

**Teachers Dig In****Dig In to the Bible**

- Read: John 10:1-16
- In This Passage: Jesus says he is the good shepherd. Like a shepherd, he calls his sheep, and they know his voice and follow him. He seeks to give his sheep a rich and satisfying life, and he sacrifices his own life for his sheep. He knows his sheep, and his sheep know him.
- Bible Point: Jesus knows us...
- Application: ...so we get to know him.
- Summary Verse: "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3).

**Dig Deeper**

- You'll Be Teaching: *Jesus knows us*. One of the greatest cries of the human heart is to be known, understood, and loved. That goes for kids, too. Help kids take comfort in the fact that Jesus knows them, loves them, and invites them to get to know him, too.
- Think About: What's something only Jesus knows about you? How do you feel realizing that Jesus knows that?

**Dig In to Prayer**

- Pray that Jesus would open kids' hearts to get to know him more.

**Quick Tip**

- How well do you know your kids? Can you call each one by name (without looking at their nametags)? If you struggle with remembering names, ask God to help you remember the names of your kids. Practice simple tips like these to memorize kids' names:
  - When you first meet a child, use his or her name twice as you look that child right in the eye —"Madison, it's nice to meet you, Madison."
  - Use a visual cue to help you. Maybe a child resembles a cousin of yours with the same name. Maybe Christopher has a curly "C" of hair on his forehead. Don't rely on outfits since those will be different next time! (You don't need to let kids know these cues; maybe you remember Noah because he has a big nose-ah.)
  - If your church allows, take a picture of each child and make a picture directory with kids' names. Pray for them by name each night as you look at their pictures.

## This Lesson at a Glance



### OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

#### Supplies

- Bible



### CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids learn about sheep pens and sort pompom sheep.

#### Supplies

- Bible
- chairs
- pompoms (in 5 colors)

#### Easy Prep

- You'll need a pile made up of all the colors of pompoms for each group of 5. Also hide some of each color of pompom around the room.



### LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids thank Jesus for what he knows about them.



### HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids herd balloon sheep by color.

#### Supplies

- 4 pieces of construction paper (1 red, 1 yellow, 1 green, 1 blue)
- 4 inflated balloons per child (1 red, 1 yellow, 1 green, 1 blue)
- pool noodles or other hockey-stick-like supplies (1 per person)
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

#### Easy Prep

- On the floor near the middle of each wall, tape a rectangle large enough for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total number of balloons to fit in.
- On the wall near each rectangle, tape 1 of the pieces of construction paper.



### CRAFT

Kids make door hangers with their names.

#### Supplies

- white card stock
- pencils
- scissors
- fishing line
- tape
- paint stirring sticks or 12-inch dowels (1 per child)
- chenille wires
- glue
- various craft supplies such as markers, stickers, pompoms, feathers, sequins, and anything else you have in your craft supply bin

#### Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



### LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids follow their partners' voices to find them.

## Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)



## OBJECT LESSON

**Kids taste and identify ingredients in sauce.**

### Supplies

- store-bought sauce (such as barbeque sauce or salad dressing)
- toothpicks (several per child)
- small bowls (1 for every 4 kids)
- pens and paper (1 set for every 4 kids)
- whiteboard or poster board
- dry-erase markers or regular markers

### Easy Prep

- Put some sauce or salad dressing in bowls. Refer to the ingredient list on the packaging, and write 5 of the ingredients on the whiteboard or poster board. Then write several common ingredients that aren't in the sauce, as well as some silly, unexpected ingredients, such as bananas, chocolate chips, or worms.



## DEEPER BIBLE

**Kids grapple with who Satan is and how he works.**

### Supplies

- Bibles
- ball

*\*Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



### Supplies

- Bible

### Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids wave at three people they're not sitting near.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say "drippy haybath" (the letters of happy birthday mixed up).
- Collect the offering.

### Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we're going to learn that Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. He knows our names and so much more about us.**

### Share

- Tell kids something special about *your* name, such as why you were given that name or what it means.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share something special about *their* names.
- After partners have discussed, have a few kids share with the whole group.

### Summarize

Open a Bible to John 10, and say: **We just learned new things about each other's names. But Jesus already knew those things! Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. Let's get to know him by reading the Bible. We know that everything in the Bible is true and is from God, so let's take a moment to talk to God as we get started.**

Pray, praising Jesus for knowing and loving us.



