

The Good Shepherd

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
John 10:11-18


Church Season
Easter 4

Lesson Focus
Jesus takes care of us.



Tear here for easy use!

Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>Play Time Kids interact with elements of the story The Good Shepherd.</p>	<p>Coloring Pages </p>	<p>Fabric (varying colors and textures), wooden blocks, stuffed animals (including sheep), crayons (including white), black paper</p>
<p>Circle Time Kids discuss sheep and shepherds as an introduction to The Good Shepherd.</p>	<p>Leaflet</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Prayer Time Kids pray an echo prayer with the leader.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>The Good Shepherd Storytelling Kids retell the story using handmade puppets.</p>	<p>Spark Story Bibles</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Lost and Found Sheep Scene Kids color and use stickers to retell the story.</p>	<p>Leaflets, Lesson Stickers</p>	<p>Crayons or markers</p>

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Everyone Is Special Kids decorate sheep and fill in frames on the leaflet.	Leaflets	Cotton balls, tissue paper, glue sticks, markers
Where Is Jesus? Kids place Jesus stickers next to photos on their leaflets.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	None
Streamers of Joy Kids sing and dance joyfully with handmade streamers.	Leaflet	Roll of crepe paper, craft sticks, transparent tape

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids review the story and say a good-bye rhyme together.	Leaflets	None
Prayer Time Kids pray together, echoing the leader's words.	Leaflets, Family Pages 	None



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: a Coloring Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Before kids arrive, set up some wooden blocks to look like a sheepfold. Set the rest of the blocks out, as well as the stuffed animals. In another area, set out the fabric pieces. As kids arrive, encourage them to build a block sheepfold to protect the stuffed animals. They can also dress up like a shepherd or sheep using the fabric pieces. Set out black paper and crayons, including white. Invite kids to draw symbols of Easter (cross, empty tomb, butterfly, etc.) on the paper. Provide copies of the Coloring Page for this lesson for kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their papers.

When everyone has had time to play, ask the kids to put away all of the supplies and join you for Circle Time. Use the following rhyme to help them transition.

**One, two, three-four-five,
Jesus really is alive!
Six, seven, eight-nine-ten,
It's time to gather with our friends!**

Repeat the rhyme as often as needed.

Circle Time

Welcome kids enthusiastically. **Hello, everyone. I'm glad to see you all! Let's say and play a rhyme to see who's here!** Repeat the following rhyme using each of the kids' names.

**[Name]'s here!
[Name]'s here!
Clap your hands and give a cheer!
[Name] is in God's house today!
Hooray!** (clap and cheer)

Hold up a leaflet and point to the seasonal color and icon on the front. **These remind us that we are in the season of Easter, a time when we remember that Jesus is alive.**

As you came in today, some of you played with sheep. Raise your hand if you pretended to be a sheep or took care of sheep. Allow kids to respond. **Can sheep take care of themselves?** (*no*) **What do we call a person who takes care of sheep?** (*shepherd*) **What kind of things does a shepherd do to care for the sheep?** Allow kids to respond, accepting all responses. Answers will vary. **In today's Bible story, we're going to hear about a sheep and a shepherd. Listen carefully to find out what the shepherd does for the sheep.**

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Fabric (varying colors and textures)
Wooden blocks
Stuffed animals (including sheep)
Crayons (including white)
Black paper

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

None

Tear here for easy use!

Prayer Time

Before we get started today, let's pray. Repeat my actions and words.

Dear God, (lift one hand high)

Thank you for taking care of sheep, (pretend to pet sheep)

And for taking care of me. (hug self)

Help me listen (cup ear)

To your word now. (hold hands like a book)

Amen. (fold hands)

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Good Shepherd Storytelling

It's time to hear a story from God's word, the Bible. This is the story of The Good Shepherd. Remember the sheep we talked about? There are sheep in this story! I need you to help be the sheep by making the sound that sheep make. What is that? (Baa!) When I point to you, you all say what sheep say, "baa!" When I put my hand down, you stop. Let's practice. Point to the kids and have them "baa." Put your hand down and have them stop.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

None

Take out your Spark Story Bible and pass out Bibles to the kids. Help everyone find The Good Shepherd on pages 436-439, and encourage them to follow along with you. Read The Good Shepherd through once. Point to the kids whenever there is a "baa" in the story. Encourage them to change the tone of their voices to match the situations in the story, and then, have the kids nod their heads and "baa" in agreement after you read the following sentences in the story:

- **A good shepherd cares for each and every sheep in the flock.** (Baa!)
- **I will keep you safe.** (Baa!)
- **I have found you. I will carry you home.** (Baa!)

Following the story, allow the kids time to answer each of the following questions.

Point to the shepherd holding the sheep. **Who found the lost sheep?** (*shepherd*)

Who said he was like a good shepherd? (*Jesus*) Point to the picture of the

scared sheep in the Bible. **Have you ever felt scared? Who helped you when you**

were scared? (*parents, siblings, family, Jesus*) **Jesus is always taking care of us,**

especially when we are scared and feeling lost. Jesus is our good shepherd!

Jesus takes care of us!

