

Ecclesiology
Semester 2 – Topic 8 – Theological/Philosophical Issues
The Family Integrated Church and Biblical Counseling Movements

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Review and Introduction

Thus far in our study of “practical ecclesiology”, we reviewed the theological foundations of ecclesiology (the doctrine of the church) then looked at the characteristics of healthy churches, the definition and practice of worship, body relationships or the ‘one-anothers’, and spiritual gifts. We have also started looking at some theological/philosophical “issues” in the church starting with parachurches and a philosophy of missions.

Some of the topics considered to be discussed today were the church growth movement (seeker sensitive movement); the health, wealth, and prosperity movement; the social justice movement; the emergent church movement; the “Christian” psychology movement; etc. For brevity, we will look at two “movements” that have impacted us more here at VBC – the family integrated church movement and the biblical counseling movement.

Family Integrated Church Movement

First, let’s do a quick review of Covenant Theology. This will help us understand some of the thinking behind the Family Integrated Church Movement (FIC or FICM).

Covenant Theology is a system of interpreting the Scriptures on the basis of two covenants: the covenant of works (covering Gen 1-3) and the covenant of grace (covering Gen 4 to Rev 22). According to this theological view, the covenant of works is a covenant that God made with Adam promising eternal life for obedience and death for disobedience. Adam failed at the Fall and sin entered the human race. God then entered into a covenant of grace with the elect through which the problem of sin could be dealt with and He offers salvation to the elect sinner. Covenant theology teaches that the church began in the OT with the covenant of grace and continues throughout all time. According to this view, the universal church consists of all believers (OT and NT) of all time.

Covenant Theology holds to a strong sense of uniformity throughout the Bible; a strong sense of continuity between the OT and NT. In the Covenant Theology hermeneutic, there is less acceptance of progressive revelation, and more of a thought of amplifying or explaining with greater clarity or precession what has been there from the beginning. Some call this a hermeneutic of uniformity. There is a tendency to look back into the OT and view the things known from the NT as always having been true and revealed in the OT. Examples of this are the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the peoples of God (Israel and the church).

In contrast, Dispensationalism is a framework for interpreting the Bible that recognizes that God has dealt with people differently through the ages or dispensations. This system understands that all Scripture is for me (all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable), but not all Scripture is to me (many of the commands and promises are not addressed to me, but rather to people living under other dispensational arrangements). Dispensational theologians believe the church began on the day of Pentecost and consists of all believers of the present age (the church age).

The FICM is a loosely related group of families and churches motivated by the same ideas and who generally adhere to several theological and philosophical beliefs about the family and the church. It is not a denomination, but a loose association of churches and organizations represented by a variety of denominational perspectives. While there is diversity of thought and practice within the FICM, the majority of leaders fall into either the Presbyterian/Reformed or Baptist traditions.

The FICM is a uniquely North American movement. Some other names used for the FICM are family discipleship churches, family-centered ministry, inclusive-congregational ministry, a faith-family atmosphere, multigenerational community of faith...

The FICM blames the downfall of the family and young people leaving churches after high school (some studies say up to 88%) in the US on local bodies and their failure in ministering to families. (As an aside, theologically, people leave the “church” either because they are not true believers as 1 John 2:19 tells us or they are immature and were not taught and/or accepted the biblical teaching on the importance of the local body. It is not a local body’s responsibility to keep people “in church”.)

The FICM believes that how churches are organized has destroy the Church’s vitality and home life, specifically the American church tears families apart. They believe that the way churches minister to young people through age segregated children and youth ministries has usurped the authority of families, particularly fathers, and has caused this mass exodus.

The FICM believes that age segregation in the church is unbiblical. This is generally based on a Covenant Theology view of the church and viewing the nation of Israel as the church. Also, the hermeneutical regulative principle related to ecclesiology is given as a reason.

The regulative principle teaches that churches may only do that which God has specifically prescribed in the Scripture. For example, since God has not prescribed certain events during a Sunday service like a skit, special music, a video advertising for a women’s retreat, or age segregated classes, these events should not be part of the service.

The normative principle teaches that there is freedom to do anything that God does not specifically prohibit. For example, since God does not prohibit a skit, special music, a video advertising for a women’s retreat, or age segregated classes then it should be allowed in corporate worship.

