

KICKRiCKulum presents Psalm 23

Grades 1 - 6

Lesson One: Feeling Sheepish? Psalm 23:1a (Amp.)

The LORD is my shepherd [to feed, guide, and shield me]....

Support Verse: Psalm 8:4 (Amp.)

What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of [earth born] man that You care for him?

KIDnabber: Globe

Puppet: *Enters with the globe and ignores the class. Rick stares at the globe with his mouth open.*

Teacher: Hi, Rick! What've you got there? *Rick gives no response and continues to stare at the globe.*
Rick...Rick!

Puppet: *Snaps out of daze.* Huh? Were you talking to me? Sorry.... This is my miniature model of the earth. It's way smaller than the real thing.

Teacher: That's right, Rick. The real earth we live on is huge!

Puppet: I know! We learned in school that if you got in a car and drove 65 mi/hr, 24 hours a day, without stopping or slowing down for anything, it would take you about 16 days to go around the earth one time.

Teacher: That's more than two weeks, Rick, and we couldn't even stop to use the restroom! What a huge, awesome God He is to have created it!

Puppet: Yeah, but when I think about it sometimes, it makes me feel...small.

Teacher: Well, compared to the earth, we are pretty small. But even though the God of all creation is so huge, the Bible tells us that the Lord is OUR Shepherd.

Puppet: Shepherd? What does that have to do with me feeling small?

Teacher: That means that it is the Lord who completely watches over and cares for you...not just over kings and "important" people, but you. The Lord God is your shepherd, Rick. You are His most prized possession. All of us who ask Jesus into our hearts can say this.

Puppet: Wow, such a huge wonderful God cares that much for me...me?! I'm gonna go learn what a shepherd does to see what it means for me! *Rick exits.*

Teacher: I think we should learn what a shepherd does, too.

Rampin' Up

Materials Needed: Box large enough to contain the following items : food items, jug of water, first aid kit, directional compass, binoculars, shield, receipt, hat with a label reading “manager,” and a blanket. On the box write, “Property of the shepherd,” but cover “the shepherd” with a piece of paper so those words cannot be seen.

Pull out the box and say: Many people use different things in their jobs or do different things that make up their jobs. For example, what types of items do teachers at school use? *Entertain answers.* Right! All of the items you mentioned are used by teachers. In my box here are several items representing a certain type of job. As I pull each one out, I want you to guess who would use or do these things in their job. *Pull out food items.* Say: This person makes sure food is always provided. Any guesses? *Entertain answers.* *Pull out the jug of water.* Say: This person makes sure there is always water to drink. Any guesses? *Continue in this manner saying for the following items:* (First aid kit) This person makes sure care is provided; (Compass) This person leads and guides those in their care; (Binoculars) This person watches over those in their care; (Shield) This person protects those in their care; (Receipt) This person owns those in their care; (Hat) This person manages those in their care; (Blanket) This person comforts those in their care.

If a child guesses correctly during this, have him/her help you pull remaining items from the box.

Say: Can anyone guess what type of person provides food, water, care, guidance, protection and watching over, ownership, management, and comfort to those in their care? *Pull the cover off “the shepherd” on the box.* Say: It is the job of a shepherd to do all of these things for the sheep in their care. Wow! That’s a lot of hard work. But you know, shepherds do their jobs because they love their sheep. What do you think this means when we read, “The LORD is my shepherd?” *Entertain answers.* Let’s see what our Shepherd, Jesus, has to say about this.

Read: John 10:1-16 as paraphrased below in the object lesson.

JOHN 10:1-16

Materials needed:

- action figure
- receipt
- paper with 1 Peter 5:7 written on it
- paper with many names written out (use names of children in your class for some)
- Bible
- Bowl w/grapes
- fake ear
- recording of you singing a current, popular song the children would know, w/tape player
- box with contents from Rampin’ Up



Say: Jesus had just performed a mighty miracle – He gave a blind man the ability to see! As usual, this miracle caused a stir with the Pharisees, a group of Jewish people who figured that they were the closest to God and if anyone knew how God acted, it was them. They began to ask Jesus some questions but Jesus responded by talking about a shepherd and his sheep.

