

Student & Family Ministry Statement

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Ministry Statement

1. Philosophy of Ministry

In developing a ministry strategy, it is tempting to begin envisioning practices that will mark the ministry. Such premature decision-making, however, can result in a ministry that is cruising to “nowhere.” It is therefore essential to have a well-defined philosophy. This ensure that ministry practices will contribute to the overall direction of the ministry.

1.1 *Biblical Grounding*

In the first place, our philosophy of ministry is grounded in the Word of God. We affirm the Reformation statement, *sola Scriptura*. Scripture alone is our highest authority. Whatever Scripture affirms, we affirm. Whatever Scripture commands, we do.¹ God alone has the right to be worshiped, and God alone has the right to determine how He is to be worshiped. As such, the ministry practices at BBC will reflect those teachings in Scripture that describe the church’s polity & ministry.

1.2 *Comprehensive Student Discipleship*

The ministry of the church essentially involves *discipleship* (Matt. 28:20). As church leaders and teachers entrusted with the students in our ministries, we have been appointed by the exalted Christ for the purpose of discipling our students (Eph. 4:11). It is not our place to define the meaning, method, or means of discipleship. The Lord has defined that in His Word. Rather, we are called to faithfully carry out discipleship as the Lord has commanded. Therefore, in order to be faithful with our ministries, we must seek to understand what discipleship is and how it is to be done.

1.2.1 *Discipleship as Concurrent with Sanctification.* In describing the essence of discipleship, I will begin by making a case that discipleship is a ministry of man that takes place concurrently with the Spirit’s ministry of sanctification.

The Apostle Paul describes his and Apollos’s ministries as being in conjunction with the efficacious work of the Spirit (1 Cor. 3:5-9). While the Apostles labor, it is ultimately the Spirit who produces growth. From this Passage, we see that the Spirit uses believers in His work of conforming others into the Image of Jesus. Therefore, in order to rightly understand our

¹ This hermeneutic of polity and practice is described as the *Regulative Principle*.

role in discipleship, one must first understand the Spirit's work of *sanctification*.

Sanctification can be defined as “the process by which God works to make his children holy in character...”² While this is wholly a work of the Spirit (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18), Scripture calls us to participate (Phil. 2:12-13; Rom. 8:13). Furthermore, this sanctification does not take place solely in isolation.³ Discipleship is one of the means that the Holy Spirit uses to sanctify God's people. In other words, discipleship and sanctification happen concurrently. The former is a ministry entrusted to man while the latter is solely a ministry of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, discipleship only produces growth in as much as it is happening concurrently with the Spirit's work.

Therefore, our conception of discipleship should be in light of the Spirit's work of sanctification. If we see discipleship as joining the Holy Spirit in His work then we ought to model our ministry practices after that of the Spirit. There are a few specific aspects of the Spirit's work of sanctification that significantly influence the way we do discipleship.

- 1) *Sanctification is Through Jesus Christ.* In conversion, the Spirit of God joins us to the Lord Jesus. We enter into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ and we persevere in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. In the Gospels, Jesus says that His disciples are specifically those who will remain in Him (Jhn. 15:1-5). The entirety of our salvation is through Jesus Christ, including our sanctification.⁴

Because the Spirit joins us to Christ, who secured our redemption, it is Christ who is the subject of our speech and the object of our devotion.

- 2) *Sanctification is Dependent on the Holy Spirit.* Apart from the work of the Spirit, none of us can understand the Gospel or respond in faith (1 Cor. 2:14; Jhn. 6:63). We begin our walk with Christ by the Spirit of God; we continue by the Spirit of God (Gal. 3:3).

² Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), 228-229.

³ In Dietrich Bonhoeffer's seminal work on discipleship, he argues that sanctification primarily takes place in the context of Christian community. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1963), 314.

⁴ As the Dutch Reformed theologian, Herman Bavinck, states, “[Sanctification] consists in the reality that in Christ God grants us, along with righteousness, also complete holiness, and does not just impute it but also inwardly imparts it by the regenerating and renewing work of the Holy Spirit until we have been fully conformed to the image of His Son.” Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Holy Spirit, Church, and Creation*, Vol. 4. Trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2008), 248.

