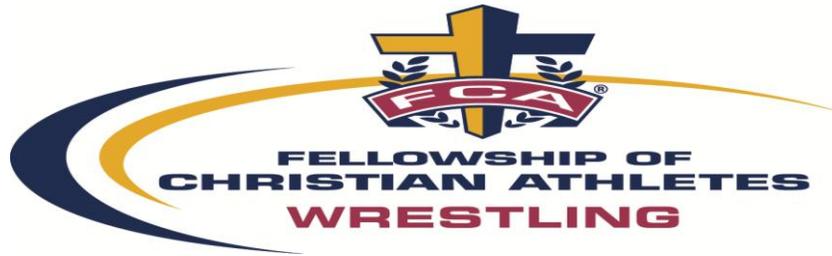


## **WRESTLING MINISTRY**

### **Season #3 - Topics for Team Huddles (2014- 2015)**

1. **A Bad Call** - Refs aren't perfect. God is
2. **Playing The Edge** - Dealing with boundaries
3. **Stalling** - Wrestle aggressively, don't get disqualified
4. **"Potentially Dangerous"** - Stop the move before someone gets hurt
5. **Infractions** - Check the Penalty Chart
6. **"Bad Time"** - In life, you don't get to go back and re-wrestle
7. **The Scale** - Will you make it?
8. **Getting a Forfeit** - You have to accept the Gift
9. **Who Gets Choice?** - You have to be able to wrestle from all positions
10. **Escape** - How to break free
11. **Reversal** - Scoring from the bottom
12. **Control** - How to determine Who is in control
13. **Locked Hands** - Good or Bad?
14. **It's Never too Late** – Never give up
15. **Learning from Adversity** – God uses the losses of life to develop us
16. **Nutrition** - The importance of what you put into your body - and mind



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 1: “A Bad Call”

In wrestling, like it or not, there is a judge - a referee - who is in charge of the match. Every wrestler has been the victim of a "bad call". Perhaps the referee was out of position and couldn't see the action. Perhaps the referee was inexperienced and didn't know ALL the rules. Perhaps the referee knew the rule, but didn't apply it properly. Or, perhaps the referee just used poor judgment. Referees are human, and humans make mistakes. When you are in a match, wrestle your best the entire time, pushing hard to the final whistle. That way, you minimize the chance that a bad call will determine the outcome.

In life, like it or not, there is a judge - God - who is in charge. Unlike a wrestling referee, God is always in the proper position, and can see all the action. He has the experience of eternity. He WROTE all the rules and applies them perfectly. Because God is perfect and holy, He can not be in the presence of sin. In fact, Romans 6:23 states that "the wages of sin is DEATH". And because God is just, he MUST enforce the rules. But because God loves us so much, He is offering His own Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for our sins. The offer is no good, however, unless you accept it. You have the opportunity to have an amazing relationship with God for eternity. Don't make a bad call that will determine an outcome less than what God offers us. He is allowing you to make your own call.

**Isaiah 6:3** "and one (angel) called out to another and said 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord'..."

**Romans 3:23** “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

**Romans 6:23** “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why did the angels say that God is "Holy" three times?
2. What sins are OK to God?
3. "For the wages of sin is death". Does the punishment fit the crime?
4. Who made the rules?
5. Can someone else pay for your sins? Why would they?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 2: “Playing the Edge”

In wrestling, there is an out-of-bounds circle called "The Edge". In Freestyle and Greco-Roman, there is a penalty for stepping over the edge, so most of the action takes place in the middle of the mat. In Folkstyle, however, there is no such penalty. As a consequence, most of the action in Folkstyle takes place by the edge. Folkstyle wrestlers like the edge. When you are wrestling near the edge, you can take chances that you wouldn't risk taking in the center of the mat. There is a sense of freedom when you are "Playing the Edge", because if you get in trouble, you can get out of bounds and the referee will restart the match in the middle of the mat. In the Rule Book, "intentionally going out of the wrestling area" is a technical violation. Often times you can get away with it, but eventually you will be penalized.

In life, there are things that are out-of-bounds. In many cases, the Law says that certain things are out of bounds; underage drinking, illegal drugs, curfew, speeding, etc. In other cases, God's morality says that certain things are out of bounds; lying, cheating, pornography, bullying, pre-marital sex. We know where the out-of-bounds is, but we are continually tempted to Play the Edge. When you are living near the edge, you take chances that you wouldn't risk taking in front of your parents, a police officer, or God. There is a sense of freedom when you are "Playing the Edge", but it's false. Many times you can get away with it, but eventually you will be penalized.

