

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

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers act out the Bible story and sing a song.

Supplies

- Bible

Easy Prep

- Using classroom furniture and/or supplies such as bulletin board paper, make a wall that separates a small part of your room from a larger part of your room. The small part should be large enough for all the kids to fit in. The large part should be large enough for kids to spread out and roam. Make a small “gate” that kids can crawl through in this wall.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers receive an affirmation and pray.



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers change their voices with homemade kazoos.

Supplies

- short cardboard tubes (1 per child)
- wax paper (one 5x5-inch square per child)
- rubber bands (1 per child)
- stickers (optional)



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers use plates to fan balloon “sheep” to a destination.

Supplies

- 2 pieces of construction paper in different colors
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match 1 of the colors of construction paper
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match the other color of construction paper
- small dessert-size paper plates
- painter’s tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- On the floor at opposite ends of the room, tape rectangles large enough for $\frac{1}{2}$ the total number of balloons to fit in.
- On the wall near each rectangle, tape 1 of the pieces of construction paper to indicate which color balloon should go in which rectangle.
- Place balloons in the center of the room with the colors mixed together.



PRESCHOOL PUPPET SKIT

Recommended for preschoolers.

Supplies

Easy Prep

- Theophilus the FaithRetriever™ Puppet (order [here](#))
- notepad
- pencil

- Attach the notepad to Theo's left paw. Attach the pencil to Theo's right paw.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers play a version of Memory.

Supplies

- index cards (1 per person)
- markers or pens (1 per adult or teen helper)
- stickers (optional)



CRAFT

Preschoolers make sheep on leashes.

Supplies

- disposable bowls (1 per child)
- glue sticks
- black paper
- white hole-reinforcement stickers (2 per child)
- cotton balls (about 25 per child)
- hole punch
- yarn
- scissors

Easy Prep

- Cut out a black oval for each child. Ours were about 2x2½ inches.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.

**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 preschoolers make a silly animal noise at two different friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers sing “Happy Birthday” with their lips tucked over their teeth.
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’ll learn that Jesus knows us! He knows everything about us—even our names. Jesus even knew what our parents would name us before we were born!**

Share

- Share something about *your* name with preschoolers. You might share why your parents named you what they did, what your name means, or a reason you like your name.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share something about *their* names. They can share their full names, tell something their parents have told them about their names, such as other names their parents were thinking of, or what their parents call them for a nickname.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **Each of your names is special, and Jesus knows your name—he knows everything about you! Jesus is your good friend, and he loves knowing all about you! When we’re friends with Jesus, we can get to know him, too.**

Pray, thanking Jesus that he knows each of the children.



Supplies

- Bible

Easy Prep

- Using classroom furniture and/or supplies such as bulletin board paper, make a wall that separates a small part of your room from a larger part of your room. The small part should be large enough for all the kids to fit in. The large part should be large enough for kids to spread out and roam. Make a small “gate” that kids can crawl through in this wall.

Tip

- If you don’t know the song “Five Little Ducks,” do a quick internet search to find a YouTube video or similar service that demonstrates the tune.

Act It Out

Have kids gather on the side of your makeshift wall that’s smaller. Say: **Today we’ll learn that Jesus knows us, and we can get to know him.** Show the Bible. Say: **In the Bible, Jesus tells a story to help his friends understand this. Jesus tells about sheep inside a pen. Let’s pretend we’re sheep.** Have kids get in a crawling position, and encourage them to say “baa” like sheep.

Say: **Jesus called himself the gate. He said, “Those who come in through me will be saved.” Jesus wasn’t saying he’s really the door you use to walk through a fence. He was telling a story to help his friends understand that he helps people be friends with God. Jesus makes it so we can live in heaven forever with God! That’s what Jesus means when he calls himself a gate. Let’s crawl through our gate now, pretending we’re sheep entering God’s special land.** Lead kids to crawl through the makeshift gate.

Say: **Jesus loves us so much, and he wants to be friends with us! He invites us to live with him forever in heaven. In the Bible he told a story about sheep to help his friends understand. He called himself a shepherd—that’s someone who takes care of sheep—and he said his sheep can run and play on his land and they’d be safe.** Lead kids to pretend to run and play like sheep by crawling around the room and making “baa” sounds. Have kids stop in place when they’re all spread out.

Say: **Jesus also said he knows his sheep very well. He said he knows their names—like he knows your names. Jesus said his sheep come to him when he calls their names because they know him, too.** Call each child’s name, and have him or her come to you.

Say: **Jesus said he’s like a shepherd who leads his sheep to good places. He said they won’t follow a stranger. They’ll follow only him because they know his voice.** Lead the children around the room once, having them still pretend to be sheep on their hands and knees.

Say: **We’re like Jesus’ sheep, and Jesus said he won’t let his sheep get hurt. If someone tries to hurt them, he’ll gather his sheep together.** Gather all the children close around you, pretending to keep them safe from a scary wolf.