“The FICM paints a dark picture of the American church. The Church is using self-destructive methods of ministering to individual groups. The church has lost its way in its individualistic pursuit of discipleship. The church has abandoned the family as the primary means of ministry, and therefore abandoned the biblical teaching. The church’s age-segregated ministries are on dubious, unbiblical and unhistorical soil, and the proponents of the FICM are calling the church back to a family centered ecclesiology.” Jason Webb in his Master’s Thesis titled *The Family-Integrated Church Movement: An exploration in Ecclesiology*

To address this dark picture of the American Christian family, the FICM generally holds to and advocates the following (see the appendix for an example from a church website):

1. The nuclear family is seen as central to life and the life of the church.
2. The church is redefined as a family of families.
3. The family (specifically the father) is viewed as the evangelizer and discipler their own children. The church’s mission is secondary. The father is expected to make disciples of his children and lead the family in worship.
4. The family attends church together. There are no age segregated ministries. Parents and children attend church services together and children stay through church service and age-integrated Sunday School without attending children/youth specific Sunday school or children's ministries. There are no organized groups and activities for children and youth. Having children in age appropriate ministries is viewed as interfering with the parents’ mandate to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
5. An emphasis is placed on education as a key component of discipleship which involves not only family-specific discipleship but also home-schooling (for most).

Other common characteristics in family integrated churches include an emphasis on strong marriages, male headship, courting, and the “quiver-full” approach to family planning.

Leaders within the FICM are:

- Scott Brown, director of the National Center for Family-Integrated Churches (NCFIC)
- Doug Phillips, past president of Vision Forum Ministries (Closed in 2013)
- Voddie Baucham, professor, author, and pastor
- Eric Wallace, president of the Institute for Uniting Church and Home (IUCAH)

Some quotes:

Voddie Baucham in *Family Driven* faith in speaking about various tenants of the FICM including increasing birth rate says “This is a reformation, a paradigm shift ... We are not talking about a new program; we are talking about a complete overhaul of the philosophy that is accepted in our churches, colleges, seminaries, and homes as the only way to do it.”

Philip Lancaster in *Family Man, Family Leader* says “We can be part of a new revival and hasten its spread if we will turn our hearts toward our families and shape them according to the Word of God.”

Voddie Baucham in a message titled “The Nature of the Family,” in *Faith in Practice Conference*, October 2005 says “The family is the foundational institution upon which all other institutions are built and for which all other institutions including the church exist.”

Voddie Baucham in a message titled “The Nature of the Family,” in *Faith in Practice Conference*, October 2005, says “It’s not the church’s job to disciple my children. At best, it is the church’s job to equip me and assist me as I do what God commanded me to do in discipling my children.”

Evaluation

It should be noted that there are several areas where VBC would agree with the FICM. Those in the FICM hold to a high view of Scripture and view it as the sole authority for doctrine and practice in the church (though they interpret the Scriptures with a Covenant Theology hermeneutic). They value expository preaching. They are concerned with worldliness in the church (though we would maybe define “worldliness” differently). They are concerned with the weakening of the family and desire to strengthen families by strengthening marriages and teaching parents to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (though we would disagree with how to accomplish this).

Even so, there are at least three areas of concern with the FICM. This information has been distilled from several internet sources as well personal observation.

1. The FICM exalts the nuclear family to an unbiblical place.

The nuclear family is seen as central to life and to the life of the church. The primacy of the traditional nuclear family, family roles (marriage as well as parent/child), and domestic order (as determined by the FICM) undermine the primary place that Christ and His body have for all believers. Köstenberger and Jones state in *God, Marriage and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation* that the movement "...has elevated the family to an unduly high status that is unwarranted in light of the biblical teaching on the subject...".

Instead, Scripture teaches that loyalty to Christ supersedes the family, Jesus viewed the body of believers as primary to the natural family, and Christ may actually divide family units.

