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# The Sheep Know Jesus' Voice

*Children's Ministry Bible Lesson for Kids on Jesus the Good Shepherd from John 10:1-18 and Psalm 23*

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The Sheep Know His Voice: Sunday School Lesson on Jesus, the Good Shepherd

\*Adaptations noted for younger students. Most activities can work for all age groups.

**Lesson focus:** This lesson reminds students that God is our “shepherd”, who cares for us and provides us with all that we need. He knows us inside and out and wants us to be safe and secure. We can take comfort in trusting that Jesus is our protector and guide, and will be with us always.

**Passage:** John 10:1-18; Psalm 23

**Target Audience:** Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade

**Materials Needed:** Cotton balls,

## More Bible Teaching Activity and Lesson Plans on the Good Shepherd

- Compare our [John 10:1-10 Sunday School Lesson “Jesus is the Good Shepherd”](#)
- Compare [I AM the Good Shepherd Lesson from John 10:11-16 for Children’s Ministry](#)
- Browse more [teaching activities and kids Bible lesson on Jesus the Good Shepherd](#)
- See the MTC playlist on YouTube on [Jesus the Good Shepherd](#)

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## Sheep Themed Games to Introduce the Bible Lesson

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**Lesson Opening:** There are many fun sheep activities for students. Since this lesson focuses on the Lord as a good shepherd, and our role in listening for his voice, highlight those elements in particular.

- “Wolf and sheep”: this variation on freeze tag begins with one student as a “shepherd” and another as “wolf.” The remaining students will scatter across a playing field. If tagged by the wolf, students must “baa” and lie or crouch down. The shepherd will use a long pool noodle “staff” to un-tag the sheep and try to bring them back into the center of the playing field. The goal is to bring all sheep into the center without letting them stray or get caught by the wolf.
- “Which Sheep is this”? Start with a blindfolded “shepherd.” The “sheep will mill about the playing area. When touched by the shepherd, players will make a “baa” sheep sound, and see if the shepherd can identify who he/she is touching.
- Sheep round-up (especially fun for younger students): scatter and/or hide cotton balls around a classroom, and have students gather them up as “sheep.”

Explain for students that there are a lot of beautiful descriptions we have in the Bible for who God is and how He loves and takes care of us. One of the ways that God is described is as a shepherd, a good shepherd who watches out for His sheep and even lays down His life for them.

**Ask:** Do you know what a shepherd does? Do you know any shepherds?

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## Children's Ministry Bible Lesson for Kids (Psalm 23 and Acts 10:1-18)

### The Sheep Hear Jesus Voice

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**Bible Lesson:** The passage from John is spoken by Jesus, describing how He cares for us and lays down His life. This passage is a good one to read out loud for children, pausing to discuss and describe. Older students can take turns reading themselves, if willing. Be sure to point out that Jesus is speaking.

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. -John 10:1-3*

Jesus is using a metaphor here. He explains that robbers or thieves might try to steal sheep from a flock. Students might need a bit of explanation regarding the roles of shepherds: they were to take care of sheep and make sure wild animals or thieves did not snatch them away. Sheep tend to follow wherever their guard leads them, trusting the shepherd and letting him lead. Jesus says that sheep know the shepherd's voice, as we should know His voice.

*When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." 6 This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. -John 10:4-6*

**Ask:** Have your parents ever talked to you about staying close to them in a crowd? What should you do if a stranger tries to talk to you and your parents aren't close? A shepherd was a guardian for the lambs. They would listen carefully for his voice.

Jesus wanted people to know how much He cared for them, and to understand why He had come. He came to care for us and ultimately to die for us. Sometimes, the shepherd would lie down in front of the gate to protect the flock from danger or escape. Jesus said that He did the same thing. In fact, He said that He would lay down His very life. A great shepherd is willing to go up against enemies in order to keep the sheep safe. Jesus conquered death to give us life.

*So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. -John 10:7-11*

Jesus wanted to emphasize that He was the "real thing." If danger came, a servant or other guardian would be more likely to run away than stay and fight off a foe for the flock. The true shepherd would genuinely care for the lambs. Jesus is that true shepherd. This is a comforting image for us, because we know that Jesus cares for us deeply and knows us.

