

Classis Heartland Meeting Supplement
Wednesday, September 18, 2024 at 8:30 AM

Location: Ireton Christian Reformed Church
301 Maple St
Ireton, IA 51027

The following documents will be included in our deliberations as a classis.

1. **Classis Heartland & Iakota Safe Church Report (p. 2)**
This will be taken up as part of agenda item 14, the Classical Discipleship Committee report.
2. **Classis Interim Committee Summary from September 10, 2024 (p. 3)**
This will be taken up as part of agenda item 4, the Classical Interim Committee report.
3. **Pastor Hoekstra Sermon: “Being Moved” ~ Genesis 12:1–20 (pp. 4–12)**
4. **Pastor Hoekstra Sermon: “To What do you Surrender?” ~ Luke 8:40–42, 49–56 (pp. 13–19)**
5. **Pastor Hoekstra Sermon: “Not Simply A Policy” ~ Psalm 15, LD 43, Q&A 112 (pp. 20–29)**

These three sermons will be considered as part of agenda item 7, the Article 10 examination of Pastor Kieth Hoekstra for Ordination as Minister of the Word at Hope CRC of Hull.

Classis Heartland & Iakota Safe Church Report Spring 2024

Prepared by: Tara Boer, Iakota & Heartland Safe Church Coordinator

Data Prepared: 09/04/24

Iakota & Heartland Classical Safe Church Team Members: Pastor Henry Lengkeek (Trinity CRC-Iakota), Heidi Van Roekel (Bethel CRC-Iakota), Pastor Jesse Walhof (Living Water CRC-Heartland), Kristi Habben (Sibley CRC-Heartland) Tara Boer (Hope CRC, Heartland)

Classical Safe Church Team Tasks:

- The Safe Church Team serves in a consultative role for churches in classis who are developing (or reviewing/revising) congregational safe church policies.
- The Safe Church Team serves as a resource for churches dealing with allegations of abuse.
- The Safe Church Team serves as a clearing house of best practices and periodic trainings for Classis Heartland and Classis Iakota with regard to abuse awareness and prevention.

Team Meeting:

A Safe Church Team meeting was held on 09/04/24 to discuss the future of the safe church team. Pastor Henry Lengkeek is retiring and Tara Boer will be resigning from her role after the end of the year. The team reviewed past and current church needs as well as potential candidates to fill these soon vacant positions.

Safe Church Team Recommendations

The team will provide classis with qualified candidates willing to step into the safe church team coordinator role. Tara is willing to help/mentor the new coordinator in whatever capacity is needed. The current team also agreed on a pastoral candidate to replace Pastor Lengkeek and contact will be made with this individual to determine their willingness to serve. If willing, a recommendation will be made to classis for that position. The team will continue to be available for churches for process and procedure questions related to safe church issues.

Please do not hesitate to contact a member of our committee if you would like to talk about any safe church needs your church may have. You may communicate with any committee member or contact Tara directly at 712-898-6468 (cell) or tara.boer@dordt.edu

Team Members

Pastor Henry Lengkeek: henry@trinitycrc.com

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Classical Interim Committee - Heartland

September 10, 2024

Calvary CRC, Orange City

1. Membership: All present Rev. Kevin Muyskens (Chair), Rev. Nathan Kuperus (Clerk), Rev. Brian Hofman (Vice-chair), Rev. Phillip Westra (Stated Clerk) Rev. Aaron Greydanus (upcoming classis vice-chair, via phone call for the first part of the meeting)
2. CIC instructs Rev. Aaron Greydanus (Church Counselor) to connect Hospers CRC with Susan La Clear (Thrive) and CMLT as Hospers CRC has inquired about the process to call a pastor who is not yet ordained as a Minister of the Word.
3. CIC reviews the upcoming classis meeting agenda with Rev. Kuperus (upcoming chair of classis) and Rev. Greydanus (vice-chair of classis), after which Rev. Greydanus is dismissed from the meeting.
4. CIC notes that Ryan Pelton is no longer pastoring New City CRC, Kansas City as has been called to a church in California and expresses its hope that the connection between this congregation and the classis can be strengthened during their time of vacancy.
5. Rev. Muyskens will be the church counselor to New City
6. CIC duly approves the minutes of the special meeting of classis on August 20 at which classis decided to not accede to an individual's appeal of a decision of a consistory within classis.
7. CIC notes that minutes of the special meeting are confidential and will only be given to the appellant, the respondent and a copy will be kept in the records of the stated clerk of classis.

Sermon for September 8, 2024

Hope CRC – AM Service

Pastor Keith Hoekstra

Genesis 12:1-20

Title: Being Moved

We begin now a new series and leading up to the leading up to Thanksgiving we are going to spend time looking at the life of Abraham we call this series, A Life of Faithful Response. There are so many ways in which we can learn about what faithful response looks like in the life of Abraham and sometimes it's very simple and sometimes it's very complicated. Sometimes we look upon his life and we get frustrated sometimes we look on his life and we examine ours and we get and we get frustrated. However we look at his life and we're reminded of the words of Hebrews 11:8, as it talks about his faith. We want to be numbered with those who have that faith, we want to be declared as those who have that faith.

This morning as we begin this series we're going to look at the first steps, really it just comes down to the idea of being moved being moved by God's Word, being moved by His command, being moved in faith and in trust, and being moved through the challenges of our lives.

Today we're going to look at Genesis chapter 12 the whole chapter, all the way through, so I invite you to open his Word to Genesis 12 as we look at 1 through 20 and there we read the words of the Lord.

The Call of Abram

12 The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

² "I will make you into a great nation,

and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,

and you will be a blessing. ¹

³ I will bless those who bless you,

and whoever curses you I will curse;

and all peoples on earth

will be blessed through you."

⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. ⁵ He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had

accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

⁸ From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.

⁹ Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

Abram in Egypt

12:10–20 Ref—Ge 20:1–18; 26:1–11

¹⁰ Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. ¹¹ As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. ¹² When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. ¹³ Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."

