



The Evangelical Covenant Church



Show Notes for  
Embrace Webinar #3

## Just Sexuality: Exploring the Intersections of Justice and Human Sexuality

with Dennis Edwards

### Embrace webinar #3 summary:

Drawing from his pastoral and biblical insights Rev. Dr. Dennis Edwards speaks into the paradox of being both just and upholding a traditional sexual ethic within the church. Prior to serving as Associate Professor of New Testament at North Park Theological Seminary, he served as a pastor of Sanctuary Covenant Church, a justice-minded church. Dennis offers his assessment on justice, the church's need to lament and repent with regard to engagement with LBGT+ people, and next steps for just sexuality. Full webinar and resources available at <https://covchurch.org/embrace/webinar-3/>

### Key takeaways and timestamps from webinar:

**(4:37-7:13):** In the Covenant, justice is “making things right in our broken world.” How has Sanctuary Covenant Church been involved in making things right? Starting with awareness of what is broken. Moving into prayer. Engaging in justice through volunteerism and activism.

**(7:14-9:22):** Justice is following the example of Jesus, who sought to make things right in words and actions.

**(13:26-15:34):** Just sexuality is controversial because of differing understandings of what justice is and how to practice it within the church.

**(15:34-18:53):** How is it possible to be both just and to uphold a traditional sexual ethic? In a fallen world, human understandings of justice have been broken. Sometimes the world will call just what is actually unjust. At other times, the world will call unjust what is just



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in God's eyes. God calls Christians to align with his standards for justice and holiness. At times, God's standards will come into conflict with the moral compass of the world.

**(18:53-21:47):** Christians who uphold a traditional sexual ethic can be seen as hateful by society. But this should come as no surprise: **it's helpful to remember that, historically, some Christians were called "haters of humanity" due to conflicting standards around what was proper and just.**

**(21:48-29:10):** We as the church have not always been just in the way we have applied the traditional, biblical sexual ethic. At times, the church has narrowly focused on the sins of LGBT+ people while overlooking the sins of heterosexual people. This is not just.

**(29:11-34:23):** Lamenting and repenting of the church's engagement with LGBT people does not comprise convictions. (See "Just Sexuality Next Steps")

**(34:24-37:02):** Ethnic dynamics that play into embracing LGBT people and pursuing justice for all. For example, in the traditional African American church the culture of "don't ask, don't tell" has made it a difficult place for LGBT+ people to belong, too.

Next Steps on Just Sexuality from Dr. Dennis Edwards:

1. Repent for negative attitudes and actions toward LGBTQ+ people.
2. Advocate against bullying.
3. Continue having conversations with LGBTQ+ people, including those who identify as Christian. Our goal is to understand what is helpful in loving people (e.g., avoiding unhelpful language and behavior). Effective listening is an act of justice.
4. Read books. Include those about individual journeys and others about the treatment of Scripture passages.
5. Recognize that we're always on a journey of interpreting ancient Scripture and learn how it speaks to contemporary contexts.
6. Remember: we all love imperfectly, so let's always be motivated by love and respect.

Resources mentioned:

[Forgive Us: Confessions of a Compromised Faith](#)

[Lead Them Home: Justice Initiatives](#)