**Ask:** Do you have any pets? You probably love and care for your pets, and they know that you do...Jesus loves us so much more than that! And He wants to care for us.

*He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father." -John 10:11-18*

There's one more thing in these verses that can be tricky to understand. Jesus said that he had "other sheep not of this fold..." but that He would bring them in to be "one flock, one shepherd." For older students, explain that Jesus was referring to the Gentiles. In the time Jesus was on Earth, Jews thought they were the only chosen people. But Jesus came to show that anyone and everyone can be part of God's family, if they trust Christ and follow Him as the way, truth, and life. No one forced Jesus to sacrifice His life for us, but He gave it because He loves us!

**Ask:** So...at the beginning of the lesson we asked if you knew any shepherds. What do you think? You do know a shepherd. In fact, you know THE Good Shepherd...His name is Jesus!

If time allows, review Psalm 23 as well, noting the other beautiful and comforting descriptions of a shepherd (leading beside still waters, restoring the soul, comforting, finding food and protection). Explain that David (yes, Goliath-slaying King David) was a shepherd at one point, and he wrote this psalm. Review how God is like the shepherd in that passage.

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## Learning Activities and Crafts on The Lord Jesus Christ is My Shepherd

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**Lesson Review Activities:** Choose a craft or activity connected to the story:

- Review questions about the story (what does it mean that Jesus is the Good Shepherd? How does God protect you? What was David’s job before he became king? How do we act like sheep sometimes?).
- Make a sheep puppet, gluing cotton balls to a decorated paper bag. Add a face and “legs”, as well. You could also use a cup as the base for the sheep puppet, adding cotton balls around it and attaching to a popsicle stick.
- Make a sheepy snack! Place pretzel sticks into marshmallows, using four for “legs” and attaching a mini marshmallow “head” as well.
- Hand print sheep: Take a hand print from students. Flip the hand upside down so that the four fingers look like legs, with the thumb acting as head. Attach cotton balls and eyes to turn the hand into a lamb.
- Clothespin sheep: Use thick cardstock as a sheep body, cutting out a cloud shape and attaching cotton balls or cotton batting. Use clothespins for the legs and add a head with eyes and ears.

**Close** with prayer, thanking God for caring for us as a good shepherd. Ask for help in trusting and loving Him over all things.

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# “Safe in the Sheep Pen”

Children’s Sermon Object about the Jesus the Good Shepherd

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## Children’s Message: Safe in the Sheep Pen

Jesus is the Good Shepherd

**Main Objective:** This message focuses on the importance of recognizing that Jesus is our guide, protector, and leader. There are several elements described in this passage from John: sheep know the voice of their shepherd; the Good shepherd guards His flock; a shepherd belongs with His sheep, and anyone else trying to break in will not succeed. The main objective of this message is communication of how we can trust and rely on Jesus.

**Law/Gospel Theme:** In the Bible, Christ described Himself as the Good Shepherd, willing to guard us and ultimately laying down His life for us. Other people or other ideas attempt to lead us astray or lie to us about what is most important. Jesus is the only one we should put our trust into and listen to. We can take heart in the truth of what Jesus promised, because He already accomplished our salvation through His death and resurrection.

**Optional Materials:** Stuffed animals (especially sheep) or real pets, pictures of shepherds, items that demonstrate taking care of someone or something.

**Bible Passage:** John 10:1-10

**Message:** Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. Use your judgment and ideas to best serve students.

## More Teaching Help about Jesus the Good Shepherd

- See our playlist on YouTube on [Jesus the Good Shepherd](#)
- Browse free resources on our website about [the Good Shepherd](#)
- Compare [“I am the Good Shepherd” Sunday School Lesson](#)
- See our [Jesus Knows Me Bible Lesson](#)
- See our [craft ideas about the Good Shepherd](#)



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# The Good Shepherd Children's Sermon

## (John 10:1-10)

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*Greet children, and depending on setting, you might have a stuffed animal lamb or a live animal with you.*

Hello, children of God! Do you have any pets? (*If possible, you might show a picture or a live example of yours.*) I have one. How do you think I should take care of this animal? I make sure it has food and water, and a safe place to stay. I help it take care of bathroom needs, and I play with it!

