



## David's Psalm

**Bible Passage:** Psalm 23

**Memory Verse:** <sup>6</sup>No one is like you, LORD; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. **Jeremiah 10:6**

**Bottom Line:** I believe in and love Jesus because He provides everything that I need.

**Big Picture Question:** Is anything or anyone greater than God? No, God is greater than everything.

**Christ Connection:** David compared God's love, protection, and guidance for His people to that provided by a shepherd for his sheep. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He laid down His life to save people from sin. Because of Jesus, we have hope that one day we will live with God forever.

### 10 Minutes SOCIAL: SETTING THE TONE OF THE EXPERIENCE

Stick Around Minute to Win it

**What You Need:** 4 small bowls, Fruit Loops cereal, chopsticks or skewers ( 1 per kid)

**What You Do:**

- Set out 2 bowls per team. Fill one bowl with Fruit Loops.
- Separate kids into 2 teams.
- Set your timer for 1 minute.
- Kids are going to put the chopstick or skewer in their mouth, and attempt to transfer the Fruit Loops from one dish to another using only the chopstick/skewer.
- Keep playing till everyone has a turn. (in between each player, replace the ping pong balls)
- Award points for each cereal piece moved to the other bowl.

**What You Say** "This summer we are playing a different game each time you come to small group. As we play we should get to know each other's names and see if there is a way we can learn from our Bible story as well. It's time for large group, let's clean up and get ready to see what story we have today."

### 10 Minutes Worship: CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING

SONGS, OFFERING AND PRAYER

### 15 Minutes LARGE GROUP: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS

#### CONTEXT

The Book of Psalms contains 150 psalms—poems, songs, and prayers—from a time in Israel's history spanning from Moses (about the 1400s BC) to Israel's exile to Babylon (about the 500s BC). Nearly half of the psalms are attributed to King David.

David wrote Psalm 23, one of the most well-known psalms in the Bible. David's background as a shepherd equipped him to use the imagery of a sheep and shepherd to describe the Lord's guidance and care for His people. When Samuel went to Jesse to anoint one of his sons, David was with the sheep. (1 Sam. 16:19) David's experience protecting his father's sheep gave him confidence in the Lord's ability to deliver. (1 Sam. 17:37)

David compared God's love, protection, and guidance for His people to that provided by a shepherd for his sheep. A shepherd leads his sheep to pastures where they can find food. He watches over his sheep to protect them from danger. He cares for them, lifting a fallen sheep from a pit and ensuring not one is lost.

This was David's experience of the Lord. He provided for David's needs. He led him to places of peace and rest. He guided him on the right paths. The Lord was with David, and He is with us.

Point kids to Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Jesus had compassion on the crowds who were "like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Jesus laid down His life to save



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people from sin. He assured His disciples that when He returns, He will gather His sheep from among the nations and welcome them into His kingdom. (Matt. 25:32-34) Because of Jesus, we have hope because one day we will live with God forever.

### TEACHING FOCUS (Psalm 23)

In Bible times, people wrote songs called psalms to praise God. David loved God with all his heart, and he wrote many of the psalms in the Bible. Before David was a king, he was a shepherd. He fought off lions and bears to protect the sheep. When David thought about God, he realized that God is like a shepherd. This is a psalm that David wrote about God:

"The LORD is my shepherd.  
I have everything I need.  
He lets me rest in green pastures;  
He leads me beside quiet waters.  
He gives me strength, and  
He leads me along the right paths  
for His name's sake.  
Even when I go through the darkest valley,  
I do not fear danger,  
for You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff comfort me.  
"You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Only goodness and faithful love will be with me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will live in the house of the LORD forever."

**Christ Connection:** David compared God's love, protection, and guidance for His people to that provided by a shepherd for his sheep. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He laid down His life to save people from sin. Because of Jesus, we have hope that one day we will live with God forever.

