



**NEW (SCHOOL)
YEAR, NEW ME**

PREVIEW

As we enter a new school year, today's lesson will help us live out our faith..

PRAISE

What are some of your favorite things about a new school year? What are some of your least favorite things about a new school year?

PARABLE

"New Year, New Me." We tell ourselves this mantra on January first each year and use it as motivation for all of our new goals. Many of us carry this mentality into the new school year too. There's a reason this mantra has become so popular over the years. People want a fresh start. Sadly, it's easy for new goals and their motivation to fizzle out after a while. When that happens, we're disappointed that we could not do what we set out to do. So how do we make things different? How can we make sure this year will be different than last year? If we decide to be different by doing new things without actually being different, we're setting ourselves up for disappointment.

PRESENT

Before He began His public ministry, Jesus went to John the Baptist to be baptized. What happened when He came out of the water? The sky opened, and the Spirit of God said, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." From that place of being, Jesus was able to save the world.

You see, everything Jesus does comes from who He is. Everything flows out of Him because He knows in the deepest part of His heart that He is God's Son, and He knew God was pleased with Him before He ever did anything!

The key is this: If we want things to go differently, we can't just DO things differently; we need to BE different. We go about change all wrong: we try to work hard at being something different. Instead, we should try to remember the simple truth that we are children of God, and He is well pleased with us. We chose to change and accept Him into our lives. Now it's time to be who He says we are.

It is awesome to experience what Jesus experienced; however, there are times when we are going to feel defeated. Many have often stood in the face of defeat, wondering where it all went wrong or how things ended up the way they did. It can be easy to become discouraged in those moments and give up everything we've worked so hard for.

PRACTICE

You can find yourself in moments like this in your faith. Maybe you thought you could be different and change your relationship with God, but life suddenly took a turn you didn't expect. Maybe it is harder than you thought it would be to share your faith with your family or friends. Whatever the case, you would rather throw it all away and go back to the way things used to be.

When you are surrounded by trouble, when you don't understand, when you feel abandoned, when you get knocked down—be encouraged and stand your ground! When it would be easier to throw it all away—even then, don't give up. Instead, press forward, remembering that these moments are only temporary. Don't look at the trouble around you but fix your eyes on the hope that Jesus offers. Even when things don't go as planned, you can be encouraged that God will not leave you to be crushed, abandoned, or destroyed.

Read Proverbs 4:1–7.

All of us should be seeking wisdom. And, as seen in these passages, just taking time to listen to our parents and taking their words to heart will help us get that.

PRAY

Jesus, help me to remember I am Your child. Let everything I do this school year come from being who You called me to be. Let the "new me" everyone sees point back to You. Help me stay encouraged even when things don't go the way I thought they would. Even when I get knocked down, help me remember You will always be there to pick me up again. Thank You for moving into my life today, and show me someone who needs to hear about You. Enable me to share with them about my encounter with You.

PLUS

Discuss the lyrics to the song "Who You Say I Am":

Who am I that the highest King
Would welcome me
I was lost but He brought me in
Oh His love for me
Oh His love for me

Who the Son sets free
Oh is free indeed
I'm a child of God
Yes I am

Free at last
He has ransomed me
His grace runs deep
While I was a slave to sin
Jesus died for me
Yes He died for me

Who the Son sets free
Oh is free indeed
I'm a child of God
Yes I am
In my Father's house
There's a place for me
I'm a child of God
Yes I am

I am chosen
Not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me
Not against me
I am who You say I am