

## Sunday School Lesson

### Good Shepherd Sunday SEASON 2026 with LSSI

For use with other resources available at [LSSI.org/GSS](https://LSSI.org/GSS)

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#### NOTES:

- *Not all Sunday School curriculum packages include “Jesus the Good Shepherd” as the lesson for April 26, even if you are using lectionary-based materials.*
- *\*Supplies needed will vary based on activities chosen below.*

#### Welcome:

*Welcome all participants to the space.*

*Celebrate, sing, connect in whatever ways you do every week.*

#### Introduce the lesson.

*Say something like:*

Today’s Bible story is about listening to Jesus and following Jesus. We’ll read the whole Bible story together soon. But first, we’re going to practice listening and following.

## **Opening Activities:**

*Choose one or more of the following:*

- Guess that sound: Fill several egg shakers with different materials such as rice, beans, paper clips—anything! Set out 1 sample of each item in the eggs. Tape the eggs shut and have children guess which item is in each egg.
- Telephone... This one doesn't get old. Whisper a message to pass around the circle and see how it changes from beginning to end.
- Simon says, with variations... You might have "Simon" give directions three times, or have students perform the act three times (since the story involves calling three times).
- Who is that? Blindfold one student and have them walk up to another and ask who it is. Have the child try to fool the blindfolded one by disguising his/her voice and see if the blindfolded guesser can determine who it is.

## **Transition:**

*When the activity is done, gather everyone together in a circle, standing.*

*Take 3 deep breaths and then sit down.*

### Activity Debrief:

*Before moving on to the next activity, give students a chance to talk about what they just learned. Ask questions like:*

- What happened during our activity?  
*(we listened to sounds... we repeated words... we did what we were told... we tried to follow directions)*
- How did you feel during the activity?  
*(fun... confused... happy... silly ... frustrated)*
- What have you learned through this activity?  
*(I am good at knowing sounds! it's hard to understand other people... I liked leading more than following.... I didn't like it when I made mistakes... I didn't like being blindfolded... I thought it was fun to make lots of guesses)*
- What can you do with your new learning?  
*(accept any reasonable answer)*
- What do you think our activity had to do with listening to Jesus and/or following Jesus?  
*(accept any reasonable answers)*

## **Bible Story:**

*Read today's Bible Story from John 10:1-10 (like Spark NRSV Bible page 1185) or read "The Good Shepherd" from a Story Bible (like Spark Story Bible pages 436).*

The Living Bible (TLB) Translation:

Jesus told his disciples:

"I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! <sup>2</sup> But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

<sup>4</sup> After the Shepherd has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice."

<sup>6</sup> Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn't understand what he meant, <sup>7</sup> so he explained it to them: "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will find safety. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures. <sup>10</sup> The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

## **Bible Story De-Brief:**

*Ask students questions like these, to see what they learned from the Bible story:*

- What was Jesus doing or saying in today's Bible story?
- Who was talking to Jesus or listening to Jesus?
- What do you remember about "sheep" in today's Bible Story?
- Do you know what a "shepherd" does?
- A shepherd takes care of sheep.  
Why did Jesus compare himself to a shepherd?
- How do we know that Jesus takes care of us?
- Who or what do you take care of?
- Who takes care of you?
- How/when can we say "thank you" to Jesus for taking care of us?
- How/when can we care for other people and animals?

## **Prayer**

Jesus, thank you for always caring for us, leading us, loving us, and keeping us safe. Send us other shepherds, too, like pastors, teachers, parents, coaches, friends, and others to watch out for us, too. Help us to listen to you and follow in your ways. Show us how to care for other people, just like you do. Amen.

## Additional Activities

### Video Option<sup>1</sup>

- For young/middle elementary: <https://youtu.be/sj3vb1EmHv0> recorded at a modern, American sheep farm!
- For middle/older elementary and middle school: <https://youtu.be/e45dVgWgV64>  
Lots of people try to call the sheep... but they only listen to their shepherd!
- Song option, great during snack time: <https://youtu.be/IDvb1tXuRrU>

### Craft

*choose one of the following:*

- Megaphone/listening “trumpet”: Provide students with paper towel tubes and have them decorate with stickers and markers to serve as “listen-up” reminders.
- I’m all ears! Help students fashion headbands by cutting long strips of paper to fit their heads. Have kids color and cut large ears and staple or glue to the sides of the head band.
- Special names... Just like God called Samuel’s name, our names are important. Have students write or draw their names with decorative color and design.
- Telephone...(revisited) Make an old school “phone” out of cups and string. See if it works!

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<sup>1</sup> (Note: LSSI did not create these videos, so we cannot be responsible for ads that might appear before or during the video. For best results, preview the videos, and download prior to Sunday School to show with as few ads as possible.)

## Additional Activities, continued

### **Bonus Bible Game**

1. Form groups of three. Have one person in each group close their eyes. Have the other two take the person at least 20 feet away from their group.
2. Say: “You have one minute to get back to your seat with your eyes closed. Your friends in your group will guide you but listen well.”
3. The “blind” people can’t be led by the hand; they must follow only their group members’ instructions. Play three times to let each group member have a turn being the blind one.
4. Then ask: “How easy or difficult was it to listen to your group members’ voices? How did other people’s instructions affect you? What techniques did you use to listen well? How can we use some of those same techniques to listen well to God?”

