

**Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Family Integrated Worship**  
**By Grace Family Baptist Church**  
**Revised for Sovereign Grace Bible Church**

**Q. Most of the kids in our youth ministry come from non-Christian homes. What does the Family Integrated Church model do in such circumstances?**

This issue is a product of the youth ministry structure. The reason most youth ministries are filled with unchurched teens from unchurched families is that the structure attracts teens and not families. As a result, this phenomenon is unusual in Family Integrated Church circles. We rarely see unattached teens. However, when we do, there are several differences in the way we proceed.

First, the Family Integrated Church model promotes inter-generational fellowship. Thus, teens who come to our church will likely have come with a family who has shown them hospitality and not with other who teens who know them in isolation. As a result, the Family Integrated Church model presents a readymade environment for inter-generational interaction.

Second, at SGBC we believe teens are young men and women, not big children. Thus, we believe the most important relationships they can have are not those with other teens, but with older adults. Teens will rise to the level of behavior expected of them. If we place them in a room filled with carnal teens, they are not likely to mimic the behavior of responsible adults.

Finally, teens from non-Christian homes need their parents to be reached and influenced. Because the Family Integrated Church model involves these teens in meaningful relationships with families, there is a natural connection between families in our church who are ministering to the teen and the family who needs to be reached with the Gospel.

**Q. Most of our families are headed by nominal believers. How can we expect them to disciple their children?**

Unfortunately, this is normal. True biblical discipleship is a rarity in the modern American church. Rare is the family headed by a godly father who actually sees discipleship as his responsibility. Rarer still is the man who is equipped for the task. As a result, this is a very real issue that must be addressed.

At SGBC, we rely on catechism as a discipleship tool. As a result, we tell our men, "You only have to be a day ahead." A man who is catechizing his children is also catechizing himself. Moreover, a man who is encouraged and expected to lead in family worship on a regular basis will be transformed in a very short time into something he never knew he could be:

As they pray for each other their mutual love is strengthened. Reading and memorizing Scripture and the catechisms of the church results in incredible development of children, both spiritually and intellectually. What families regard as important is evidenced by the manner in which they spend their time. Therefore, regular family worship shows the children that their parents believe that Jesus Christ is central to all of life. This practice leaves a legacy that will benefit thousands in generations to come.

(David Wegoner, JBMW)

Men must be challenged. They must have mountains to climb; foes to conquer. The Family Integrated Church says to men, "Here is your challenge....go make disciples in your home. No one is going to do it for you. You simply must get it done." We offer help, encouragement, accountability and training. But it is ultimately up to our men to get the job done (Deuteronomy 6:4-15; Ephesians 6:1-4).

**Q. Most churches send the children to the nursery to create a more worshipful environment. How do you conduct worship with disruptive children?**

We encourage all families to bring their children into the sanctuary. Coing babies don't bother us one bit. We recognize that some infants will need to be taken out for feedings, etc., and we have no problem with that, however, we do not provide a nursery. The Bible frequently mentions children in the context of the corporate gathering of God's people (Deut. 31:12-13; Ezra 10:1; Matt. 18:1-5; 19:13-15; Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20). Moreover, we believe it is important for children to worship with their parents, and to be taught how to sit through service.

Nurseries tend to hide problems that need to be corrected. Children who cannot sit through a service need training and discipline, not isolation. Moreover, if these children cannot sit through service, they are probably giving their parents fits at home (thus their desire to drop them off at the nursery on Sunday morning). We patiently teach inexperienced families how to walk with their children through this process and it blesses their home, their marriage, their relationship with their children and the testimony of the church.

**Q. How do you do Sunday School if you have no age segregation?**

We do not have Sunday School at Sovereign Grace Bible Church. However, if we did, it would be age-integrated. We would simply offer a variety of classes and allow families to choose which ones they wanted to attend. For now, though, we recognize that our weekly services with a monthly fellowship meal, Tuesday Family Night Study and Titus 2 monthly meetings represent a large time commitment. Family takes time. We want to minimize the requirements placed on families and encourage them to maximize their time together for family worship, prayer, Bible reading, memorization and catechism.

