



GRACE/TRUTH 1.0 ECC SUPPLEMENT

Evangelical Covenant Church FAQ



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INTRODUCTION

The Embrace team has asked for feedback about [Grace/Truth 1.0](#) from a diverse group of Covenant readers. The below FAQ and recommendations have emerged from this feedback and are intended to assist those seeking to utilize this resource within the context of the [Evangelical Covenant Church \(ECC\)](#). In addition to this supplement, please be sure to review the [Grace/Truth 1.0 small group leader's guide](#).

WHAT IS GRACE/TRUTH 1.0?

[Grace/Truth 1.0](#) is a five-week small group learning experience produced by the [Center for Faith, Sexuality, and Gender](#) that introduces Christians to LGBTQ+/same-sex attracted (SSA)/sexual minority* people, identifies what language to use and avoid, presents a biblically faithful view of marriage and sexuality, and offers practical guidance on how to embody the love of Christ toward sexual and gender minorities.

DOES EVERYTHING IN GRACE/TRUTH 1.0 REFLECT THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE ECC?

As part of the larger [Embrace suite](#) of curated resources, Grace/Truth 1.0 is in harmony with the ECC's adopted position, the center of which is "Faithfulness in heterosexual marriage, celibacy in singleness—these constitute the Christian standard." However, Grace/Truth 1.0 should be viewed as one of many curated Embrace resource recommendations rather than as an "official" statement of the ECC's position on all points. To review official ECC publications relating to human sexuality, see [Human Sexuality: Biblical & Theological Discernment](#) as well as the [ECC's Resolution on Human Sexuality](#).

WHO IS THE INTENDED AUDIENCE OF GRACE/TRUTH 1.0?

Grace/Truth 1.0 is intended for small groups of laypeople in local evangelical churches. In terms of its relevance and effectiveness, the material may be best suited for congregations that are more traditional/conservative in their inclinations or those at the very beginning of their journey of LGBTQ+ learning and engagement. Although Grace/Truth 1.0 does name and engage some affirming/progressive arguments and concerns, on the whole it primarily addresses traditional readers. Recognizing this perspective, we believe Grace/Truth 1.0 has the potential to be an excellent resource for all congregations, especially when it is modified and tailored to each particular context. If you are looking for an alternative resource that features authors

who compare and discuss contrasting positions on human sexuality, one excellent resource is the book [Two Views on Homosexuality, the Bible, and the Church](#).

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE STRENGTHS OF GRACE/TRUTH 1.0?

- As of this writing, Grace/Truth 1.0 is unique in that it is the only comprehensive small group curriculum available to facilitate conversations around faith, human sexuality, and gender identity.
- The accompanying [Grace/Truth 1.0 video series](#) features the voices and stories of sexual minority people. It is engaging and exemplifies high-quality film production. The first video, entitled [Dear Church: I'm Gay](#), is available to view for free online.
- This resource delivers on its title—with grace and truth, it directly names harmful behaviors that evangelicals display toward LGBTQ+ people while also remaining faithful to the historic Christian sexual ethic. It explores the biblical arguments for and against same-sex sexual intimacy in a compelling manner.
- It emphasizes the need for compassionate relationship. Chapter 5 on “Six Relational Dos and Don’ts” is an especially helpful starting point for engaging effectively with LGBTQ+ people.
- The content is accessible and easy to understand, and the entire series can be completed in five weeks. Grace/Truth 1.0 also points to additional resources for those who want to go deeper, such as the pastoral papers of the [Center for Faith, Sexuality, and Gender](#).

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WEAKNESSES OF GRACE/TRUTH 1.0?

- Given the brevity of this resource, there are many topics that cannot be covered. Although Grace/Truth 1.0 frequently points to Grace/Truth 2.0 for engagement around certain topics (including those relating to gender identity), as of this writing, Grace/Truth 2.0 is not yet available.
- Grace/Truth 1.0 video series observations: 1) The 1.0 video series lacks ethnic diversity. However, the 2.0 video series promises to feature a more diverse set of participants. 2) The videos do not always directly relate to the weekly topic/questions in the curriculum. 3) Although the phrase LGBTQ+ is used, the 1.0 videos primarily feature lesbian and gay voices. There are no self-identified bisexual or queer interviewees.

- The word “transgenderism” is used more than once—note, however, that this word is grammatically incorrect and offensive to some.

WHAT SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR USING GRACE/TRUTH 1.0 WITHIN THE LOCAL CHURCH?

- **Prepare.** Before week one, we highly recommend that facilitators read the [small group leader’s guide](#) and the entire [book](#), watch all the [videos](#), review the [pastoral papers](#) referred to in Grace/Truth 1.0, and note any questions that may arise so that you can begin to seek responses in advance.
- **Tailor.** Adjust the study as needed for your group; for example, modify some of the existing discussion questions or create your own.
- **Relate.** Remember that our ultimate goal is to grow in love. We encourage you to get to know at least one LGBTQ+ person better as you explore and progress through this material. As you do, engage with a posture of learning, compassion, and humility, even (and perhaps especially) when you disagree.

HOW CAN READERS AND SMALL GROUP PARTICIPANTS GIVE FEEDBACK ON GRACE/TRUTH 1.0?

We are constantly seeking constructive feedback, both positive and negative, on Embrace resources so that we can continually improve our toolbox. Please share your feedback with us at embrace@covchurch.org.

***A Note on Language.** We recognize that in conversations about human sexuality, various constituencies use words and definitions in different ways. Meaning matters, and careless use of language can hinder true communication. In Embrace we make an effort to curate and create resources that utilize a full range of human sexuality vocabulary interchangeably in order to make space for everyone.



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