My (cat/dog/guinea pig/etc.) knows my voice. If I call (her/him), it knows me and will come, because it recognizes me...and wants food. This creature knows that I care about it and will take care of it. In a tiny way, this is a little bit like being a shepherd.

Do you know what a shepherd does? A shepherd is responsible for taking care of sheep. There are some people who are shepherds now, but in the times of the Bible there were even more of them. The shepherd would guide the sheep to places where they could find grass to eat, water to drink, and a place to rest. Sheep are not always terribly smart, but they learn to follow the shepherd.

They know when he is talking to them and follow along, recognizing that he will lead them to good things. If a wolf or a bear tries to come attack the flock, the shepherd must protect his sheep, and be willing to fight off the predator. Sometimes, the shepherd even acts as a door! See, the sheep would often get herded into a fenced-in space together (*show picture if you have one*), and the shepherd would lie down right in the opening. Anything that tried to enter or leave the pen would have to come through him first, so he could monitor and make sure all of the sheep stayed safe.

In our Gospel today, Jesus compared Himself to a shepherd. He said that He was the gateway. He is the way to life, and anyone else that might try to stake such a claim is tricking us. We are like sheep, wandering around and needing guidance. We can trust in Jesus to provide for us and to protect us. He said that a good shepherd would even lay down his life for the sheep, and that's exactly what Jesus did!



We can trust in His promises and rejoice that our shepherd has rescued us from sin and death. We can listen for His voice through prayer, Scripture, and discernment. And we know that He cares. Each of us is precious in God's eyes, and we can rest assured that He listens when we call to Him, and gives us life. What a blessing! We should thank God for that...

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## Children's Prayer Moment

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(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for being the Good Shepherd

Help us to listen for your voice

And to follow you and trust you

We know you will guide us and protect us

Thank you for caring about us

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!



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# John 10:1-10 ESV

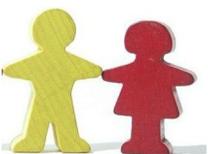
## “I am the Good Shepherd”

