

## YEAR OF PRAYER: Rope a Dope

Pastor Brandon Zieske

Text: Ephesians 6:10-19; Matthew 26:31-46; 1 Peter 5:6-11

REALIZATION: We are in a ring facing an opponent.

If we don't realize that we are in a battle, we've already lost.  
Ephesians 6:10-11; James 4:7; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Matthew 6:13; Daniel 10:12-13;  
Acts 19:15-16

You are not in the ring because of who you are, but because of whom you are.

Prayer is the means by which believers depend on the Lord and put on the armor of God.

Prayer is not the path of least resistance! It's the path of greatest resistance!  
Ephesians 6:13-19

Our best intentions are not enough to go toe to toe with our enemy.  
Matthew 26:30-35; Luke 22:31-33

It's in the garden of prayer where victory is either won or lost.

### JESUS' PRAYER IN THE GARDEN:

He prayed for deliverance.

He surrendered to God's will.

\*To find the way out of temptation is to watch & pray.

He prayed till he had a pre-determined YES.

**LOOK AT THE RESULTS:** Jesus stood His ground. The others ran away.

**WHY?** It's not the enemy that makes us run away but our own unprepared hearts.

**PETER'S REALIZATION:** 1 Peter 5:6-11; 2 Samuel 22:1-51

## Food for Thought for the week of January 31, 2016

(Questions and Scriptures for further study and discussion)

Text: Matthew 26:31-46

1. How did this week's message impact you? What challenged you? What questions did it raise? What confused you?
  2. Think about the world situation, our national crisis, and then about your own lives. We are in a battle. We so often forget that a battle is raging around us. List some of the reasons for our lapse in awareness.
  3. Review again - what is prayer? What does prayer have to do with being in a battle?
  4. What does it mean to pray in the Spirit? Just how do we accomplish this?
  5. To be effective in our battle, we must align with God's will and desire. How do we do that?
  6. How would you describe being proactive in our prayer life? Discuss how to avoid falling asleep?
  7. What did Jesus pray in the garden prior to His crucifixion?
  8. Why is obedience critical for effective spiritual warfare? Avoiding temptation? Achieving victory?
  9. Why does praying until we have a "yes" strengthen us for the battle?
- The Way Back After Defeat:**
10. What can we count on when we have failed and lost the battle?
  11. What does the Bible assure us about Jesus' victory as it applies to our defeat?

### Application:

1. List four specific examples of other Christ followers in the Bible who stood their ground and claimed victory as a result. Cite scriptural references for each.
2. Identify one strategic plan you will use to pray proactively.
3. Think of a time when you felt God had disappointed you in your prayer life. List possible reasons why God answered your prayers in the negative and why His answer might be a better (or at least a viable) alternative.

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