Say: He described how the sheep will listen to the shepherd’s voice and how they will know it from anyone else’s voice. *Pull out the fake ear and talk about knowing the voice.* Say: I want to play a song for you all and I want you to tell me the name of the group who is singing. *Play the tape you made.* Say: Okay, that’s a very popular song right now...who was that? *Entertain*

answers. What?! You mean it wasn't fill in the name of the group? Well, who was it then? *Admit to the children that it was your crooning! Offer to sing the rest of the class time.* Say: Just as you could easily recognize that the voice on the song wasn't the right one, so too can sheep recognize their own shepherd's voice! They know when it's not the shepherd! Jesus then described how the shepherd leads the sheep out by name and how they follow him. Jesus said that sheep will never follow a stranger but will run away because they don't know the stranger's voice.

Say: Jesus then made a very bold declaration. He said (v. 11), "I am the Good Shepherd," only He wasn't talking about being a shepherd of sheep but of people! *Pick up the Rampin' Up box.* He was saying that just as a shepherd does all these things for sheep, He does them for us as people! He makes sure that we, as His "sheep," have spiritual food (*hold up the food items*) to help us grow as His people more into Him, that we have spiritual water (*hold up the jug of water*) so that we aren't thirsty any more (like being hungry and thirsty for righteousness! Matt 5:6), that we are cared for both physically and spiritually (*hold up the first aid kit*), that we are guided correctly and led in our lives to be more like Jesus (*hold up the compass*), that we are watched over and protected (*hold up the binoculars and shield*) both physically and spiritually, that we are owned by Him (*hold up the receipt*) when we ask Him into our hearts, that He manages us (*hold up the hat*) and maintains us so that we are living our lives for Him and not selfishly for ourselves, and that we are comforted (*hold up the blanket*) when we are in need of comfort. As the Good Shepherd, OUR Good Shepherd, these are all parts of His job for us, making sure that all things are done. We can't do them on our own any more than a sheep could do them on their own! That's why we must have a Shepherd. And what a Shepherd we have in Jesus!

Say: Jesus also goes on to say that the Good Shepherd risks and lays down His life for His sheep. *Hold up the Action Figure.* Jesus tells us that someone who has been hired to watch over sheep, but doesn't love them or own them, won't care to stick around and fight off the wolves that come to kill and eat the sheep. But, as the Good Shepherd, Jesus does love us and owns us (*hold up the receipt*) so He was willing to risk His life for us. In fact, the wolves of sin were eating the flock so much, that Jesus gave His life to save the us, stopping the wolves! Now that's some caring! *Throw the Action Figure and receipt in the box from Rampin' Up.* Say: In fact, our job as "sheep" in His flock is very simple: *Take out the paper with 1 Peter 5:7 written on it and read it.* Our job is to let go of all our cares and concerns and give them to the Good Shepherd, Jesus, whose job is to care for us! Don't do His job. You can't! Let Him, as the Shepherd, take care of you! *Throw the paper with 1 Peter 5:7 into the box.*

Say: Jesus tells us that as our Shepherd, He knows all of us as His sheep (v. 14). Wow!  Jesus knows us all personally, by name. *Hold up the page with names written on it.* What a neat thing this is. He knows us each so well—better than we know ourselves! This verse (v. 14) gives proof that we can say, "The LORD is my shepherd!" As big and awesome a God as He is, He knows you by name and cares for you as if you were His only one. *Throw page with names on it into the box.*

Say: Jesus also says that as His sheep (v. 16), we are to know and recognize Him, to know His voice as our Shepherd. How do we hear His voice? *Hold up the Bible.* We know His voice as we read it in His Word. The more we become familiar with it and know it, the more we'll recognize His voice and know when and how to follow Him! *Throw the Bible into the box.*

Say: Finally, Jesus tells us that all His sheep will be brought in as one flock in one fold (v. 16). A sheepfold is an area to keep the sheep. *Hold up the bowl with the grapes. Pull the grapes out and scatter them across the table.* Say: This won't work. All of our grapes are scattered all over the table. I'd better put them together in one place. *Pick up the grapes, putting them in the bowl.* Like this bowl with the grapes, the sheepfold is used to keep the sheep from wandering off. Romans 1:16 talks about the Jews and Gentiles all being accepted into this one sheepfold, together, under one Shepherd, no matter what their background is. *Set the bowl aside to be used in Time to Thrash.*

Say: Many of us know Jesus as our Savior, but it is time we knew Him as Shepherd and allowed Him to do His job to us and for us. We may have let Him lay down His life for us, now we have to let Him do the other jobs as a shepherd, too.



