Salvation, despite what Christ said on the cross, “It is *not* finished.” The believer must complete the work of salvation that Christ began. Future grace is conditional, and it is we, not Christ, who must meet those conditions.

Because Piper’s focus is on benefits we may receive in the future, this long and repetitive book omits any discussion of the Satisfaction by Christ of the justice of the Father (although Piper has a great deal to say about *our* being satisfied); it fails to discuss either Christ’s active or passive obedience; it omits any serious discussion of the imputation of sin and righteousness (imputation is mentioned in passing); it omits any discussion of the law of God; it omits discussion of the covenant of works; it fails to mention Adam and Christ as our legal representatives; and it depreciates the law and justice of God.

Piper opens the book with an attack on thanksgiving—he calls it gratitude—as a proper motive for Christian obedience. Thanksgiving is backward looking; it is not future-oriented. It is op-

posed to and conflicts with faith in future grace. Nevertheless, thanksgiving is taught in Scripture as a proper motive for obedience, and Piper grudgingly admits it. But he devalues thanksgiving because it involves what he disparagingly calls the “debtors’ ethic.” Debt, merit, and justice belong to another theological universe, not Piper’s. Rather than thanksgiving, it is “faith in future grace” that properly motivates obedience, and Piper quotes verses that are silent on the point in an attempt to support his claim.

According to Piper, future grace is conditional, and it is we personally, not Christ, who must meet those conditions.

Piper writes: “But we do not live in the past.... All of our life will be lived in the future. Therefore when we try to make gratitude empower this future obedience, something goes wrong. Gratitude is primarily a response to the past grace of God; it malfunctions when forced to function as motivation for the future...” (47). This is an asinine argument. His “therefore” does not indicate a logical inference, for there is no logical argument, but merely a rhetorical flourish. (One is tempted to point out, in keeping with this silliness, that none of our lives will be lived in the future; all of our lives will be lived in the present.) What Piper’s new focus for faith implies is that we must depreciate the past, which cannot be changed, and bank on benefits that may never eventuate for us, since their eventuating—which Piper misleadingly calls future “grace” —is conditioned on our obedience, our works.

It turns out that Piper’s “future grace,” which is to be the focus of our faith, is subjective, infused grace. “Future grace” is not an attribute or quality of God; it is not the unmerited favor of God. “Future grace” is “grace” that God will infuse into us; and it is this subjective “grace” that is to be the focus of our faith. Piper writes: “...the heart-strengthening power that comes from the Holy Spirit...is virtually the same as what I mean by future grace” (69). Piper shifts the focus of our faith from the objective, historical Christ to our present, subjective experience; from the meritorious, alien work of Christ outside of us to our own works, done by the power of the Holy Spirit; from the perfect, objective, imputed righteousness of Christ to our imperfect, subjective righteousness; from the life and death of Christ in history to what

¹¹ He also makes conflicting statements, such as this: “All true virtue comes from faith in future grace; and all sin comes from lack of faith in future grace” (323).

the Holy Spirit is doing and will do in our lives. “And this faith in future grace,” Piper pontificates, “is the faith through which we are justified” (191).

“Future grace” is “grace” that God will infuse into us; and it is this subjective “grace” that is to be the focus of our faith.

It is not faith in the finished and effective work of Christ on the cross, but faith in “future grace,” which Piper has defined as “the power that comes from the Holy Spirit,” that justifies the sinner. Piper approvingly quotes his mentor, Daniel Fuller:

A faith that only looks back to Christ’s death and resurrection is not sufficient.... Forgiveness for the Christian also depends on having...a futuristic faith in God’s promises. Thus we cannot regard justifying faith as sufficient if it honors only the past fact of Christ’s death and resurrection but does not honor the future promises of God... (206-207).

Fuller, of course, attacks a straw man, a figment of his own imagination. But the effect of this clever attack is to deny that the faith that justifies has the meritorious work of Jesus Christ as its sole object.