## Supplies

- Bible
- chairs
- pompoms (in 5 colors)

## Easy Prep

- You'll need a pile made up of all the colors of pompoms for each group of 5. Also hide some of each color of pompom around the room.

## Create a Sheep Pen

Say: **Today we're learning that Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. In our Bible story, we'll see how Jesus talks about sheep and shepherds as an example of how he knows us.**

**You might not be that familiar with the relationship sheep and shepherds have. But you might know a little bit more about pets!**

Ask: • **Tell about your pet or a friend's pet. How can you tell the pet knows its people?**

Say: **A dog or cat can tell its own human from a stranger. And an owner can easily pick out his or her dog or cat from a group! That's kind of like how it was with shepherds and sheep. Let's act it out to help us understand.**

Have kids help you build a sheep pen by arranging chairs in a circle, leaving a small space to be the gate.

Say: **In Jesus' time, some shepherds traveled around with their sheep. When night came, they would find a sheep pen for their sheep to sleep in. But they might not be the only group of sheep in that pen. There could be a bunch of shepherds who all ended up at the same sheep pen one night.**

Have kids form groups of three to five. The child in each group that's standing closest to you will be the shepherd. The others will be the sheep. Have each group come up with a password that only their group knows. Have the shepherds lead their sheep into the pen.

Say: **After the sheep were in the pen, some of the shepherds would go find somewhere else to sleep in for the night. But one shepherd would sleep right across the entrance to the pen. That way, no wolves or thieves could get in to hurt the sheep.**

Have one shepherd lie across the entrance to the pen and the rest of the shepherds move to a corner of the room.

Say: **In the morning, when the shepherds came back, they'd call their sheep. By now, the different flocks might be all mixed together. But the shepherds knew their sheep, and the sheep knew their shepherds. They would come only if they heard the call from *their* shepherd. And shepherds would take only *their* sheep because they knew their sheep.**

Have the shepherds take turns coming to the gate and shouting their passwords from earlier. When the sheep hear their shepherd, they should get up and leave the sheep pen.

## Explore the Passage

Gather with kids outside the sheep pen. Say: **Now that we have a better understanding of how well shepherds and sheep knew each other, let's see what Jesus had to say.**

Read John 10:2-5.

Ask: • **How is this like what we just experienced?**

• **What do you think Jesus meant by saying this?**

Say: **If you're confused about what it means, you're not alone! The people who heard Jesus say this didn't know what he meant, so he explained it. We can always turn to Jesus with our questions, just like they did. That's one way we get to know Jesus. Let's see what he said.**

Read John 10:11-15.

Ask: • **Jesus described what shepherds do to protect their sheep. How is that like what Jesus does with us?**

## Sort Flocks

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. He knows us even better than a shepherd knows his sheep, and he was willing to give up his life to save ours. Let's try another experience where you can see how well you know your sheep.

Have kids form groups of five or remain in their groups from earlier if they were in groups of five. Give each group of kids a pile of pompoms. Say: **Now you're all shepherds. These pompoms are your sheep. Everyone choose a color that will be your flock, and make sure no one else in your group picks the same color.** Pause.

Read John 10:14 again. Say: **Now let's see how well you know your sheep. Choose just your sheep from the pile.** Allow time for groups to sort the pompoms into flocks.

Say: **Jesus said another thing that was kind of confusing.**

Read John 10:16.

Ask: • **What do you think this means?**

Say: **In Jesus' day, there were two main groups: the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jews were people who came from Israel and were part of what had always been God's chosen family. The Gentiles were everyone else. A lot of people thought the Jews were the *only* people God loved, so the Jews didn't like to even hang out with Gentiles. The Jews thought they were the only ones who could be God's sheep. But Jesus was saying that he was inviting everyone to be a part of his flock.**

**You have *your* sheep, but you're missing *all* the sheep of your flock! So go find some!** Have kids search around the room to find sheep of their color and add them to their flocks.

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. And we can help *other* people get to know him and bring them into Jesus' flock of sheep.

## Listen

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. One way we do that is by listening. Jesus even said that his sheep would listen to his voice. Let's do that now. You might not hear an audible voice, but maybe you hear a voice in your heart, see a picture, get a word from God, or get a feeling from God.

Turn off the lights, and have at least a full minute of silence, providing an opportunity for kids to listen to Jesus. At the end of the time, ask kids to share anything they heard from Jesus.

