

Though Lupton's work lacks theological substance, it is filled with practical insights. Once a church or believer determines they need to do good to all people and to love their neighbor, they must face the question of how to carry out those commands. *Toxic Charity* is a valuable resource in answering that question. In providing examples of both flawed approaches and effective approaches, Lupton's book shows how to avoid hurting the people one is seeking to help.

Ben Edwards

For Calvinism, by Michael Horton. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. 196 pp. \$16.99.

Michael Horton, Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Seminary California, writes for those outside the Reformed tradition, "to consider its rich resources for faith and practice in the twenty-first century" (15). He desires to press believers to examine the Scriptures and grow from "vague sentiments" to "explicit convictions" about God's sovereignty in providence and salvation (16). Appealing to the college or early seminary reader, Horton gives an irenic account of Calvinism and defends it against its most common attacks. His knowledge of Calvin, the Protestant Reformation, Arminius, and Wesley lend credibility and depth to his account.

Horton outlines his book according to the Synod of Dordt's five canons, adding chapters on the Christian life, Christian missions, and an analysis of the New Calvinism. Romans 3, 1 Corinthians 2, and Ephesians 2 form the backbone of his defense of the bondage of the unconverted will to sin and unbelief. He stresses that the problem is not with human will as God created it but with the perversion of that will due to the free choice of Adam.

Romans 9 is the centerpiece of Horton's exposition of unconditional personal election to salvation. He answers objections that this text refers only to nations and not to individuals by pointing to the "children of promise" language, which he takes as "clearly soteriological" (60).

Horton's argument on the atonement is that every model with biblical support can be explained as a facet of "vicarious substitution, addressing the objective problem of guilt before a holy God" (90). From there, he believes that the efficacy terminology associated with vicarious substitution supports the idea that "the specific intention of Christ as he went to the cross was to save his elect" (92).

Horton cuts down a caricature in his treatment of efficacious grace: "The will is liberated, not violated" (107). That is not to say that individuals are granted contrarian free will in regeneration, rather, the renewal sinners receive gives "us our voice back, so that we can join the choir of praise to God's glorious grace" (111).

Consistent with the original historical setting of these canons, Horton points up the weaknesses of Arminian objections to Calvinism along the way. He shows how Arminians inevitably come to the ostensibly Calvinist conclusion, "God could have prevented [evil] but decided to allow it" (59). Horton's comments also tell against Olson's recent censure of Calvinism, "Classic Arminianism and Calvinism actually agree that God chose not to save everyone.... Arminians hold that it is more important to God to give people free will to decide their own destiny than it is to save everyone" (63). In a final section, Horton answers some practical objections to Calvinism, endeavoring to show that Calvinism as a system and as a movement has had few rivals in the Christian pursuit of holiness, hard work, and global missions.

The greatest strength of *For Calvinism* would be evident in a casual, even superficial, comparison of this book with Olson's counterpart. The consistent use of a multitude of Scripture passages from Moses to Isaiah to John, puts the lie to Olson's claim that Calvinism's vision of divine sovereignty is based on a few isolated texts. By comparison, Arminianism's strength seems to rest solely on an egalitarian understanding of 1 John 4:8 and John 3:16. In addition, two points from Horton's treatment of the Christian life shine. First, Horton's radical view of ethics does the Calvinist tradition proud: good deeds that are not done "out of love for God" are worthless before God (125). Second, Horton's explanation of how God works to make his people holy and happy through the preaching of the word and the administration of Christ's ordinances challenges readers to be more biblical and less esoteric about sanctification. Horton's skepticism about the New Calvinism's sustainability apart from the life of particular local churches is also refreshing.

On the other hand, I felt that Horton failed to convincingly answer objections to particular redemption in chapter 4 and objections to the Reformed approach to the Ten Commandments "not as the way *to* life but as the way *of* life" in chapter 6 (124). Also while Horton's emphasis on divine initiative is well supported by Scripture throughout the book, his treatment of human responsibility, specifically the Christian's responsibility to actively pursue obedience, was incomplete at best and misleading at worst. Those who are looking for a clear vision of the active cultivation of Christlikeness in the Reformed tradition will need to look elsewhere.

Horton provides a winsome, knowledgeable defense of Calvinism, and while I have reservations here and there, on the whole I would recommend it for anyone interested in pushing beyond the fad to the substance of Calvinism.

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