

Summary

The thesis „Pastoral aspects of the baptism in the current discussion in the German speaking countries” analyzes critically the theological discussion since the seventies. The baptism is deprived of its closely sacramental and christological determination and is treated as an occasional service. Biographical and ritual concepts of the occasional services attribute to these acts a special theological significance that cannot be derived from Christ's commission to preach the gospel, but rather is rooted in a piety, which targets the life cycle of individuals and families. Occasional services are therefore seen as a pastoral accompaniment of man in his fault (and critical) stage of life. Its aim is to convey his emotional and cognitive stabilization and assist in re-establishing his fluctuating identity. The practice of the baptism, in this perspective, must regard ambivalent experiences of parents and provide them an appropriate religious intervention. Traditional theological contents of the baptism are markedly eliminated with regard to the situation of the distant Christians who became estranged from the reflected Christianity.

Keywords

Baptism, Pastoral Care, Occasional Services, Ritual, Folk Church