Say: **Sheep don't know their shepherds fully on day one. It takes time to get to know someone! If you didn't hear anything from Jesus now, that's okay. Just keep listening for his voice. The more you listen, the more you'll get to know him and recognize his voice.**

Have each child hold a pompom as you pray: **Jesus, thank you that you know us. Help us get to know you and recognize your voice. In your name, amen.**



**Thank Jesus**

Say: **Today we learned that Jesus knows us. Jesus knows everything about you...and he loves you so much. There might be some things about you that not a lot of people know, but Jesus knows.**

- Have kids think of things not many people know about them.
- Kids will pray, thanking Jesus for knowing those things about them.
- Kids can also ask Jesus to help them get to know him better.

**Wrap Up**

Pray: **Jesus, thank you that you know and love us! Help us hear your voice and get to know you better. In your name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.



### Supplies

- 4 pieces of construction paper (1 red, 1 yellow, 1 green, 1 blue)
- 4 inflated balloons per child (1 red, 1 yellow, 1 green, 1 blue)
- pool noodles or other hockey-stick-like supplies (1 per person)
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

### Easy Prep

- On the floor near the middle of each wall, tape a rectangle large enough for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total number of balloons to fit in.
- On the wall near each rectangle, tape 1 of the pieces of construction paper.

### Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

### Move Balloons With Pool Noodles

Say: **Today we're learning that Jesus knows us a lot like a shepherd knows and cares for each of his sheep. Let's play a fun game where you'll have some sheep to herd into a safe place!**

- Mix all the balloons together in the center of the room.
- Form four teams, and assign each team one of the balloon colors.
- Give each person a pool noodle.
- Teams will use the pool noodles to move their color of balloons into their pens (the rectangles taped on the floor) near the pieces of paper that match the color of the balloons.
- Teams will move their balloons into the pens as quickly as they can, trying to be the first to herd all their balloons into the correct pen.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play. You can reset the balloons and play as many rounds as time allows.

### Talk About It

Ask: • **Why was it easy or hard to herd just your sheep?**

Say: **You knew the color, an important detail of the sheep you were herding. Because you knew that, you were able to pick out your sheep from the rest. Jesus knows all the important details about us, maybe even things that almost no one else knows about us!**

Ask: • **What's something unique about you that not very many people know?** Share an example of your own, such as you're really good at math or you were born in a different country.

Say: **Jesus knows us in such a special way. Jesus cares to know even the tiniest things that make us who we are. Jesus really is our good shepherd, and we'll get to know him more and more as we spend time with him.**

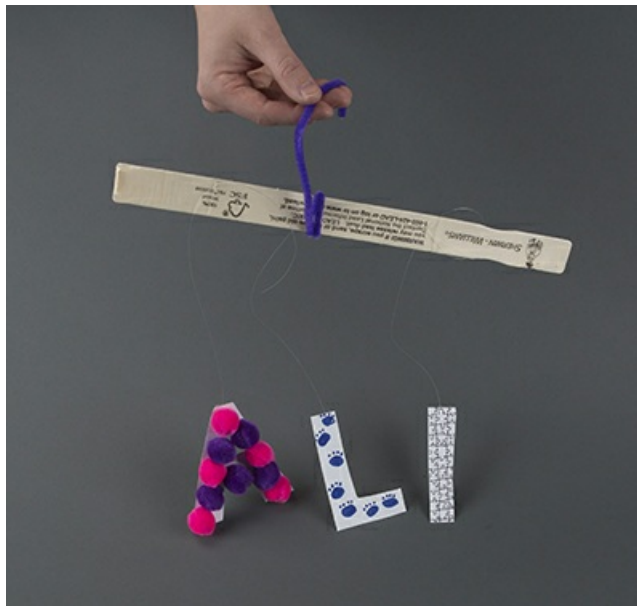


## Supplies

- white card stock
- pencils
- scissors
- fishing line
- tape
- paint stirring sticks or 12-inch dowels (1 per child)
- chenille wires
- glue
- various craft supplies such as markers, stickers, pompoms, feathers, sequins, and anything else you have in your craft supply bin

## Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



## Make Name Mobiles

Say: **Jesus knows us. Our Bible story says he calls his own sheep by name. That's us!**

Show kids the sample craft you made. Give each child a paint stirring stick or dowel. Set out the remaining supplies to share, and have kids follow these directions to make name mobiles.