**Galatians 6:7** “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”

**I Corinthians 10:13** “The only temptations that you have are the same temptations that all people have. But you can trust God. He will not let you be tempted more than you can bear. But when you are tempted, God will also give you a way to escape that temptation. Then you will be able to endure it”. (ERV)

**Matthew 6:13** "...and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil". (The "Lord's Prayer" is only 55 words. These are the last dozen!)

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why are there laws?
2. What are the consequences of Playing the Edge?
3. Discuss "Forgiveness" and "Consequences"
4. How strong are you when...?
5. Why is "Advanced Decision Making" important?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 3: “Stalling”

In wrestling, each wrestler is REQUIRED to wrestle aggressively, regardless of position or the time or score of the match. Stalling occurs for many reasons. You may think there is a lot of time left in the match and you want to save your energy. You may have used all your energy and you are just trying to hang on. You may think you already have enough points to win, or You may just be lazy. Every wrestler should build their endurance so they are prepared to wrestle an entire match - including overtime. If you don't wrestle aggressively, you will eventually get warned - and then penalized for stalling. If you stall repeatedly, you will be disqualified and lose the match.

In life, God yearns for a relationship with us regardless of position or the time or score. Yes, He wants you to spend eternity with Him in Heaven, but He also wants to build a relationship with you throughout your life. Often we stall with God. Stalling occurs for many reasons. You may think there is a lot of time left in your life and you will get to God later. You may be using all your energy on social media and don't have time for God. You may think you already have enough "good" points to get into heaven, or You may just be lazy. Everyone should build their relationship with God EVERY DAY so they are prepared to live their entire life - including eternity. If you don't aggressively pursue a relationship with God through Jesus, you eventually will get warned - and then penalized for stalling. If you stall repeatedly, you could be disqualified and lose everything.

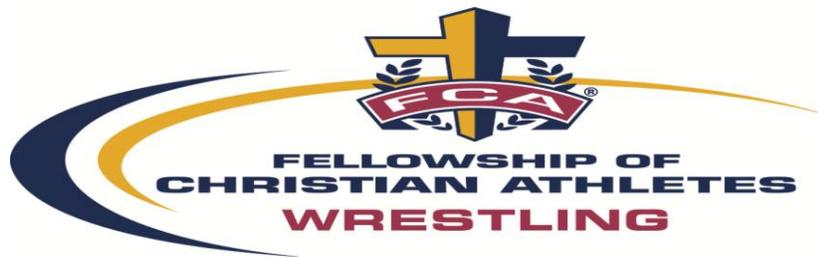
**Revelation 3:20** “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.”

**Hebrews 12:1-2** “...and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus...”

### Discussion Questions:

1. How much time do we have?
2. There are more than 10,000 minutes in a week. How many do you share with God?
3. What is more important than your relationship with God/ Jesus? (Be honest)
4. What are ways that you are stalling with God?
5. What will you do to avoid stalling with God?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### **Week 4: Potentially Dangerous – (Stop it, before someone gets hurt). (James 1: 3-4; Psalm 51: 4)**

In the sport of wrestling there are positions in which a wrestler can be seriously injured. These situations are called “potentially dangerous”. At times the wrestlers themselves don’t realize their situation is dangerous, but they have the referee to recognize what is going on, and stop the match before someone gets hurt. That is an important part of a referee’s job, to protect the wrestlers.

In life, it is “sin” (rebellion against our Creator) that puts us in “dangerous situations”. “Sin” sets itself against God and turns our hearts away from His love for us, (becoming an unhealthy obsession with selfish desires, even to the point of having contempt for God). It is like a Boa Constrictor, a slippery snake. If we let it grasp our foot, it appears we may still control it; however, it won’t let go from there. Rather, it will slither around the leg, and over time, wrap itself upward until it has a firm grip around the chest, where it will squeeze out the life. **James 1: 14 -15** tells us that “*when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.*” Sin always brings destruction to our lives and relationships.

As wrestlers, we have the referee to stop the match in potentially dangerous situations. So, who is there to stop our “potentially dangerous” moves in life, when we put ourselves in positions that could ultimately destroy our lives? The answer is God. The Lord offers us His companionship and guidance, through His Word and other wise believers. He wants to teach us to avoid potentially dangerous actions, and follow His loving direction for our lives. But we must be humble before Him. **Psalm 51: 4 says, “Against Thee, Thee only; I have sinned, and done what is evil in Thy sight. So, Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, and blameless when Thou dost judge.”** If we want a blessed life, we must avoid sin, in all of its forms; and live for the Lord. One of the best ways to avoid sin, is to avoid its “near occasion” (situations in which we know we might be likely to sin). Just as a wrestler cutting weight avoids the “all you can eat buffet”, we should avoid circumstances in which we know we could fall into temptation.

