The Lost Sheep *Bible lesson*

Luke 15:1–7 · 30-minute core or 60-minute full lesson



BIG IDEA

Every single one matters to God.

MEMORY VERSE · LUKE 15:6 BSB

“Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep!”

LESSON AT A GLANCE

0–6	**Welcome** · Sheep search	
6–10	**Hook** · Just one	
10–20	**The Story** · The Story	●
20–30	**Talk** · Talk	●
30–35	**Memory Verse** · Memory Verse	●
35–40	**Sing** · Sing	
40–50	**Activity** · Shepherd review	
50–55	**Respond** · The one	
55–60	**Pray & Send Home** · Pray & Send Home	●

● Core step. Teach just these for the 30-minute version.

Leader prep

Bible background

Tax collectors and sinners were gathering to hear Jesus, and the Pharisees and scribes grumbled, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them” (Luke 15:1–2). Jesus answered with three stories about lost things: a sheep, a coin and a son.

A shepherd with a hundred sheep notices one is missing. He leaves the ninety-nine in the open country and goes after the lost one until he finds it (15:4). He doesn’t scold it or make it walk home; he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and carries it, then calls his friends: “Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep!” (15:5–6).

Jesus explains: there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who don’t think they need to (15:7). The story shows God’s heart: He goes looking for the lost, and He is glad when they come home.

Where is Jesus in this story?

Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). He told this story while eating with people others had given up on. He came to find the lost, and He gave His life to carry us home to God.

Supplies

- Ten to twenty paper or toy sheep, with one marked differently
  Prep: Hide the marked sheep before class.
- A shepherd’s staff (a broom or walking stick) and a towel for a headcovering
- Printed story cards, verse poster, coloring pages and parent pages
  Prep: Print from the Classroom resources section.
- A screen for the story video (optional)

Questions kids might ask

“Wasn’t it dangerous to leave the ninety-nine?”

Jesus is showing how much the shepherd cares about the one. Shepherds often worked together, and the point is the shepherd’s love, not the other sheep being forgotten.

“Who is the lost sheep?”

Anyone who has wandered away from God, which is all of us at some point. Jesus came to find us.

“Does God stop loving me if I wander?”

No. Like the shepherd, God comes looking and is glad to bring us home.

If a child shares something serious

When kids share what scares or worries them, some may mention something serious, like someone hurting them or a big fear at home. Listen, thank them for telling you, and don’t promise to keep it secret.

Tell your ministry leader the same day and follow your church's child-safety policy.

Teach it

SAY read aloud DO leader action KIDS SAY call and response

1 Welcome 6 min

Full lesson

Sheep search

DO Hide paper sheep all around the room before class, including the specially marked one. Kids find as many as they can in two minutes.

SAY Did anyone find the special one? In today's story, a shepherd would not stop until he found the one that was lost.

2 Hook 4 min

Full lesson

Just one

SAY If you had one hundred dollars and lost one dollar, would you look for it? What if it was your dog, and you had a hundred dogs?

SAY Jesus told a story to show how much every single person matters to God.

3 The Story 10 min

Core

DO Read the story aloud with the story cards, or play it in the Little Lantern app.

SAY Listen for what the shepherd does when he finds the sheep.

DO Have kids open their Bibles to Luke 15:1–7. Ask a confident reader to read it aloud.

SAY Look at verse 2: people grumbled that Jesus welcomed sinners. This story was His answer. God goes looking for the lost.

KIDS SAY **Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep!**

4 Talk 10 min

Core

Who was Jesus talking to when He told this story, and why?
Listen for: People who were grumbling that He welcomed sinners. He wanted them to see God's heart for the lost.

How did the shepherd feel when he found the sheep?
Listen for: Joyful! He carried it home and threw a party.

What does this story tell us about how God sees people?
Listen for: Every single one matters to Him, even people others ignore.

Who is someone who might feel left out that you could include?
Listen for: Answers vary.

OLDER KIDS Read John 10:11. How does Jesus being the Good Shepherd go further than the shepherd in this story?

5 Memory Verse 5 min

Core

DO Write the verse on a whiteboard or hold up the poster. Teach the motions.

> **"Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep!"**
> Luke 15:6 · BSB

MOTIONS

- **Rejoice with me,** Clap and wave a friend over.
- **for I have found** Shade your eyes, then point: there it is!
- **my lost sheep!** Hug a pretend sheep across your shoulders.

PRACTICE IT THREE WAYS

1. Say it with motions.
2. Disappearing words: erase or cover one word at a time until kids say it from memory.
3. Say it fast, then slow, then in a whisper.

6 Sing 5 min

Full lesson

> The Little Lantern song for this story is coming soon. For now, sing a favorite worship song about Jesus the Good Shepherd.

7 Activity 10 min

Full lesson

Shepherd review

DO One child is the ‘shepherd’ with the staff. Answer a question correctly to ‘find’ a sheep from the pile. Swap shepherds every two questions.

How many sheep did the shepherd have?
Listen for: One hundred.

How many did he leave to look for the lost one?
Listen for: Ninety-nine.

How did he bring the sheep home?
Listen for: On his shoulders.

What did he tell his friends?
Listen for: “Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep!”

Who does Jesus say rejoices when someone comes back to God?
Listen for: Heaven!

> Prefer a quieter room? Hand out the mini-book or a coloring page instead.

8 Respond 5 min

Full lesson

The one

DO Kids write: “I matter to God because ____. Someone I can include this week is ____.”

OLDER KIDS Write a short prayer for someone you know who feels far from God.

9 Pray & Send Home 5 min

Core

DO Pair kids up. Each names someone who might feel left out or far from God, and their partner prays for that person.

SAY Close: Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd. Thank you that every single one of us matters to you. Help us look out for others. Amen.

DO Hand out parent pages.