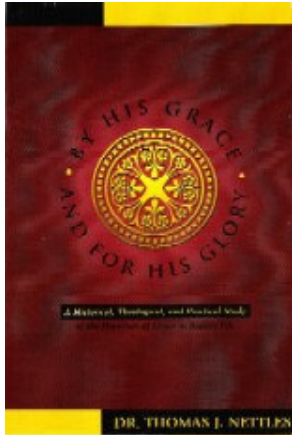


# Read 'Em and Reap!

Evangelical Christian Book Reviews

Hebrews 5:14



**By His Grace and For His Glory** – Dr. Thomas Nettles

Most people familiar with Southern Baptist life today can explain the Cooperative Program, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, and other staples of Southern Baptist heritage. But, how many can articulate the history of this largest denomination in North America? In terms of theology, how many know that the Doctrines of Grace, or Calvinism, which is now spoken of in terms such as “diabolical,” “hell-conceived,” “destructive,” and “pagan” was, in fact the dominant theology during the first 275 years of modern Baptist life?

Dr. Thomas J. Nettles, in 1986 published this book as a definitive history of the Doctrines of Grace in

Baptist life. Now, after having been out of print for a number of years, it has been republished (2002).

He traces the history of Calvinism and how it was embraced by the early theologians in Baptist life. From John Bunyan and Benjamin Keach, to Isaac Backus and Adoniram Judson, to John Dagg and Patrick Mell, to Basil Manly, J.P. Boice and John Broadus, Nettles examines what each man believed and taught about Total Depravity, Election, Effectual Calling, Irresistible Grace and Perseverance of the Saints.

It was at the end of the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that men like E.Y. Mullins, Herschel Hobbs and L.R. Scarborough began to take Southern Baptists away from the long held orthodoxy. Though, all the reasons are impossible to articulate because of their elusiveness, Nettles says that there were a few things that can be pointed to. One of those things is the Cooperative Program. He says, “Orthodoxy is now described in terms of support for the program rather than as reflective of the [Baptist Faith and Message] confession” (p.244). Another thing was the increasing indifference toward doctrine, in which the distinctives were not only overlooked but distinctiveness was discouraged by many contemporary Southern Baptists.

Nettles, in the second section of the book, gives an exposition of the Doctrines of Grace, complete with answers to various objections. The final section is Practical Exhortations, which include the Doctrine of Assurance, the Liberty of Conscience, and World Mission & Bold Confidence. According to Nettles, each of these exhortations can only be rooted in a firm adherence to what the Southern Baptist Denomination was originally built upon – The Doctrines of Grace!

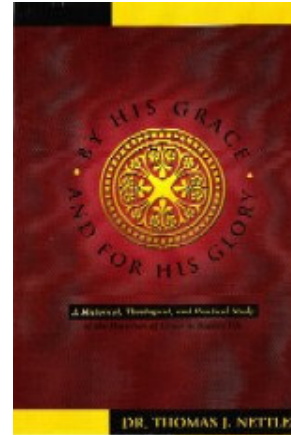
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