Piper writes: “Before sin entered the world, Adam and Eve experienced God’s goodness not as a response to their demerit (since they didn’t have any) but still without deserving God’s goodness.... So even before they sinned, Adam and Eve lived on grace” (76). “All the covenants of God are conditional covenants of grace,” Piper prevaricates. “They offer all-sufficient future grace for those who keep the covenant” (248). Please note the adjective “all-sufficient,” and please note that this future grace is all-sufficient, not for believers, but “for those who keep the covenant.”

According to Piper, there was no justice in Eden, only “grace.” There were (at first) no demerits, nor were there merits. The sinless, obedient Adam and Eve did not deserve God’s goodness. The fact that God had already given commands and (implicitly) promised reward for obedience (that is what the Tree of Life was for) and (explicitly) threatened punishment (death) for disobedience, thus establishing a legal, juridical framework, means nothing to Piper. It was all “grace.” It is important to realize that Piper uses the word “grace” in an un-Scriptural sense, for in

Piper’s theology no one deserves the goodness of God—not innocent Adam, not sinless Jesus.¹² Piper’s “grace” forms no contrast with sin, merit, desert, or works, as it does in Scripture, because there is no merit in Piper’s theology. With the disappearance of divine justice from his theology, it no longer remains Christian. In Piper’s theology, God is not, and cannot be, *just* and the *justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus*.

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Piper tells us that future grace is conditional grace, but meeting these conditions is not meritorious: “It is possible to meet a condition for receiving grace and yet not earn the grace. Conditional grace does not mean earned grace” (79). Those acquainted with Romanist theology may recognize here in Piper’s conditions something akin to the Romanist doctrine of congruent merit. Meeting conditions is not an example of condign merit—that is, Real Merit, but it is an example of congruent “merit,” a “merit” that is not really merit.

How does Piper try to evade the charge of teaching salvation by works? Simple: *He redefines works*. “The term ‘works,’ ” he asseverates, “refers to the warfare of righteousness unempowered by faith...in future grace” (220). So, by definition, a person who has “faith in future grace” cannot do any works. His

¹² Piper tells us that it was “future grace that awaited him [Jesus] on the other side of the cross” (307). But *Hebrews* and *Romans* say that the joy Jesus received was a reward that had been promised to him by the Father, a reward that he had earned by his perfect obedience to the Father. When Christ prayed, “I have glorified you on the Earth, I have finished the work which you have given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify me together with yourself, with the glory which I had with you before the world was,” he was asking for the reward that he had earned by doing the work assigned. The transaction is one of pure justice, not grace. He was asking for his wages, for what was his *by right*. *Jesus Christ earned and deserved his reward*. To deny the merits of Christ, to deny the justice of God, is to deny the whole of Christianity.

efforts, his labors, his doings are not works, because they are “empowered by faith in future grace,” and therefore his salvation is not and cannot be conditioned on works, but on the “obedience of faith.” Theology is a word game for the Neolegalists.

Piper’s propensity to play with words is also evident in his treatment of faith. Harping on a tiresome theme of the Neolegalists, Piper asserts that “belief is not merely an agreement with facts in the head; it is also an appetite for God in the heart” (86).

Not only does this statement rest upon an un-Scriptural dichotomy between the head and the heart, but it also obscures a clear and meaningful idea by a vague and meaningless phrase. Forty years ago Gordon Clark demonstrated through painstaking exegesis that the Bible teaches no head-heart dichotomy, yet contemporary theologians write in complete ignorance of his work and expect their readers to take them seriously. This discloses not only their ignorance of Scripture, but also their poor scholarship. What “an appetite for God” might be, if it is not a desire to learn, know, and believe more truth about him—all of which is intellectual—pietistic Piper gives no hint.

Piper repeatedly attacks the Scriptural idea that saving faith is understanding revealed propositions and accepting them as true. Many times he writes: “Believing that Christ and his promises are true...is a necessary part of faith. But it is not sufficient to turn faith into saving faith” (201). Of course, the Holy Spirit and the apostle disagree: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.” Piper acknowledges that “If we go wrong on the nature of faith, everything in the Christian life will go wrong” (209). He is quite correct on this point—in fact, his theology unintentionally illustrates this point. One of the subtlest ways to deny justification by faith alone is to change the definition of *faith*. Piper presents us with several different definitions of *faith*:

But I want to say a bit more than [Charles] Hodge does. I don’t want to say merely that faith in promises produces “confidence, joy and hope,” but that an *essential element* in the faith itself is confidence and joy and hope. [Aren’t these *three* elements?] It is not false to say that faith *produces* these things. But that does not contradict the other truth: that confidence and joy and hope are part of the warp and woof of faith.... [T]he essence of

saving faith is a spiritual apprehension or tasting of spiritual beauty, which *is* delight (205).

