LEARNING TO TREASURE THE SACRAMENTS

Tim Chester Shows How God Uses Baptism and Communion to Strengthen the Faith of Believers and Reassure Their Hearts

WHEATON, Ill.—Many Christians often feel confused about the sacraments of baptism and Communion. What is happening when someone goes down into the water in baptism? What’s the significance of eating bread and wine together as a church on Sunday mornings?

In his latest book, *Truth We Can Touch: How Baptism and Communion Shape Our Lives* (Crossway, January 2020), Tim Chester makes the case that God has given Christians truth they can touch for a reason: the sacraments embody the promises, grace, and presence of Christ. Chester looks throughout the Bible to explain how the sacraments are intended to actually shape Christians’ lives by giving physical bread, wine, and water that believers can point to as expressions of their union with Christ.

“Above all, I want us to learn to appreciate baptism and Communion,” writes Chester. “Christ gave them to us to nurture our faith. I want us to understand how we can approach them so they do this. They do more than simply work on our minds to teach or remind us—otherwise Christ would have given words to say or truth to remember. Working out what the ‘more than’ involves is the theme of this book. What is the added value of physical acts? Or to put it another way, why water, bread, and wine? Why not just thoughts and words? I don’t believe the water, bread and wine work like medicine or magic. They ‘work’ as we respond to them in faith. But that means the more we understand and appreciate what they signify, the more benefit they will bring and the more we will value them.”

In *Truth We Can Touch*, Chester does the following:

• Explores how baptism and Communion nurture faith by physically confirming God’s promises to believers
• Looks beyond the usual debates to explore how the sacraments are intended to shape Christians’ lives
• Explains how baptism and Communion relate to God’s covenants throughout the Bible
• Empowers churches to explain the meaning of baptism and Communion to their members
• Makes a clear and compelling case against both the traditional Roman Catholic position on baptism and Communion and the common evangelical viewpoint today

Truth We Can Touch: How Baptism and Communion Shape Our Lives
By Tim Chester

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Continued
Thomas R. Schreiner, professor from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, writes, “In this delightful book, Chester reminds us that baptism and Communion are God’s gifts to us that convey the gospel and grace in powerful ways. Baptism and Communion are central in the New Testament, and something is wrong if they are neglected or ignored by us. Take up and read and be instructed, challenged, and most of all encouraged by the gospel which is displayed so beautifully in baptism and the Eucharist.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tim Chester (PhD, University of Wales) is a faculty member of Crosslands and a pastor with Grace Church, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire. He is an author or coauthor of over forty books, including A Meal with Jesus; Reforming Joy; and, with Michael Reeves, Why the Reformation Still Matters.

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