**Q. What curriculum do you use for family discipleship?**

We encourage families to use our website as a tool to aid in their Bible memory and hymn of the month memory. They are able to prepare and discuss as a family the scripture teaching for Sunday morning and review the songs before they arrive at church Sunday. Please view the Worship area on the website for further information. It helps to give children the anticipation that they are familiar with the music and text that is being taught. We encourage families to use the catechisms to teach themselves and their family sound biblical doctrine.

There is no set pattern as to how family worship has to be followed but usually consists of: Bible reading, scripture memory, hymn memory-families singing praises together to the Lord, praying together and a time of teaching (we encourage families to use the catechisms to aid them in their time of teaching – see our resource page online for further information).

**Q. What is a typical SGBC Sunday morning service like?**

We begin with a time of prayer from 9:00 am-9:45 pm. We encourage all who are able to come, even if you are not right there at 9:00 am, to join us in prayer whenever you are able to get there. Our service starts at 10:00 am and we open in prayer followed by a time of singing. Following we have a time of corporate prayer and one of the congregation will share a testimony of a missionary of the present or past with the body. We have updates on what is going on with the missionaries the church supports so we know how to be praying for them and their families. We have a short break time to set-up for the time of teaching. After break time, we gather for the time of teaching and close the service in prayer. Our monthly communion service/shared meal would follow after this time on the first Sunday of the month.

**Q. Does your family discipleship focus (and emphasis on fathers) alienate singles and single moms?**

Absolutely not! In fact, the opposite is true. This question has several underlying assumptions:

*Assumption #1: Family Integrated Church Sermons Focus on Families.*

The truth is SGBC is committed to 'systematic exposition.' In other words, we preach through the Bible systematically. We start with a book or a large segment in the Bible and work our way through verse by verse. This way we teach "the whole council of God" and not just the latest hot topic. This way every believer gets what he or she needs regardless of situation in life.

*Assumption #2: The Family Discipleship Emphasis Excludes Singles.*

The truth is our emphasis on family discipleship is truly an emphasis on discipleship 'in the home.' Everyone lives in a home and should learn how to get into the Word in that home whether they live alone or with a spouse and five children. Moreover, there are many other discipleship opportunities at SGBC

*Assumption #3: The Emphasis on Traditional Families Alienates Single Mothers.*

The truth is children growing up in single parent homes need the same thing every other child needs. The Family Integrated Church offers a place for single moms to expose their children to godly male role models who are doing and being exactly what she wants her children to become. Single moms also benefit of a strong deacon ministry designed to minister to their special needs.

*Assumption #4: The Emphasis on Training Fathers Excludes Single Men.*

The truth is fathers are not a separate or special breed of man. Fatherhood is simply a context in which biblical manhood is expressed. The tools needed to be a godly husband and father are the same tools needed to be a godly man. The Family Integrated Church is about training men and women to thrive in their biblical roles whether they marry or not.

*Assumption #5: The Family Integrated Church Doesn't Offer Activities for Singles.*

The truth is we offer a number of activities for singles. We just don't offer activities that set singles apart in segregated, isolated settings. Our Church offers discipleship for all believers. Our home groups study materials that singles need to learn. More importantly, singles can learn from (and teach) married adults.

*Assumption #6: Singles Will Feel Pressured to Get Married.*

The truth is the high view of marriage at SGBC is just as likely to elicit higher levels of caution in single adults considering marriage. Our emphasis on biblical courtship, biblical manhood and womanhood, and multigenerational faithfulness means the bar is set high for marriage. Thus, one could argue that there would be less pressure to just 'get married'. Although we would hope that a church filled with men and women striving to grow in grace and exemplify biblical marriage would ignite a godly desire for marriage in all those who have been called by our Lord to a life of singleness.