KICK RiCK Grind

- God has let it be known that those He has called, He knows by name! *Exodus 33:12, 17 and Isaiah 43:1.*

Air Time

(Present questions for discussion)



- What types of jobs does the shepherd do for the sheep?
- Was the voice on the tape the right one for the song?
- How did you know it was the wrong voice?
- What job did the action figure represent?
- How many flocks and sheepfolds does Jesus want to have?
- Read Romans 1:16. How does this refer to one sheepfold?

Character Skit: François on the “lamb”

François will need to have his chef's hat and apron, but they will be dirty and very disheveled. If possible, use make-up to create a black eye. He will be carrying a bag of ice to put on his head or jaw.

François: *walking in slowly, unsteadily as if staggering...* Oh, my. I am certainly tired. I'll just take a moment and rest here before I go any further. Whew...*wiping brow.*

Teacher: Uh, hi, François. Boy, you don't look so good. What happened to you? Is that a black eye?

François: Yes, yes, yes, a black eye...what of it? Perhaps you would care to have a matching set, no?

Teacher: No! No black eyes necessary here! No sir, I'm all good in that department. Why do you have a black eye, François? Did you get in a fight?

François: *As if in pain...* You are so nosey! Please let the World's Greatest Master of Culinary Dexterity be in peace!

Teacher: You look a long way from peace, buddy.

François: Oh, alright! I was out procuring the ingredients for my next dish, Gyros (*pronounced "yeer-oh"*). I was looking for some fresh lamb meat—

Teacher: *exaggerating...* Yeeeeer-Oh? What in the world is a Yeeeeeeer-Oh? Is that the name of the lamb, like, "Bing-O was his name O?"

François: *talking to himself...* why do I even bother conversing with an inferior mind? Gyro (*pronounced "yeer-oh"*), the dish of seasoned lamb meat and cucumber sauce wrapped in warm pita bread; it is the food of those who know how to eat!

Teacher: Ohhhhhh, you mean a gyro (*pronouncing it "jy-row"*)! Why didn't just say so? You've been saying it wrong this whole time! You had me all confused!

François: *quickly running out of patience...* It is most certainly NOT a "jy-row," but a gyro (*pronouncing it "yeer-oh"*). I should know, I've been creating them for years. Please take my word for it. At the very least, I've taken a beating in trying to get it ready.

Teacher: Oh, I forgot! So, you got beat up trying to get the lamb meat for your jy-row....

François: *steaming now...* It is not jy—oh, forget it! I was trying to get fresh meat, so I went out to the green pasture land to find a good lamb to use—

Teacher: You weren't going to the store? Oh my, no wonder you got beat up!

François: Huh? Well, I found the perfect lamb to use and when I went to get it, out of nowhere the shepherd comes and gives me a beating with his staff I'll never forget! *Gently touching his side and his eye to demonstrate the tenderness of those spots.*

Teacher: François, don't you know that the shepherd does everything for his sheep? He makes sure they have good grass to eat, good water to drink, watches over them, guards them, protects them...well, I guess you found out all about the protection of a shepherd, huh?

François: I've never seen anything like it. This shepherd person was feeding some other sheep and just ran up at me as I tried to take it away. He saw everything going on and risked his own life to protect that lamb. He had me running away in pain and without the lamb meat!

Teacher: That's wonderful!

François: You are sick...what do you mean that is wonderful? You like to see François get beaten like that?

Teacher: Well...no, of course not! What is wonderful is the way the shepherd will do whatever it takes to keep his sheep safe and secure. You know, Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He acts just like that shepherd did. He will come in and beat the tar out of the devil in order to protect you. Just like that shepherd was feeding those other sheep, He makes sure we are well fed with His Word. So what are you going to do about the jy-rows?

