**Review of “Truth We Can Touch” – Tim Chester**

(How Baptism and Communion Shape our Lives)

The reformed Churches recognise only two sacraments – Baptism and Communion. This recognition leads to the question what do you understand or get from these sacraments? Can you give a coherent answer? If these sacraments did not happen in a Church setting, how long would it be before they were noticed as missing?

A word of warning; the book does not become involved in the matter of whether infants or just those professing faith should be baptised.

The author of the book sets out the implications of Baptism and Communion and the reality of visible signs which help to give us a firmer grasp of Christ. When we have applied or take the sacraments, three parties are involved – God, The Church and Ourselves.

Baptism involves getting wet with water and Communion involves ingesting bread with wine because we are people with bodies. Every Communion meal is a participation in God’s grace. Communion is also a recognition that we are dependent on God, not just as creatures but also as sinners. When we receive the water, bread and wine by faith, we receive the grace of God. Baptism and Communion are key means that God uses to convey grace to his people to nurture our faith in his promises and to strengthen our sense of his love. Every Communion meal is a witness to God’s grace.

A chapter entitled “Enacted Grace” very helpfully highlights the difference in the interpretation that exists between the reformed churches and the Roman Catholic churches and even within some reformed denominations in respect of these two sacraments. This same chapter also highlights that Baptism is about union with Christ and is a “one-off one-way act” in which we are entirely passive. Communion is about communion with Christ and is an expression of “the two-way relationship” we have with Christ because we have been united with him by grace.

These sacraments also refresh our memory in respect of our commitments to Christ. We enter the visible church through Baptism and we express our ongoing belonging to the Church through Communion.

The book is not necessarily an easy read, but it is worth the effort. The content can be read in “bit sized chunks”. This will greatly enhance the believers and the unbeliever’s knowledge of the purpose and effect of the two sacraments. There is also excellent historical information about the enlightenment and the impact that has had on modern day minds.

This would be a particularly useful book for Churches to provide to all who request to partake in either of these two sacraments.

It would also be a useful source for those with the spiritual oversight of the church as almost certainly it would add to their knowledge and appreciation of the two sacraments.

Tim Chester continues to be is an excellent Biblical communicator.