¹⁴ When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. ¹⁵ And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. ¹⁶ He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

¹⁷ But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai. ¹⁸ So Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What have you done to me?" he said. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? ¹⁹ Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!" ²⁰ Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had. ¹

Let us pray:

Father in heaven we open your word and we hear your command to Abram. We hear his movement as he went from his home in Heron, as he went towards the promise you had given to him. Wpen our ears and our hearts Lord that we may hear you speak. That we may be encouraged to be moved and that we may live in the trust and the faith of your working as we are moved.

God I ask your blessing upon me servant that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart would be pleasing to you. That God we together as your people would be enriched, encouraged, and emboldened. Enriched by your word, encouraged by your promise and your faithfulness, and embolden to live lives in faithful response to your call on them. Lord we praise you and thank you it is in Jesus name that we pray these things. Amen.

¹ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ge 12:1–20.

We hear this account of what happened in the life of Abram and I'm going to jump back. As we start I want to jump back just a little bit, and read a little bit before these accounts in our passage this morning, to look at the account of Terah's family line. If you look back with me into chapter 11, we read of the call to move, in verse 31 Terah we read.

³¹Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Harran, they settled there. ²

What we notice is that in our passage it is not the first time that Abram has been moved and it's important for us to set that stage. In order for us to have a more complete picture we should set scene, there is this process by which Abram is continuing to move towards what God has ordained for him.

We have this joyous understanding of the Providence of God. We have this incredible hope and peace in the knowledge that God is in control of all things and he moves us and shapes our lives by his will and by his command.

Sometimes we experience things that shake us to the foundations of our soul in our lives. We ask:

Why is this where are you taking me?

Where am I going?

Why are you moving me here?

Why am I going through this?

People of God you hear the account of what happened in Abram's life he went from Ur to Heron and we read in the very beginning of our passage that he was blessed in Heron. Abram had gained wealth there in Heron and yet there was this call this call to be moved by command.

MOVED BY COMMAND

We recognize God's Authority in our lives we recognize his providence and his care for us, however sometimes we struggle with being moved by his command to us.

His call to us people of God, there are moments in everyone's lives where they experience a call to move and to change. Sometimes that move and that change isn't so much about moving away like we see here in the life of Abram, sometimes that call to be moved is as simple as volunteering. Sometimes that call to be moved is as difficult as sitting still and that sounds contradictory but sometimes the movement God has for you is to sit and wait and be still. Here we see the command to move in Genesis 12: 1-3 this is the command that he gives to Abram:

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

²"I will make you into a great nation,

² *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ge 11:31.

and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.¹
³ I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”³

We look at verse one and it's just that simple there is this command that God gives to Abram. In that command he says go, you will need to move, you will need to change. In this case Abram I will take you from this place where you have settled, this place where you have found blessing, this place where you have benefited and become wealthy. I'm going to send you to a place that will be your descendants place I'm going to send you to a place that I am preparing for your children, your children's children, their children, their grandchildren, and so on. From generation to generation I am sending you to a place that will not be yours but your children's. I am moving you to a blessing that is beyond your vision.

The command that he gives to Abram is to go and to be moved. What does that take, what's the necessity, what's the response to the command? The command is to go and that means there must be change, there must be something different, there must be movement.

We see that command responded to by Abraham and he goes, he goes not only from Ur of the Chaldeans, but he goes from Heron to another place, Canaan, to a place that is populated and owned by another people. By the command of God he moved.

People of God we have that picture of Abraham, we have that example of Abraham moving. Sometimes we ask ourselves “what's the command we're following, what is the command that we are to move for, what is the command that is going to make us move?”

I would like you to hear this command that Christ gives to His disciples as He called them, in Matthew 4 we read:

¹⁹ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him. ⁴

I encourage you to have this command on your heart. This is the command on my heart, this is the command that has been on my heart since the first moments God started working in my heart and mind for the purpose of calling me to be a pastor, a preacher, a teacher of His Word. We all have that same command. This is one picture of Christ's command upon our lives, another picture of that command that

³ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ge 12:1–3.

⁴ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mt 4:18–20.

is ours as his people, we go to Matthew 28 as he's preparing to ascend into heaven we have the great commission and read:

¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” ⁵

This is a command that requires us to go, it is a command to move. This command on our hearts and on our minds should move us. This command is for each and every one of us, that doesn't mean the command to move is going to move you from Ur to Heron and then to Canaan. The move that he's called you to that move might be the willingness to get up one morning and go to your neighbor and be that voice of discipleship that they need.

There is another command there is another way to look at the command to move and I want us to consider that as well. The command to move can call us out of the things of this world. It can call us out of the things that take us away from worship, take us away from his word, take us away from fellowship. In Deuteronomy 13:4 we read:

⁴It is the Lord your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him.⁶

That command to love him, to serve him, to keep his commands, to follow him, and to be close to him; not only do we see pictures of the command to move from place to place, or move for the purpose of the Gospel, we are called to move our lives into faithful obedience to him. As those who are his by his will and by his calling, he has declared us his own, and He commands us to move into faithful living.

MOVED IN TRUST

We also must be moved in trust moved in faith. We hear those words and we recognize it and we see it we see the response that Abram had in verses four and five: Abram went, it didn't say so Abram talked to God for a little while longer, it didn't say so Abram went back to Ur because that sounded easier, it didn't say so Abram sat down there in his house and he waited for a second message or a second command. Abram went, he didn't go with caveat, he didn't go with conditions, he didn't go with other “well God if you will then I will” “if you do then I will”, we read Abrams response:

⁴So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. ⁵He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there. ⁷

⁵ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mt 28:19–20.

⁶ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Dt 13:4.

⁷ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ge 12:4–5.

They went to that place, he didn't wait, he didn't hold off, he didn't pause, he didn't he didn't say well if you give me this then I'll go if you show me this then I'll go he moved in trust. He simply got up and went.

