

Editorial

## CLINICALLY-INFORMED BIBLICAL COUNSELING?

*Dr. Greg E. Gifford<sup>1</sup>*

If you haven't been paying attention, the BC movement has been defining and refining. Leadership changes. Books written. Articles posted. And statements written. In the JBSC's past articles, we have talked much about common grace, the body keeping the score and the Clinically-Informed Biblical Counseling (CIBC) movement and its claims to be biblical. Most recently, ACBC hosted a colloquium in July 2025 in Kansas City where myself, Dale Johnson, and Jared Poulton addressed CIBC. We invited the CIBC representatives who were unable or undesiring to attend. The articles from that colloquium, some pastoral and some academic, I commend to you. While I do not believe that the conversation is over regarding CIBC, there are definitely lines that have been drawn in clarifying and helpful ways. This edition represents a response to the CIBC movement and its claims.

Sam Stephens and Francine Tan are some of the brightest academic minds among us. They have written an article to continue to clarify the nature of common grace entitled, "The Need for Clarifying Counsel." Remember, this article is a further elaboration of last Fall's (2024) edition on the common grace challenges within the BC Movement. Austin Collins' article, "Generational Trauma, Epigenetics, and Biblical Hope" fits nicely into the conversation as trauma and "trauma-informed care" are part of the overall topics within CIBC and modern controversies. I think you'll enjoy both of these articles and I look forward to your thoughtful engagement.

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Lastly, be encouraged that it is now time to construct. Many times a movement (like the BC Movement) needs to clarify what it is not, but then move toward greater clarity on what it is. There is a wide-open ocean of topics like understanding the image of God and change within BC (2 Cor. 3:18), or the connection to our environments and how we reflect them (Ps. 115:8). We need to explore the ideological underpinnings for those growing up in foster and adopt homes, or to construct a framework for BC and missions. There are almost innumerable topics that need to be advanced within BC. My recommendation to you is help us construct. We have critiqued—as is good and necessary—but now our desire is to construct. Our counselees need us and the future church needs us to be thinking biblically, clearly, and helpfully about the complex problems that we face. And many look to us not only to say, “Avoid this” but also to say, “Pursue this.” Let’s construct and develop what it is that still needs work in our movement. The JBSC is simply a cog in the wheel of that effort, as the Lord allows.

Thank you for reading.

*May God give us grace to honor his sufficient word for his glory and the good of our counselees!*