



Week 1 3's 4's, 4's 5's 9:45

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Cares for Us

SCRIPTURE: [Psalm 23](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [From Psalm 139:14](#)

[Psalm 23](#) could be the most famous of David's compositions. Take a moment to read it, even if the words are familiar.

David probably used imagery of his experience as a shepherd while writing this psalm. But unless you live in a verdant countryside, you probably don't see shepherds leading sheep from place to place.

Unlike their reputation, sheep are intelligent. They have an impressive memory, recognizing other sheep and familiar humans. This is crucial to the survival of these domesticated animals. Sheep are also dependent on their caretakers.

In David's imagination, his previous role is reversed. He becomes a sheep under the care of God—an ideal shepherd. God plans for the physical needs of those in His care. Yet David admits that God leads the sheep into dangerous places. Just as a human shepherd must bring the sheep through treacherous paths, God guides and protects His sheep on a hazardous road. God's care is not superficial.

In the same way, the life of faith is not free of risk. God has a destination in mind, a place of abundance and redemption. God cares so much for His sheep that He will bring them into dark places, which leads to future triumph. Have you felt like you are under the watchful care of God this week? If you are finding yourself in dark places, have you stayed close to your shepherd?

—**Jason Hitchcock**

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Curiosity Activity: Needs and Wants

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), marker (prep only), index cards (2)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Needs and Wants Cards](#)

Ahead of time, print the Needs and Wants Cards and cut the cards apart. Using a marker, write the word *NEEDS* on one index card and *WANTS* on the other index card.

We all need certain things to live. Some of those things are food, water, shelter, and clothes. Can you think of any other things we need? Set out the *NEEDS* card. **We also have things we want, things that aren't necessary to live. Some of those things might be desserts, games, toys, and computers. Can you think of other things we might want?** Set out the *WANTS* card.



You all had some good thoughts on needs and wants. Let's play a game where I'll show you a picture and you'll share whether it's a need or a want. Then we'll take turns putting each picture under the *NEEDS* or *WANTS* card, depending on which you think it is. Go through each card one at a time and have the kids help you decide to which category it belongs.

The Bible says God is our shepherd. A shepherd takes care of the sheep and makes sure they have everything they need—such as food, water, and somewhere safe to sleep. We'll learn more about how God is our Shepherd and how He cares for us!

Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

Leader: You may remember our friend Tac, the curious cat. He's always asking questions. He has a question for you. Are you ready?

Tac the Cat: Hi, kids! I have something I've been curious about ... I heard you talking about a shepherd, but ... what is a shepherd? I've never met anyone who is a shepherd.

Leader: Oh, that's a good question, Tac! A shepherd is a person who takes care of sheep. (*Hold up the Shepherd Picture.*)

Tac the Cat: Oh, that's cool! So why do sheep need to be taken care of so much? Not all animals have special caretakers. I mean ... Cats are pretty good at taking care of themselves and one another. Can't sheep do that too?

Leader: That's another good question. Sheep aren't very good at taking care of themselves. They can't fight off animals who try to get them. And they can get hurt.

Tac the Cat: So the shepherds fight off the other animals that try to get the sheep? What else does the shepherd do?

Leader: Shepherds work hard to make sure their sheep stay safe. They make sure the sheep have enough food and water, and they help if the sheep get stuck or lost.

Tac the Cat: Oh, wow! That sounds like an important job!

Leader: Yes, it's a very important job. In Bible times, there were many shepherds. Many of them carried a stick called a staff. A shepherd's staff is a long and sturdy stick with a hook at one end. A shepherd uses the staff to catch sheep that might run off. The staff could also be used to defend the sheep if a predator tried to attack. Shepherds could also use the staff to balance when walking, especially when traveling on rough ground.

Tac the Cat: That sounds pretty cool. Kind of like a walking stick!

Leader: Yes, you're right, Tac! And another amazing thing you should know is that the Bible tells us God is our shepherd!

Tac the Cat: Wait a minute ... I might be a cat, but I'm not a sheep! And these kids aren't sheep. Why do we need a shepherd?

Leader: God takes care of us and gives us what we need. We're going to learn all about it today.

Tac the Cat: I can't wait to learn more about that! There's so much to be curious about. Thank you for answering my questions! I'm going to go teach all my cat friends about sheep and shepherds now.

Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: What would it be like to be a shepherd? Allow kids time to respond. **How would you feel if you were a shepherd? Is that a job you would like to do?** Allow kids time to respond. **The Bible says God is our shepherd. Let's find out more about what this means!**

Today's Wonder Truth is GOD CARES FOR US. Today we'll discover how God cares for us like a shepherd cares for sheep.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, shatterproof mirror

WORD OF WONDER

How God made me is amazing and wonderful.

—from Psalm 139:14

Our Word of Wonder for the Wonderfully Made series is from Psalm 139:14. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together. Practice the verse with the kids.



Hold up a handheld mirror, looking at yourself as you say the Word of Wonder. Pass the mirror around the room and invite each kid to say the verse while looking in the mirror.

In today's God's big story, we learned about David, who wrote lots of poems and songs. Did you know poems and songs are one way we can praise God and thank Him for making us and knowing us?

After everyone has had a chance to say the verse, ask the kids about what they noticed in the mirror. **God is our Creator! He created us in amazing and wonderful ways! We have eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, a nose for smelling, and a mouth for tasting. Look around the room. Do we all look the same? No—we're all different, but we're all the same in one way ... we're all made by God to be amazing and wonderful!**

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **HOW GOD**—Point up with both hands.
- **MADE ME**—Point to yourself with two thumbs.
- **IS AMAZING**—Put one arm out to your side for each word.
- **AND WONDERFUL.**—Burst both arms up and out to the sides at the same time.
- **FROM PSALM 139:14**—Hold your hands open in front of you, as if holding a book.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **How does it make you feel to know God made you to be amazing and wonderful?**
- **What would you like to say to God for making you?**

Craft: Woolly Sheep

SUPPLIES: thick paper or cardstock (1 sheet per kid), glue sticks, cotton balls (handful for each kid), construction paper (green and blue; 1 sheet of each color per kid)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Sheep Template](#) (1 per kid)

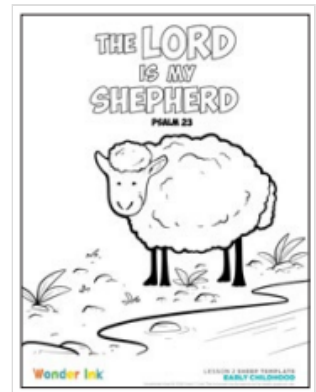
Ahead of time, print a copy of the Sheep Template on thick paper or cardstock for each kid.

We learned about David today. He knew that God cared for him so much. He trusted that God would love and take care of him forever. God is our shepherd too. And He loves us so much. God looks out for us and cares for us. God gives us what we need. He protects us and comforts us. We can trust the Lord as our shepherd because God cares for us.

Give each kid a Sheep Template. Show the kids how to use a glue stick to attach the cotton balls to the sheep to make its wool. Some cotton balls may need to be stretched out to cover the entire sheep.

Then have the kids tear the green and blue construction paper into small pieces. Have the kids glue the small green pieces to the template as grass. Do the same thing with the blue construction paper to make water for the sheep. As the kids work, talk about how God provides for us and cares for us.

The shepherd provides clear water and fresh grass for the sheep. God provides everything we need. He loves us and takes care of us. We can trust God and follow Him! We're like sheep, and He is our shepherd.



Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for being our shepherd.

Let's pray and talk to God and thank Him for all the ways He cares for us. God, thank You for being our Shepherd. We're so grateful that You give us everything we need. You comfort us, and You care for us. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: The Lord is your shepherd. He wants to lead and guide you. He wants to provide for you and comfort you. May you always remember that He's with you and cares for you.

Closing Activity: Listen to the Shepherd

Did you know sheep learn the voice of their shepherd? So if there's a bunch of different herds of sheep all near each other and the shepherd for one group of sheep calls to them, they'll only go to their shepherd, not the other one. Pretty neat, right? Let's play a game where we listen to one of our friends, and we'll have to figure out who talked without being able to see!

Encourage the kids to sit on the ground spread out, at least an arm's-length away from one another.

First, everyone needs to close their eyes. I'll tap one kid on the shoulder. That kid will say, "Hello, sheep!" Everyone else will keep their eyes closed until I say to open them. When I say, "Open your eyes," you can try to figure out which friend said the words.

Invite the kids to play the game, selecting a different kid to speak each round. You can even suggest having the kids use funny voices or quietly moving to a new spot when they talk.

We can listen to God and follow Him. We can trust Him to take care of us like sheep trust a shepherd to care for them.