In light of the fact that it is God who gives the growth (1 Cor. 3:5-9), we are reminded that our labor must not be done in the flesh but in the Spirit. This requires us to be prayerfully depended upon the Spirit in ministry.

- 3) *Sanctification is Nurtured by God's Word.* God's Spirit uses God's Word to change our hearts (Heb. 4:12). As we open the Word, we learn that God is the perfect and Holy Creator and covenant Lord. We learn that we are sinners by nature and under His wrath. We also learn of our blessed Savior, the One Who knew no sin but became sin so that we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).

Scripture is the infallible, inerrant, Self-Revelation of God. Apart from this special revelation of God, we would not know anything to lead us to salvation. Therefore, Scripture is our curriculum and our guide in discipleship ministry.

- 4) *Sanctification is Goal-oriented.* The Holy Spirit is taking us somewhere. The same God who began a good work in us will see it to completion on the Day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6). On the Day our sanctification is completed, we will be perfectly conformed into the Image of Jesus (Rom. 8:29).⁵

Discipleship & sanctification ought to be going in the same direction. It also follows to have one comprehensive discipleship vision for our kids, student, and college ministries. There is one Lord, one Spirit, one Word, and one direction everyone in Christ is headed – conformity to Image of God's Son. Therefore, each of our discipleship ministries are aligned to the same trajectory of – what is defined below as – *spiritual maturity*.

As a result of aligning our discipleship ministry with the Spirit's work of sanctification, our philosophy of ministry necessarily becomes Christ-focused, prayerfully dependent, biblically-centered, and comprehensive.

1.2.2 *Spiritual Maturity.* Ministry practices ought to be evaluated on the basis that they serve to meet desired goals and objectives. While the ultimate goal of sanctification is that each student will be completely conformed into the

⁵ Wayne Grudem refers to this as "complete sanctification." Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1994), 750.

Image of Christ, we know that will not happen in this life, but on the Day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6). Because perfection cannot be attained in this life, perfection is an unrealistic ministry objective. We need something tenable in order to use it as the standard for evaluating our ministry practices. We desire demonstrable outcomes in order to be able to measure our ministry practices. Such outcomes can be derived from what we will call “spiritual maturity.”

The Scriptures often speak of spiritual maturity as an attainable pursuit in this life (e.g. Heb. 5:11-6:3). If spiritual maturity is our goal for discipling students, then we must ask how the Scriptures describe this level of maturity in order to derive ministry objectives. From the whole Counsel of God, we have identified qualifiers to spiritual maturity and have set them as objectives for our discipleship ministry. Below is a list of the adopted *BBC Student Ministry Goals*.

1.2.3 *BBC Student Ministry Goals.* By the time our students leave the *Student Ministry*, our desire is for them to develop the following so that they will reach maturity and be equipped to make disciples of Jesus Christ to the Glory of God (Heb. 5:11-6:3):

- 1) A deeper understanding of how all of Scripture testifies about Christ, and where each story fits in God’s Redemptive Plan (Luk. 24:44-49)
- 2) A disciplined life of prayer and Bible study (1 Tim. 4:7; 1 Thes. 5:16-18; Psa. 1:2)
- 3) A biblical worldview (1 Cor. 2:16; 10:31)
- 4) A sense of unity and fellowship in the church (1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:1-6; Phil. 2:1-4)
- 5) A passion for and engagement in evangelism and missions (Mat. 28:18-20; Acts 4:13-31)
- 6) A biblically sound apologetic to defend the faith once delivered to the saints (1 Pet. 3:15; Jud. 1:3)
- 7) A spirit of worship of the Triune God (Isa. 25:1)

1.2.4 *BBC Student Ministry Practices.* Our vision is that everything we do as a student ministry would fulfill one or more of the above goals. We believe that

if we meet each of these goals then we can be confident that our discipleship strategy is in line with the Spirit's work of sanctification. In order to evaluate our practices, we simply ask the question, "Does this serve to meet one or more of our adopted goals?" From there, we place the practice in one of three categories: (1) receive, (2) redeem, (3) reject.