In some ways, God is like a good referee who protects us from the dangerous consequences of sin. He proved this when He took our sin upon Himself at the Cross, paid the penalty for sin that we deserved, in order that we may be set free from sin to follow Him, and enjoy Him forever.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Have you ever done something you knew was wrong?
2. Once you’ve developed a bad habit, have you ever tried to break that bad habit?
3. Is it easier to avoid the habit in the beginning?
4. How can we avoid the “near occasion of sin”?
5. Is it more important to impress our buddies, or to please our Lord?
6. What does it mean to repent?

#### **CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER**



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 5: “Infractions”

In wrestling, there are several types of infractions included in the Rules Book. On the mild side, there are infractions for "False Starts", "Stalling" and "Technical Violations" such as locking hands, not reporting to the scorers table properly equipped and leaving the wrestling area without referee's permission. Somewhere in the middle are "Illegal Holds and Maneuvers". And on the severe side, there are infractions for "Unnecessary Roughness", "Unsportsmanlike Conduct" and "Flagrant Misconduct". In some cases, you get a warning. But most of the time there is a penalty. The penalties for infractions can be one point, two points, or disqualification.

In life, there are many different types of infractions included in the Bible. On the mild side, there are infractions like "little white lies", "cheating on a test" and "driving over the speed limit", Somewhere in the middle are "stealing" and "sex outside of marriage". And on the severe side, there are infractions like "rape" and "murder". The Bible calls every type of infraction as "sin", which means "missing God's standard". Unlike in wrestling, there are no cases where you get a warning. For ANY sin, there is a penalty. The penalty is NOT having to do good deeds. The penalty is NOT reading the Bible and going to church. The Bible says that the penalty for sin is DEATH - eternal separation from God. You can pay the penalty for your sin by your own death. Or, you can pay the penalty for YOUR sin by Jesus' death. Jesus died for my sin and yours. He gave His life, so we could live. Jesus died on the cross so that we could not only spend eternity in heaven, but also have life abundantly on Earth.

**Romans 3:23** “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

**Romans 6:23** “for the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

**John 10:9-10** “...I (Jesus) am the door: if anyone enters through Me, they shall be saved... I came that (you) may have life, and have it abundantly”

### Discussion Questions:

1. What does God say is the payment for a HUGE sin (like murder)?
2. What does God say is the payment for a tiny sin (like telling a "white lie")?
3. Can someone else pay for your fines (for example: a speeding ticket)?
4. Why would God choose to pay for your sins?
5. If you were sentenced to life in prison, and someone else took your place, so you could be free, How would you feel? What would you do?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## **FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle**

### **Week 6: “Bad Time”**

"Bad Time" is when wrestling has occurred with the wrestlers in the wrong position, or the wrong wrestler being given choice of position. Bad Time is also when wrestling has occurred after the clock should have been stopped at the end of a period, or following a violation when the match should have been stopped, but wasn't. With a few exceptions, any points, penalties or injury time that occurred during Bad Time shall be voided. In certain situations, Bad Time may be re-wrestled

In life, there will be bad times, but there is no "Bad Time". Sometimes we are in the wrong position because we made a bad choice. Sometimes we are in the wrong position because someone else made a bad choice. Bad time often occurs after hours, when our activity clock should have been stopped. But in Life, unlike in wrestling, any points, penalties or injuries that occur during Bad Time are NOT voided, and must be dealt with. Unfortunately in life, Bad Time can not be re-lived. Let's call Bad Time what it is - SIN. There are consequences for sin. But with God, through Jesus, there can be forgiveness.

**Psalm 103:12** “As far as the east is from the west, So far He removed our transgressions from us.”

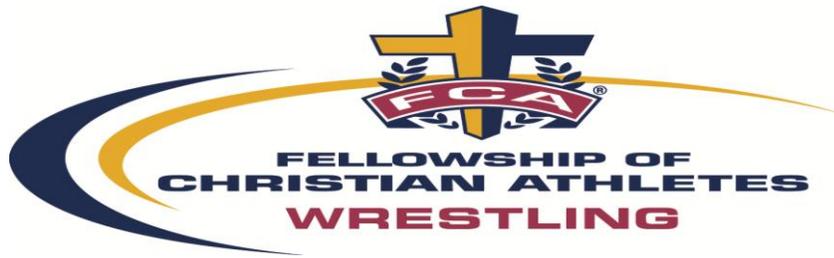
**Jeremiah 33:8** “I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against me.”

