

“THE PURIFYING POWER OF LIVING BY FAITH IN...
FUTURE GRACE”

Study Guide

I. A Foe to Faith in Future Grace

Chapter One: The Debtor’s Ethic: Should We Try to Pay God Back?

What is gratitude?

1. Define gratitude in the dictionary sense of the word. What are some things you have gratitude for or people you have gratitude towards? Why? Compare your definition with the authors’ definition.

The Birthplace of the debtor’s ethic

3. Describe debtor’s ethic to the best of your ability and explain how this changes what gratitude should be.

3. So does gratitude nullify grace? Explain.

4. Give an example of how you have been caught up in debtor’s ethic? Does not have to be spiritual but definitely can be.

Should we pay God back?

5. After reading this section, how has your thinking been challenged or supported? Can you think of any places in scripture where gratitude or thankfulness is the explicit motive for moral behavior? Is this a new idea to you? Explain.

Was ingratitude the problem?

6. Read Numbers 14:11; Deuteronomy 1:31-32 & Psalms 78:15, 17&22. From your understanding and interpretation, what is the cause of the people’s sin?

7. The author makes the case that _____ is the missing ethical power to overcome rebellion and motivate obedience.

The fear of the Lord and faith in future grace

8. Read Deuteronomy 6:2; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Nehemiah 5:9; Proverbs 23:17; Psalms 115:11; Hebrews 11:6; Psalms 40:3 & Exodus 14:31 and surrounding passages to get the full accounts. Then explain how fear, faith and future grace all fit together.

Pay your vows to the Most High

9. What is a vow?

10. Have you ever made a vow to God? Did you follow through on keeping it? Explain.

11. Read the scriptures under this section. What do they say about making vows?

Is Paying Vows an example of the Debtors ethic?

12. Read Psalms 116:7-14. What has God done for the Psalmist? How did the Psalmist react [vs. 7, 13, and 14]?

13. What do you think is meant by “lift up the cup of salvation” and “call upon the name of the Lord” in regard to “I shall pay my vows to the Lord”?

Faith in Future Grace protects gratitude from the debtor's ethic

14. Read Psalms 50: 9-15. What does this passage tell you about how to show gratitude to God? Does this better help clarify the Psalm 116 passage? If so how?

15. In summary, what purpose did God intend gratitude to play? How is this different from the debtor's ethic? What is wrong with the debtor's ethic?