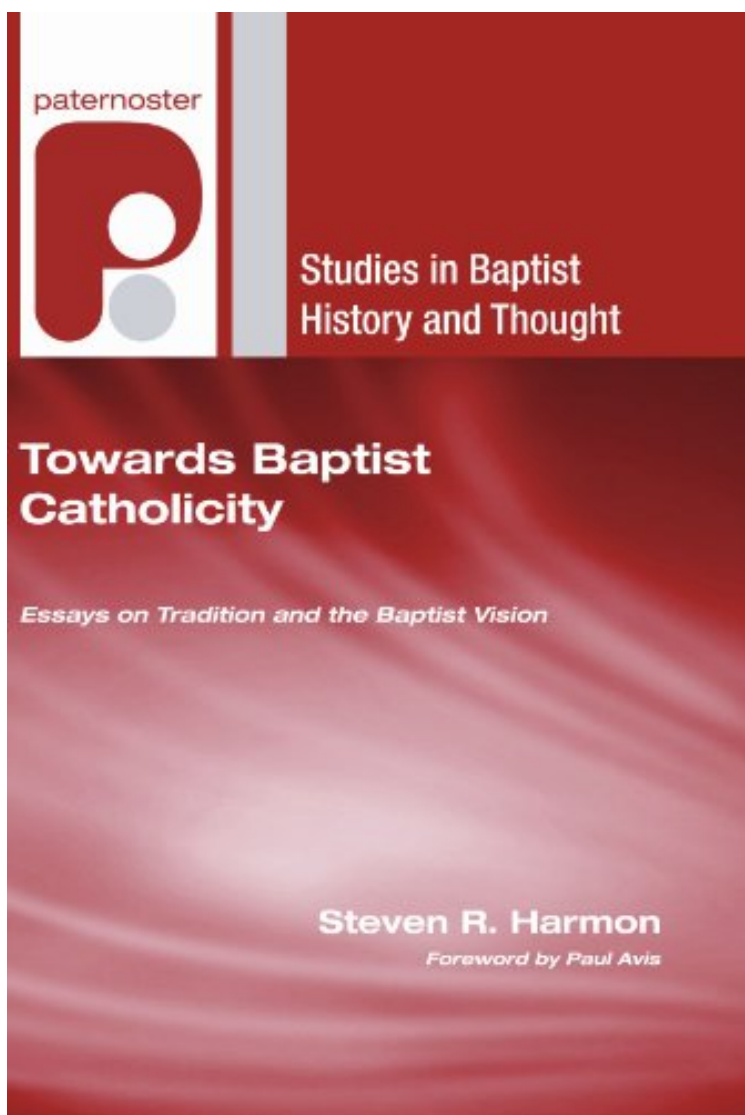


[Read free] Towards Baptist Catholicity: Essays on Tradition and the Baptist Vision (Studies in Baptist History and Thought)

## **Towards Baptist Catholicity: Essays on Tradition and the Baptist Vision (Studies in Baptist History and Thought)**

*Steven R. Harmon*

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**Steven R. Harmon : Towards Baptist Catholicity: Essays on Tradition and the Baptist Vision (Studies in Baptist History and Thought)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Towards Baptist Catholicity: Essays on Tradition and the Baptist Vision (Studies in Baptist History and Thought):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This was all news to me, a lifelong member ...By Harvey HillerThis was all news to me, a lifelong member of Baptist churches. Wow, have I been cheated out of my heritage, and I did not even get a pot of stew out of the deal!7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Hopefully just the beginningBy C. SchelinSteve Harmon has taken a great leap forward in his bold appropriation of the tradition of the Church universal as an integral resource for renewal in Baptist churches. He shows how Baptists might conceive of a derivative authority for tradition while maintaining the primacy of Scripture, highlights our implicit allegiance to Nicaea and Chalcedon in our confessions, and offers Protestant/evangelical paradigms for re-energization by way of engagement with the early church fathers and mothers. Harmon shows that tradition does not eliminate dissent - a cherished Baptist practice! - but rather sets the boundaries within which dissent is actually a constructive task. This reviewer is ever thankful for this recent work by Harmon as well as the writings of Philip Thompson, Elizabeth Newman, Curtis Freeman, John Colwell, Paul Fiddes, D.H. Williams, Timothy George, and others. These current voices in Baptist theology and historiography demonstrate that one doesn't need to swim the Tiber or Bosphorus to feel at home in the grand current of Christianity throughout the ages. More immediately, they provide insights into Baptist identity which transcend the stale and shop-worn divide between "biblical conservatives" and "freedom-loving moderates." It's time to move on! So why not five stars? This is an important book, but because of the sophisticated style of writing it may be fairly inaccessible to many Baptists, both laity and pastors. I believe that its fruits would require a lot of "translation" to be applied in most local churches, especially since the typical theological dialect for Baptists is very different from that of persons and communities which explicitly value little-c catholicity. That being said, Harmon's chapter on corporate worship is very accessible and can be reproduced for church committees considering how they may incorporate practices that would enrich Sunday morning. It is my hope that more and more Baptists will read this book and take it seriously, and that more and more Christians in the "traditional" communions will read it and take US seriously as well!9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Great title, great bookBy Matthew MarstonProf. Harmon's book is an important book for Baptists, other free church protestants and Christians of other persuasions who wonder about their Baptist sisters and brothers. He displays his fidelity to the Baptist tradition precisely in his dissenting from some of our problematic tendencies to ignore ecclesial history and theology. In his essays, Harmon provides concrete ways that Baptists can become more "catholic", both in theology and in worship. Harmon "makes wise the simple" by writing in clear, accessible prose which is never simplistic. This book is a must read for Baptist pastors, theologians, students, and lay people who want to know how their tradition relates to/ can be a part of the church's larger tradition. Those who think they disagree with Harmon, be warned: you just might be persuaded by him if you give this book the reading it deserves. I look forward to much more from this promising theologian.

Towards Baptist Catholicity contends that the reconstruction of the Baptist vision requires a retrieval of the ancient ecumenical traditions. Themes explored include catholic identity, tradition as a theological category, the relationship between Baptist confessions of faith and the patristic tradition, the importance of Trinitarian catholicity, catholicity in biblical interpretation, Karl Barth as a paradigm for evangelical retrieval of the patristic theological tradition, worship as a principal bearer of tradition, and the role of Baptist higher education in shaping the Christian vision.

About the AuthorSteven R. Harmon is associate professor of Christian Theology, Campbell University Divinity School, North Carolina.