

LESSON PLAN

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10

Lesson Memory Verse: John 10:11 - "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep."

Lesson Aim: To lead each child to receive Jesus Christ as his Shepherd.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): There was a man who took care of a hundred sheep. How many of you have seen a sheep? Where did you see it? Who knows what they call a man that takes care of sheep? Yes, he is a shepherd. This shepherd took his hundred sheep into the mountains to find grass for them to eat. After they had eaten for a long time, he took them to a quiet stream where they could drink fresh cool water. When it was getting dark, he took his sheep to a cave where they could be safe and sleep during the night. He would stand by the entrance to the cave and count the sheep as they went by him one by one to enter the cave. He counted up to 97, and 98 and 99, but he looked around and could not see any more sheep. He was missing one of his sheep. What should he do?

Well, he could be satisfied with the 99 sheep that were safe in the cave. He might cry a little for the missing sheep and hope that he would find it in the morning. After all, it was getting dark and he might get lost in the mountains. He could have stayed with the 99 sheep to protect them, but was that the right thing to do? No, he loved all of his sheep. He must find this lost sheep. He would leave his dog by the entrance of the cave to protect the 99 sheep in the cave and he would search for the lost sheep.

It was dangerous for a sheep to be in the mountains when it got dark. Wild animals were looking for food and a sheep would be a big dinner for a wolf or a bear or a lion. The mountains also were dangerous in the dark for the shepherd because he could easily fall into a deep hole or maybe stumble over a cliff and be killed. The shepherd knew all of this, but he loved all of his sheep and he would risk his life to save this poor lost sheep. He searched all the places where they had been that day and it was getting darker and darker. He must find the sheep soon or he would not be able to find it in the dark.

Then he heard the faint cry of a lamb, which is a little sheep. It came near the edge of a cliff. He carefully looked over the cliff and there he saw the small lamb caught in a bush just below the edge of the cliff. The shepherd reached down with the crook or curved end of his staff and put it under the body of the little lamb. Then he carefully pulled the lamb up to the top of the cliff to safety. He had found the lamb just in time. He checked the lamb and it was okay. It was scared, but it was okay, so he put the lamb over his shoulders and carried it back to the cave where the other sheep were. It was getting very dark by the time he got back to the 99 sheep, but now all of his sheep were together and protected from danger.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse is about Jesus being a shepherd. He does not take care of sheep; He takes care of those who put their trust in Him. He takes care of His followers just like a shepherd takes care of his sheep. He feeds them with the words of God. He gives them the Holy Spirit, who is the water of life. He protects them from the wild attacks of Satan. He looks for us and finds us when we are lost. He is the good Shepherd that gave His life on the cross to save us from going to Hell. I hope that you know Him as your good Shepherd.

SEE (for Apperception and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our Bible lesson today I will tell you some things about a shepherd

LESSON PLAN

of sheep that will help us to know how Jesus takes care of those who follow Him and trust Him for salvation.

A. The Shepherd's Duties

1. He leads his sheep to green pastures and quiet waters where they can eat and drink (Ps 23:2). How does Jesus do that for His followers? Do you remember how we explained that in the memory verse?
2. He finds a safe place for them to sleep each night. Do you trust Jesus to take care of you at night?
3. He knows sheep by name. Jesus knows us and we know Him (Jn 10:14).
4. He protects the sheep from their enemies. Jesus protects us from Satan (Jn 10:15).
5. He carries the weak lambs in his arms. Jesus for cares us all the time (1 Pet 5:7).
6. He fixes their broken bones and pours oil on their cuts. Jesus heals us when we suffer for Him.
7. He finds his lost sheep. If we are lost in sin, Jesus finds his lost ones and saves them (Lk 15:11-2:32).

WE: We can count on Jesus to take good care of us. We never need to worry about things that might happen to us (1 Pet 5:7).

B. The Shepherd's Equipment

Shepherds are away from home all day and sometimes they are away for many days, even weeks, as they take care of their sheep on the hillsides and mountain slopes. What do shepherds carry with them when they are away? (Think of David. What did he have?)