**John 1:29** “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. How can you reduce the chances of being put in the wrong position?
2. Why do so many bad things happen "after hours"?
3. Have you asked the people you've wronged to be forgiven?
4. Have you asked God (whom you've wronged) to be forgiven?
5. How would you feel if you knew you were totally forgiven for every sin you've ever committed?

### **CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER**



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 7: "The Scale"

Every wrestler fears the scale. We all know that a time is coming when we will have to step on the scale and find out if we made it. There are two primary ways to manage our weight; do more positive things and do fewer negative things. Examples of positive things we can increase include more conditioning, managing hydration and improved nutrition. Examples of negative things we can reduce or eliminate include desserts and soft drinks. We can step on a check scale to determine our progress, and we can be confident that the official scale will be pretty close. But, wouldn't it be great if someone else could weigh in for you?

Every person fears God's scale. We all know that a time is coming when we will have to step on the judgment scale and find out if we made it. There are two primary ways to manage our salvation; do more positive things and do fewer negative things. Examples of positive things we can increase include attending church, reading the Bible, and donating our time and money to charity. Examples of negative things we can reduce or eliminate include sins of thought, deed or inaction. Unfortunately, we can't step on a check scale to determine our progress, so we can never be confident that we will make it on God's scale. The Truth is that God's scale requires perfection. And no one can make it no matter how much good that they've done nor how much sin they've avoided. But God has provided a way. His Son, Jesus, is willing to step on God's scale in your place. And that is the only way that you can be certain to make it in eternity.

**Job 31:6** "Let Him weigh me with accurate scales, and let God know my integrity."

**Proverbs 16:11** "A just balance and scales belong to the Lord..."

**Hebrews 9:27** "...it is appointed for men to die once and after this come judgment"

### Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think that people are mostly good, or mostly bad?
2. How good do you have to be to get into heaven?
3. Are there some things that are so bad, that God won't forgive them?
4. Why is God's standard perfection?
5. Why do we need Jesus to step on the judgment scale for us?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 8: “Getting a Forfeit”

In wrestling, no matter how good you are, you are never 100 percent sure that you are good enough to win - UNLESS you get a forfeit. When you learn that you will be receiving a forfeit, several emotions go through your mind. Part of you thinks: I practiced hard for this match, I exercised discipline to make weight for this match, I prepared mentally for this match - And now, I don't get to wrestle. But another part of you thinks: I will be able to save my energy, I don't need to risk getting injured, WOW! I get to advance without having to do anything. Well, that's not entirely correct. The Rule Book says "in order to RECEIVE a forfeit, the wrestler shall be dressed in a legal wrestling uniform and appear on the mat". If you don't ACCEPT the Forfeit, you don't advance!

In life, no matter how good you are, you are never 100 percent sure that you are "good enough" to get into heaven - UNLESS you get a forfeit. WHAT??? You can continually do good deeds, You can exercise discipline to avoid sinning, You can prepare spiritually by reading the Bible and going to church - But that won't do it! The Bible tells us that no one is good enough to get into heaven on their own. No ONE - not Billy Graham, not Mother Theresa, not Pope Francis, and not me or you. The only One who was ever good enough was Jesus. But God made a way for us to exchange our shortcomings for the perfection of Jesus. Jesus died on the cross for my sin, and for yours. He Forfeited His life, so we could live. Well, that's not entirely correct. The Bible says in order to become a "child of God" you must RECEIVE Jesus. If you don't ACCEPT the Forfeit, you don't advance!

**Romans 3:10** “There is none righteous, not even one”.

**John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

**John 1:12** “But as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become children of God...”

### Discussion Questions:

1. How righteous and holy is God?
2. Why can't anyone get to heaven on their own?
3. Why would God choose to sacrifice His own Son for you?
4. How do you RECEIVE Jesus and ACCEPT the Forfeit?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 9: Who gets choice? (You have to be able to wrestle from all positions): (Job 1: 21)

As wrestlers, we've got to be able to wrestle through the entire match, from beginning to end. We'll find ourselves in every conceivable position: top, bottom, neutral, ahead or behind in the match; while there's still time on the clock, we can compete and win. We must have faith, and believe in ourselves, holding on to the confidence that we can defeat our opponent.