People of God that that picture for us is a faith based on a trust in the things that God is doing in our lives. That picture of faith and trust and movement and being willing to accept the way in which God is moving in our lives or in your life or in my life has had a 2year video for me. As someone who has been able to talk and sit with Mike and Jackie and the family, never was a moment where they said I don't trust him. Never was there a moment where their faith wavered as God moved them through this journey. They continued to remember that the blessing that was promised, just like the blessing that was promised in the command to Abram was for a vision Beyond Jackie's and our sight. This week we will celebrate her life and it will be joyful, it will be sorrowful but it will be joyful. Her faith never wavered she moved in trust and faith each and every step of the way it wasn't a question of what God was doing, it was a knowledge that God was doing it.

People of God, we see this picture of Abraham and we kind of get stuck, we go well I can't do that. How can I display that kind of trust and faith in movement. Sometimes the movement is what's going on in your life, the hurts and pains of ongoing pains, the struggles of things that never seem to get fixed. when you must go to the doctor over and over and over again for the same thing, there doesn't seem to be any relief, there's no healing, nothing ever changes, and yet in all that movement you trust and you have faith. That is part of how we are to move through our lives each and every day.

We move in trust and in faith. We see the account again, and we rejoice in the in what Hebrews tells us. We want to be numbered with those of the who are spoken of in chapter 11, we want to be those who are called the faithful, like we read

⁸ By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹ By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.⁸

He moved in faith, he moved in Trust. Moving in faith sometimes means moving across the country, moving in faith sometimes means moving across the street, moving in faith sometimes means moving in your living room, and sometimes moving in faith simply means moving in your heart. Moving from spot to spot knowing that God has for you a plan that is far beyond anything we can hope ask for or imagine moving in the trust that he is the god of creation. Moving in the faith of knowing that Christ is our savior moving in the hope that is founded solidly in him. Moving in the comfort, hope and confidence that there is an eternity for us with him.

In Proverbs the idea of moving in faith has a formula for us, in Proverbs 3:5 and 6;

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart

and lean not on your own understanding;

⁸ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Heb 11:8–10.

⁶in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight. ^{8 9}

When you move, as you move, we are called to trust in him with all our heart. Don't get weighed down by your ideas or your wishes or demands, but trust him lean not on your own understanding submit to his will. Living in the trust and faith and knowledge that he is a good, loving, and gracious God who has redeemed his people to an eternal glory that is joyful and wonderful.

MOVING CHALLENGED

We come to the end of this portion of scripture, and we see the challenges that Abram faces. People of God we know challenges. Each of us has them from things that are going on with our children, to things that are going on with our spouse, to things that are going on at work, to things that are going on in the world, to things that nobody knows about. There are things that challenge us each and every day. Things that hurt us, that make life difficult, that confuse us, that frustrate us, that bring us fear or sorrow. But we must continue to be moved through those challenges. We must continue to move towards him in those moments of challenge in those times of hurt in those times of struggle.

We see at the end of this chapter the way in which Abram responds. He looks in fear and he doesn't go in faith. We see the activity of moving from Heron into Canaan, a faithful picture of response to the command of God, then we see the challenge of a famine. As we look we are reminded that there was a famine and he moved yet again. He went down to Egypt and in fear, not in faith, in fear, he talked to Sarai and said when we get to Egypt tell them that you are my sister, tell them that you are my sister for it will save, my life I am afraid of what they will do.

That is a picture of the challenge that is going to happen in each one of our lives as we move in faith. There are going to be moments where it is going to be difficult. We are going to be challenged, we are going to be pushed, we are going to have moments where our faith struggles. People of God if we're being moved and we're being moved closer to him and we're being moved for his purposes and for his glory and for his will by his by his care and in his Providence. We can rest in the hope and the confidence of knowing that he will complete what he is doing. We will complete the blessing we saw that promise at the very beginning in verses 2 and three that promise to Abraham. Go and I will make you a great nation I will bless all peoples through you, those who bless you I will bless those who curse you I will curse.

We see that gift that is given, that gift of faith by the working of the Holy Spirit. And when we face those challenges where our faith is tested, where it's hard to see the picture, the next thing, it's hard to see what God is doing, people of God we have to go back to that promise. We have to go back to that promise that God made to Abram there in that moment.

In seeing that Abram moved we remember that promise and rejoice in the knowledge that it is fulfilled. We know the Fulfillment of that promise. We know the hope, we know the full joy of the blessing that has come through Abram. That full blessing of the Messiah that will be for all peoples, that blessing of a savior who redeems us.

⁹ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Pr 3:5–6.

The blessing of a savior who defeated sin and death. The blessing of a savior who goes before us ascended into heaven and is preparing a place for us.

In our lives here we will face challenges. We read it throughout scripture of the challenges that faced His people. This week we face the challenge of loss and hurt and sorrow and pain and yet as he moves us through those moments.

As he moves us through these days my prayer is that we together are encouraged, my prayer is that we as his people are encouraged in the promised blessing that he gives to us, as he moves us from one place to another.

We are called to respond to his command that command of declaring that Jesus Christ is the only way truth and life. For us that that peace that comfort that joy and that hope should fill us and that's a movement. That's a change that's a move from well I live for me I live for the world I live for what I can get I live for what I desire we are moved to live for Christ.

We must move in the faith and trust that that victory is won, we must move in the faith and trust that God is the one in control, and we can rest in the promise that we have in Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ¹⁰

We have that promise and we can move in that faith and trust whatever challenges we face whatever hurts we endure whatever pain that continues on whatever sorrow that threatens to overcome us we can live in the Hope and Faith of the that God is in control. In the hope and the faith that is ours in Christ Jesus, in the joy of an eternity that awaits us in his blood for his glory.

I have had that picture painted for me for two and a half years, people of God we have the opportunity to display our faith to all of those surround us as we're moved from place to place or from moment to moment. There is so much I'd love to share about the conversations I was able to have with Mike and with Jackie, but I share this: God walked with them through this journey, they knew God was moving and God was moving with them for his glory for his honor and for his purposes and we mourn and we're sad but we're reminded that God continues to call us to move day after day moment after moment for his glory and for his purposes.

Let us pray:

Father in heaven we come before you and we praise you and thank you God, we see this picture of Abram the one who was moved the one who was moved to by faith that he went from where you had placed him to where you had called him. God as we consider what it means to be moved, move in in us so that during our challenges we are moved in faith moved by command. We ask Lord that you continue to strengthen us for that movement continue to strengthen our faith for your honor For Your Glory.

