The one area that could be an improvement of the book relates to referential framework. In treating denominational distinctives one must have solid scriptural arguments (in this Bauder shines)—this is the preferential approach. But the support of historical source material via footnotes or at least recommendations of appropriate references would have supported what otherwise appears to be Bauder's assumptions or preferences. His normal frame of reference is what he is most familiar with—the GARBC and related groups. But a larger historical framework would have added perspective and even greater credibility to his assertions. This is done occasionally and, where it is done, with great effect. But footnotes are generally sparse. For example, when Bauder introduces his study with hermeneutical assumptions that he finds implicit in mainstream Baptist thought, I would like to have seen some evidence for this, even in the form of suggested studies. Certainly, such an addition would increase the book's length, perhaps considerably, but would also enhance its value. Yet, all in all, this is a superbly written manual on how to have orderly churches. And heaven knows we need them in these desperate times of uncertainty and unbelief. I highly recommend this book and encourage every Baptist pastor and church member to read and heed its contents.

Gerald L. Priest

Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (and How to Reverse It), by Robert D. Lupton. New York: Harper One, 2011. 191 pp. $22.99.

You drive up to a man in tattered clothes standing by the road holding a sign stating he is hungry and asking for help. A poorly dressed woman approaches you asking for money to buy food for her children. You watch a video about the destitute orphans overseas and hear the plea to help with just a small payment each month. As a Christian, your heart is moved with compassion for these individuals, so you give of your own limited resources to provide aid. But does your act of kindness benefit the individual, or does it harm him? In *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (and How to Reverse It)*, Robert D. Lupton argues that much charitable work is destructive for those receiving the gift. Lupton is the founder and president of Focused Community Strategies (FCS) Urban Ministries, based in Atlanta, GA. He has lived and served in inner-city Atlanta for nearly forty years, focusing on neighborhood and community development. Lupton has a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Georgia and is also the author of four other books on Christians and urban ministries: *Theirs Is the Kingdom*; *Return Flight*; *Renewing the City*; and *Compassion, Justice and the Christian Life*.

Charities are a big industry in the United States. Millions of dollars and thousands of hours of manpower are given each year in an effort to relieve the hurting. Unfortunately, much of that effort is toxic in nature because it offers crisis relief instead of development. Lupton proposes an "Oath for Compassionate Service," similar to the Hippocratic Oath, that would better serve charitable efforts. First, "Never do for the poor what they have (or could have) the capacity to do for themselves." Second, "Limit one-way giving to emergency situations." Third, "Strive to empower the poor through employment, lending, investing, using grants sparingly to reinforce achievements." Fourth, "Subordinate self-interests to the needs of those being served." Fifth, "Listen closely to those you seek to help, especially to what is not being said—unspoken feelings may contain essential clues to effective service." And sixth, "Above all, do no harm" (8–9). Lupton expounds on these principles through the rest of the book, weaving real-life examples of how these principles were either abused or successfully implemented.

One poignant illustration comes from Lupton's first Christmas as a resident of inner-city Atlanta. As he was enjoying coffee in his neighbor's home on Christmas Eve, a family from the suburbs arrived bringing their donated Christmas gifts. Lupton watched as the mom had to mask her own embarrassment from the guests and then make an excuse to the children for their dad's sudden disappearance. Though Lupton had often shared the experience of the family coming in from the suburbs, for the first time he witnessed the experience of the struggling families living in the city. This incident, combined with several more to come, solidified in Lupton's mind the danger of much of charity work. Too often, giving boosts the pride of the giver while simultaneously humiliating and hurting the receiver. Lupton replaced their adopt-a-family program for giving gifts at Christmas with a Family Store. Those who wanted to help donated unwrapped gifts to the store, where low-income families could then purchase them at bargain prices or work in the store to be able to provide the gifts for their family. In this way, those in need could maintain their dignity as persons while still receiving help.

Lupton's book is ostensibly Christian, but evangelicals will find no real theological value in the work. Lupton rarely cites Scripture passages, and when he does there is no attempt at expositing the passage. For example, he uses Matthew 25:40 to assert that helping the poor is like helping Jesus but offers no defense for that interpretation of "the least of these my brothers." In fact, he even removes "my brothers" through the use of ellipses (44). He interacts with Christian writers and thinkers, but not on a theological level. Instead, the focus is always on the practical nature of charity work. Lupton addresses the effectiveness of short-term mission trips, food pantries, international aid, and other programs by considering their ability to relieve physical suffering and provide for better earthly lives. Those searching for biblical evaluations of these efforts or for their connection to spiritual and eternal realities will need to look elsewhere.

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).