

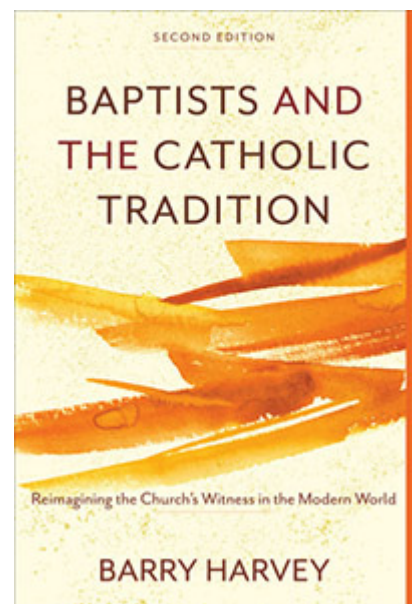
Review: Baptists and the Catholic Tradition

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Baptists and the Catholic Tradition: Reimagining the Church's Witness in the Modern World

By Barry Harvey (Baker Academic)

Baptists and the Catholic Tradition defies easy categorization. Barry Harvey, professor of theology in the Honors College at Baylor University, draws from theology, philosophy, history, biblical hermeneutics and social theory to present a challenging vision of the church as a pilgrim people. He explores multiple factors that contributed to what he calls the “dismembering of Christ’s body.”



Baptists and the Catholic Tradition requires a patient reader. Harvey spends nearly two-thirds of the book meticulously preparing the ground and laying the foundation for a structure that takes shape only in the last three chapters. As a key remedy to the “dismembering” of the body of Christ, Harvey points to the “sacramental sinews” of the Lord’s Supper and baptism. In essence, “re-membering” is facilitated by the “remembering”

Christians engage in through the Lord's Table and the waters of baptism, although he is quick to critique traditions that refer to the ordinances as "just" symbols. Christians are "re-membered" by the Holy Spirit, not only when they join in Communion and are joined by their baptism, but also as they participate in formative spiritual disciplines—particularly when practiced in community, rather than exclusively as individual acts.

Harvey writes beautifully; at times, some passages are poetic in their imagery. However, his style likely will frustrate some readers who could find themselves wishing the author would "make the message clear and plain." *Baptists and the Catholic Tradition* is not light and easy reading, but it is worth the effort.

Ken Camp, managing editor
Baptist Standard