

commentator Ambrosiaster, who tells us that Christianity came to Rome through Jews who believed in Jesus, and the second-century Roman historian Tacitus, who connects Christianity in Rome to Judea. Therefore, Longenecker concludes, the addressees of this letter were Christians with strong ties to the Jerusalem church.

Longenecker's second distinct contribution builds upon the first. Observing that Romans 1:18–4:25 utilizes Jewish and Christian assumptions which Paul's addressees would have held in common with Paul, Longenecker argues that the focus of the letter is actually Romans 5–8: "My proposal, then, is that the materials of 5–8 should be viewed as expressing the focus of what Paul writes in Romans, and particularly the section that contains the 'spiritual gift' that he says he wants to give the Christians at Rome in 1:11 and that he speaks about as being 'my gospel' in 2:16 and 16:25" (373). Romans 5–8 is the essence of the gospel Paul proclaimed in his Gentile mission. In fact, according to Longenecker, explaining this distinct gospel is one of the primary purposes Paul wrote his letter to the Romans. In lieu of being able to visit them, he wrote to give them a "spiritual gift" (Rom 1:11), "which he thought of as something uniquely his (cf. his reference to 'my gospel' in 16:25; also see 2:16)" (158).

In my view, these two theses put too much weight on the brief comments of Ambrosiaster and Tacitus, and Paul's two references to "my gospel" (16:25 and 2:16—should we think of the idea that God will judge the secrets of people through Christ as distinctly Pauline?). But it will be interesting to see how Longenecker develops and defends them further in his forthcoming commentary.

In conclusion, who should read this book? Busy pastors may find that its detail makes it unhelpful to their sermon preparation. Why would they need to know every scholar who has ever disputed the Pauline authorship of Romans, a position which is surely untenable? However, those looking for a one-stop-shop for everything Pauline scholars have said about the introductory issues in Romans will find this book to be an invaluable resource.

Kevin W. McFadden

*You Mean I Don't Have to Tithe? A Deconstruction of Tithing and a Reconstruction of Post-Tithe Giving*, by David A. Croteau. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010. xvi + 380 pp. \$44.00.

The last several years has seen a surge in materials detailing discontinuities between the Old Testament and New Testament peoples of God. David VanDrunen, Michael Horton, Darryl Hart, and until his recent defection, Joshua Stelman have led the way in explaining how the Christian relates differently to the two kingdoms than did his OT Israelite counterpart, resulting in an ethic sharply different from the prevailing

“already/not-yet” one-kingdom ethic of neo-Calvinism. Jim Hamilton, Alan Cole, and others are affirming discontinuities between the “old covenant” and “new covenant” ministries of the Spirit so thorough that even some dispensationalists are squirming. New Covenant Theology, having emerged from early obscurity as a little-noticed Reformed Baptist anomaly, has earned a substantial hearing for its arguments against tithing and sabbatarianism as unwelcome intruders from an earlier age. And while it disappoints me that such treatments are not coming primarily from the pens of dispensationalists, it is gratifying to see the governing principles of dispensationalism not only surviving, but also contributing to the hope that the century-long grip of neo-Calvinism over the evangelical community will eventually ease.

David Croteau joins this coterie of dissident voices in his recent work *You Mean I Don't Have to Tithe?* This adaptation of the author's 2005 dissertation is the fruit of a 15-year quest to understand the function and purpose of OT tithing, together with an inquiry into the church's historical acceptance of the practice. Croteau expresses concern in his introduction that his work will be received rather coldly in some quarters as something of a backhanded, libertine attack on Christian giving that effectively threatens the financial stability of churches. Indeed, Croteau does not even pacify his critics by invoking the reassuring caveat used by other tithe-doubters that the tithe may still be used to establish God's “minimum standard” for Christian giving. Instead, Croteau does something much better—he offers a robust theology of New Testament giving, a “post-tithing paradigm” that successfully fills the gap left by his careful conclusion that, indeed, “I don't have to tithe.”

Croteau begins by thoroughly reviewing the ecclesiastical history of tithing, even-handedly describing the ebb and flow of the practice through the whole of church history. The study slows to give special attention to the 1876 “rediscovery of the tithe” by Thomas Kane, who, after lamenting that the “law of the tithe was almost universally disobeyed,” revived the practice almost single-handedly. This in turn paved the way for the influential work of Harold Landsell, whose *Sacred Tenth* rendered mandatory tithing a troublingly sacrosanct feature of twentieth-century American church life.

Croteau follows this rather interesting history with two chapters that address exhaustively each pertinent biblical text from both testaments concerning the tithe. In these he convincingly proves that biblical tithes cannot be extracted from the legal and civic structures of the communities by which they were practiced and for which they were prescribed. Consequently, any present obligation of believers to observe them has been suspended in view of Christ's completion of the Mosaic Law and institution of a new community (the church) with its unprecedented bifurcation of ecclesiastical and civic concerns.

In chapters 5 and 6, Croteau analyzes representative positions of dispensationalism, theonomic covenant theology, and non-theonomic covenant theology relative to the tithe. He concludes that dispensationalists are consistent in denying the continued obligation of tithing in the

church and that theologians are consistent in advocating at least a partial tithe today. His chief aim in these chapters, however, is to plead with non-theonomic covenant theologians to join him in rejecting NT tithing, since it perpetuates civil/ceremonial aspects of the law that by common consent have been set aside. In short, he argues for the consistency of the position of new covenant theology without expressly naming it as such.

Croteau completes his study with two chapters urging pastors to excise “traditional” and “pragmatic” appeals to tithing in the church, and to replace them with a robust NT theology of giving—one that is perhaps a bit unnerving for its refusal to legislate giving, but one that ultimately reflects the biblical expectation for our post-tithe era. These chapters alone are worth the price of the book.

While this book will not satisfy all of our dispensational readers at every point, the arguments contained here are well worth reading. Above all, Croteau offers an unobjectionable guide for NT giving that should prove very useful for fearful traditionalists and pragmatists who are looking for a practical way to excise the entrenched but biblically unsustainable practice of tithing from the contemporary church.

Mark A. Snoeberger

*Am I Called? The Summons to Pastoral Ministry*, by Dave Harvey. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012. 221 pp. \$12.99.

The title of this book expresses a question many of us have asked and been asked. It is a good and legitimate question for those considering pastoral ministry and one those of us in local churches should be prepared to help young men answer.

Dave Harvey, the author, serves on the leadership team of Sovereign Grace Ministries as the one responsible for church planting, church care, and international expansion (back cover). In this role, Harvey has spent time with hundreds of young pastors and new church planters and so is well qualified to write such a book.

Harvey divides his book into three main parts. In the first part, “Approaching the Call,” the author addresses the idea of a ministry call and the context in which it takes place. In the second section, “Diagnosing the Call,” Harvey asks a series of six diagnostic questions about a person’s godliness, his home, his giftedness for preaching, his shepherding ability, his heart for evangelism, and the recognition of these things by those around him in the local church. In the third section, Harvey addresses “Waiting,” giving advice on what a young man should do in preparing for ministry and developing his gifts.

Harvey’s work is needed and welcomed in the field of Pastoral Theology. Not since Charles Spurgeon (*Lectures to His Students*, chapter two) or Charles Bridges (*The Christian Ministry*, Parts I and II) has there