Again Piper obscures truth with his pied, pink prose. What, exactly, does “tasting spiritual beauty” mean? Is it akin to “smelling spiritual loveliness”? What good purpose is there in deliberately obfuscating the nature of faith with such vague and meaningless figures of speech? On the next page, “It is the ‘embracing of spiritual beauty’ that is the essential core of saving faith.” Just a few lines earlier, Piper had told us that “an essential element of faith is a sense of revulsion.”

Piper proclaims: “I am hard pressed to imagine something more important for our lives than fulfilling the covenant that God has made with us for our final salvation.”

In chapter 19, “How Many Conditions Are There?” Piper actually enumerates 11 conditions we must meet if we want any “future grace”: loving God, being humble, drawing near to God, crying out to God from the heart, fearing God, delighting in God, hoping in God, taking refuge in God, waiting for God, trusting in God, and keeping God’s covenant, which he says is the summary of the first 10. Piper proclaims: “I am hard pressed to imagine something more important for our lives than fulfilling the covenant that God has made with us for our final salvation” (249). Consider his words carefully. Piper does not mean that the work of Christ in perfectly fulfilling the covenant on behalf of his people is the most important thing he can think of for our final salvation; he says that we personally, or as he says, “experientially,” fulfill the covenant on our own behalf, and that our fulfillment of the covenant is the most important thing for our final salvation. We ourselves “fulfill the covenant that God has made with us for our final salvation.” Furthermore, keep in mind his description of “future grace”: “the heart-strengthening power that comes from the Holy Spirit...is virtually the same as what I mean by future grace.” Therefore, if we fulfill the conditions required of us, if we obey the covenant, then God will give us “the heart-strengthening power that comes from the Holy Spirit,” and we will be saved. This is not the Gospel. It is a pious fraud.

Here is the Gospel, expressed in a poem by Augustus Toplady:

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save and thou alone.¹³

Many essays related to the topics of justification, sanctification, and their relationship to God's law and covenant may be found at <http://www.trinityfoundation.org/>.

To return to Piper's various definitions of *faith*: "All these acts of the heart [the 11 conditions he has cited for receiving future grace] are overlapping realities with saving faith. Faith is not identical with any of them, nor they with faith. But elements of each are woven into what faith is" (252). Keep in mind that Romanism has only seven theological virtues; Piper has out-poped the papists.

But the worst is yet to come: There are still more conditions required for obtaining future grace: doing good deeds, not practicing the works of the flesh, and loving the brethren, to name three. Now here's the catch: Unless Piper has provided a complete list of the conditions we must meet in order to "fulfill the covenant" and obtain "our final salvation," the Piper Plan of Salvation is worthless. To be worth anything, a plan of salvation must be complete. But even with centuries to ponder the question, the Roman Church-State did not come up with a complete list of conditions the sinner must meet to obtain final salvation, and so it invented Purgatory, where all unfulfilled conditions for salvation may be met. The sinner may and usually does endure millions of years of torment in Purgatory, but at long last the persevering sinner fulfills the conditions required for final salvation. Perhaps one of Pastor Piper's future publications will be *Piper Proves Purgatory*. Then we shall have a rediscovery of Romanist eschatology, as the Neolegalists continue to work out the implications of their false and Antichristian premises.

There are many more errors in *Future Grace*, but this discussion has disclosed some of the most important.

The music is gay; it will lead you astray:
Beware the Pied Piper.

¹³ This poem, of course, is the second verse of *Rock of Ages*. Poetry need not be vague or mystical, as some incompetent poets tell us. It can be and ought to be used to teach truth, not error, as Scripture and Toplady use it.