²⁶“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. Luke 14:26-27

³¹Then His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent *word* to Him and called Him. ³²A crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, “Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You.” ³³Answering them, He said, **“Who are My mother and My brothers?”** ³⁴**Looking about at those who were sitting around Him, He said, “Behold My mother and My brothers!** ³⁵**For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.”** Mark 3:31-35

²⁷While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed.” ²⁸But He said, “On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.” Luke 11:27-28

⁴⁹“I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished! ⁵¹**Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division;** ⁵²**for from now on five *members* in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three.** ⁵³**They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”** Luke 12:49-53

In elevating the family, the FICM redefines the church as a “family of families”. This comes as a result of their general Covenant Theology view of Scripture. In the OT, Israel was a family of families held together in a theocracy by blood lines. In the NT, the Church is the family of God, not a family of families. In fact, in the church, nuclear families may be fragmented because of loyalty to Jesus (Matt 10:34-39).

²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal 3:28

¹⁹**So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household,** ²⁰having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*, ²¹in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²²in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. Eph 2:19-22

In addition, as a result of this unbiblical elevation, the FICM tends to exclude or marginalize singles, the divorced, and those in non-traditional families in contrast to Scripture’s precepts and principles (see Matt 19:11-12 and 1 Cor 7:7 concerning singles and James 2 addressing partiality in the church).

2. The FICM emphasis on age-integration is unbiblical.

FICM advocates believe that since there are no explicit Biblical directives or examples for age-segregated programs, they are unbiblical. This is based on the regulative principle (churches may only do that which God has specifically prescribed in the Scripture).

However, where the Scripture is silent there are opportunities for freedom in accord with systematized biblical principles. The sufficiency of Scripture means that when Scripture speaks, in prohibiting or commanding something, it must be followed. Conversely, when Scripture does not speak it must not be added to.

The FICM fails to understand the early church context when looking to a return to “biblical” age integration. Jesus chose and called **young men** to be his disciples/apostles. His ministry was both age and gender specific. Historically, Jesus and the apostles attended segregated synagogues. The temple layout segregated families, having a court for the men and a court for the women and children. Also, young Jewish boys attended age-segregated day schools.

In contrast to FICM philosophy of ministry, in Scripture, there are specific ages and genders called out as recipients of ministry (see Titus 2 for both age and gender distinction, see also Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 5 for age and life situation specific ministry).

While the emphasis on total age integration is unbiblical and one extreme on a spectrum, total age segregation is also an extreme position. Titus 2 provides the biblical balance where people are ministered to based on the struggles they have at their stage of life (age specific). But those who have walked the path before them (older) have opportunities/responsibilities for ministry to the younger to aid them in their walks.

¹But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. ²Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. ³Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, ⁴**so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,** ⁵to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. ⁶Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; ⁷in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified, ⁸sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

Additionally, the mandate to make disciples is given to individuals within the body of Christ. Nowhere does Scripture place that specific role as a precept on the nuclear family (neither does it preclude the nuclear family from being disciple makers). Scripture views the local church as the means through which disciples are made. The mandate was not given to families (though it extends to families since believers in families can be seeking to make disciples within their family).

It is the body’s role to equip all saints (regardless of age and family status) for the work of service (Eph 4:11-12). This is accomplished through the ministry of God’s Word in the lives of believers by gifted and qualified men (and women in the case of women specific ministry and children). There are many different ways in which this can be accomplished – from preaching in the corporate gathering to age-integrated meetings to age-segregated meetings. There is much freedom in how this is accomplished while being faithful to the Scriptures.

3. The FICM elevates areas of freedom and/or personal conviction to the standard of holiness.

Families involved in the FICM tend to make their convictions a test of fellowship (e.g. homeschooling, no women working outside the home, full quiver family planning, courtship dating only, definitions of modesty, etc.). They then choose to disassociate with believers at large or believers in their own church who do not share FICM values. This amounts to legalism.

In a church culture where the family and personal convictions are elevated, the mission of the church (to make disciples of all people and even ones’ one children) is compromised and the purpose of the church (to glorify God) is reversed (to glorify personal conviction).

The result of legalism is division within the body of Christ, both intra-church or inter-church.

Conclusion

It is difficult to disagree that marriages and families are under attack by Satan and his world system in America. That can be seen all around us. And that attack extends into the church universal and into local churches. The solution is not unbiblical elevation of the nuclear family, age-integrated bodies, legalism, and division. The solution is the gospel in the hearts of believing parents and a commitment to be doers of the Word while walking in the Spirit in regard to their marriage roles and parenting roles.