If the practice serves to meet one or more of our adopted ministry goals, we *receive* it as a biblically-grounded ministry practice. If it does not meet one of the goals but has the potential to, we seek to *redeem* that practice for a more biblically-faithful purpose. If the practice appears to be irredeemable, we *reject* it. By this evaluation method, we ensure our ministry practices contribute to our overall discipleship strategy and thereby hope to "keep in step with the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25).

1.3 *Family Ministry*

At BBC, we are committed to *family ministry*. Seeing family ministry in two aspects helps us grasp everything that the Scriptures prescribe to the church and the home. These aspects are (1) family-equipping ministry and (2) intergenerational ministry.

1.3.1 *Family-equipping Ministry*

A ministry is *family-equipping* if the ministry leaders communicate the biblical roles of parent and church while seeking to equip parents for their role as their child's primary disciple-maker.

1.3.1.1 *The Role of the Parent.* We are stewards of the students in our ministries, but we are neither positioned nor appointed to be the primary source of a child's discipleship. That role and responsibility belongs to the parent. The entirety of Scripture teaches that God has appointed parents to be their child's primary disciple-maker. In the Old Testament, God calls parents to make the home a place that is saturated with the Word of God (Deut. 6:4-9), a place where their children will be trained in the fear and admonition of the Lord (Prov. 22:6). This is something that is reiterated in the New Testament (Eph. 6:4). The explicit command to disciple one's children has been carried out in various formal and informal ways in the church's history, from daily family worship to weekly devotion time.

Not only are parents appointed to be the primary disciple-maker of their children, they are also strategically positioned to be. A brief glance at

the amount of time a child spends at home versus the time they spend in the church's ministries sheds light on this reality. God has graced parents with a glorious opportunity and has called them to carry it out faithfully. However, He has not asked parents to carry it out alone or ill-equipped.

1.3.1.2 *The Role of the Church.* The Lord has appointed leaders in His body to “equip the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph. 4:12). Every follower of Jesus has a radius of influence, a ministry entrusted to them. Faithful church leaders will seek to equip their people for their divinely appointed tasks. Therefore, no student ministry is complete without an aim to equip parents to faithfully carry out their calling to disciple their children. Too often, student ministries overlook the fact that they are not appointed or positioned to be a student's primary disciple-maker. The result of failing to understand their responsibility with regards to discipleship is that they often undermine the role of the parent by not communicating the roles of parent and church as they have been revealed in Scripture. Students in such ministries are spiritually malnourished for the discipleship that church leaders can provide to students is merely supplemental to that which a parent can provide.

That is why at BBC we do not communicate that our ministries are the primary context of a child's discipleship. Rather, we reinforce the biblical teaching that the primary place of discipleship is the home. We take up our calling to equip parents through resources, training, and other family-equipping initiatives.⁶ At the same time, we seek to provide our students with the best supplemental discipleship that we possibly can.

1.3.1.3 *For the Family.* While parents can find a family-equipping component integrated into a number of our various ministries, much of the resources and training is provided through our initiative entitled, *For the Family*. Many of these resources can be found on our *Kids* and *Student* ministry webpages.⁷

1.3.2 *Intergenerational Ministry*

⁶ Term and model by Stinson and Jones. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones, *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2011), 26.

⁷ For parents of youth, see <http://bbcmaryville.org/for-the-family-youth>. For parents of children, see <http://bbcmaryville.org/for-the-family-children>.

If family-equipping ministry focuses on helping the home look more like the church then *intergenerational ministry* focuses on helping the church look more like the home. Intergenerational relationships are integral to the New Testament's vision of the church (2 Tim. 2:2; Titus 2). The church does not function as it was intended if the generations are segmented to the point that they do not interact with one another. That is why we also focus on occasioning the opportunity for intergenerational relationships to develop so that healthy discipleship can take place.