1. He had a sling to throw stones at wild animals and robbers at a distance to protect his sheep. David had a sling to conquer Goliath. Jesus had the word of God to conquer Satan (Mt 4:1-11). He uses the word of God to protect us from our enemies (Eph 6:10, 17).
2. He had a rod for beating off wild animals at close range. It was a 3-foot club which had a round knot on the end and sometimes was studded with metal and sharp stones. David beat off a lion and a bear, when taking care of sheep (1 Sam 17:34-36). Jesus beats off Satan and gives us the victory by His intercession (Rom 8:34; 1 Cor 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14).
3. He had a staff for guiding sheep. It was a long pole that was used to touch sheep in order to guide them away from dangerous places. Sometimes it had a crook on the end to help lift a sheep that had fallen into a hole or onto a ledge on a mountainside. David said the Lord's rod and staff comforted him when in danger (Ps 23:4). Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide us and to lift us out of danger to safety (Jn 15:26; 16:13; Rom 8:13, 14, 26).
4. He had musical instruments to play. They played the flute, ram's horn or hand harp while the sheep ate or rested. David was skillful with the harp (1 Sam 16:16, 23). Jesus has put a song in our hearts by the joy that the Holy Spirit gives to us (Gal 5:22; Eph 5:18-19).

WE: Our Shepherd provides what we as the sheep of His pasture needs to be safe and joyful.

C. The Shepherd's Enemies

The shepherd had dangerous enemies which tried to kill his sheep. Can you name some of these enemies?

1. **Thieves and robbers** tried to steal and kill his sheep. False teachers work for Satan and they try to steal us from God, but Jesus will protect us (Jn 10:1, 8; 17:11, 12, 17).
2. **Wild animals** like lions, bears, wolves and jackals tried to kill his sheep for food (Jn 10:12). Jesus laid down His life on the cross and rose from the grave to protect us from Satan (Jn 10:15-18), who roars like a lion seeking to destroy us (1 Pet 5:8).

LESSON PLAN

3. **Snakes** that hid in the rocks would bite the sheep if they passed too close to them. Jesus will protect us from Satan, that old serpent, if we resist him (Jam 4:7). Later He will cast him into the Lake of Fire (Rev 20:10).

WE: We do not have to be afraid of Satan because Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be in us and He is greater than Satan who is in the world (1 Jn 4:4).

D. The Hired Shepherd

Some shepherds were hired to take care of the sheep. They watched over the sheep, but did not love the sheep. If danger came, they would run away and leave the sheep unprotected (Jn 10:12-13). Jesus loves His sheep (those who follow Him) and died to destroy Satan (Heb 2:14).

WE: We are safe with Jesus, but only He can save us (Acts 4:12). He is the good Shepherd.

E. The Good Shepherd

Jesus is the Shepherd of those people who trust Him as their God and Savior. Jesus is the good Shepherd. Do you know why? (See if your students can answer correctly.)

1. **He gave His life for His sheep** (Jn 10:11, 15, 17, 18).
2. **He knows His sheep** and calls them by name (Jn 10:3, 14, 27).

WE: Are we one of His sheep? If so, He knows our name and everything about us.

3. **He leads His sheep** by going before them and His sheep know His voice (Jn 10:4).

WE: Do we follow Jesus and listen to Him speak in the Bible?

4. **He is the door** to salvation, sanctification (go in to worship Him), service (go out to serve Him), sustenance (find pasture) and satisfaction (live more abundantly). (Jn 10:9-10).

WE: We need Jesus to be our good Shepherd. First of all, He must be your Savior. If He has saved you, you have become one of His sheep. The rest of the blessings will make us grow stronger and bigger in our Christian life.

5. **He is God**, which is the best answer (10:30).

WE: We need to make sure that Jesus is our God. Then He will be our good Shepherd.

BE (for Action): There is the story of a shepherd whose sheep were being stolen and driven off by some soldiers. The shepherd went off to a nearby mountainside and gave a loud call to his sheep. Suddenly they perked up their ears, turned from the soldiers and ran up the mountainside to their shepherd. Before the soldiers could do anything, the shepherd had disappeared in the mountains with his sheep.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. Satan is trying to take us away from our Shepherd by making the pleasures of the world look more attractive than what Jesus offers. If we are His sheep, we will know His voice when He calls and we will quickly leave the pleasures of this world to follow Him. If we are not His sheep, we will not recognize Jesus' voice and will continue to follow Satan. Jesus is calling for us to come close to Him. He will protect us and bless us in many ways. Is Jesus your Good Shepherd? If Jesus is not your Good Shepherd, go to Him now and ask Him to save you. Then He will be your Good Shepherd forever. (Let the students know that you will help them to ask Jesus to be their good Shepherd, if they will stay after the class is dismissed.)