God we praise you and thank you for the opportunity to give back our tithes our gifts and our offerings as we give back lord for the for the general fund here and for our missions work here at Hope CRC we ask Lord that as we give back our tithes our gifts and our offerings they would be used for to share the

¹⁰ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 8:28.

good news of the Gospel, and be used to move people by the working of your spirit to declare that you are God to rejoice in the promised hope of a Messiah Jesus Christ.

God we praise you and thank you it is in Jesus' name we pray amen

Sermon for September 8, 2024

Hope CRC – PM Service

Pastor Keith Hoekstra

Luke 8:40-42 and 49-56

Title: To What do You Surrender?

We take now this opportunity to seek him in his word. We have been going through these last several weeks what happened after the Sermon on the Mount, what occurred after Jesus finished that sermon. Seeing the miracles, the teaching and the activity. Last week we talked about the simple faith of reaching out, we discussed that idea of fear and faith. Tonight we're going to ask ourselves this question to what do you surrender?

To what do you give up to what do you give into and that's an interesting question, that's sometimes a difficult question for us to answer clearly. Sometimes because we know what we want to surrender to, we know what we desire to surrender to, we even know what we're called to surrender to. But as we look at Jairus and this account of what happened when he came to Jesus is seeking his help for his daughter.

There are three things that I want us to consider what we have the ability to surrender to. We've talked about fear and faith, but we can surrender to fear, last week we talked about how that simple Faith was displayed in desperation and yet we can surrender to desperation. We know to whom we are to surrender we know to what we are to surrender. We are to surrender to Christ and to his authority I invite you to examine that as we look at God's word this evening.

I want us to take full account of our surrendering mine and yours, our surrendering as a church and our surrendering as individuals. What does that look like and what should that look like? I invite you to open God's word as we're going to look at the Luke 8: 40 and 42 and then we'll jump further along to verses 49- 56 s there we read these words:

⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. ⁴¹ Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house ⁴² because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him.¹

and now we jump on to verse 49:

⁴⁹ While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't bother the teacher anymore."

⁵⁰ Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed."

¹ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Lk 8:40–42.

⁵¹When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child's father and mother. ⁵²Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep."

⁵³They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴But he took her by the hand and said, "My child, get up!" ⁵⁵Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened. ²

Let us pray:

Father in heaven we have opened your word to this account of the working of Christ in the life of this daughter of Jairus. We have opened your word to the account of a leader surrendering to the authority of Christ. God I ask that you would open our ears our hearts and our minds to hear you speak through the working of the Holy Spirit, that you would guide us and lead us to hear what it is you have for us to learn so that we may grow Lord closer to you, that we may be encouraged, enriched, and emboldened for the purposes of your kingdom. for your glory and for your honor. I ask your blessing upon me your servant Lord that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart would be pleasing to you, that they would go before you as a fragrant offering and God that you would be honored and glorified in them. I pray that your people would be fed and nourished and God that we would go energized to live as your children, as your people, as your body in this world. Lord we praise you and thank you.

It is in your son's name we pray. Amen.

When I've thought about surrender, I always had a joke and it's not a real great joke but it was always one of those things that made me laugh. Being a World War history guy, I always kind of made fun of the French, and that's not nice I get it, but their flag was the two-fold surrender flag, they only had to fold the two sides in then it was a white flag of surrender.

I thought about that and I kept thinking what did it look like to surrender? What did it mean to surrender? Well one of the things that I kept thinking about, is when you surrender what do you lose? What do you give up? What do you place above yourself when you surrender?

When the French people surrendered to the Germans as they invaded they surrendered to the authority of the Nazi Powers, they surrendered to the authority of Hitler. In that surrender they lost authority within their own country. they lost the authority to rule their own country. I kept examining what they gave up, so that question kept kind of processing this week, as I studied and as I prepared.

What is it that surrender means? What is it that we give up what do we give away. There are three things I want to look at in terms of surrender as we look at our passage this evening.

SURRENDERING IN DESPERATION

that first idea is surrendering in desperation. what does that look like, what does it feel like people of God? we have all had those moments where we just want to give up in desperation. We feel like there's

² *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Lk 8:49–56.

nothing left for us to do, we don't know what to do next, we don't know how to proceed, we don't really have for ourselves a vision of hope. That's a struggle, that's hard, and we surrender to desperation.

What we give up is our hope when we surrender to desperation what we have given ourselves up to is the circumstance that's in front of us. I think that as Jairus was coming as Jesus was approaching, and Jairus was headed out to meet him, he was coming and surrendered to desperation. He was coming in surrender to the desperation that there is nothing left for me to do in this world for my daughter.

we hear these words in verses 40- 42:

⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. ⁴¹ Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house ⁴² because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. ³

This account reveals to us this man named Jairus, a synagogue leader. He came and fell at Jesus' feet in desperation. He came pleading with him to come to his see and save his daughter. The crowds almost crushed him there as his daughter is dying Jairus comes in desperation. He lays himself before the feet of the Lord and he says I surrender I have nothing else that I have to give. I have no ideas left to do. I have given her to the doctors, this is a man of authority, this is the man a man who has the ability to get the proper care. Last week we talked about the woman as she approached she had seen all the doctors and they couldn't do anything ;we see that same picture here.

Jairus would have gone to the doctor asking what can you do for my daughter? How can you heal her? Jairus would have gone to the synagogue and prayed and sought the will of the Lord and he comes now in desperation and he lays himself down at the feet of the Lord. His desperation surrenders him to the authority of Jesus Christ.

People of God when we have nothing left when there's no other place to go when there's no other opportunity to turn to, we can surrender in desperation. sometimes that's scary, and sometimes that's difficult, and we find it really hard to, but we have this reminder in Matthew 11 when Jesus shares this incredible hope for un in all our desperation:

²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." ⁴

That is the picture that we have been given, when we come in desperation Jesus says surrender it to me, give it to me, lay it at my feet. When there's nothing left sometimes that's what it takes for us to get there. Sometimes that's what it takes for us to arrive at the spot where we willingly lay at his feet in desperation. We have nothing left to do we have nothing left but to give it up to Him.