In our relationship with God, a daily walk, while there's still time to live on this earth, we must choose to put our faith in the Lord, and refrain from listening to the father of lies (the devil / Satan), whether we are on the peak of the mountain top, or when we find ourselves in the low valleys. There will always be times of temptation and discouragement, for life on this earth is a battle. But we must remember that God is with us, and we always have a choice in what we do. Just as we can choose 'top', 'bottom', or neutral, in a wrestling match, God gives us the choice in how we live our lives. We don't have to fall into temptation and wrong-doing! 1 Cor. 10: 13 states, ***"NO temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the ways of escape also, that you may be able to endure it."***

If we choose our own selfish desires, the ultimate price will be defeat. If we choose to follow the Lord, the end result will be a life of blessing, and an eternity in God's loving presence. The choice is yours. What choice will you make? God is still King, and He never stops loving and calling, and knocking on the door of your heart. He never ceases loving you, no matter what your past looks like, no matter how far you have fallen. He will call you to the top of the mountain, while providing Himself as the way. He beckons us in all situations to follow Him, with eyes of faith set on His Truth and Promise. We can never go wrong following our Lord. As King David slew Goliath while still only a young boy, so did the Lord Himself crush the evil one (the devil), when He died for our sins and rose again, conquering death. Now He has gone on before us, to prepare a place for us to follow... (the Body always follows the Head). At the end of our lives on this earth, our relationship with God is all that will matter, as ***Job 1: 21 states, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."*** (So, choose wisely my friends!)

### Discussion Questions:

1. When we find ourselves ahead in a match, how do we conduct ourselves?
2. When behind, how do we conduct ourselves?
3. What's our best position in wrestling: Top, Bottom, Neutral?
4. In victory or defeat, who else is impacted?
5. Is it the same in life? Who else is impacted if we lose the spiritual battle?
6. What must we do to address our weaknesses as followers of the Lord?
7. What is the most important choice you can ever make?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### **Week 10: Escape – How to break free from the enemy’s grasp. (1 Cor. 10: 13-14)**

Just as we talked about “reversing our opponent”, every wrestler knows what it is like to be ‘stuck on the bottom’ under a tough opponent. You have to work hard to get an escape, and you cannot give up. You have to keep your head up, get hand control, and keep moving. No matter how tired you are, you must keep moving. And if you keep standing up long enough, you will eventually work your way free. In life, we face tempting situations all the time. Some of those situations will trap you and keep you down, on the bottom in life, just like a tough opponent in a wrestling match who is ‘cranking’ on you from the top, trying to turn you over and pin you. Just ask any young man in prison if he wishes he had found a way to escape the temptation that ultimately put him behind those bars and walls.

**Whenever you face those moments of temptation**, (whether it’s following your buddies to go out drinking and driving; stealing something because you think you can get away with it; treating a young lady without respect; etc...), **you always have a choice**. You can choose to do right, or you can choose to do wrong, but you are never without a choice. In fact, God actually promises that He will not allow us to face any temptation so great that we cannot overcome it. *1 Cor. 10: 13 tells us that “No temptation has overtaken you, except what is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape, so that you are able to bear it / endure it (the temptation).”* In other words, when you think something is so tempting you cannot stop yourself, get over it; it is a temptation that many have already overcome, and God is going to provide you with an escape route, if you will take it. **YOU CAN OVERCOME IT.** So, remember, falling into temptation is totally avoidable, no matter what it is, and God will always help you through it. **The choice is completely in your hands.** Will you fall into temptation; or do what you know is right and follow God’s path for your life?

#### **Questions:**

1. Have you ever faced a temptation that you thought was too tempting to stop?
2. Once you have fallen into temptation once, is it easier or harder to avoid the next time?
3. How do you think you can make wiser choices in the future, and break a cycle of sin in your life?
4. Are you willing to do whatever it takes to escape the way of temptation, and follow the path of escape provided by the Lord?

***Remember, the choice is always yours, and God will always help you (when you want the victory). Following God’s direction and His path will always help you avoid the awful consequences of foolish behavior, and will set you up for a life of success, peace, and joy.***

**CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER**



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### **Week 11: Reversal – Scoring from the bottom. (I John 1: 8 -10.)**

Every wrestler knows, that a wrestling match is a battle. The battle involves our physical, mental, and our spiritual being. We must maximize our body, our mind, and our heart, in order to compete in a “winning manner” (giving our best). Just as we fight to win on the mats, the Scripture is clear that we also fight a spiritual battle in life. Eph. 6: 10 – 12 tells us; “Be strong in the Lord, . . . For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers and powers, . . . and forces of darkness / wickedness in the heavenly realms.” God is telling us that in reality, we are all in a spiritual battle, a ‘spiritual wrestling match’ with His enemy, Satan (the devil), and his evil hosts (fallen angels).