Say: **We’re like Jesus’ sheep. Jesus knows everything about us. He loves us and always takes care of us. Jesus knows when you’re awake and when you’re asleep. He knows when you’re sad and when you’re happy. He knows how you feel when you’re scared and every thought in your head. Think of your favorite color right now.** Pause, and then invite kids to share what they were thinking. **Jesus knew the color you were thinking before you said it to us! And we can get to know him, too, when we spend time with him!**

Sing a Song

Have kids get in circles of five, each with an adult or teen helper. Say: **Let’s sing a song about sheep to remind us that Jesus will always look for us.** Lead kids in singing the following song to the tune of “Five Little Ducks.” Have kids walk in a circle around the helper as they sing. Each time one little sheep doesn’t come back in the song, the helper will touch one child’s shoulder, and that child will step away from the circle

and sit down. On the last round, all five of the kids will jump up when the song says all five sheep come back.

**Five little sheep went out one day,
Over the hill and far away.
The shepherd called, "Sheep, sheep, sheep!"
But only four little sheep came back.**

**Four little sheep went out one day,
Over the hill and far away.
The shepherd called, "Sheep, sheep, sheep!"
But only three little sheep came back.**

**Three little sheep went out one day,
Over the hill and far away.
The shepherd called, "Sheep, sheep, sheep!"
But only two little sheep came back.**

**Two little sheep went out one day,
Over the hill and far away.
The shepherd called, "Sheep, sheep, sheep!"
But only one little sheep came back.**

**One little sheep went out one day,
Over the hill and far away.
The shepherd called, "Sheep, sheep, sheep!"
But none of the five little sheep came back.**

**The sad shepherd went out one day,
Over the hill and far away.
The sad shepherd called, "Sheep, sheep, sheep!"
And all of the five little sheep came back!**

Repeat, as time allows.

Say: **Like the shepherd in our song, Jesus knows us and will always look for us so we can stay close to him. He loves us so much. And when we spend time with him, we get to know him even more!**

Share something *you'd* like to know about Jesus.

Ask: • **What's something *you* want to know about Jesus?**

Say: **Jesus knows us, and he loves for us to know him, too. He's our friend, and he'll always be there for us!**



Call the Sheep

Be Called by Name

Have kids spread out around the room, while you stand in the center. If you have more than 10 kids, create the same setup, but in small groups with your adult and teen helpers. Say: **Today we found out that Jesus knows us and we can get to know him. He knows everything about us, and he wants us to be close to him. He wants to be the best of friends with each of you! That's why he calls our names, like we learned about in the Bible.**

Call one child's name and tell him or her, "Jesus knows you," and then invite the child to join you in the center of the room. If you're having adult and teen helpers lead small groups, have them do the same thing with one child in each of their groups. Continue this process until all the children have joined you or their small-group leader in a huddle.

Pray

Say: **Jesus knows and loves each of you. Let's thank Jesus that he wants to know us, and let's ask him to help us get to know him even better, too.** Lead kids in a short prayer.

Say: **Jesus is the best of friends! This week, remember Jesus is always with you and he knows you. Please come join all your friends back here at church next week.**



OBJECT LESSON

Voice Change

[10 min]

Supplies

- short cardboard tubes (1 per child)
- wax paper (one 5x5-inch square per child)
- rubber bands (1 per child)
- stickers (optional)



Make Kazoos

Say: **We learned in the Bible story today that sheep know what their shepherd's voice sounds like. May I hear what your sheep voices sound like?** Have kids "baa" like sheep. **Thank you! Let's make something that'll make our voices sound different. I'll show you how!**

- Give each child a cardboard tube and a square of wax paper. Give adult or teen helpers rubber bands.
- Show kids how to set the cardboard tube upright on the table and then cover the top with wax paper.
- Have kids fold down and hold the wax paper to the sides of the tube while they wait for you or an adult or teen helper to secure the wax paper by wrapping a rubber band around the top of the tube.

Use the Kazoos

Say: **Now let's "baa" like sheep into our kazoos!**

- Demonstrate first, using your full voice to "baa" into the open end of the tube. The vibrations through the wax paper will change the sound of your voice.
- Have kids "baa" into their tubes. Say: **Wow! You sound different!**
- Give each child a turn to "baa" while the other kids listen and hear their different voices.
- Prompt kids to say different words into their kazoos, including the Bible point, Jesus knows us.
- If time allows, invite kids to decorate their kazoos with stickers.

Talk About It

Say: **Our kazoos made our voices change. Even though your voice sounded different, Jesus still knows who you are. Jesus knows us. Sometimes it's fun to pretend to be different. We can change our voices or comb our hair differently or wear costumes. But Jesus still recognizes us because he knows us so well. We can't trick him!** Talk into your kazoo as you say: Jesus knows us and loves us so much! Invite kids to repeat the Bible point into their kazoos, and then put the kazoos in a safe place so kids can take them home.



Supplies

- 2 pieces of construction paper in different colors
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match 1 of the colors of construction paper
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match the other color of construction paper
- small dessert-size paper plates
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- On the floor at opposite ends of the room, tape rectangles large enough for $\frac{1}{2}$ the total number of balloons to fit in.
- On the wall near each rectangle, tape 1 of the pieces of construction paper to indicate which color balloon should go in which rectangle.
- Place balloons in the center of the room with the colors mixed together.