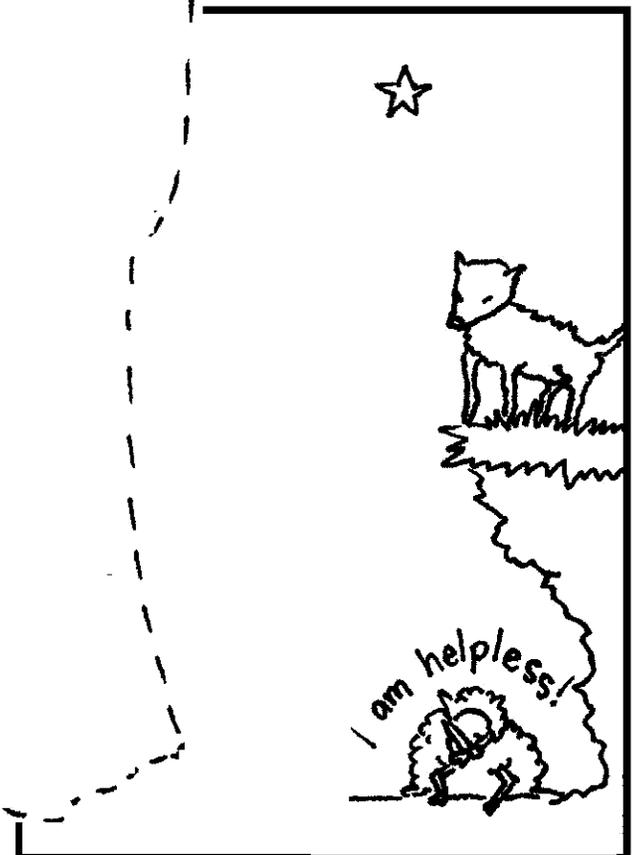
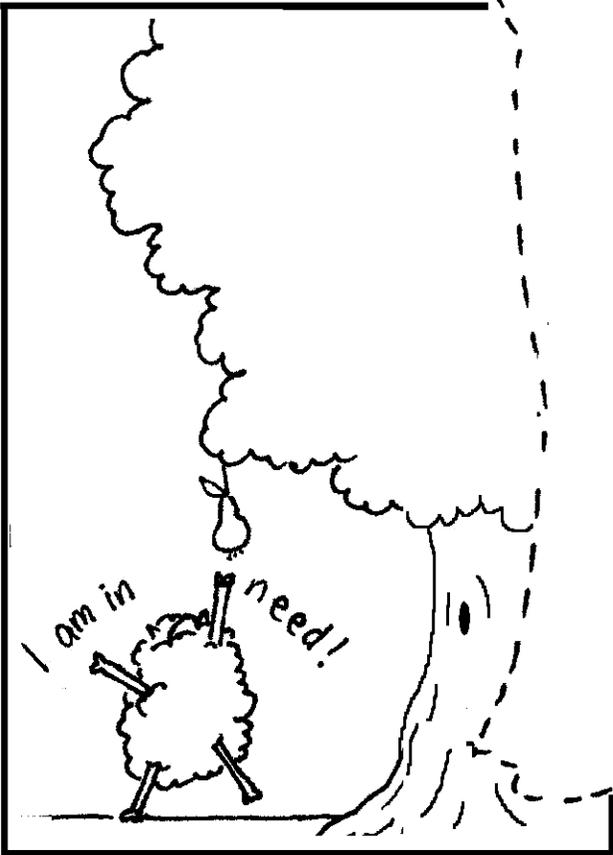
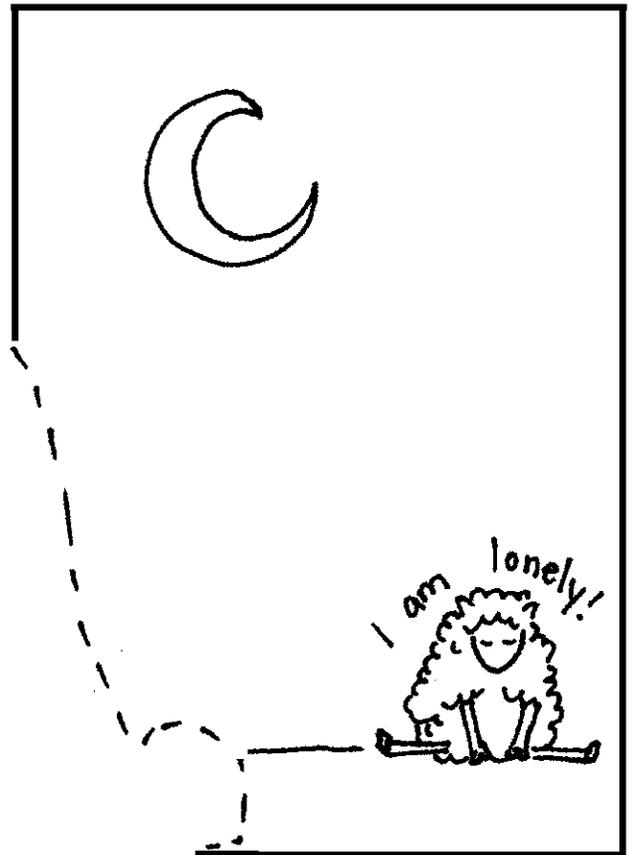
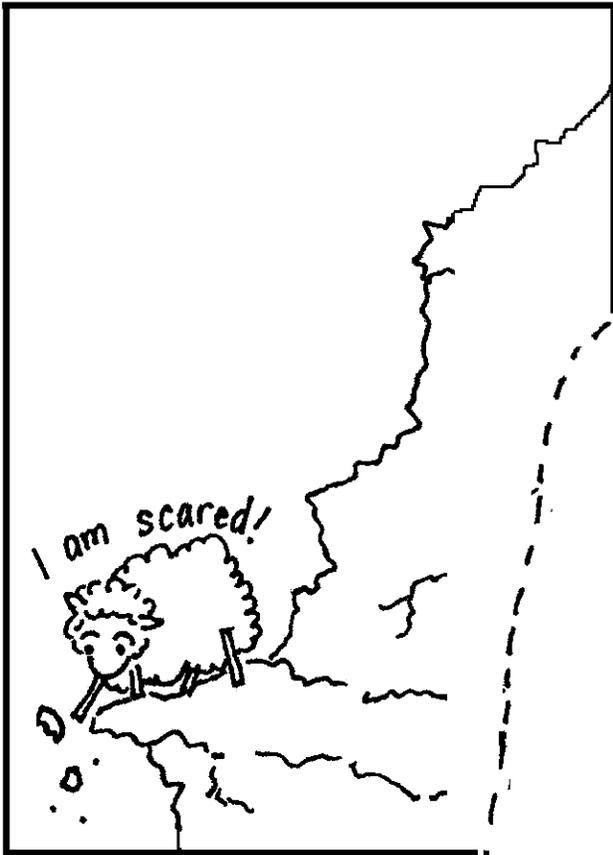
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*“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup>But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup>This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.*

