

Baptism and the Journey in Christ: Ecumenical Third Rail or Opportunity for Common Formation?

Is it possible to talk together about baptism in a way that strengthens our common mission? How might our two traditions encounter each other's practices and theologies in ways that challenge both to deepen their practice and understanding of baptism? This paper focuses on the neuralgic issue of the different approaches to baptism in Orthodox Christian and Evangelical Protestant traditions and will outline their implications for approaches to soteriology, theological anthropology, mission, ecclesiology, and Christian formation and discipleship. It will honestly acknowledge the significant existing differences between the two broad traditions, and offer suggestions for potential deeper points of contact, mutual learning and cooperation. The paper will place these suggestions in the context of the churches' life and mission in secularizing societies and the challenges the two broad traditions face today.