2. Kids Ministry

Applying our philosophy of ministry to our *Kids Ministry*, we have developed the following discipleship strategy.

2.1. Discipleship Strategy

- 2.1.1** *Sunday School.* We have adopted the *Gospel Project* for our Sunday School curriculum in order to teach our children biblical theology. Beginning in preschool, our children are learning the metanarrative of Scripture and how all of Scripture testifies about Christ (goal #1). In addition to the main curriculum, we teach the children catechisms during the Sunday School hour to help them understand the faith once delivered to the saints (goal #6).⁸
- 2.1.2** *Midweek Gathering.* Our *Kids Bible Club* and *Summer Bible Club* programs are designed to provide kids with an interactive and engaging learning environment. Kids will be involved in activities and games (goal #4), worship songs (goal #7), catechisms, and Bible lessons during the midweek gathering. Curriculum employed in these programs include *Firm Foundations*, *Creation to Christ*, and other biblically sound material. In addition, kids also learn about missions through videos and their lessons (goal #5). See the schedule for times and other information.⁹
- 2.1.3** *Fifth & Sixth Grade.* Our 5th and 6th grade class is unique in our *Kids Ministry*. We focus on preparing these students for their transition into the *Student Ministry* and for greater participation in the life of the church. The curriculum for this class is 1 year of study on doctrine (goal #3) and 1 year of study on the spiritual disciplines (goal #2).¹⁰ These students will also enjoy outings, games, and other fun activities.
- 2.1.4** *Children's Church.* Although the ideal is for the entire family to worship together, we understand that some families might want their children to interact with the Word in an age-segregated setting during the Sunday service. Our *Children's Church* service provides that opportunity for children ages 4 through 2nd grade.

⁸ Catechisms have been used by the church since the 2nd century to teach people (especially children) the deep and glorious truths of the Christian faith. Catechisms are in a question and answer format where answers to specific doctrinal questions are memorized alongside of Bible verses that undergird the teaching. For our Kids Ministry, we use the *New City Catechism*.

⁹ <http://bbcmaryville.org/ministries/kids>

¹⁰ For doctrine, we use the *New City Catechism* curriculum. For spiritual disciplines, we utilize the work of Donald S. Whitney: *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, and *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church*.

2.2 *Transition Protocol*

The last week of May, all the classes will promote.

2.3 *Outreach*

Outreach is an integral part of our *Kids Ministry*. During the midweek gathering, our bus ministry picks up kids in our community for our *Kids* and *Student* programs, and takes them home afterwards.

3. Student Ministry

Applying our philosophy of ministry to our *Student Ministry*, we have developed the following discipleship strategy.

3.1 Discipleship Strategy

- 3.1.1** *Sunday School.* We have adopted the *Gospel Project* for our Sunday School curriculum in order to teach our students biblical theology. In the *Student Ministry*, students go deeper into the Texts of Scripture and trace the flow of the Bible's unfolding Storyline (goal #1). The students separate into guys and girls classes for their study time to be able to have the freedom to discuss issues related to being a young man or a young woman in Christ (goal #3). In addition to the main curriculum, we teach the students catechisms during the Sunday School hour to help them understand the faith once delivered to the saints (goal #6).¹¹
- 3.1.2** *Midweek Gathering.* During our midweek gathering, students will have the opportunity to engage in worship (goal #7), sit under expositional preaching (goal #1), and interact with the Scriptures in small group settings (goal #4). Games and other activities also find their place during this student gathering time. See the schedule for times and other information.¹²
- 3.1.3** *BBC Ministry Training Program.* When students reach the *Student Ministry* they will be given the opportunity to serve in various capacities within the church. Our *Ministry Training Program* connects interested students with ministry departments. They will occasionally serve under the guidance and supervision of an approved *coach*. The purpose of this program is to give students the opportunity to engage in church service while shadowing an experienced volunteer. Ministry departments includes but is not limited to the music ministry, AV ministry, TV ministry, administration, nursery, and greeter ministry (goal #4).
- 3.1.4** *Missions Opportunities.* When students reach the *Student Ministry* they will be given the opportunity to engage in various service projects and missions

¹¹ Catechisms have been used by the church since the 2nd century to teach people (especially children) the deep and glorious truths of the Christian faith. Catechisms are in a question and answer format where answers to specific doctrinal questions are memorized alongside of Bible verses that undergird the teaching. For our Kids Ministry, we use the *New City Catechism*.