And if you want to keep your children in the corporate service with you, then ok. They won't get much out of it since they do not understand the principles being taught, but you are welcome to do that. Only, please be mindful of others around you so they can be learning from the message. And if you want to send your children to our age-segregated Sunday Schools, then ok. They will learn God's Word at their age level to understand. You have freedom to do either, though VBC believes your family would be best served to have your children learning the Word at their level and developing body relationships as they grow.

Biblical Counseling Movement

Biblical counseling, also referred to as nouthetic counseling (from the Greek word "noutheteo" meaning "to admonish"), is a form of counseling based solely upon the Bible and the counselee's dependency on the sufficiency of Christ. It has been called "biblical counseling" since 1993 to emphasize its central emphasis on the Bible. The *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling* states that "The aim of Nouthetic Counseling is to effect change in the counselee by encouraging greater conformity to the principles of Scripture."

The Biblical Counseling Movement (BCM) had its beginning (better said, "rediscovery") in the early 1970s when Jay Adams published *Competent to Counsel* (1970) and further books putting forth his thesis that the body of Christ had all the resources (through the Scriptures and the indwelling Holy Spirit) needed to care for the spiritually, emotionally, and mentally hurting completely separate from secular psychology.

Biblical counseling seeks to answer three questions from a Biblical worldview which is in stark contrast to the way psychology answers the questions: "Who is man?", "What is wrong with him?", and "How do we fix him?" The world seeks to answer these questions with theories that address symptoms and not the root cause. The place we go to answer these questions is the Bible. Here is a short comparison of psychology and the Bible.

Who is man?

Psychology – Man is an evolved animal born morally neutral (or good); governed by instincts.

Bible – Man is a created being in the image of God for the purpose of glorifying God.

What is wrong with man?

Psychology – Environmental factors (family, religion, trauma victim, etc.) have influenced man to cause psychological problems. Man is not at fault, he is not responsible.

Bible – Man is sinner by nature and choice; he is responsible for his own sin and responses to experiences.

How do you fix man?

Psychology – Man is fixed by medication designed to attack behavior and/or re-education and changing of emotions and thinking by self-actualization, improving self-worth, eliminating self-defeating outlooks on life, etc.

Bible – Man requires freedom from the penalty and power of sin through salvation in Jesus Christ; then growth (progressive sanctification) through the Holy Spirit and Word of God.

Evaluation

It should be noted that there are several areas where VBC would agree with the BCM. Those in the BCM hold to a high view of Scripture and view it as the sole authority for doctrine and practice in the church (though there is a tendency to interpret the Scriptures with a Covenant Theology hermeneutic due to its founder's denominational perspective). They place an emphasis on the sufficiency of Christ to effect progressive sanctification in the believer as the believer cooperates with the Holy Spirit. They view the local body as central to the Lord's disciple making mission.

Even so, there are at least three areas of concern with the BCM.

1. An over emphasis on professional certification

The BCM tends to view official training and certification by biblical counseling organizations (like the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, ACBC, formerly the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors, NANC and others) as needed prior to bringing biblical care to hurting believers. Since the 1970s, there has been a proliferation of parachurch organizations and colleges and seminaries that provide basic and advanced training in biblical counseling.

As bible-believers ourselves who value knowing and doing the Scriptures, it is difficult to argue against the philosophy that training in the Bible is bad. We are not saying that. We are saying that there is no biblical mandate to attend classes, take tests, perform hours of supervised counseling, and obtain of certificate in order to bring biblical care to hurting believers.

Jesse Johnson in a blog response at thecripplegate.com/the-biblical-counseling-movement/ says concerning the BCM. "It started on the presupposition that godly men/women are competent to counsel, but what it has grown into is a network of classes, training, certifications, and often times its own psuedo-scientific terms. Sometimes I secretly wonder if they didn't simply replace one extra-biblical structure with other."

Interestingly, this emphasis on credentials is a carryover from an academic model which values credentials. The only Scriptural credential to bring Biblical care to hurting believers is to possess the Holy Spirit and be walking in the Spirit (allowing the words of Christ to dwell richly). Mature believers whose mind has been transformed by the Word of God are able to discern good and evil.

¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. Heb 5:14

Every Spirit-filled believer is capable and commanded to disciple one another using the Bible. The result of natural result of Spirit-filling (allowing the words of Christ to richly dwell within us) is teaching and admonishing other believers.