*<sup>7</sup>So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*

[–John 10:1-10](#)

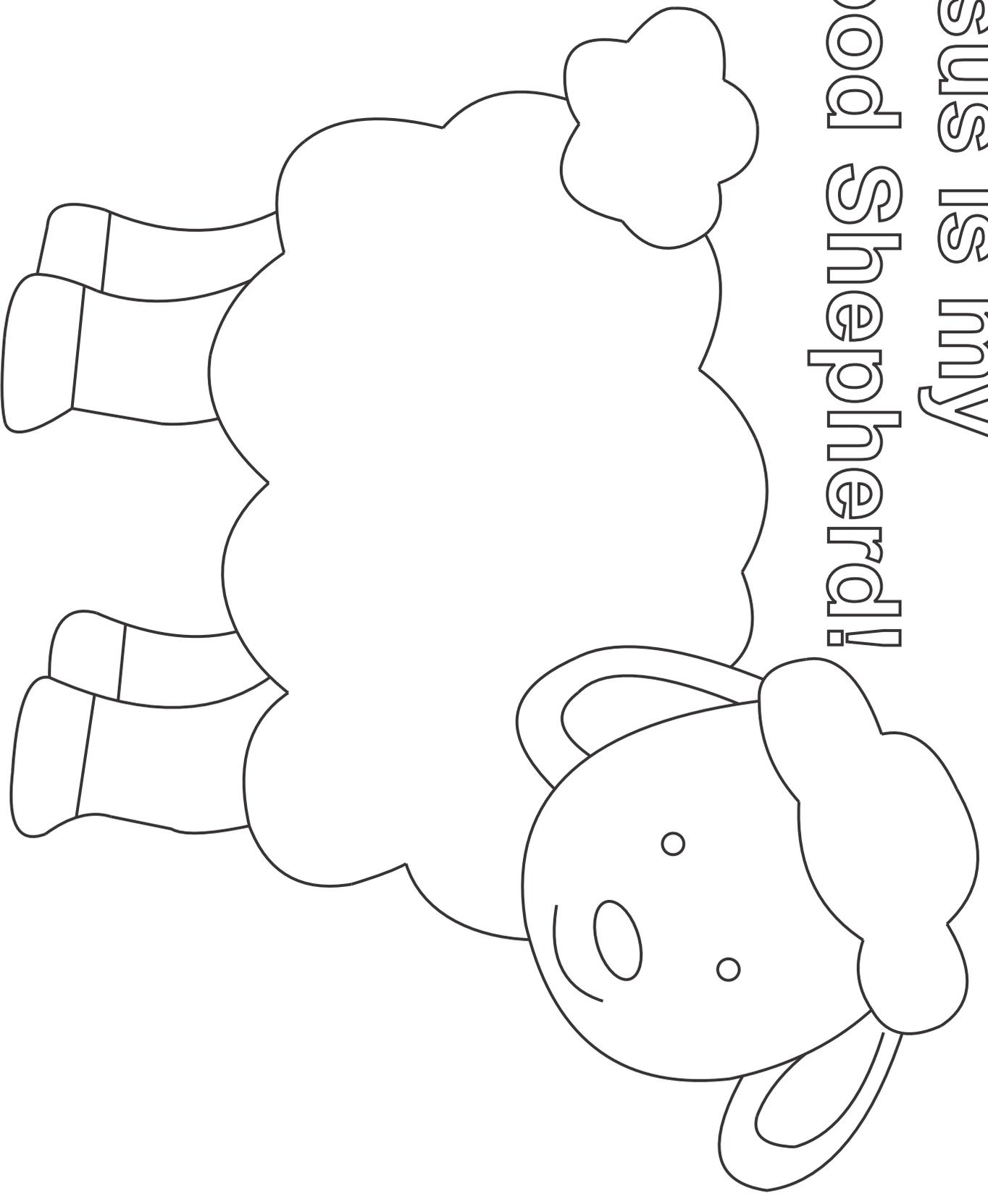




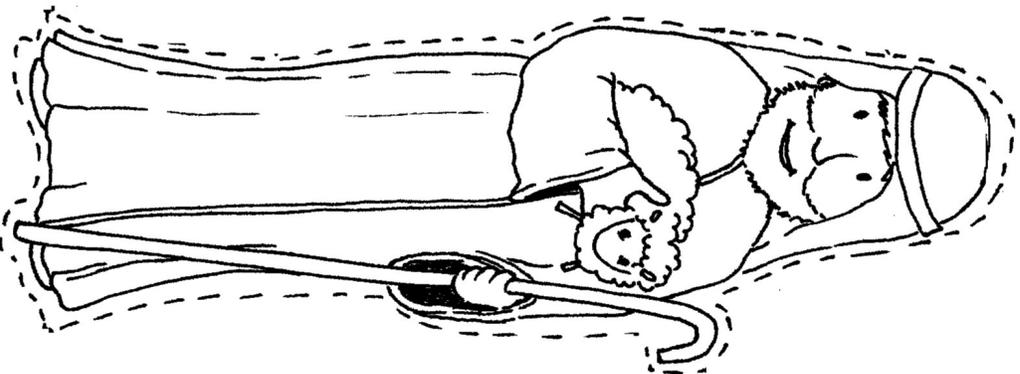
# Jesus is the Good Shepherd!



Jesus is my  
Good Shepherd!



# Jesus is the Good Shepherd!



## *Jesus, the Nice Shepherd*

Jesus was a shepherd,  
A nice one slim and tall.  
He loved the sheep so much,  
He loved them one and all.

The sheep began to know Him,  
Spending time grazing the hills.  
Soon they knew His voice,  
And followed as He willed.

The sheep began to grow,  
Stronger and lovelier every day.  
They became good friends,  
With their Shepherd right away.

They loved the nice Shepherd,  
Who led them in pastures green,  
And always gave them water,  
Never once was He mean.

One by one they followed,  
This nice shepherd as He led.  
And they loved him as a father,  
Trusting Him as they were fed.

Written by Jacquelyn K Heasley

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# Jesus is the Good Shepherd Craft Ideas

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Listen for His Voice, Little Sheep! Craft Ideas for Jesus, the Good Shepherd

There are several Biblical references that involve sheep. The lifestyle of the first century made this an applicable metaphor, as there were many who were involved in the business of livestock care. Even with that familiarity, people did not always readily understand sheep stories (“This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.” -John 10:6). Sheep are entirely dependent on the shepherd, as we are dependent on God. Jesus promises to be our shepherd, to guide us and lead us and lay down His life for us. There are an abundance of great sheep crafts... The crafts in this particular lesson will focus on the John 10 Gospel and the idea of listening to the Good Shepherd.

## Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

(Main Text: John 10:1-10)

*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!*

## More Teaching Help about Jesus the Good Shepherd

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- Browse free resources on our website about [the Good Shepherd](#)
- Compare [“I am the Good Shepherd” Sunday School Lesson](#)



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# Craft one: "Sheep in the Pen"