### TODAY'S TAKEAWAYS

- God loves, protects and guides Christians.
- We all need God like sheep need a shepherd.
- God gives us all things that we need.
- **BL:** I believe in and love Jesus because He provides everything I need.
- Jesus showed He is the good shepherd by teaching, healing, and laying His life down on the cross.

### 25 Minutes SMALL GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

#### Discussion Questions:

- David wrote that the Lord renews what? (*life, Ps. 23:3*)
- According to Psalm 23, why didn't David fear danger? (*God was with him, God's rod and staff comforted him; Ps. 23:4*)
- Where did David say he would live? (*in the house of the Lord, Ps. 23:6*)
- What are some ways Jesus is like a good shepherd? *Guide kids to think about the ways Jesus gives us what we need. Help kids see that Jesus provides us with protection from our greatest enemies, sin and death. Invite the kids to share ways or times that Jesus has led them to love and obey God.*
- What are some ways we are like sheep? *Discuss the idea that people are "herd" animals. We often want to follow the crowd even if the crowd is going the wrong way. Help kids understand that sheep tend to be animals that are not good at defending themselves against predators. Compare a sheep's helplessness without a shepherd to our helplessness without Jesus.*



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- How do you feel about God when you hear the words of this psalm? *Guide kids to speak openly and honestly about what they think and feel. If kids seem stuck or hesitant, offer up your own feelings about Psalm 23. Encourage kids that there are no wrong answers, and remind them that God would rather they speak honestly than pretend to love Him if they do not yet love Him.*

### **Activity: A wolf in sheep's clothing**

**What You Need:** no supplies needed

#### **What You Do:**

- Instruct kids to sit with their heads down and their eyes closed.
- Walk around the room and discreetly tap one player on the head. That player is the "Wolf"
- Guide kids to raise their heads and open their eyes.
- Instruct the players to each choose an animal—a cat, a sheep, or a chicken.
- Explain that you will name two animals.
- Any player who chose one of those animals must stand up and sit in a new seat.
- Each round, the wolf must also stand up and change seats.
- The object of the game is for kids to figure out who the wolf is.
- After several rounds of naming animals, invite volunteers to guess the identity of the wolf.
- Play additional rounds if time allows.

**What You Say** Wolves prey on animals like cats, chickens, and sheep. We heard in our Bible story today about how God is like a shepherd. David wrote a psalm to praise God. David compared God's love, protection, and guidance for His people to that provided by a shepherd for his sheep. Jesus is the Good shepherd. He laid down His life to save people from sin.

Because of Jesus, we will live with God forever. **BL: I believe in and love Jesus because He provides everything I need.**

### **Activity: Memory Verse Activity**

**What You Need:** Memory Verse Poster, Memory Verse Word Search Week 6(1 per kid), pencils

#### **What You Do:**

- Display the memory verse poster.
- Lead kids in reading aloud together.
- Then distribute copies of the word search for kids to find words of the memory verse.
- As they finish, guide them to turn over their word search and write the memory verse on the back from memory.

**What You Say** " [Allow volunteers to recite the memory verse when they are ready from memory] The kingdom of God is not like other kingdoms of earthly kings. God's kingdom lasts forever, and He always keeps His promises. Say our big picture question and answer with me: Is anything or anyone greater than God? No, God is greater than everything and everyone.



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### Pray and Dismiss:

**What You Need:** no supplies needed

### What You Say:

"Lord, You are our Shepherd. We have everything we need. You let us rest in green pastures; You lead us beside still waters. You give us strength, and You lead us along the right paths for Your name's sake. Even when we go through the darkest valley, we do not fear danger because You are with us. Your rod and Your staff comfort us. We are the sheep, and You are the Shepherd. Thank You for Your care and protection. We love You. Amen.

### 5 Minutes HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage your kids to tell their parents about our Big Picture Question. Is anything or anyone greater than God? No, God is greater than everything and everyone. **BL: I believe in and love Jesus because He provides everything I need.**