People of God what are those things in your life that drive you to desperation what are those things in the world, in your work, in your family, that drive you to desperation? What are those things that frustrate you because you don't have a picture of how to proceed here we have that that promise that

³ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Lk 8:40–42.

⁴ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mt 11:28–30.

hope that that declaration that we have from Jesus. “Lay them at my feet” and we see the act of Jairus in coming before Jesus in full and complete desperation, laying before him and saying I've got nothing left.

People of God you know what those things are in your life? You know what those things are to which you surrender in desperation. You know those things that are desperate situations.

The psalmist knew those desperate situations that despair we read in Psalm 130: 1 and 2

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;

² Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive

to my cry for mercy. ⁵

In this cry we see desperation, a position that the Psalmist finds and recognizes there is nowhere else to go. People of God we see this same picture of Jairus, and it's an invitation for us it's an invitation for us to come before his throne when we are desperate, when we are seeking answers, when we have nowhere else to turn it is a call to us to come to him and surrender in desperation. This is the first picture surrendering in desperation

SURRENDERING IN FEAR

The second picture is surrendering in fear. We have discussed the nature of fear and faith we have considered what it means to be fearful when the disciples were on the boat and the storm arose. We understood that they were fearful. They were fearful for their lives they, were fearful for what was going to happen next. There was this sense of fear that wrapped around them and here again Jairus has that same fear and that fear.

We read in verses 49 and 50 we read:

⁴⁹ While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” he said. “Don’t bother the teacher anymore.”

⁵⁰ Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.” ⁶

Jesus said don't surrender to your fear, don't give up on the hope that I can provide for you that fear can envelop you, that fear can wrap itself around you and it can drag you down, and it can hurt and it can it can cause struggles. It can draw you into itself where you begin to think that there's no other answer there's nothing left there is no hope.

That fear can darken the brightest hope in anyone's life, however it is easy to surrender to fear it is easy to surrender to the fear of illness, it's easy to surrender to the fear of hurt and of pain, it is easy to surrender to the fear of loneliness, it's easy to surrender to the fear of addiction. People of God here

⁵ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ps 130:1–2.

⁶ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Lk 8:49–50.

Jairus could give us a clear picture of surrendering to the fear in his life the fear that his daughter is gone and there is nothing left and there is no hope and there is no joy. Jesus tells him do not be afraid.

When we come to him in that desperation in that hope in that in that confidence of knowing that he is the Lord he is our savior, when we come there is for us a defense against that fear. There is for us a protection against a surrender to the fear in 2 Timothy 1:7 we read:

⁷ For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.⁷

We are not to be fearful the spirit of God works in us, so that that fear can be driven out. That fear of those things that can wrap us and pull us away from him can be washed away in the work of the holy spirit in our hearts and in our minds. In order that we may find hope, joy, love, peace, and comfort.

Jairus in that fear came before him and Jesus in simple words said don't be afraid do not surrender to your fear.

In Isaiah 41:10 we read these words as Isaiah writes them to us and to the people of Israel,

¹⁰ So do not fear, for I am with you;

do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you;

I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.⁸

Over and over and over again in both the Old Testament and New Testament we hear those words do not be afraid, do not fear, be strong and courageous, we have not been given a spirit of fear and timidity but a Spirit of Hope and of Power by the working of Christ and the Holy Spirit In Our Lives. We have the incredible hope of knowing that our savior died on the cross so that our sins were cleansed, that my sins were cleansed, that your sins were cleansed. We have that incredible hope and joy so we do not have to live in that fear.

When you think of those words that Jesus says later, "she's alive" he says she will be fine. I can't help but think of this week the hope and confidence we have we as we celebrate Jackie's life. Knowing that she is alive, she is whole, she has been made new, that hope is beyond our vision but that hope is there. We have that same thing right now we're experiencing that fear that surrender that that desperation we went through those things but now we stand on this side.

We live in the joyous hope of the comfort that we declared as we shared in Heidelberg Catechism question and answer one. "What is our only comfort in life and death? That I'm not my own but belong body and soul to my faithful in life and in death", people of God what is the greatest fear that the world faces it's death. The greatest fear that that people face when you ask them, you'll get lists of things like heights, tight spaces, of dogs, or well some people are afraid of cats. But you'll get those lists of things but really one of the things that everybody shares is a fear of death.

⁷ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 2 Ti 1:7.

⁸ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Is 41:10.

We no longer fear death we no longer surrender to that fear because just as Jairus' daughter had in Christ Jesus that one that would raise her from the dead we also have in Christ Jesus that one that will raise us from the dead. He has defeated death and sin and we have an eternal hope that is ours so we are called to surrender to him we are called to surrender to him and to his authority in our lives.

SURRENDER TO HIS AUTHORITY

We don't surrender to desperation and our own ideas of well this might work we surrender to him we don't surrender to fear because we know that there is victory in him. We know that there is victory in his victory over death and sin and hell so we surrender to him. We give ourselves to him we come in prayer before him and we lay those things at his feet. When we say those words "thy will be done" we are surrendering to him and to God's will. People of God the joyous hope of surrendering to him is yours if you would surrender your life to him. The incredible comfort of those words that we read in question and answer one are yours if you would surrender your life to him. If you would declare with your mouth that he is Lord you would believe in your heart that he died for your sins.

That comfort, that surrender is right there before you when you think about what it is to surrender when you consider what it is for you to surrender to him.

We see what happened in the life of Jairus. We see the way in which he surrendered to Christ's authority, he said this is the one who can save my daughter and he went to him and he laid at his feet and he plead with him. When Jesus said do not fear he went in, what is really interesting to me as you read that story it wasn't the father and mother that laughed. When he said that "she's not dead" it was the people surrounding the house who laughed, Jairus went in in the full confidence of knowing that this man, this Messiah, this savior, this servant of God of the most high God could raise his daughter. Jairus heard Him say "do not be afraid" and Jairus was not. He surrendered his whole house to Christ Jesus in that day, he gave up his authority, he gave up his power, he gave up his will, and he said it is your authority Jesus, it is your authority that I surrender to. I know you are the only one who can save my daughter.

