

Have You Decided to Follow Jesus this New School Year?

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- **time for school to start:** Pasco County started last week, Hillsborough County and colleges start this week
- **have you made a conscious decision to follow Jesus**, 100% dedicated to Him, while at school this year
 - **Matt. 7:21-27** decided to act on Jesus' words, not on the words of those who lead people away from God
- **lesson:** have you decided to follow Jesus this school year

➤ **Satan hopes you're *not* prepared to obey God this year at school**

- **1 Pet. 5:8** Satan, **prowl**ing around like **roaring lion**, seeking whom he may devour

- stay away from lion (Satan), not go places he's lurking, not be around his helpers

- be strong to defeat him when he attacks – temptation

➤ - **illus. analogy: Satan is like a lion**

- **pic. - illus.:** lion (Satan) **camouflages himself**, to sneak up and **surprise** his prey

➤ - **2 Cor. 11:3-4; 13-15** Satan **deceives people**, false doctrine, like Eve, **disguise himself as angel of light**, and his servants **disguise themselves as servants of righteousness**

➤ - **pic. - illus.:** lion (Satan) **prowl**s about looking for vulnerable ones who could become **easy prey**

➤ - **1 Pet. 5:9** be strong, resist him – lions (Satan) prefer easy prey

- **strong offense is a strong defense** – “walk softly and carry a big stick” (Theodore Roosevelt)

- be so strong Satan doesn't want to waste time with you, since there are so many others in the world who would easily serve Him

- **illus.:** burglar would rather break into a house where's there's no resistance, than a house where people are going to put up a fight – **one of best home security is a large black dog**, that's why a lot of security businesses are named “blackdog”

➤ - **pic. - illus.:** lion (Satan) **roars to scare** others, prey, rules with **fear and intimidation**

➤ - **1 Pet. 3:13, 14, 15, 16, 17** be zealous, not fear intimidation, sanctify Christ in heart, ready to make defense, keep good conscience, better to suffer for right than wrying

- **Phil. 1:28** not alarmed by your opponents, a sign of destruction for them, a sign of salvation for us

- **bullying: try to scare us into doing the wrong thing**

- **illus.:** Allan, 4th grade, boys stole shoes, had to go and get them back

- I didn't retaliate, they didn't do it again

- **illus.:** Allan, about same time, some boys were bullying me one day, called “fat turkey gobble gobble”

- I didn't retaliate, they didn't do it again

- **Satan is the biggest bully of all, uses people to bully** in school and at work

- prepare, not give in, no take vengeance, live by golden rule

- Satan hopes we're not prepared, so he can surprise us and overcome us before we know what's happening

- preparation, strong offense, not afraid or intimidated - key to victory

- Have you decided to follow Jesus this year at school? – decided now, be ready for temptation

- **We must prepare our minds for action to succeed**
 - **Matt. 7:21-27** we have to hear Jesus' words and act, take action – inaction is sin
- - **1 Pet. 1:13-14a** prepare minds for action, as obedient children
 - **1 Pet. 1:13a; 5:8a** sober: preparation of mind is sobriety
 - **controlling self with mind**, based on Scripture
 - **not allowing emotions to take over** and lead the wrong way – **illus.: false teachers** use emotion to lead astray
- - **mental preparation (sobriety) necessary for success as God's children**
 - **illus.: Daniel and friends decided to obey God in advance** (Michael Schmid, last Sunday afternoon, Bible study with children)
 - **Dan. 1:8** Daniel made up his mind
 - asked not to be fed food unlawful for them to eat
 - favor, looked better, given only vegetables
- - **Dan. 3:16-18** Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego not worship idol
 - not worship, even if cost them their lives, knew God could deliver them if it was His will
 - fire not harm, king glorified God
- - **Dan. 6:16, 23, 25-26** Daniel prayed after law passed making it illegal, saved from lions
 - God shut up lions' mouth, rescued Daniel, king glorified God
- **illus.: girl at school, homecoming queen**
 - girl voted homecoming queen, turned it down because tradition was for king and queen to have first dance, they changed the tradition so she could be queen
- **illus.: band members this summer**
 - **Jake and Lauren**, band camp on Wednesday, director went to them to work it out, already knew they couldn't be there
 - **Dawn, band camp on Sunday**, told them she could be there Sunday because she had church, they changed band camp schedule, then on Wednesday left early to get to Bible class
- **illus.: other young people in past missed concerts and work**
 - missed ball games and concerts to assemble with saints
 - told employers couldn't work during church, even if lost job
- **illus.: Pam Michaels at work, manager trying to get her to drink**
 - told him repeatedly she couldn't drink, but he kept aggravating her
 - she finally told him it was against her religion, and he never bothered her again
 - good to tell people it's against your religion
 - then if they keep bothering you, it's religious discrimination (illegal)
- **Have you decided to follow Jesus?** – school, work, everywhere, all the time
 - **school:** obey teachers, homework and study, honesty, dancing (homecoming, prom), course jesting, behavior on dates, language, assemble with the saints, etc.

➤ **If we prepare ourselves, we'll be strong**

- **1 Th. 2:13b** prepare with the word, performs work in those who believe – strong, resist Satan, overcome temptation
 - **Rom. 1:16** gospel power of God to salvation

- - strong, wearing spiritual armor from God
 - **R - Eph. 6:10** strong in the Lord
 - **R - Eph. 6:11** stand against devil, schemes, deceptions
 - **Eph. 6:14-18 armor:** truth, righteousness, gospel, faith, salvation, word of God, prayer
- - **pic. illus.: Roman soldier in armor** – protected by armor– fight the good fight
- - **video illus.: Roman soldiers in a testudo formation** (tortoise formation) – security in numbers, Christian friends who also have armor

- - **What can you do to grow stronger, every day?**
 - **Phil. 2:12** obey, work out own salvation with fear and trembling – do what you have to do
 - **Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17** learn, put on the whole armor of God, obey
 - read and study Bible, pray, sing
 - alert in pray, thanksgiving
 - assemble with saints (church)
 - hang out with Christian friends, do spiritual things together, and do fun things together
 - encourage, positive influence

- **prayer for spiritual strength**, especially for young folks starting a new year of school
 - **Eph. 3:14-21 Paul's prayer**
 - God makes more strength available to you than you'll ever need
 - you have it 24/7, if you are a faithful child of God doing what you should be doing
 - **Jerry Flatt:** lead us in prayer

Summary / Inv.

- **Have you decided to follow Jesus?** - school, work, everywhere, everything
 - review: **PP**

- **inv.:** song #28 I Have Decided To Follow Jesus