How we wrestle this match matters more than any match we will ever wrestle on a mat. Since none of us are perfect, we all find ourselves at times, being ‘taken down’ by the devil, when we fall into temptation of one kind or another. How we respond to these situations, when we stumble and fall, determines who will win the “big match of life” in the long run. When you stumble along the way of life, doing something you know in your heart is wrong, you have two choices: Wallow in the sin, and let Satan beat up on you; or ‘fight off the bottom’ and get back ‘in control’. God gives us simple instructions on how to “reverse” our position and get back on top. I John 1: 8 – 10 tells us that no one is perfect, but anyone cannot admit that they have sinned, they are basically calling God a liar and are not in relationship with Him. **But “if we confess our sins (to the Lord), He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).** So when we ‘confess our sin’ (agree with God that He is right and we are wrong), asking His forgiveness, we are ‘reversing our situation’, getting back into a close relationship with the Lord, and getting back ‘in control’ in life.

If you let Satan keep you down, and whup-up on you, he will. But if you are willing to be honest with yourself and God, and humbly confess your sins to the Lord right away, (whenever you blow it), you can ‘stay on top’ in the wrestling match of life. When the final whistle blows someday, you will be a winner in the greatest match of all . . . the wrestling match of life.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Have you ever been tempted to do something you knew was wrong? (Welcome to the human race.)
2. How do you feel about yourself once you have done something that you know is wrong?
3. According to 1 John 1:9, what is the one thing we can do to pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and get back in control of the fight/ get back in control of our lives?

**CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER** (*Give the wrestlers a chance to pray silently during this time, and to confess anything in their lives that they know is not right with God, to redirecting their hearts back to the Lord.*)



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 12: "Control" (Eph. 5:18)

In wrestling, "Control" is crucial, but it is also subjective. The Rules Book states "Control occurs when an individual has gained restraining power over an opponent." In scramble situations, it can be difficult to determine who has control, and when. In certain situations, the exact same position can be declared "control" if one wrestler is out of bounds, but "no control" if both wrestlers are in bounds. Often, two very experienced officials will view the same action, and one will determine "control" and the other will not. It is not always obvious to determine who is in control.

As a wrestler, your goal is to get control of your opponent, and keep him under your control. In life, "Control" is also crucial, but it is also subjective. When we are young, we are under the control of our parents. When we are at school, we are under the control of our teachers. When we are at practice, we are under the control of our coaches. But each of us has our own will. We want to be independent. We want to be free. We want to be in control of ourselves. And while that sounds ideal, by definition it also is just "selfish". Sometimes it seems like we just cannot be in control of our self. The media and the culture can control our thinking. Alcohol or drugs can control people's perspective. Lust can control actions. Envy and jealousy can control. ***What or Who controls you will determine your success, your happiness, and even your eternal destiny.*** So, here is the great news – ultimately, you get to decide in life who or what controls your thoughts, actions, and choices. ***God gave you a free will***, and He has an amazing plan for your life. You will only know His love and plan for your life, if you surrender control to Him. ***Eph. 5: 18 tells us to "Be filled with the Spirit". In the original Greek language, this word 'filled' here literally means, "controlled and empowered by". The passage means that God is calling us to be continually under the control of His Holy Spirit.*** The fruit of His Spirit is a life that demonstrates the qualities of a true champion, including love, peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness, & self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

**Proverbs 3:6** "In all you ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight."

**Proverbs 25:28** "Like a city that is broken into and without walls, Is a man who has no control of his spirit"

**1 Corinthians 9:25** " Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

**2 Corinthians 5:14-15** " For the love of Christ **controls** us, having concluded this, that...He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf".

### Discussion Questions:

1. Think of someone or something that controls your life in a negative way? (You don't have to say it out loud.)
2. Name someone or something that controls your life in a positive way?
3. What is it like when people are "out of control"?
4. Who decides who has control?
5. What is stopping you from giving God control of your life?

**CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER**



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

**Week 13: Locked hands: (John 10:27-30; Rom. 8: 38-39; Heb. 13: 5; 1 Jn. 5: 11-13; Is.40: 11)**

In folkstyle wrestling (the style done in high school and college), locked hands from the top position is an illegal move, and will be an automatic 1 pt. penalty. However, in Freestyle & Greco Roman Wrestling, locking hands is legal and a prevalent (frequently used) technique in mat wrestling, to turn one's opponent. In any style of wrestling, locked hands is a very effective way to control your opponent's body, apply a lot of pressure, and maintain your hold on him.

In the Christian life, the Bible tells us that God has His children locked in His hands for all eternity. *In John 10: 27 – 29, Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and **no one shall snatch them out of My hand.**”* Jesus says here that His sheep, are given eternal life (life with Him forever), and that “NO ONE can “snatch them out of His hand”. In other words, **the grip that God has on His followers is so strong that NO power, or no being (natural or supernatural) can ever snatch (or wrench) them from His hands.** He is all-powerful and ever-faithful, Almighty God,. If He says that He has us, His children, locked in His grip, then we are securely locked in His grip, forever. Period. End of story! And to further emphasize this ‘lock’ that God has on His children, His Word promises that ...