Tear here for easy use!

Lost and Found Sheep Scene

Gather kids at a space where they can work, and hand out a leaflet to each of them. Distribute crayons or markers so that all kids have access. Direct them to the front. **Look at this picture from The Good Shepherd story. Where are the sheep?** (*in the valley, near the shepherd*) **Let's color the sheep.** Allow time for kids to do so. **What happened to one of the sheep?** (*It was lost.*) Hand out a lost sheep sticker to each of the kids. **Put this sheep somewhere on your picture to show that it is lost.**

What scary things do you see? (*a wolf*) **What are some things that scare you?** (*the dark, spiders, etc.*) **Let's color the wolf.** Allow time for kids to do so. **In our Bible story, who found the sheep and took care of them?** (*shepherd*) **Where is the shepherd?** Have kids point out the shepherd. Distribute the sticker of the shepherd's face and invite kids to add it.

Look! You made a picture that tells the story of The Good Shepherd! Who is our good shepherd? (*Jesus*) **Jesus takes care of us and protects us, just like the shepherd in the story.**

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Markers or crayons

Tear here for easy use!

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Everyone Is Special

Have kids turn their leaflets over, and direct their attention to Everyone Is Special on the back. Point to the picture of the sheep at the top of the page. **Look at your sheep, and then look at your neighbor's sheep. They look the same, right?** Allow kids to respond. **But that's not right! Every sheep is made special. A shepherd knows each one of his sheep, and loves each of his sheep, even though they are all different.**

Distribute the cotton balls, tissue paper, glue sticks, and markers. **Let's use these supplies to decorate each sheep in a special way.** Allow time for kids to decorate the sheep on their leaflet. Encourage them to use creativity so that all of the sheep in your group are different.

Wow! We have quite a flock of sheep! They are all different and all special, and their shepherd knows each one of them!

Just like sheep, we are all different! Look around. We have different eyes, hair, smiles, families, and more! Invite kids to look around and observe the differences in the group. **Jesus knows each one of us and always takes care of us.**

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Cotton balls
Tissue paper
Glue sticks
Markers

Point to the frame next to the sheep. **Use the supplies to draw a picture of you in the frame. All of our pictures will be different because we are all different. One thing is the same though . . . Jesus cares for all of us!**

Compliment kids on their work. If time allows, encourage kids to share their creations with their neighbors.

Where Is Jesus?

Direct kids to Where Is Jesus? on the leaflet. **Look at the kids in these photos. Where are they and what are they doing?** (*playing outside, in bed sleeping, eating at a table, with friends at school*) **Do you do any of these things?** Let kids share their stories.

It looks like these kids don't have a parent or adult around taking care of them. Who do you think is keeping them safe during their day? (*parents, caregivers, Jesus*) **Jesus said he is always taking care of us, just like a good shepherd. When we sleep, when we eat, when we play, and when we are at school or with friends, Jesus takes care of us!**

Hand out two Jesus stickers to each kid. **Let's put these stickers near the kids to remind us that Jesus always takes care of us.** Help kids position stickers between two photos so that Jesus is near all of the kids. Continue talking about kids' experiences of care.

Spark Resources
Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies
None

Tear here for easy use!

Streamers of Joy

Right now, we are in the season of Easter at church. Hold up the leaflet, showing kids the color and icon at the top of the page. **What happy things do we celebrate during Easter?** (*Jesus is alive, Jesus is with me.*) **When we celebrate happy things we say we are joyful. Let's make some streamers to dance with as we sing a song about Easter joy!** Help each kid tear off a piece of crepe paper about the length of his or her arm. Distribute craft sticks and tape. Demonstrate how to tape the crepe paper to the end of a craft stick.

Wave your streamer in your hand and do the actions while we sing. Sing the following song to the tune, "If You're Happy and You Know it."

If you're joyful and you know it, wave your hand.
If you're joyful and you know it, wave your hand.
If you're joyful and you know it, then at Easter time you'll show it!
If you're joyful and you know it, wave your hand.

Repeat the song several times, inviting the kids to join in.

Spark Resources
Leaflet

Supplies
Roll of crepe paper
Craft sticks
Transparent tape

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Gather the group together in a seated circle on the floor. **Today we enjoyed learning about sheep, shepherds, and how Jesus takes care of us, like a good shepherd!**

We've heard the story about the good shepherd who takes good care of his sheep. Jesus is taking care of us everywhere we go! When you take your leaflet home, have your families read the Faith on the Go! idea on the back. There's a game you can play this week to show how Jesus cares for you!

Before we go, let's say good-bye with a rhyme. Repeat the rhyme until all of the kids have been named. Give each kid a hug or high-five following the rhyme.

**Good-bye, [Name],
Our great friend.
God will be with you
Until we meet again!**

Spark Resources
Leaflet

Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Let's close with a prayer. Repeat the words after me.

**Dear God,
Thank you for sending Jesus
To take good care of me
Everywhere I go,
Each and every day.
Amen.**

Be sure to send leaflets and Family Pages home with kids.

Spark Resources
Leaflets
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Tear here for easy use!