- Cut out each letter of your name from card stock. (You can use pencil to draw bubble letters first!) When you line up all the letters of your name, your name needs to be less than 12 inches long, so think about that as you decide how big to make the letters.
- Tape a piece of fishing line to the back of each letter.
- Decorate the letters in fun, unique ways that represent you. For example, you can add pawprint stickers if you love dogs, draw a soccer ball pattern if you play soccer, or use feathers of your favorite color to cover a letter. Decorate each letter differently.
- When you've finished all the letters, tie the fishing line around the paint stirring stick to make a hanging mobile of your name.
- Wrap a chenille wire around the middle of the paint stirring stick, and make a hook at the top so you can hang your mobile over the top of your bedroom door.
- If you have a short name and finish early, help someone else! Just make sure you let that person direct you on what he or she wants you to decorate with.

### **Talk About It**

Ask: • **Tell about how you chose to decorate your name.**

• **How do you feel when you imagine Jesus calling your name?**

Say: Jesus knows us, and he calls us by name. He knows a lot more about us than just our names! And we can get to know him, too.

Have kids take their name mobiles home and hang them on their bedroom doors as a reminder to listen for Jesus calling their names.



## LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

### Shepherd Search

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#### Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

#### Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

#### Follow a Partner's Voice

Say: **We're learning that Jesus is our good shepherd. He knows us, watches over us, and cares about us like a shepherd cares for each of his sheep. Let's play a game of shepherds and sheep to see what all this means.**

- Form pairs. Partner with someone yourself if you have an uneven number of kids.
- Give partners time to introduce themselves if they don't already know each other and find something they have in common, such as a favorite color, what school they go to, or a favorite sports team. Once pairs find something simple they have in common, that word or short phrase will be their special call.
- For the first round, one partner will be the Shepherd and the other will be the Sheep.
- Have all the Shepherds stand along one of the walls, facing their partners.
- Have all the Sheep stand along the opposite wall, facing the wall so their backs are turned to their partners.
- Have the Shepherds shuffle so they're no longer standing across from their partners.
- At your cue, the Shepherds can start calling out the word or phrase they and their partners decided on, and the Sheep will walk backward, trying to get to their Shepherds only by listening for their voices and special calls.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play. It will help make the game more challenging as partners try to listen for each other.
- Play a second round, allowing pairs to come up with a new special call and swap roles.

#### Talk About It

Ask: • **What was hard or easy about listening for your Shepherd's voice?**

• **What would be different if you had to pick out the voice of someone you know really well, like a parent or your best friend?**

• **Who are people you could easily pick out of a crowd?** Share an example of your own, such as your mom because of her gentle voice or a friend because he or she is always joking and laughing with you.

• **How can we get to know Jesus' voice like that?**

Say: **Jesus know us better than anyone, and as we spend time with Jesus, we'll get to know him more and more so we can recognize his voice in our lives. It's good to know the voice of our good shepherd!**

**Supplies**

- store-bought sauce (such as barbeque sauce or salad dressing)
- toothpicks (several per child)
- small bowls (1 for every 4 kids)
- pens and paper (1 set for every 4 kids)
- whiteboard or poster board
- dry-erase markers or regular markers

**Easy Prep**

- Put some sauce or salad dressing in bowls. Refer to the ingredient list on the packaging, and write 5 of the ingredients on the whiteboard or poster board. Then write several common ingredients that aren't in the sauce, as well as some silly, unexpected ingredients, such as bananas, chocolate chips, or worms.

**Tip**

- Be mindful of food allergies as you select and have kids taste the sauce.

**Taste and Identify Ingredients**

Say: **It's time for a taste test!** Hold up the bottle of sauce. **Do you know what ingredients are in this sauce? Let's see if you can work together to identify five of them.**

- Form groups of four, and give each group a bowl with sauce, some toothpicks, and a pen and paper.
- Have each child dip a toothpick into the sauce to taste it.
- Have groups work together to identify and write down which ingredients listed are actually found in the sauce. Remind kids to use new toothpicks each time they taste.
- Have groups write down their guesses.
- After several minutes, go through the list and have each group call out whether they think the ingredients are in the sauce. Place tally marks beside the ingredients kids think are in the sauce.
- Finally, erase or cross out the false ingredients to reveal the five ingredients from the sauce.