¹⁶Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom **teaching and admonishing** one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Col 3:16 (see the correlation with Eph 5:18-19)

Spirit-filled believers are "able to admonish" other believers.

¹³Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁴And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and **able also to admonish one another**. Rom 15:13-14

Spirit-filled believers are called to restore sinning believers. “Spiritual” believers are those who are filled with the Spirit and, therefore, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. They are to restore those caught in any trespass (sin). Spiritual believers are to bear the burdens of trespassing believers. “Bear” has the thought of carrying with endurance; sustain, uphold, or support. “Burdens” refers to heavy loads that are difficult to lift and carry; representing personal difficulty or problem. Love demands that we support believers who are struggling with difficulties or sin.

¹Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, **you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one** looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. ²**Bear one another’s burdens**, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. Gal 6:1-2

2. An apparent over emphasis on the writings of those in the BCM over the Scriptures

The BCM holds to a high view and sufficiency of the Scriptures and therefore will dismiss this concern. However, it is observed at conferences, trainings, and in personal discussions that the books of BCM leaders are what is referred to for resources either for the counselor or the counselee in many cases over Scripture.

This really flows from the academic model which has been brought into the BCM. Scholars advance by publishing new ideas or new ways to look at old ideas. Even Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling (MABC) degrees have a thesis requirement. Therefore, there is a plethora of BC material available from all kinds of people within the BCM.

To be clear, there are many gifted men and women who know the Scriptures well and who can systematize doctrine and present the application of Biblical truth in helpful ways. Writing or reading a book about systematic or practical theology and how to minister the Word into peoples’ lives is not bad. But those writings will not change lives. Only the Word of God applied by the Spirit to a believer’s heart has the power to bring sanctification.

Only the Scriptures are authoritative and fully sufficient for all matters of faith and conduct. If the Bible is God’s inspired Word, then it is fully sufficient to meet all the spiritual needs of God’s people. And, it is only Scripture that is able to meet these needs. The Bible is authoritative (see Matt 4:4, 7, 10) and therefore the standard for faith and practice for every person. In addition, the Bible accomplishes its purpose (Isa 55:11; Heb 4:12) for which God sends it forth. It is powerful and therefore able to accomplish God’s desire in the lives of people. Unlike any other writing, the words of Scripture are able to perform the work their intended result (1 Thess 2:13) because the author, the Holy Spirit, is at work in the lives of the readers.

3. A tendency to reject any cause for life difficulties apart from the counselee’s own sin

It should be noted that there is much diversity of thought concerning this issue. In general, the more someone is closer to Jay Adams’ original teachings on nouthetic counseling, the more they will tend to view all life issues as caused by sin. In more recent times, some in the BCM offer a more balanced view.

Dr. Charles Hodges in his book “Good Mood Bad Mood” notes that how people think, feel, and act can shape their brain (see chapter 8). Psychological research into Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) looked at brain scans of people diagnosed with OCD before and after they were treated with talk therapy. After they had learned to change their thinking and behavior, their brain scans changed towards normal. This demonstrates that how we choose to think and behave influences how our brain works; not the other way around, necessarily.

There are also cases in which physiological diseases influence behavior, emotions, and thinking. In other words, behavioral, emotional, and cognitive issues are symptoms of physiological diseases. Some examples can be found in “Good Mood Bad Mood” Appendix B. Hodges’ evaluation of medical conditions affecting mood is focused on depression, but it is instructive to demonstrate that medical conditions can affect behavior, emotions, or thinking.

Hodges breaks the medical issues into groupings:

- Metabolic and endocrine diseases (e.g. thyroid and pituitary diseases)
- Infectious diseases (e.g. TB, Mono, HIV, and influenza)
- Neurological diseases (e.g. Alzheimer’s, MS, Parkinson’s, tumors, strokes, or TBIs)
- General diseases (e.g. cancer, lupus or other auto-immune diseases)
- Lifestyle (e.g. sleep deprivation, diet, lack of sunlight)
- Medication (individually or interactions) and drug use

In some cases, people suffer from psychosis (a loss of contact with reality) or are psychotic. This is characterized, for example, by hallucinations and delusions. It is important to note that those people who are suffering from psychosis (after physiological or pharmacological causes are ruled out) are most likely suffering from a true mental illness where pathology exists, but for which medicine does not yet have the ability to detect. These diseases are schizophrenia and bipolar I (manic-depression).

