

Case Study: Jesus vs. Satan

by Jonathan Ruehs

Opening Activity: “Wii will X-box it out!”

If one is not readily available, see if you can borrow a video game system from one of your youth (Wii, Xbox, PS3) as well as a “fighting” game (a boxing game would be best but any fighting game will do). Set up a mini “fight club” tournament amongst your youth. Afterwards ask the following questions:

- What kinds of skills do you think it takes to be the best at this game?
- How many hours of investment do you think it takes to be the best at this?

Scripture: “Biblical Boxing”

Say: Today we are going to be talking about fighting in a different way. We are going to be looking at how Jesus fought Satan and the skills He used to do so.

Read Mark 1:12-13 and Genesis 3:24.

- What similarity do you see between Genesis and Mark? What do you think Mark is trying to communicate to us about these similarities?
- What other Old Testament stories refer to wilderness journeys or use the number 40? What background does this help provide for the story of Jesus’ temptation?

Read Matthew 4:1-11.

- What areas did Satan seek to target with his temptations? Why do you think he targeted these areas?
- How did Jesus combat each of these temptations? Where did these references come from (see text notes on the bottom of your Bibles)? What Old Testament story does it connect back to? Why do you think this might be significant?
- How does Jesus’ defeat of the temptations function as a reset of the defeat that Adam and Eve experienced in the garden?

Application: “The Boxing Match”

- Agree or disagree: Temptations are context specific. What you might be tempted with are not necessarily the same things that your friends, family, etc. are tempted with. Why?
- Recall the ways in which Jesus was tempted. What might be the targeted areas that Satan would go after in a teen’s life?
- What skills do we need to face against our own temptations? (Hint: See what Jesus did.) Why is this important? How much time should be invested in developing these skills? Why?
- Ultimately who was Jesus’ defeat of Satan really for? Where did the ultimate throw-down of Satan occur? Explain.
- What does Jesus’ defeat of Satan mean for us when we experience a KO in our own spiritual boxing match?

Closing Prayer

“...we have an ongoing task on earth, and that is to pray constantly against this archenemy [Satan]. For if God did not support us, we would not be safe from this foe for a single hour.” -Martin Luther-

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the ultimate defeat of Satan on the cross through your Son, our Lord Jesus. Be with us daily in our struggles that you may guide us to victory through your Word. In the name of Jesus our Victor, Amen!