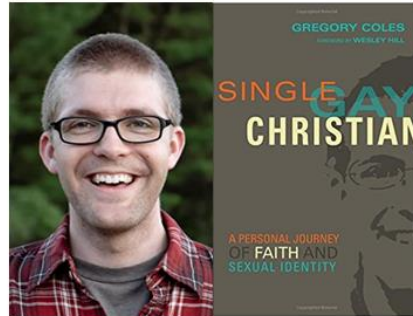




The Evangelical Covenant Church



Show Notes for  
Embrace Webinar #2

## Single Gay Christian: A Personal Journey of Faith and Sexual Identity with Greg Coles

### Embrace webinar #2 summary:

In an age where neither society nor the church knows what to do with gay Christians, Greg Coles offers insights from his journey of faith and sexual identity that are instructive for the church's posture and practices. He offers 10 "provocations" for evangelicals to grow in loving LGBT people well. Full webinar and resources available at <https://covchurch.org/embrace/webinar-2/>

### Key takeaways and timestamps from webinar:

**(2:30-5:00):** Greg's **personal story** of growing up and coming out as a celibate gay Christian within the evangelical church.

**(6:00-7:20):** The **challenge of belonging as a celibate gay Christian**: many evangelicals do not make space for gay people, and many gay people do not make space for those who hold a traditional sexual ethic.

**(7:20-10:00):** What **language** to use to identify oneself and communicate with others (gay, same-sex attracted, etc.)? Greg makes a case for using the word "gay" because it's synonymous with "same-sex attraction" but does not carry the negative associations of the ex-gay ministry movement.

**(10:00-12:30):** Why **"being gay"** – that is, having a homosexual orientation – **is not in itself a sin** to be condemned.

**(12:30-14:30):** **Homophobia** means responding in revulsion rather than Christ-like love to people who are predisposed differently than you.



## The Evangelical Covenant Church

(14:30-17:35): All people's sexuality bears both the **goodness** of being created in the image of God as well as the **brokenness** of being impacted by the fall. (21-23:40): **Fulfillment is found in Jesus**, not in satisfying our appetites.

(24:40-28:28): **Concrete ways the church can love LGBT people well**, such as providing safe space to talk about being gay and providing places to belong in the church and within families.

(28:28-36:00): 10 "Provocations" for Evangelicals

1. **Be Flexible with Language.** Don't be afraid to be "terminologically promiscuous."
2. **Try Directional Discipleship.** When possible, let discipleship be directional, not locational.
3. **Find Common Ground.** Whenever possible, find common ground with discourses that don't share a biblical sexual ethic (e.g., secular gender theory).
4. **Elevate Singleness.** Churches cannot attend to the needs of singles by making them "special projects." The whole ordering of our lives together, including our idolatry of marriage and the nuclear family, needs to be transformed.
5. **Dare to Reimagine.** Dare to ask what might be advantageous about being gay and celibate. Questions about vocation for LGBTQ folks can't be driven by fear or image concerns.
6. **Pursue Solidarity.** Be prepared to defend LGBTQ people who uphold a traditional biblical sexual ethic from attacks on both "sides" of the conversation.
7. **Be Consistent.** Beware of any restrictions on facility use, pastoral involvement, etc. leveled vis-a-vis same-sex marriage that aren't equally applied to all marriages that violate biblical bounds.
8. **Assume the Best.** Engage generously with and assume the best of open-and-affirming folks.
9. **Go Deeper.** Look for and try to address the questions that often underlie beliefs about sexual ethics.
10. **Create Safe Space.** Make space for people on the journey to wrestle on a personal level in your congregations. People may ultimately reach conclusions that cause them to leave...but if they can't wrestle honestly in your church, they'll find somewhere else to do it.

### Resources mentioned:

[Single, Gay, Christian: A Personal Journey of Faith and Sexual Identity](#) By Gregory Coles

[Is Same-Sex Attraction \(or Being Gay\) a Sin?](#) By Dr. Nate Collins and Greg Coles

[Embrace Webinar Slides - Greg Coles](#)