1. We are **“sealed with His Holy Spirit of promise**, Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance” (our eternal inheritance, as one of His family members)” – (Eph. 1: 13-14);
2. **Nothing can separate us** from His love – (Rom. 8: 38-39);
3. **He will never leave us** or forsake us – (Heb. 13: 5);
4. **We can never escape His presence** – (Psalm 139: 7-12).

For God's children, His grip on our lives is ironclad, and it is virtually impossible “for any created thing” to break His grip (Rom. 8:39). Talk about an effective grip! **The key for us is to make sure that we have “locked onto Him”**, by surrendering our hearts and lives to Jesus Christ. God calls us, to follow Him (Matt. 16: 24; 19: 21; John 10:27); to abide in Him (John 15: 7); to fight for Him, (2 Tim. 4: 7-8); and to “grasp” (‘lock onto with bulldog tenacity’) the message of His Word, (Titus 1: 7-9).

God wants to bless us and use us for His glory, but He waits for us to respond to His call of love. Have you made that decision to follow Christ? Here is how you can start that personal relationship today:

1. **Acknowledge your sin** before God, and your need for a Savior (Rom. 3:23; 6:23);
2. **Believe that Christ paid the price** for your sins by dying on the Cross (Rom. 5: 6, 8), and that He rose from the grave on your behalf (1 Cor.15: 3-7);
3. **Confess / profess your faith in Christ** (Acts 16: 30-31; Rom. 10: 9); and **surrender your life to Him by faith** (Rom. 6:11; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2: 8-9; Col. 3: 1- 3), inviting Him into your heart.

### Discussion Questions:

1. When an opponent has his hands locked in the top position, how hard is it to break his grip?
2. If another wrestler's grip is tough to break free from, how hard do you think it would be to break free of God's grip, once you are in His family?
3. How awesome is it to know that God has His children in His grip, forever?
4. Have you surrendered your heart and life to Jesus Christ yet? Why not today?

**CONCLUDE WITH PRAYER (Giving them a chance to pray silently & surrender their lives to Christ.)**



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 14: It's Never Too Late. (James 1: 2 – 3, 12.)

In the 2002 NCAA finals at 184 lbs., Lehigh's Rob Rohn was repeatedly turned for near fall points by his opponent, Josh Lambrecht of Oklahoma. Trailing 14-3, and with only a minute to go in the match, the television commentators began to predict a win for his opponent. Almost no one thought Rohn had time to make a comeback. However, with a minute left in the final period, Rohn fought his way free to the neutral position, and threw a desperation "cement job" on his opponent, resulting in a tight pinning hold. With just 14 seconds remaining in the NCAA finals, Rohn pinned his opponent and pulled off a stunning victory. In wrestling, a pin means it is never too late to pull out a win, no matter the score or the situation. *In life, God wants us to know that no matter what our past is, or what the situation we face is, that it is never too late for us press on, and make a comeback.*

**James 1: 2 – 4** says, "Consider it all joy my brothers, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect (mature) and complete, lacking in nothing."

God's timing for our lives is often different than ours. We may think it is too late to resolve a problem. The odds seem to be against us and it's too late to do anything about it. We can rest assured, however, that our heavenly Father knows exactly where we are in our lives at every moment. In fact, God often uses trials to strengthen our patience and our character, allowing our Christian faith to mature and become complete (James 1:3-4). It is the 'tests' of life that cause us to rise up to the challenge. Like exercise builds muscle, the tests of life build our inner strength and character. That is why James said, "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him." Those who never give up, but persevere in following God's will for their life, they will eventually gain the ultimate victory, receiving 'the crown of life' from the Lord. *So remember, no matter what your circumstances are, it is never too late ... (whether in wrestling, or in life), to gain the victory.*

### Discussion Questions:

1. Have you had moments when you were way behind in a wrestling match, and felt like there was no way you could win?
2. When you felt that way, did you give up, or keep fighting for victory?
3. Have you ever felt that you were in a hopeless situation in life?
4. Do you know where to turn for help in those times? God wants you to know that you can turn to Him for strength and help. He will pull you through if you don't give up, and keep persevering for the right things.

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

### Week 15: Learning from Adversity. (Rom. 8: 28)

The other side of last week's story: In the 2002 NCAA finals at 184 lbs., Josh Lambrecht of Oklahoma had built a 14 - 3 lead over Lehigh's Rob Rohn by repeatedly tilting Rohn for 'near fall' points. With Lambrecht ahead 14-3 in the final period, television commentators were sure he was about to win a national championship. Yet with a minute left in the match, from the neutral position, Lambrecht got caught in Rohn's desperation "cement job", and was pinned with 14 seconds left in the NCAA finals.