The question then arises, if there can be physiological influences to behavior, emotions, or thinking, then are people responsible for the sin they commit?

The answer to this question lies in the question, “What is the source of a person’s sin?” Sin comes from the heart (Jer 17:9-10; Mark 7:20-23). The heart, the essence of each person, is corrupted by sin. We are hopelessly lost and not able to do anything by ourselves that can make us right before God. We are not able to choose or do anything that is acceptable to God apart from His grace. The Scriptures describe each person as a sinner (Rom 3:23); having a wicked heart (Jer 17:9); not seeking God (Rom 3:10-12); separated from God (Isa 59:2); a slave of sin (Rom 6:15-23); dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the ways of Satan, a child of wrath (Eph 2:1-3); father is the devil (John 8:44); blinded by Satan (2 Cor 4:3); under the domain (authority; house) of darkness (Col 1:13); under the power of Satan (1 John 5:19); and under the wrath of God (John 3:36).

Having a physiological condition that influences someone to sin does not absolve people of responsibility for their sin.

A good axiom is: “Never call anything a disease that the Bible calls sin. Never call anything sin the Bible does not clearly identify as sin.” (Charles Hodges during a lecture on bipolar disorder during the 2013 NANC annual conference)

Conclusion

VBC is a church that values Biblical Counseling (or what one could call crisis discipleship). We value Biblical Counseling because the Bible calls all believers to “admonish” one another. We value Biblical Counseling because it is the believer-to-believer ministry of the Scriptures into each other’s life. We believe that this admonishment can be done by any believer who is walking in the Spirit.

However, we have some concerns with the current BCM related to its undue emphases. These areas are, for the most part, readily discerned and can be corrected for in bringing Biblical care to hurting brethren.

Appendix

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.gracefamilybaptist.net/family-integrated>. The page header includes a search bar and navigation links: HOME, ABOUT, MESSAGES, EVENTS, BLOGS, LINKS, BOOKSTORE, CONTACT US. The main heading is **FAMILY INTEGRATED CHURCH MODEL**. The content is organized into sections with red underlines:

- ABOUT US**: Family Integrated Churches come in all shapes, sizes and varieties. There are FICs in virtually every denominational and theological tradition, and in most sections of the country. While no two FICs are exactly alike, they do have certain distinctives in common.
- BEFORE YOU VISIT**
- LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF 1689**
- CHURCH COVENANT**
- CORE VALUES**
 - FAMILY INTEGRATED CHURCH**
 - No Systematic Age Segregation**

One of the biggest distinctions of a FIC is the absence of age-graded ministries. We do not have segregated youth ministry, or children's ministry. First, these ministries are not part of the biblical church model. The Bible is clear on whose job it is to disciple children... parents. Second, these ministries can work against the biblical mode. Parents who are relieved of their discipleship duties tend to become dependent on those who have taken over the job. And, as Dr. Alvin Reid has noticed, "The largest rise of youth professionals in history has been accompanied by a decline in youth evangelism effectiveness."
 - Evangelism/Discipleship Through Homes**

We teach parents to evangelize and disciple their children and their neighbors. We emphasize the ministry of hospitality, family worship, catechism, and family discipleship. Thus, instead of placing the burden on paid professionals to "do the work of the ministry," we equip the saints to do it.
 - Education as a Key Component of Discipleship**

Jesus said, "A pupil is not above his teacher, but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher" ([Luke 6:40](#)). Whoever educates a child is discipling that child. We work hard to help parents see the importance of Christian education, and to help them make biblical choices as it relates to this part of their children's discipleship.

The footer contains navigation links: HOME, NEW HERE?, GET CONNECTED, UPCOMING EVENTS, MINISTRIES, MESSAGES, and social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Email. Contact information includes: Sunday School at 9:35am & Worship at 10:50am / 106 Bammel Westfield Rd, Houston TX 77090. Copyright © 2016 Grace Family Baptist Church All Rights Reserved / 832-476-3184 / 877-651-8814 / info@gracefamilybaptist.net. Powered by Church Plant Media.