

Jesus is the Good Shepherd- John 10:1-10

THE POINT

Focus:

Jesus is our Good Shepherd.
Life with Jesus is the way of Salvation

Application:

We listen to Jesus' voice and instructions through Scripture and prayer.
We trust in Jesus alone to save us.

HEART CONNECTION (5-7 MINUTES)

MATERIALS:

- Photos, stuffed animals, or sheep figurines
- Optional (See stuffed animal option on the story section below!)

Content:

Pass around the sheep items so everyone can get a good look. Ask- does anyone know anything about sheep? What sound does a sheep make? Have you ever seen or pet a sheep? What do you think we might need to have in order to take good care of a sheep?

The point of this section is to make a connection point between the children, sheep, and the care of a shepherd. As they share, they will become more interested in their own personal connections and the connections of classmates.

In Jesus' time, lots of people knew about sheep. Sheep wool was used to make cloth. Shepherds took care of sheep to make sure they were safe and healthy. Jesus compared himself to a shepherd in a parable-story that we're going to read today.

STORY CONNECTION (8-10 MINUTES)

MATERIALS:

- Parable Rolls (instructions online at www.worshipwithchildren.com/lesson-downloads or hyperlinked [HERE](#))

Optional:

The three and four year olds in our congregation have a stuffed animal sheep they've named "Lemo" who they enjoy greeting each Sunday, invite to sit with them during the story, and share their snacks with. Their play-care for their sheep friend reminds them about all the ways that a good shepherd cares for a sheep and connects with how our Good Shepherd, Jesus, cares for us. If you have preschoolers in your congregation, this is a great passage to use for introducing a "class pet".

Have the children sit in a circle for the story This helps include children who might feel shy, and it helps each child feel equally engaged. It reassures children that they are seen and welcome in the community.

This story is a parable. Using the parable rolls allows the children to interact with the text and reinforces the idea that this passage shares something in common with the other story illustrations that Jesus told.

John 10:1-10

Have the children begin their yellow background felt rolled out and the other pieces to the side. Place the green pentagon on the yellow background and explain that this is the sheep pen. Place the green square on the other part of the background and explain that this is the grass that is good sheep food. Place a few wooden beads to represent sheep in the pen. Place one blue triangle on an edge, and explain that this is the gate. As you talk about

“What I’m about to tell you Pharisees is true. What if someone does not enter the sheep pen through the gate but climbs in another way? That person is a thief and a robber.

Walk your fingers across the felt and into the sheep pen through the sides without the blue triangle.

2 The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him. The sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own sheep, he goes on ahead of them. His sheep follow him because they know his voice.

Walk your fingers through the blue triangle door; then walk them back out and move the sheep-beads to follow your fingers in a path around the background felt.

5 But they will never follow a stranger. In fact, they will run away from him. They don’t recognize a stranger’s voice.” 6 Jesus told this story. But the Pharisees didn’t understand what he was telling them.

7 So Jesus said again, “What I’m about to tell you is true. I am like a gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers. But the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I’m like a gate. Anyone who enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out. And they will find plenty of food.

Pick up the gate and turn it around when you read “I’m like a gate”. Replace it on the sheep pen.

10 A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so they may have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way.

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Reader’s Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. www.zondervan.com The “NIV” and “New International Reader’s Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

WONDER CONNECTION (3-5 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: None.

I wonder what the voice of Jesus sounds like.

I wonder what it looks like for me to follow Jesus.

I wonder how Jesus feels when he sees us, like sheep, follow him.

What do you wonder?

SPIRIT CONNECTION (7-10 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: Coloring supplies: paper, crayons, pencils, hard drawing surfaces (floor, clipboard, or a table).

Take a few minutes to talk quietly with the Lord while you draw, write, use the materials to retell the story to yourself, or just think inside your heard. Talk with God about the story today. This is a quiet time for you to spend with the Lord Jesus.