François: I have never created a jy-row. As far as my gyros (*pronounced yeer-oh*) go, I am going to wait until I get some lamb meat safely. It is not worth messing with the shepherd. *Exits slowly, staggering and clutching the ice on his jaw.*

Time to **THRASH**

1st to 3rd and 4th to 6th Activities

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Select one child to stand in the middle of the room. Put a blindfold on the child so he/she cannot see. Direct the other children to quietly walk to another place in the room. One by one, have the children say the name of the child in the middle of the room. After each child says the name, the child in the middle of the room must guess who said his/her name. The goal is for the child in the middle of the room to guess each person solely by hearing his/her voice. Allow each child to have a turn in the middle of the room as time permits.

When finished say: Just like you knew each person by only hearing their voice, sheep know the shepherd's voice and will not follow another person's voice. We, as Jesus' sheep, must know His voice, and only listen to and follow Him.

Like Sheep Among Wolves....

Place a row of food items in the middle of the room. Separate the children into two groups. One group is the sheep. The other group is the wolves. Have the sheep stand against one wall and the wolves against the other wall. Each respective wall is "base." Select one child to be the shepherd and give him/her a soft ball. Say: In order to live, the sheep must get the food items from the middle of the room and return them to their home base. Wolves, you want to catch the sheep, but the shepherd is guarding them. Shepherd, you are to protect your sheep from the wolves by throwing the ball at them. If the shepherd hits a wolf with the ball, that wolf is out of the game and must sit down. Sheep, if you are tapped by a wolf, you are out of the game and must sit down. Both the wolves and the sheep are safe when touching their home base wall. Once you leave the wall, however, you may be caught.

Play the game as time permits. Select different children to be the shepherd, sheep, and wolves.

Say: Just like the shepherd protected the sheep here, so Jesus cares for, protects, and saves us from anything that would harm us and lead us away from Him.

1st to 3rd Activities

4th to 6th Activities

99 + 1 = 1 flock

Take a handful of small beads and toss them around the room. Make sure you know how many beads you had originally. Secretly keep one bead in your hand or pocket. Place the bowl from Lesson Launch on the table. Say: My beads are scattered all around the room. I need you to act like a shepherd and bring them back to me and put them in my sheepfold – the bowl.

Casting Off

Give each child a pencil and a piece of paper. Direct the children to think about things they worry about. Examples may include grades, food, family problems, money, etc. After the children finish, allow them to share what they have written down if they wish.

Say: How many of you are tired of holding onto these cares and concerns? Do you remember the

Tell the children how many beads you had originally and stress the fact that you must find them all. Allow the children to search for the beads. After the children have gathered all the beads they can find, count the beads. Say: Oh, no! There is still one bead missing! We must leave all of these beads on the table and look for the one missing bead. Allow the children to continue looking. Secretly drop the bead on the floor so a child can find it. Say: Thank you! You found my missing bead. Now all the beads are safe in my care.

Say: Just like you brought me all my beads, Jesus cares for His sheep – you – and gathers them together into one fold. Also, just like you left all the beads to look for the missing one, the Bible says, in Matthew 18:11-14, that Jesus will leave the 99 sheep just to find the one that is lost!

jobs of the shepherd? One of Jesus' main jobs as our Good Shepherd is to take our concerns from us so we don't have to worry about them. Let Him do His job!

Place a large container labeled, "Jesus," in the middle of the room. Have the children wad up their concerns and throw them "into Jesus." As they do, have them shout, "The Lord is my shepherd!"

Bring out the KIDnabber object so children may associate with it one more time.



1st to 3rd and 4th to 6th

Say: When we started earlier, Rick was so excited to find out that Jesus is his Shepherd. We've spent the rest of the time learning about all the wonderful things this means. Only, there's one problem! Have you made Jesus your Shepherd? Making Him our Shepherd is something we must choose to do. He's not our Shepherd only because we think He is, but only if we ask Him to be.

Say: Sheep in a shepherd's flock receive a mark or a tag on their ear, identifying them as members of that flock. Jesus doesn't want to put a mark or a tag in your ear, but He does want to put His mark on your heart. All the wonderful benefits of the shepherd, the Good Shepherd, can only be yours if you become a part of His flock.

Lead the children in a prayer of salvation, asking Jesus to become their Shepherd.

Say: Now, all the benefits of the Good Shepherd are yours for the taking! Truly now you can say, "The LORD is MY shepherd!"