

Constantine Revisited: Leithart, Yoder, and the Constantinian Debate, edited by John D. Roth

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In Review



Constantine Revisited

Edited by John D. Roth

Pickwick Publications

In *Defending Constantine*, Leithart argued that the free church tradition in general and John Howard Yoder in particular were wrong to identify the fall of the church

with the conversion of Emperor Constantine and his use of the sword to advance Christianity. To various degrees these essayists say that Leithart got both Yoder and Constantine wrong. Several authors ask the pertinent question: What should Constantine have done when he became a Christian? Stepped down as emperor? Ruled in a more "Christian" manner? William T. Cavanaugh says that Leithart was partly correct: God didn't want the church to be a persecuted minority, and God wished for all people to be evangelized. Yet Yoder was right in seeing the cross of Christ as the hinge of history and to see a contradiction between Jesus' willingness to die and the use of the sword to advance the cause of Christ. The volume concludes with a gracious response by Leithart.