¹² <http://bbcmaryville.org/ministries/students>

trips. Students 16 and under must be accompanied by a parent/guardian for overseas missions trips (goal #5).

3.2 *Transition Protocol*

During their junior and senior year in high school, students will have the opportunity to attend *College/Career Ministry* activities and outings while remaining part of the *Student Ministry*. The summer after graduation, students will have the opportunity to transition into *College/Career Ministry* or remain in the *Student Ministry* for the remainder of summer. However, once students begin school after their summer break, graduates will be fully transitioned into the *College/Career Ministry*.

3.3 *Outreach*

As with our *Kids Ministry*, outreach has become an important part of our *Student Ministry*. During the school year, leaders and college students from BBC host *YOKE Club* at Eagleton Middle School. At this afterschool club, students learn the gospel, play games, and build relationship with our team.

4. College/Career Ministry

Applying our philosophy of ministry to our *College/Career Ministry*, we have developed the following discipleship strategy.

4.1 *Discipleship Strategy*

- 4.1.1 *Sunday School.* Sunday School in the *College/Career Ministry* is a time for the students to gather and study the Scriptures and fellowship together (goals #1, 2, 4). Curriculum varies between book studies to expositional studies.
- 4.1.2 *Midweek Service.* In order to prompt *College/Career* students towards greater service in the church, we encourage them to serve in various capacities (e.g. *Kids* and *Student Ministries*) during the midweek gathering times (goal #4).
- 4.1.3 *Discipleship Training.* Discipleship training is offered in Fall and Spring terms. *College/Career* students are encouraged to join one of the many training opportunities, especially the apologetics related trainings (goals #5, 6).

4.2 *Transition Protocol*

The *College/Career Ministry* is intended for all college students and those that are of similar age. All college students under 25 years of age are encouraged to be a part of this ministry. Adults who are not in college and are over 25 years of age will transition out of the *College/Career Ministry* and into one of the various *Life Groups* (see BBC discipleship opportunities for more information about *Life Groups*).¹³

¹³ <http://bbcmaryville.org/ministries/discipleship>

5. *Student Ministry Internship*

The *BBC Student Ministry Internship* is designed for young men who are called to gospel ministry and desire to be discipled and have opportunities to grow in the various aspects of church service. See Appendix 2 for the description of the internship.



Appendix 1 Comprehensive Discipleship Figure

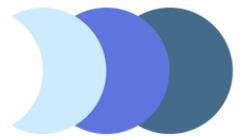
What is shown in the figure below is a big-picture view of the comprehensive nature of the student ministry, and how, at each ministry level, students are given additional opportunities for growth and service.

Discipleship & Ministry Opportunities



Missions & Evangelism Opportunities





Appendix 2

Student Ministry Internship Description

1) Service Duration & Compensation

- *Pay rate:* \$150/week
- *Internship duration:* 1 year
- *Minimum service:* 15 hours/week

2) Responsibilities

Serve in any of the following ministry opportunities as delegated by the *Student & Families Pastor*:

Youth Ministry Opportunities

- Occasional preaching/teaching during midweek gathering
- Teach Sunday School
- Lead midweek small-group
- Lead in worship during midweek gathering
- Plan games/events for youth ministry
- Plan outreach event(s)

Children's Ministry Opportunities

- Teach during Summer Bible Club
- Lead in song or games during Summer Bible Club
- Games at Bible Camp
- Help lead in VBS
- Plan games/events for children's ministry

3) Opportunities for Growth

- Work with team of biblically-grounded pastors
- Continue being discipled & mentored
- Receive training in preaching, counseling, theology, discipleship, family ministry, ministry administration, etc.
- Plug into college ministry
- Space to study for school/church work