



# Community Life

Living as a community intentionally focused on cultivating the life of Christ in others.



## GROUP GUIDE

### LIFE HACKS – wk 4: *The 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment Principle*

**ARRIVAL/CONNECTING and SNACK:** (15 Minutes) Spend time catching up and socializing with one another. Follow up on prayer requests and any action steps from your last time together.

**SHORT OPENING PRAYER FOR YOUR TIME TOGETHER:** (2 minutes)

**SCRIPTURE READING:** (5-7 minutes)

Take turns reading these Scriptures and thoughts, then quietly reflect for a few minutes.

*“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.” (Ex 20:16) and Martin Luther’s commentary: We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, or defame our neighbor, but defend him, [think and] speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.*

*“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.” (Pr 18:21)*

*“Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty.” (Ex 23:7)*

*“Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent—the Lord detests them both.” (Pr 17:15)*

The idea of *the presumption of innocence* comes from a Latin expression that says *the burden of proof is on the one who declares, not on one who denies*. We say that a person is considered innocent unless proven guilty.

*“A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.” (Pr 29:11)*

*“Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.” (Pr 16:32)*

**OBSERVATION, REFLECTION, and DISCUSSION:** 20 minutes

1. Talk about Martin Luther’s interpretation of the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment.
2. How does the 9th commandment form the basis of the presumption of innocence?
3. What does it look like to defend the honor and dignity of “our neighbor”?
4. What are some ways we give false testimony about our neighbor?
5. What does it look like to believe the best about your neighbor?

**PLAN TO CHANGE:** 20 minutes

1. How might you create some space and distance from situations that could cause you to make “snap judgements” about the motives or behavior of our neighbor?
2. What are some ways you can speak life into your neighbor who may get on your nerves or offend you?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** 10 minutes

Take a few minutes to pray for one another in light of what has been shared and discussed today.