So when we ask ourselves, "what are we surrendering" to him, what are we giving up?

Are we surrendering our daily tasks to him?

Are we surrendering our work to him?

Are we surrendering our parenting to him?

Are we surrendering our marriage to him?

Are we surrendering our children to him?

Are we surrendering our church to him?

Think about those things, what it looked like to surrender, think about what it meant to surrender for the French when the Germans invaded? They gave up they gave up their authority and they surrendered to the authority of the Germans they have surrendered to the authority of Hitler. Have you surrendered your authority in your life to Jesus Christ, or do you hold something back?

Jesus you get Sunday except football season.

Or Jesus you get Sunday but just twice a month.

Jesus you get when I'm with my people from church but when I'm with my pals or my friends no I don't surrender that to you.

I surrender to you in my devotions but I don't surrender to you in my work.

People of God we all have that desire to hold on to things to grasp on to things to hold on to those things that that we love that we want that we desire. But we're called to surrender wholly and completely those last words of that confession "wholeheartedly willing and ready" wholeheartedly willing and ready in every way to surrender my life to him.

What are you holding back?

What am I holding back?

Let's examine our lives carefully and be willing not just to surrender in despair not just willing to surrender in fear but willing to surrender in joy in hope in comfort and in everything. That there is nothing that we hold back from him, for our own desires. People of God that's hard to do it's a challenge you must seek to do it daily, you must be willing to give it up. The joy of surrendering to him is the Hope and comfort that we have for an eternity with him. The joy of surrendering to him is the knowledge that one day we will be with him in his kingdom in his glory for all eternity.

If you confess his name, if you believe that he is the one and only Savior, and you surrender yourself to him he will work through and past all your desperation, all your fears, if you fully surrender. We need to give up those things that we are holding on to. Give up those things that you put before him give up those things that you put in place of him, and you will find the joy and hope that is only available in him.

Let's pray

Father in heaven we come before you in this evening hour and we Rejoice Lord that you have authority in our lives. God I ask that you would work in our hearts and in our in our minds that we would surrender those things that we hold on to yet, whether that's our work or our status whether that's our fun or other things God. May we surrender all those things to you may we surrender our lives to you God. We praise you and thank you that we have this account of your work in the life of Jairus and in his daughter that surrender that he laid where he laid there at your feet in desperation. God that promise you have that we should not fear, may we hold on to that promise, and God may we surrender our authority in all ways in all things.

Lord as we prepare to give back our tithes our gifts and our offerings for the purposes and work of Western Christian this evening, we ask that you would bless the students and all of those who it work there. May our tithes our gifts and our offerings be used for your glory and for your honor, may they be used to share the good news of the gospel.

We praise and thank you Lord and it is in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Sermon October 2,2022
Hope CRC – PM Service
Pastor Keith Hoekstra
Psalm 15
Lord's Day 43
Question and Answer 112
Not Simply A Policy

We again come to the Heidelberg Catechism and come to a time where we're going to consider what God has called us to understand in the Ten Commandments. We keep talking about how simple some of the Commandments are when we first look at them. Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Now we come again to another one that seems very simple but as the title says not simply a policy it's not as simple as honesty is the best policy there's more to it there is more to it as we consider who we are to be and how we are to be faithful to his word.

When God says do not bear false testimony against your neighbor, that's the command do not bear false testimony false witness, do not lie that's where we've come to and it's more than just a policy. We're going to look at Psalm 15 tonight as our passage you can find that on page 9 14 in the Pew Bibles again Psalm 15 we're going to go all the way through the psalm it's a short psalm but it talks to us about what it looks like when we're called to be in his presence and how important honesty is to that. We are also going to consider the Lord's Day 43 question and answer 112. Each one of these sermons points tonight we'll go back to that one question and answer it and we will deal with it in three parts.

Let us start in Psalms 15 beginning at verse 1.

¹ Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent?

Who may live on your holy mountain?

² The one whose walk is blameless,

who does what is righteous,

who speaks the truth from their heart;

³ whose tongue utters no slander,

who does no wrong to a neighbor,

and casts no slur on others;

⁴ who despises a vile person

but honors those who fear the Lord;

who keeps an oath even when it hurts,

and does not change their mind;

⁵ who lends money to the poor without interest;
who does not accept a bribe against the innocent.
Whoever does these things
will never be shaken. ¹

We also come to the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 43 question and answer 112. I will read the question and together we will recite the answer.

Lord's Day 43

Q & A 112

Q. What is the aim of the ninth commandment?

A. That I never give false testimony against anyone, twist no one's words, not gossip or slander, nor join in condemning anyone rashly or without a hearing.

Rather, in court and everywhere else, I should avoid lying and deceit of every kind; these are the very devices the devil uses, and they would call down on me God's intense wrath.

I should love the truth, speak it candidly, and openly acknowledge it.

And I should do what I can to guard and advance my neighbor's good name.

Let us pray:

Father we come before you in this evening and we hear the psalmist ask the question "who can ascend who can come into your holy tent who can come into your Tabernacle Lord, as we hear the psalmists praises to you we're reminded that we were called to be truthful and it is so much more than that God. Opened our eyes, open our ears, and our hearts Lord that we may grow closer to you through your word and through exploring what it means when you call us to be faithful and honest to not bear false testimony or false witness against our neighbors. Lord, I ask your blessing upon me your servant that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart would be faithful and God that they would be pleasing to you Lord. Also, that they would work in our hearts so that would we would be drawn closer to you this evening through your word and through the work and will of the spirit in us. We praise you and thank you for the gift of your scriptures it is in your son's name and in his shed blood alone that we pray amen

We consider what the catechism says we're reminded that God has given us the Ten Commandments as a response to Grace.

That he has given to us freely He has called us to be obedient to him because of his free Grace.

We're reminded that when the people of Israel left they didn't have to know and obey in order to be freed from slavery, they were redeemed from that pit and then given the Ten Commandments.

¹ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ps 15:1-5.

