



JOHN

The Good Shepherd

Lesson #5
August 22/23

Lesson Objective: Jesus is the Good Shepherd who cares for His people.

Activity- Shepherd Roundup (supplies: blindfold)

Pick one person to be the shepherd and everyone else will be the sheep. Put blindfolds on all of the sheep. Once the blindfolds are on, the shepherd will move to another room. One by one the shepherd will call his sheep. The shepherd will lead the sheep to the room they are in by only using their voice. The sheep will have to follow the sound of the shepherd's voice.

Connect the activity to the lesson:

How are we like sheep? Who is our Good Shepherd? Today we will learn who our Good Shepherd is and what that means for us.

WORSHIP – Choose 2-3 songs to worship together as a family.

Introduction:

Have you ever observed sheep? They aren't the smartest of animals. Sometimes they do things or go places that put them in great danger. Many times they are completely unaware of the danger they are in. That is where the shepherd comes in. The shepherd knows what is best for the sheep and protects them from danger. They also lead the sheep to green pastures and water sources where they can be fed and hydrated. Jesus is called *our* Good Shepherd. In today's lesson we will learn why He is called this and what it means for our lives when we follow Him.

Video: "The Good Shepherd" (Video Transcript)

Jesus told a story to the Jewish leaders: "If a person climbs into a sheep pen, he is not the shepherd; he is a thief. A shepherd enters the pen through the gate. When the sheep hear the shepherd's voice, they recognize him and follow him. A shepherd calls his sheep by name, and he leads them. If the sheep hear the voice of a stranger, they will run away." The people did not understand Jesus' story. Jesus was talking about God's people as sheep. The Jewish leaders were the stranger, and Jesus is the Shepherd. Jesus said, "I am the gate for the sheep. They come in through Me and are saved." Jesus was saying that He is the gate that leads to true life. People who come to Him are like sheep who come to green pastures. Jesus warned, "A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy." Jesus was talking about the devil, who does not want people to follow God. Jesus said, "I have come so that they may have life." "I am the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep," Jesus said. "I know My sheep, and My sheep know Me." Like a shepherd risks his own life to protect his sheep from wolves, Jesus was willing to die for His people. Jesus came to do His Father's plan, and He was going to die and rise again.

The Jews argued with one another. Many said, "Don't listen to Him; He has a demon. He's crazy." Others said, "That's not true. How can a demon give sight to the blind?" The Jewish leaders asked Jesus, "Are you really the Messiah? Just tell us." Jesus answered, "I did tell you but you do not believe because you are not My sheep. My miracles prove who I am." Jesus reminded them that He is the good shepherd. "My sheep hear My voice, I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of My hand. The Father and I are one."

Christ Connection: Jesus is the Good Shepherd. God sent Him to rescue sinners. Jesus laid down His life for His sheep so they could have forgiveness and eternal life. When we trust in Jesus, we are His sheep who listen to, follow, and obey Him.

Read: John 10

Debrief:

How do you feel knowing that Jesus knows each of His sheep personally—by name? (Let the kids share their thoughts. Emphasize that each person is created in the image of God. He knows us each by name. Jesus said that no one can take His sheep from Him. He knows us and cares about us.)

What can you do when you feel lost and God feels far away? (Consider how lost sheep react. They cannot find their way back on their own, but when they cry out, the shepherd hears and rescues them. We can cry out to God, seeking Him through prayer and His Word. He will bring us back to Himself.)

How can the way you live point others to Jesus as the Good Shepherd? (Living sacrificially can give us the opportunity to tell others about the sacrifice Jesus made for us. Jesus' sheep (believers) should seek to listen to, follow, and obey Him.)

Apply the Story

Jesus saw that God's people are like sheep. Sometimes we are headed for danger and don't even know it. Sometimes we see the danger but are not strong enough to escape them on our own. We need a shepherd to lead us to good pastures where we can be protected, fed, and our lives sustained. We need a good leader—a trustworthy shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who cares for His people. How does Jesus protect His sheep? Sheep face the threat of thieves and robbers. If God's people are the sheep, a thief—like the devil—tries to keep them from following God. When we trust in Jesus, we belong to Him. We can trust in Him for protection. No one can snatch us from His hand. We can rest in safety when Jesus is our Shepherd.

Momentum Moment – Sheep in the Pen (supplies: Popsicle sticks/toothpicks/Q-tips, markers, stickers, or other decorating materials, glue stick or bottle, cotton balls, construction paper or card stock, scissors -optional)

Build a “fence” on your paper: arrange toothpicks, sticks, or cotton swabs along the perimeter and glue them down to look like a barrier. Create an opening “gate.” Place cotton ball “sheep” onto the paper within the fence. Glue the sheep down. Decorate the sheep with legs, heads, and tails, if desired. Add a verse and/or caption. See below for verse/caption options.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. -John 10:11

I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. -John 10:9

The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. -John 10:3

Listen to hear the voice of Jesus...the Good Shepherd!

The way of life is through Jesus...He is the DOOR!

Our Good Shepherd keeps us safe from danger when we put our trust in Him. He surrounds us with His love and protection.

Close: Each person prays a one sentence prayer.