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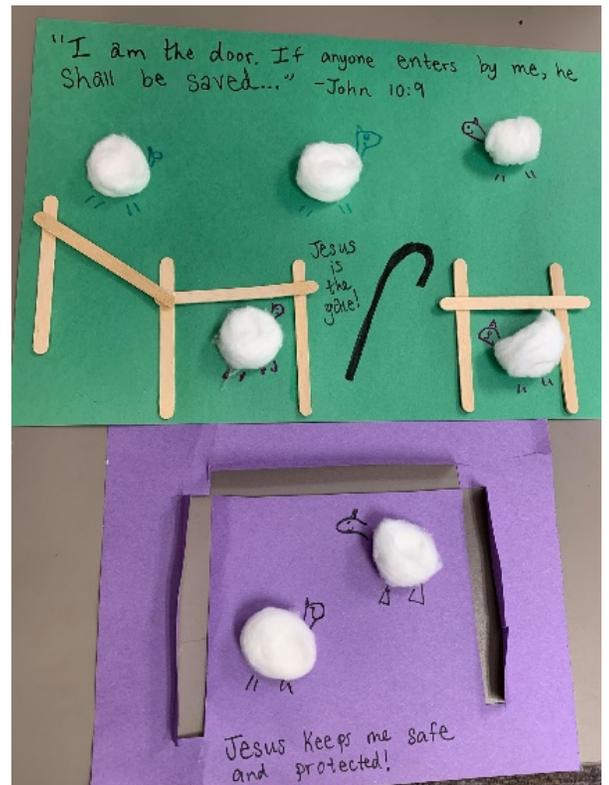
## You will need:

- Popsicle sticks, toothpicks, or Q-tips
- Markers, stickers, or other decorating materials
- Glue stick or bottle
- Cotton Balls
- Construction paper or card stock
- Scissors (optional)



## Procedure:

1. Build a "fence" on your paper: arrange toothpicks, sticks, or cotton swabs along the perimeter and glue them down to look like a barrier. If desired, this could also be accomplished with yarn, or by cutting slits into the paper. Create an opening "gate."
2. Place cotton ball "sheep" onto the paper within the fence. Glue the sheep down.
3. Decorate the sheep with legs, heads, and tails, if desired.
4. Add a verse and/or caption.
5. Allow to dry, and enjoy your sheep pen!



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# Craft Two: “Jesus is the Door” Hanger

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## You will need:

- Construction Paper or card stock
- Stickers or decorative supplies
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons



## Procedure:

1. Draw an outline onto the construction paper or cardstock, planning what shape the door hanger will be. Make sure to draw an inner circle for the door knob.
2. Decorate the paper with verse captions, stickers, and images.
3. Carefully cut the outline to create a door hanger shape (rectangle, arch, whatever preferred).
4. Find a door to decorate, and remember that “Jesus is the door”!



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# Craft Three: “Listen in Cup Phone”

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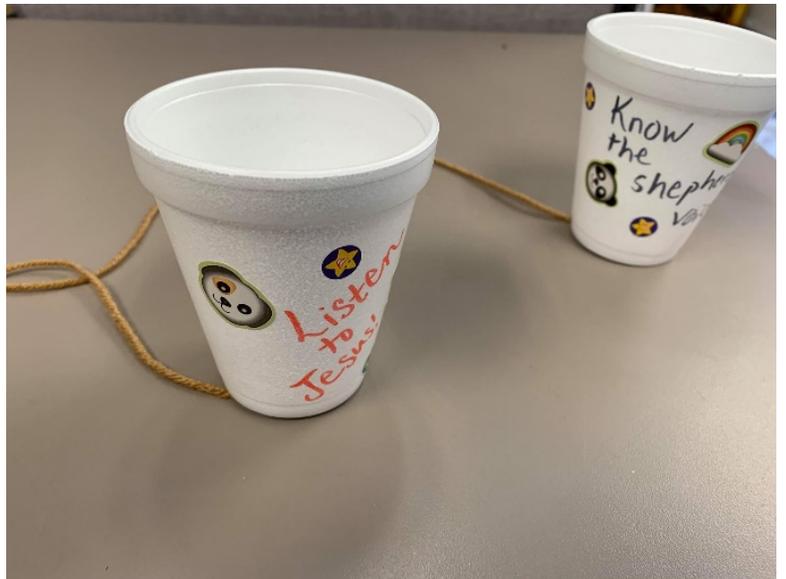
## You will need:

- Yarn or twine
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Cups (paper or Styrofoam)
- Paper clips or metal washers.
- Stickers or extra decorations



## Procedure:

1. Decorate two cups with stickers, colors, and captions.
2. Cut a long piece of yarn or string (at least 3-5 feet long).
3. Poke a small hole in the bottom of each cup.
4. Poke the yarn through the hole, and attach to a paper clip or other small item to prevent the yarn from slipping out of the hole.
5. Find a buddy to practice speaking into the cups and listening on the other side. Have fun!