As we have walked through this gratitude section of the catechism sometimes we fail to remember that this is a response. It is not a measuring stick, it's not that we have our part down and in keeping these commands we can say, "now I've made it. We must hold on to the truth that this is a response to the grace God has given us in the blessing of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY

We come to this question and answer and this one again seems so simple, so simple to say don't lie. It seems so simple to say be truthful. We have all heard that term "honesty is the best policy." We've even said it, we've said it to our children, we've said it to our grandchildren, we've said it to our friends, and to our neighbors. Honesty is the best policy, over and over again it makes sense, it's clear, it's true. But it's incomplete when we consider what the catechism is asking us. It is incomplete when we look at what scripture teaches us about being honest. In our testimony with our neighbors honesty is the best policy it's true it's absolutely a true statement.

When we read God's will for us, it says that I never give false testimony against anyone it's simple. It clearly says do not give false testimony against anyone, twist no one's words, do not gossip, or slander, nor join in condemning anyone without a just cause.

We read that first part of the answer to the first to question 112 and I'm reminded of Psalm 15 verse 2.

² The one whose walk is blameless,
who does what is righteous,
who speaks the truth from their heart; ²

Let us hear that verse again, we're asked who can come into the Tabernacle who can come into the house of the Lord? It has a definitive answer, "the one whose walk is blameless" and then it says that includes these things, "one who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart". Speaking the truth, that is a statement of approval to say what is true, it is a statement to remind us to be truthful in all that we say and all that we do.

So, is honesty the best policy? Absolutely! that's not where scripture stops when we consider what it means to be honest,

²⁸ Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy,

² *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ps 15:2.

murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips,³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents;³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.³

We hear these words written by Paul to the Roman church and to us, we are reminded that those who are reading these words are being taught about the sinful nature of men. And Paul makes clear the depth of effects of sin in the lives of men.

Let's go back to that middle verse 29 and 30 "they are gossips slanderers God haters insolent arrogant and boastful". We hear those words and they aren't about being honest, they aren't about being truthful. They're about things that gain us position, they're things that don't guide us to being loving neighbors they don't guide us to telling the truth.

Honesty is the best policy because it's what we are called to do we are called to tell the truth. We are not to be boastful we are not to be insolent we are not to be haters, quote unquote. We hear God haters there but in the term of oh most kids that I remember most kids that I know well he's just a hater he's just talking smack he's talking bad.

We're called to be truthful to our neighbors we're called to speak the truth no matter what. When we hear what it says the catechism even goes so far as to say to speak the truth even when it hurts. In Proverbs 19 we are given a reminder:

⁵ A false witness will not go unpunished,
and whoever pours out lies will not go free.⁴

We saw this morning that there's punishment for sin there's consequences for sin. In Proverbs here Solomon says, hey lying will not go unpunished. "Whoever pours out lies will not go free."

So is honesty the best policy? Yes, but it's so much more than that. It has to be so much more than that for us. Honesty is a declaration of what we believe in our heart, honesty is a declaration of the commitment we have to God, honesty is our response to everything that God has done for us.

One of the things that's always hard for us is when we fail to be honest and say I failed to be honest and say I made a mistake and yet when God calls to us he says repent of those mistakes

³ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 1:28–32.

⁴ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Pr 19:5.

be honest about those things. That truth should be so deep in the heart of us that it comes out easily.

Truth should come out of us simply and efficiently because God has called us to that as a part of our salvation as a part of what he has done for us.

When the Lanae made her profession of Faith, confess with your mouth, confess that you are in need of a savior, confess that you have sinned, that's what that means be honest enough to say I have sinned. So what does that mean for us truth should be so deep at the heart of our nature that we should not be swayed to tell lies about those who are around us.

The truth should pour out of us because we are called to that truth even through the simple promise we have in the Salvation offered by Jesus Christ. We hear again from Jesus about the need to be truthful the need to be faithful in telling the truth.

³⁷“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”⁵

The truth should pour out of us so that those things are true about us. That we do not condemn falsely, that we judge honestly, that we speak truth in love, to speak truth to guide people to Jesus Christ. Our words should not be used to put them down, not to be boastful, not to be arrogant, but to speak the truth.

HONEST IN ALL OPPORTUNITIES

One of the things that is important for us is to be honest in all opportunities honest in all opportunities no matter what.

One book that I received from my parents, and when I opened I kind of looked at it funny it was called “Respectable Sins” by Jerry Bridges. That title struck me how is that there are such things as respectable sins? The book goes onto describe those things that we have decided are not all that bad. One of those acceptable sins that the author talks about is white lies. Those simple ways that we don't tell the whole truth those simple ways that because we're “protecting somebody” and we are not telling them the truth. In all opportunities we are called to be faithful with the truth honest in all things, in all opportunities.

Returning to the catechism again God's will is that I'd never give false testimony against anyone but here again rather in court and everywhere else I should avoid lying and deceit of every kind these are devices the Devil himself uses and they would call down on me God's intense anger.

⁵ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Lk 6:37.

In court and everywhere else, avoid lying and deceit of every kind. It is not avoid the lying and deceit that's going to get me caught, not avoid the lying and deceit that well won't hurt anybody. We are called to avoid lying and deceit of every kind, in all opportunities, everywhere. In court and everywhere is the way that the way the catechism proclaims that.

So what does that look like for us for us what does that mean? We look at Psalm 15 verses 3 through 5 we read these words:

³ whose tongue utters no slander,
who does no wrong to a neighbor,
and casts no slur on others;
⁴ who despises a vile person
but honors those who fear the Lord;
who keeps an oath even when it hurts,
and does not change their mind;
⁵ who lends money to the poor without interest;
who does not accept a bribe against the innocent.
Whoever does these things
will never be shaken. ⁶

When we are honest in all things, when we are in his courts, and we are worthy to be in his courts. Honest, we will never be shaken, our word cannot be busted.

When we're honest in all places, in all occasions, in every opportunity there's nothing that can hurt us because the truth is what we're called to live in. We are called to declare the truth no matter what everywhere and in every way.

