

Introduction to the EFCC: History, Ethos, Polity and Current issues

Seminar Syllabus | Fall 2026

Facilitator: Neil Bassingthwaighte



Seminar Description

This three-part seminar builds on EFCC Orientation. It explores how EFCC history, ethos, and polity work in the local church context and how we ought to handle disagreements over practices linked to “in non-essentials, charity”. It also explores how our ethos influences how we approach and handle socially sensitive issues in our churches – both in how we teach and in how we minister in contemporary society.

Seminar Objectives

1. Help attendees understand the benefits of the EFCC Ministerial Accreditation Process.
2. Help attendees understand and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the EFCC *Our Character and Calling* statement and ascertain their fit with the EFCC ethos.
3. Identify and explore key biblical foundations and practical implications of how diversity of thought works its way out in our polity and in practices.
4. Identify preferred ways to teach about non-essential issues and discern how to ensure that there are no “second class members” even when practices cannot accommodate opposing views.
5. Identify and explore EFCC approaches to socially sensitive issues and suggest ways both to teach about these issues and to minister to people struggling with them.

Assignments

1. Explain the EFCC Motto from *Our Character and Calling* to one of your leadership teams and discuss how this works its way out into your local church or ministry. Prepare to share a 5-minute summary with your cohort of the opportunities and challenges your team feels the EFCC ethos presents to ministry in your local church, community and the world.
2. Hold a discussion with your church board or one of your leadership teams regarding how you have (in the past) or plan to handle disagreements around board structure/polity, or non-essential issues such as mode and timing of baptism, etc. Share with your cohort a 5-minute summary and lessons learned from that discussion.
3. In the seminar, give a 7-to-10-minute presentation to your cohort highlighting the key biblical principles you feel are foundational when teaching on a particular social issue such as human sexuality issues, sanctity of life issues, a Christian response to poverty, racism, the environment, or a different social issue approved by your facilitator. Your presentation should include a brief explanation of how you would teach about the issue and minister to those in the congregation or community who are struggling with the issue.
4. Write a 1000-word “learnings” paper on the most significant lessons learned in this seminar, including a personal assessment of how you feel you fit within the EFCC ethos and the EFCC *Our Character and Calling* statement.

Readings

Hanson, Calvin. *From Hardship to Harvest* [<http://bit.ly/2ui0uof>]

Olson, Arnold T. *The Significance of Silence* [<http://bit.ly/2u1ZAkr>]

Taylor, Bill. *From Infancy to Adolescence* [<http://bit.ly/2h1kZ2d>]

Seminar Schedule

Session	Date	Topics	Assignment Due Dates
1	September 24, 2026 9am-11am Pacific	A. The theological and practical benefits of Accreditation. B. The EFCC missionary posture: strengths; weaknesses; application to the local church and to mission, in Canada and internationally	Assignment #1: October 15, 2026
2	October 15, 2026 9am-11am Pacific	C. The EFCC Motto and practices that divide: how do we ensure that there are no “second class members”? D. Polity, priesthood of all believers, and how autonomy and association work.	Assignment #2: October 15, 2026
3	November 5, 2026 9am-11am Pacific	E. Biblical principles that form our approach to social issues and fit the EFCC ethos F. Liberty with responsibility: holiness in a broken world. Handling sin and grace in our teaching, congregation and community.	Assignment #3: November 5, 2026 (Presentation) Assignment #4: November 30, 2026 (Learnings paper)