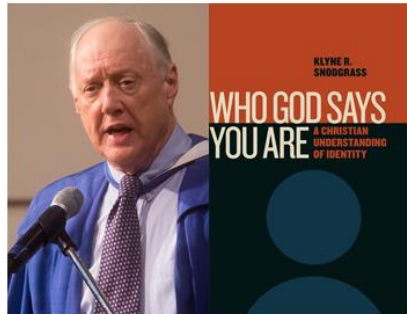




The Evangelical Covenant Church



Show Notes for
Embrace Webinar #4

Who God Says You Are: Christian Identity and Human Sexuality

with Klyne Snodgrass

Embrace webinar #4 summary:

Dr. Klyne Snodgrass, professor emeritus of New Testament at North Park Theological Seminary (NPTS), served as faculty member for 41 years and has been a leading theological voice within the Covenant. Klyne speaks to the intersection of Christian identity and human sexuality. “Who God says we are” powerfully shapes our beliefs and practices, including our sexual practices. Full webinar and resources available at <https://covchurch.org/embrace/webinar-4/>

Key takeaways and timestamps from webinar:

(5:27-7:17): “Every reality of Christian existence is at bottom an issue of identity.”

(7:18-9:45): Our Christian identity – who God says we are – defines us. To make sexuality the central focus of our personal identity is idolatry.

(9:46-13:53): Everyone has **sexual boundaries** the question is who defines them- is it self, or is it God? We define sin as any violation of God’s boundaries.

(13:54-18:21): **Sexual practice** within heterosexual marriage has boundaries, too. Like Jesus we can be whole persons apart from sexual practice.

(18:22-23:49): **God cares about what we do with our body parts.** For example: Male and female becoming one flesh bear the image of God together (Genesis 1-2, 5:2). United to Christ, we are to honor God with our bodies sexually (1 Corinthians 6:12-20).

(23:50-27:43): Most New Testament **vice lists** reference sexual sin. All of these texts do align with a traditional biblical sexual ethic.



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(27:44-34:43): Some Christians disagree on what the Bible says about human sexuality because of giving greater weight to reason and experience over Scripture and tradition.

(34:44-39:17): Every person's sexuality has been distorted by the fall. The question is: will we deny self and follow Jesus?

(44:13-47:33): Response to line of reasoning that human sexuality is a "nonessential issue" – not a "salvation issue" -- and therefore every local Covenant church should have freedom to disagree: In the Bible, the idea of identity is more important than salvation. In focusing on eternal salvation, we have lost sight of the comprehensive nature of the Gospel, which is about all of life.

Summary of Dr. Snodgrass's Slides on Christian Identity and Human Sexuality:

1. **What is your canon?** *Who God Says You Are* implies a canon, a standard by which all else is measured. What is your real canon? Is it your own being, or **does Someone outside you have the right to say who you are?** This is a matter of authority of Scripture.
2. **What is our starting point?** The starting point is not the sexual practice of LGBTQ+ people but **human sexuality in general**. Our society assumes that casual sex is what you do. The good has been turned into **idolatry**.
3. **How did sexual sin become such a light thing for us?** Sexual sin is often first on the New Testament **vice lists** and is also represented by multiple words.
4. **What is driving our sexual impulses?** Our sexuality stands at the convergence of three of the most powerful human drives: **pride, power and pleasure**. Our sexuality can be a prime context for self-deception.
5. **What does God have to do with it?** Sexuality involves at its core a **connection to transcendence**. Sexual relations have to do with God. But then, so does all of life.
6. **What is the truth about human sexuality?** We are not discussing gays and straights. **No one is "straight."** All of us are bent and twisted with regard to sexuality.
7. **Closing Thought:** Pastoral issues are exacerbated in our time. If we are going to say what the Evangelical Covenant Church says it wants to say, we need to be much more pastoral and articulate than we have been.

Resource mentioned:

[Who God Says You Are: A Christian Understanding of Identity](#) by Klyne R. Snodgrass