²² The Lord detests lying lips,
but he delights in people who are trustworthy. ⁷

He Delights in people who are trustworthy we want that said of us.

Whether that's in this building, at school, if you're a child if you're at school you want that said about you, as a parent you want that said about you, as a co-worker you want that said about you, as a spouse you want that said about you, as a business owner you want that said about you. In every opportunity be truthful, faithful, and trustworthy.

So that it is said that your word is your word.

⁶ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ps 15:3–5.

⁷ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Pr 12:22.

We again remember that let your yes be yes and your no be no, we're reminded of those words by Jesus and again I say that it should be true of us our no is no or yes is yes. Not our no might be no if this then maybe, or our yes is yes except for in this. Let us be truthful in all ways in all places Proverbs 13 Verse 5

⁵ The righteous hate what is false,
but the wicked make themselves a stench
and bring shame on themselves. ⁸

The righteous hate what is false, truth should be so deep in us that what is false is detestable to us. That we can't handle living in those lies. We can't handle living in saying those things.

We are called to live lives of truth wherever where ever we are in every opportunity in every place.

John 8.

⁴³ Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.⁹

We hear Jesus talking to the rulers and leaders there in the Jewish community and he's talking about speaking the truth. He goes so far as to say as liars you are living with the father of lies, because everything he says from the beginning is lies. In every opportunity let nothing be a lie from our mouths let truth be that virtue that is our Banner. In this building in this parking lot in these streets in your business, in your school, with your friends, with your family, in every opportunity let truth be your voice.

MORE THAN A POLICY

You see really it's more than just a policy.

Honesty is more than a policy, first of all we're called to honesty, secondly we are called to be honest and truthful wherever we are no matter where that is. Because it's more than a policy we look again at what the catechism says to us and we read I should love the truth speak it candidly and openly acknowledge it and I should do what I can to guard and advance my neighbor's good name.

⁸ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Pr 13:5.

⁹ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Jn 8:43–44.

I should love the truth, speak it candidly, openly acknowledge it, and I should do what I can to advance my neighbors good name.

I hear those words and I'm reminded of conversations I've had with hundreds of people about the neighbor that does this, the neighbor that. The neighbor that doesn't do this the neighbor that doesn't do that. And those things might be true those things might be accurate but in this command we're called to go beyond that. We're called to go beyond simply speaking the truth or better put we are called not to weaponize the truth for our own gain, our own satisfaction, our own ego, or our own pleasure.

Honesty is more than a policy, honesty should be a part of everything we do and it should invade us to love and care for our neighbors. Listen to that again I should love the truth speak it candidly and openly acknowledge it and I should do what I can to guard and advance my neighbor's good name.

Love the truth, listen to Psalm 15 2 again

² The one whose walk is blameless,
who does what is righteous,
who speaks the truth from their heart;
³ whose tongue utters no slander,
who does no wrong to a neighbor,
and casts no slur on others;
⁴ who despises a vile person
but honors those who fear the Lord;
who keeps an oath even when it hurts,
and does not change their mind;
⁵ who lends money to the poor without interest;
who does not accept a bribe against the innocent.
Whoever does these things
will never be shaken. ¹⁰

That list goes beyond the idea of simply being truthful in Psalm 15 should be a reflection of who we are in speaking truth.

Whose tongue utters no slander,
who does no wrong to a neighbor,
who casts no slur on others, who despises a vile person,
honors those who fear the lord who
keeps an oath even when it's hurt or even when it hurts does not change their mind
protects the innocent

¹⁰ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ps 15:2–5.

The truth should live in our hearts so much that we as God's people seek to live it out, to declare it openly and candidly.

Okay so what does that mean for us what does candidly speaking the truth for us mean sometimes we have hard conversations not to slur, not to demean, not to put down anyone, but we speak truth in love to guide them to know Jesus Christ. To guide them to understand who God has called them to be. To say to them this is true but this is not who God has called you to be. I am not going to go and share this down the street so that everybody in there everybody and their neighbor is talking about you because I said something.

I am going to come to you candidly in truth to say to you what is true to guide you to know and love Christ, to repent if there needs to be repentance, to change when there needs to be change, to grow when there needs to be growth, to stop doing things when there are things that need to be stopped.

It's so much more than a policy it is for us to display our love for one another and for our neighbor. Speaking truth and being truthful with our neighbor and about our neighbor displays our love for them as we're called in the Ten Commandments, as we're called by Christ, when he summed them up love your neighbor as yourself.

When the Ten Commandments say Do not bear false witness against your neighbor, do not bear false testimony against your neighbor, however you would prefer to hear those words, however you would prefer to say that command, we are called to go beyond simply speaking the truth. We are called to speak the truth in love to care for them and show them Love by protecting them not slandering them, not putting them down.

We are called to show love to them by speaking candidly the truth that they need to hear. That truth they need to hear is the truth of the Gospel, that truth that they need to hear is that Jesus Christ is the only way the only life. They need to hear the truth that living for him changes you, that accepting him should change your life, that being his should bring about obedience

In 1 Corinthians 13 verses 6 and 7 we read

⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ¹¹

When we boil down truth should evoke in us a desire to love, people of God when we are called to live out that commandment.

¹¹ *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 13:6–7.

In living out the command to not bear false testimony against your neighbor it must be so much more than just honesty is the best policy.

It should be a declaration and a display of the love we have for our neighbor because of the love that God has for us.

We are called to live differently; we are called to live in truth.

That truth should mean for us that we are honest, we tell the truth, we don't slander, we don't twist others words, we don't make things appear as we would like them, when it's uncomfortable we tell the truth.

In every situation, in every place in every opportunity and we tell the truth in love.

We tell the truth to go beyond simply speaking it we tell the truth to lead people to Jesus Christ, we tell the truth to share with them the truth that is the gospel, we tell the truth to lead each other to repentance, we tell the truth response to the incredible grace that we have received from God through Christ Jesus.

That's what we're called to when we look at the ninth commandment as we consider what the catechism says and what the psalmist says, let us be who those who are worthy to ascend the hill of the Lord to come into His Tabernacle to come into His tent being truthful being honest and showing love through the use of truth.