

mentioning the views of the Eastern Orthodox, yet space did not permit such an extensive survey. Each also identifies key aspects of debate, what Armstrong calls the 'two most important questions', namely, (1) What is the meaning and significance of this Supper? (2) Why should we regularly celebrate the Lord's Supper in our church communions? (see pp. 153-159). Both volumes are useful surveys of contemporary thought, both offer initial critiques of each position, and both will prove useful for laypeople, clergy, and teachers.

### Myk Habets

**Brian Haymes, Ruth Gouldbourne and Anthony R. Cross** *On Being the Church: Revisioning Baptist Identity* (Studies in Baptist History and Thought 21). Milton Keynes, Paternoster, 2008. (217 pp). [ISBN: 978-1-84227-121-6]

This valuable series has offered a wide range of historical treatments of Baptist experience. Baptist theology has been less well represented. To date a standout has been *Track and Traces* (2003), a collection of material on Baptist identity and practice by Paul Fiddes, who contributes a typically incisive foreword to the volume under review. *On Being the Church* takes a number of key discussions forward in a thorough and stimulating manner. The authors have been key figures in Baptist debate in Britain for many years. All have an association with Bristol Baptist College and two (Haymes and Goldbourne) have been or are in ministry at Bloomsbury Baptist Church in London.

The book is a collaborative effort in the most difficult sense of being co-written. Rather than individual chapters or sections being identified with particular authors, all three present the whole as their joint work. As they acknowledge in their preface, this has made the process longer, but perhaps more authentic. In any case the result is a cogent picture of many aspects of ecclesiology from both a Baptist and a Trinitarian perspective. Thus the first substantive chapter talks about God and the *missio Dei*, setting up in turn a general picture of God's people and their calling. Attention then moves to the shape, boundaries, life and practices of this people followed by the implications for the church's engagement with other faiths, society and the cosmos.

The effort at collaborative writing has been rewarded. The authors together present an integrated picture of the church which is at once

continuous with the heritage of Baptist thought and at the same time sharpens and extends some of the important categories. Key among these is the crucial significance of the presence of Christ. This is particularly well thought through in the chapter (6) on the Lord's Supper in which it is argued that Christ's real presence is located in the gathered community. 'Our practice asserts that our conviction is that when we meet in the name of Christ then we can depend on the promise of God that Christ will be present among us' (p 135). Communion together in Christ has both past, present and future aspects and direct implications for discipline, unity, ministry and mission. 'At the table we are united with Christ, given his identity, and sent into the world as his community' (p 151).

This is a fine volume of Baptist thought from the English tradition. It represents well an authentic style and trajectory in ecclesiology and adds significant *mana* to Paternoster's already excellent series.

**Martin Sutherland**

**Timothy Keller. *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Scepticism*. New York: Dutton, 2008 (278 pp.) [978-0-525-95049-3]**

Tim Keller's first full length book came off the press in February 2008 and directly onto best seller lists around the Western World. Keller has been the pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, New York City, for 20 years. For more than half of these he has hosted an evening Question and Answer session with any who wanted to stay to ask him any question regarding the God of the Bible, the Scriptures, etc. (You can hear many of these Q&A sessions here: [http://www.monergism.com/directory/link\\_category/Redeemer-Q--A-Sessions/](http://www.monergism.com/directory/link_category/Redeemer-Q--A-Sessions/).) This book contains the fruit of these sessions.

*The Reason for God* has been called the *Mere Christianity* for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is no surprise to see Keller quoting Lewis more than any other author in this book. It is also quite evident that Keller has lived up to this assessment. Keller effectively serves this generation in the same way C.S. Lewis served his and for this we ought to be very thankful. *Publishers Weekly* has called *The Reason for God* '[A book] written for sceptics and for the believers who love them...' Keller wrote this book for the sceptics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century from a heart that truly desires to see their questions answered from Scripture. He deliberately approached a