**Talk About It**

Ask: • **Did any of the ingredients surprise you? Which ones?**

• **How did you rule out ingredients you thought weren't in the sauce?**

Say: **You may have been familiar with the sauce because you've eaten it on your food hundreds of times. It's still hard to identify individual flavors. But I'm pretty sure the chef who designed this recipe knows each and every part. Our Bible story isn't about chefs and recipes, but it does call Jesus a good shepherd. Like a chef knows each ingredient, a good shepherd knows everything about his or her sheep.**

Ask: • **How does it help you to know that Jesus knows everything about you, even the things that are often overlooked by others?**

Say: **Jesus knows us. He made us and loves us so much. And we can get to know him more, too! Psalm 34:8 says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him." We taste Jesus' goodness when we stay close to him and follow him.**



## Who Is the Thief, and What Could He Steal From Me?

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### Supplies

- Bibles
- ball

### Tip

- This topic may inspire kids to ask many more questions. It's okay not to answer all the questions that arise. Stick to the lesson and redirect kids to avoid focusing on spiritual warfare stories.

### Play a Sneaky Game

Say: **In today's Bible story, Jesus tells us that he's a good shepherd who knows us. But he also warns us about a thief.**

Read John 10:10.

Say: **Let's play a game to see how good you are at catching a thief.**

Have kids line up along the wall. Choose one child to stand several feet away from the wall with his or her back to the group. That child will be the Catcher.

Place a ball about 1 foot behind the Catcher.

Say: **The Catcher's job is to keep everyone else from stealing the ball. The Catcher will have to listen carefully for thieves. If the Catcher turns around and everyone is still touching the wall, his or her turn is over. However, if the Catcher turns around and someone is sneaking toward the ball, that person is out. Everyone else, your goal is to steal the ball and get back to the wall without the Catcher catching you.**

Play several rounds, allowing time for different kids to be the Catcher.

Ask: • **When you were the Catcher, what was your strategy to catch the thieves?**

Say: **Jesus warned us that there is a thief out to kill, steal, and destroy. So who is that thief, and what do we have that he wants to steal? Let's dig in to that.**

### Dig Deeper

Have kids form two groups. Assign each group one of the following passages. Explain that each of these passages addresses a different earthly king, but people who study the Bible believe that the verses are actually talking about Satan and that the evil kings mentioned got their spiritual power from Satan. Also be ready to help define difficult words in these passages. Even the NLT, a very kid-friendly version, mentions some difficult words!

- Isaiah 14:12-15 (the words "shining star" in this passage are the name Lucifer, another name for Satan)
- Ezekiel 28:13-16

(Note: We used [Christianity Today](#) and [billygraham.org](#) as sources for the background on these passages.)

After kids read their verses, ask them to share what the verses tell us about where Satan came from and who he is.

Say: **The Bible doesn't have a fully written story of exactly where Satan came from. But by looking at clues throughout the Bible, we can find out more about who he is. From these verses, we can tell that Satan was once a mighty angel but was kicked out of heaven because of his pride. The Bible also tells us how Satan works in the world.**

Read 1 Peter 5:8.

Say: **The Bible tells us that Satan is someone we should be aware of and watch out for. But what does Satan want to steal from us? Let's see.**

Have kids form four groups, and assign each group one of the following passages. Each group will come up with a pose that shows what Jesus gives us that Satan may want to steal from us.

- John 14:27 (peace)
- John 15:11 (joy)

- Hebrews 6:19 (hope)
- Hebrews 10:35 (confidence/trust)

After groups read, have them show their poses to everyone and share what Satan wants to steal.

Have each group answer this question, sharing its answer with the whole group.

Ask: • **What is the opposite of the words you just shared?**

Say: **Satan tries to steal good things from us and give us those opposites instead. He wants to give us worry instead of peace and sadness instead of joy.**

Ask: • **How does it feel to hear all these things about Satan?**

Say: **It can be scary to think about Satan having power and wanting to steal our peace, joy, hope, and confidence. But here's something important to remember: Satan is not another god. His power is nowhere close to God's! In fact, Jesus gave his own disciples, who were regular people, more power than Satan has.**

Have a child read Luke 10:18-20.

Ask: • **What does it tell you when you hear that Jesus gave his followers more power than Satan?**

Say: **God gave us power over Satan, too.**

Have a child read Ephesians 6:13-17.

Ask: • **How would you feel wearing this amazing armor of God's?**

Say: **When we arm ourselves with God's truth, righteousness, peace, and, most important, salvation through Jesus, we have the power to fight Satan. When Satan tries to steal from us, we can tell him *no* because we have Jesus' power on our side! Jesus knows us, and when we get to know him, we have his power!**

**I'm going to close this time with a verse that gives us victory over Satan. As I read it, pose like you're going into battle.**

Read Romans 16:20. Have kids pose for a few seconds and then stomp their feet victoriously.