# Good Shepherd Game & Object Lesson – John 10:1-21

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 ministry-to-children.com

Written by Tony Kummer Last updated March 28, 2019 Leave a Comment Filed Under: Games , John , Object Lessons

January 11, 2030

This shepherd's voice game idea was shared by Bible Games Central. Use it to add a fun element to Sunday School lessons about Jesus being our Good Shepherd. Use the the Bible references below and it could be a standalone lesson for children's church too!

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Be prepared for noise and chaos, with half of the group shouting and the other half trying to listen out for the correct voice to follow! A great way to introduce the topic of discipleship and following the Good Shepherd.

- Bible: John 10:2-5,11-15; 14:15-17,26
- Ages: 6 and above
- Group Size: 6 or more
- Supplies: Blindfolds (1 blindfold for every 2 players)

## “Sheep Hear My Voice” Game Directions

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Pair everyone up.

Blindfold one person from each pair and have him/her stand in the middle of the room. These are the sheep.

Scatter up the others and have them stand at the edge of the room. These are the shepherds.

Ask all the sheep to turn 3 rounds on the spot.

On “Go”, the shepherds will call out to their respective sheep, to give them instructions to walk towards them. (No running allowed.)

The first pair of sheep and shepherd to reunite wins.

Switch roles and repeat.

## Bible Message – Following Jesus' Voice

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After playing this game, use this section to guide you in your lesson on following Jesus.

### **Discuss**

1. Did you enjoy this game?
2. Was it easy to identify which voice to follow? How did you know?
3. Do you know a Bible passage that talks about following the correct voice?

John 10:2-5 (NIRV)

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<sup>2</sup> The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him. The sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own sheep, he goes on ahead of them. His sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> But they will never follow a stranger. In fact, they will run away from him. They don't recognize a stranger's voice."

### **Discuss**

4. Whose voice will the sheep follow?
5. Do the sheep know who their shepherd is?
6. Does the shepherd know which are his sheep?

### **Say**

This passage tells us that the shepherd knows his sheep by name. And the sheep recognizes and follows the voice of its shepherd. Let's read more about the shepherd and the sheep.

### John 10:11-13 (NIRV)

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<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> The hired man is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when the hired man sees the wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. <sup>13</sup> The man runs away because he is a hired man. He does not care about the sheep.

### **Discuss**

7. Who does this passage compare the good shepherd with?
8. What will a good shepherd do for his sheep? Why?

### John 10:14-15 (NIRV)

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<sup>14</sup> "I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep, and my sheep know me. <sup>15</sup> They know me just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I give my life for the sheep.

### **Discuss**

9. In this passage, who does the good shepherd refer to?
10. Who are the sheep?

### **Say**

In this passage, the good shepherd refers to Jesus and the sheep are his followers. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the good shepherd who died on the cross for our sins. If you believe in Jesus, you are a follower of Jesus. Jesus is your shepherd and you are one of Jesus' sheep.

## Discuss

11. Is Jesus your shepherd? Are you one of his sheep?
12. What does this verse tell us?

## Conclude

If we are followers of Jesus and one of his sheep, then we must obey his commands. John 14:15-17,26 tells us that the Holy Spirit who lives inside us will help us follow Jesus. It is important that you learn to follow Jesus closely. You can do this by reading the Bible and talking to him regularly.

### John 14:15-17 (NIRV)

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<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, obey my commands. <sup>16</sup> I will ask the Father. And he will give you another friend to help you and to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup> That friend is the Spirit of truth. The world can’t accept him. That’s because the world does not see him or know him. But you know him. He lives with you, and he will be in you.

### John 14:26 (NIRV)

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<sup>26</sup> But the Father will send the Friend in my name to help you. The Friend is the Holy Spirit. He will teach you all things. He will remind you of everything I have said to you.

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This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through Ministry-To-Children since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader. In addition to children's curriculum, she shares her student ministry activities and lesson ideas on [YouthGroupMinistry.com](#)

My name is [Tony Kummer](#) (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. I am building three new websites. One is called [Ministry Answers](#) to help Christians find answers in God's Word. The other two are [Devotional Christian](#) and [10 Bible Verses](#) to help you focus on personal prayer and quiet times.



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*Tony Kummer*