Preschool–Grade 6

The Lord Is My Shepherd (Psalm 23)

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: God takes care of me, like a shepherd takes care of his sheep.
Bible passage: Psalm 23. Read Psalm 23 yourself before class.
Memory verse: "The LORD is my shepherd" *Psalm 23:1 (KJV).* A **shepherd** takes care of sheep.
You need: a Bible, a yardstick or broom handle for a "staff," crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at Psalm 23.

1. Opening game: Little Sheep, Come Home (5 minutes)

The kids are little sheep. They crawl around the room and say, "Baa!" You are the shepherd. Hold the "staff" and call one child by name: "Little sheep Emma, come home!" That child crawls to you, and you give them a gentle pat on the back. Call every child by name. Say: "A good shepherd knows every one of his sheep by name (John 10:3). Today we will hear a song from the Bible about God, our shepherd."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Psalm 23. Say: "This is a song David wrote to God. David took care of sheep when he was a boy (1 Samuel 16:11)." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

God is my shepherd. I am His little sheep (Psalm 23:1). *(Say, "Baa!")*
God gives me what I need (23:1). *(Hold out your hands.)*
He lets me rest in the soft green grass (23:2). *(Lie down.)*
He gives me cool, calm water to drink (23:2). *(Pretend to drink.)*
He shows me the right way to go (23:3). *(Walk in place.)*
Say it with me: "The LORD is my shepherd!"
Sometimes I walk in a dark, scary place (23:4). *(Cover your eyes.)*
But I am not afraid. God is with me (23:4)! *(Hug yourself.)*
God gives me a big meal (23:5). *(Pretend to eat.)*
My cup is so full, it spills over the top (23:5)! *(Stretch your arms up high.)*
God is good to me every day (23:6). *(Clap, clap.)*
I can be with God forever (23:6). *(Point up.)*
Say it with me: "The LORD is my shepherd!"

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3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Who is my shepherd? *(God, the LORD, Psalm 23:1)*
2. Where does the shepherd let the sheep rest? *(In the green grass, 23:2)*
3. Am I alone in a dark, scary place? *(No! God is with me, 23:4)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "The Bible says, 'The LORD is my shepherd.' That means, 'God takes care of me.'" Teach the motions: point up on "The LORD," point to yourself on "my," and make a staff with your arm (hold one arm up and bend your hand over like a hook) on "shepherd." Say it three times: normal, in a whisper, and happy and loud. Then say "Psalm 23:1" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus said, 'I am the good shepherd' (John 10:11). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: The Shepherd's Sheep (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw a sheep resting in green grass beside blue water, like Psalm 23:2. While they color, ask: "Who takes care of the sheep? Who takes care of you?" *(God does, 23:1.)*

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Dear God, You are my shepherd.
Thank You for taking care of me. In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the lines moving and do every motion with them. If they get wiggly, play "Little Sheep, Come Home" again.

Told gently on purpose: this lesson calls "the valley of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4) only "a dark, scary place." If a child asks more, say: "Even when something is very scary or very sad, God is with us. He never leaves His sheep."

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