That was a tough moment in Josh Lambrecht's life. However, as Josh has gone on to tell many young wrestlers, it also became a time in his life that caused him to evaluate what was the most important thing in life. For Josh, he realized that was his relationship with God, that being a man after God's own heart, was the most important thing in life. The pain of his loss in the NCAA finals taught Josh his most important lesson in life: *That being a winner in God's eyes is the 'most important win of all'.*

Josh Lambrecht finished his wrestling career as a three-time NCAA All-American for the University of Oklahoma, but he will tell you that wins on the mat are not as important as learning what it meant to be a winner on God's team. That is because Josh understands that 'winning' in God's eyes is more important than accomplishment in men's eyes.

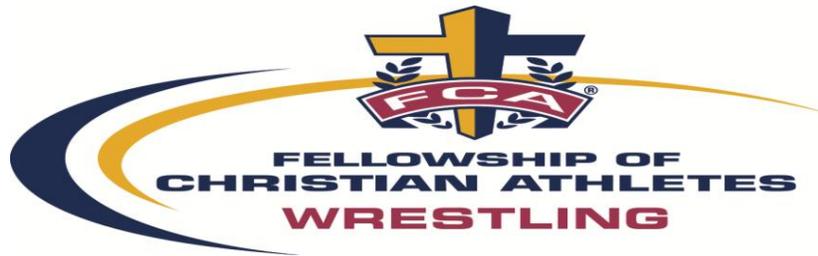
***Romans 8: 28 tells us, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good, to those who love Him, and are called according to His purpose."***

This passage does not say, "all things are good", but it does tell us that all things – including the hard or painful times – all work out for the good of those who love God. Our heavenly Father knows exactly where we are in our lives at every moment, and He uses the hard times and trials, all for His own perfect purposes in our lives. (Like a good coach who pushes his team to get the most out of them.) Some things in life are tough to take, some things can be dangerous, and some things bring emotional pain. Yet for the person who loves the Lord, and follows His call on their life, even the hardest things of life will work together to strengthen our patience, develop our character, and mature our Christian faith (as we saw last week, in **James 1:3-4**). No matter what we face in life, God will use it all (good or bad) to help us grow into the kind of people He wants us to be. We know that the plan God has for His children is always a good plan in the long run – to benefit us, not to hurt us (**Jeremiah 29:11**).

### Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever worked hard for something, only to come short of your goal and face bitter disappointment?
2. Why do so many bad things happen "after hours"?
3. Have you asked the people you've wronged to be forgiven?
4. Have you asked God you've wronged to be forgiven?
5. How would you feel if you knew you were totally forgiven for every sin you've ever committed?

**CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER**



## FCA Wrestling – Team Huddle

**Week 16: Nutrition (The importance of what you put into your body, & mind).  
(Psalm 1: 1 - 3; Rom. 12: 1 – 2)**

As wrestlers, what we eat determines our body's make-up, and energy store. It is critical that we nourish ourselves with proper nutrition, at the proper time, and over time as we wrestle through the season. Our diet requires discipline if we aim to be champions. In our relationship with God, the most important path we will ever take, requires discipline as well. We've all heard the cliché, "you are what you eat." In life, we can nourish ourselves on the Truth of God's Word. His Truth focuses on such virtues as: Faith, Hope, Love, Fortitude (Courage), Justice, Temperance (self-control), and Prudence (wisdom). As we practice these virtues, through disciplined living, and walking with our Lord, we grow into people of character and honor. On the other hand, if we practice vice though undisciplined living, we become spiritually weak, and "vicious", living lives that are destructive to ourselves and others. Whether we become people of Godly virtue, or people enslaved to the weaknesses of the flesh, it always depends upon whether we are feeding our spirit or our flesh. The one we feed is the one who thrives.

*Psalm 1: 1 - 3 states; <sup>1</sup>"Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, <sup>2</sup>but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. <sup>3</sup>That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers."*

*Romans 12: 1 – 2 states; "I urge you brothers, by the mercies of God ... to present yourselves as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, ... And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed (changed) by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God."*

### Discussion Questions:

1. When we pray the Lord's Prayer, who's will are we praying be done, Thy, or My?
2. When we live out this prayer, seeking this day our daily Bread, who is the Bread of Life?  
John 6: 48
3. How can we obtain this daily Bread, for our nourishment?
4. If a wrestler needs nutrition for his body, how much do you think we need nourishment for our soul?

### CONCLUDE WITH A SHORT PRAYER