Joel Northrup said on national television Wednesday (Feb. 23) morning that he decided in the fifth grade that he would never wrestle against a girl again.

Northrup is the Linn-Mar sophomore who forfeited his opening-round match in the Iowa state wrestling tournament last Thursday because he did not want to compete against Cassy Herkelman of Cedar Falls, one of two girls to make the tournament this year.

Northrup has declined interviews with local and state media, but he was scheduled to speak Wednesday morning with national correspondents from CBS, NBC, CNN and Fox from the KGAN studios in Cedar Rapids.

Northrup appeared on "The Early Show" on CBS. He was asked to explain his decision not to wrestle against Herkelman, which the family said last Thursday was based on religious principles.

"Wrestling is a combat sport," Northrup told CBS. "It gets violent at times. You get put in compromising holds and positions. I just don't think it's right that a boy should engage a girl in a manner like this."

Northrup finished third in the 2010 state tournament at 103 pounds and was ranked No.5 in the state at 112 pounds heading into the 2011 tournament. He won a consolation match after defaulting to Herkelman, then lost a match and was eliminated without placing.

The CBS correspondent reminded Northrup that Herkelman accepted the possible consequences of wrestling against a boy. Herkelman competed for the Cedar Falls varsity all season.

"I mean, she deserves to be out there, but I do believe that if she does wrestle, she should wrestle other girls and I should wrestle other boys," said Northrup.

Northrup was asked by CBS if he thinks he "cheated" Herkelman of an opportunity to compete.

"It's kind of a tough situation. I don't believe so," he replied. "I just had to stick with my convictions. It's hard for her, but I just hold on to what I decided in fifth grade, that I wouldn't wrestle a girl."

Herkelman wrestled two matches at state after receiving the forfeit from Northrup. She lost both matches and was eliminated.

The reporter for CBS told Northrup he's been described as chauvinistic and sexist by some people, but as chivalrous by others.

"It's fine," he said. "I really don't care what people say. There's been people that are for me and people that are totally against me, but I feel what I did was right.

"It's people's opinion," he said. "But I just had to hold true to my convictions."