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](#).

Fan Plates to Move Balloons

Say: **Today our Bible story is about how Jesus knows us the way a good shepherd knows his sheep. Shepherds watch over their sheep and take care of them. The shepherd knows each sheep, and the sheep listen to their shepherd because they know he cares about them. Let's play a game where you'll be shepherds trying to get your sheep into a pen—a place where they'll be safe!**

- Divide into two roughly equal teams, and give everyone a paper plate.
- Assign a balloon color to each team. Kids on a team will fan paper plates to move balloons of their assigned color into the pen (the rectangle taped on the floor) near the piece of paper that matches the color of the balloons.
- Teams will move their balloons into the pens as quickly as they can.
- 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: • **What was fun about taking care of your balloon sheep?**

• **What made it hard to get *all* your sheep in the pen?**

Say: **The sheep didn't always go the direction you wanted them to, and that made it hard to round them up! But you didn't leave any behind because you knew which sheep belonged to you. Like shepherds watch over their sheep, it's good to have someone watching over you who knows and cares about you.**

Tell about someone who's watched over *you* in your life and knows you well.

Ask: • **Who are people who know *you* and watch over you?** Preschoolers will likely share about their family members, teachers, or good friends.

Say: **It's great to have those people watching over us, but we have another friend who does that—Jesus! Jesus knows us and cares to watch over each one of us all the time. Jesus is our good shepherd! As we follow Jesus, we'll get to know him better, too.**



Supplies

- Theophilus the FaithRetriever™ Puppet (order [here](#))
- notepad
- pencil

Easy Prep

- Attach the notepad to Theo's left paw. Attach the pencil to Theo's right paw.

Tip

- Before printing, turn on page numbering in Word to keep the pages in order (or simply hand-number each page after printing). You may also find it helpful to highlight your part and set the script on a music stand nearby during the skit.

Leader: **It's time for our puppy friend, Theo, to come for a visit. Let's call him to our class with a "woof, woof." Ready?** *(Leads kids to bark until Theo is brought into view.)*

Theo: **It's good to see you!** *(Pants.) I really, really want a good scratch. Friends, will you scratch my back?* *(Circulates among kids so each child can pet him.)*

Leader: **Thanks for giving a friendly welcome to Theo, kids!**

Theo: *(Looks to kids.) You sure are good friends! And I want to know more about you!* *(Holds up his notepad and pencil.) That's why I brought my notebook and pencil—so I can write and remember all I can about you!*

Leader: **I bet the preschoolers would love to share about themselves, Theo. What do you want to know?**

Theo: *(Looks down at his notepad.) Um...I think I want to know your favorite color!* *(Looks to kids, and invites each child to share. Theo pretends to record kids' answers, and he comments on them.)*

Leader: **What's your favorite color, Theo? We want to know you more, too!**

Theo: **You want to know me, too?!** *(Hops excitedly.) I love being friends with all of you.*

Leader: **Do you know who else wants to know you—and does know you really well?**

Theo: *(Thinks for three seconds.) Um...(Names one child in the class.)*

Leader: **He [or she] does!** *(Looks to the named child.) Don't you love Theo? (Pauses.) But today we're learning that Jesus knows us!*

Theo: **Cool! Does he know my favorite color?**

Leader: **He does, even if you don't say it out loud. Jesus knows every part of you!**

Theo: **Wow! How does he know something if I didn't even say it out loud?** *(Pauses.) Oh, I know—he probably saw me earlier today.*

Leader: **Jesus sees you all the time, and he knows every part of you because he made you! And he loves you so much, too!**

Theo: ***Jesus is a good friend! And I want to be a good friend like him, so that's why I want to know more about all of you!***

Leader: **Okay, let's continue—but you never told us your favorite color, Theo.**

Theo: ***Oh! I like red and blue...and yellow...and I love all the colors except green. (Shakes his head.) I don't like green.***

Leader: **Okay. What's your next question, Theo?**

Theo: *(Looks to kids.) I want to know your favorite animal. (Looks to kids, and invites each child to share. Theo pretends to record kids' answers, and he comments on them.) My favorite animal is a dog, of course. And I like caterpillars, too, but those are bugs!*

Leader: *(Chuckles.) That's right, Theo.*

Theo: *(Looks to notebook.) Next I want to know where you want to play more—inside or outside? (Looks to kids, and invites each child to share and explain what they like to play. Theo pretends to record kids' answers, and he comments on them.) I like to play outside! I love to run in the grass!*

Leader: *(Tells whether he or she prefers to be inside or outside.)*

Theo: *(Records the leader's response.) Good. I also want to know what your favorite food is. (Looks to kids, and invites each child to share. Theo pretends to record kids' answers, and he comments on them.) Mine is probably Nutter Butter cookies. (Rubs his tummy.) Yum!*

Leader: **I think some of us knew that one! We've heard you share about Nutter Butters so many times. (Chuckles.)**

Theo: ***They're just so good! (Looks to kids.) What other things can you tell me about yourself so I know you even more? (Encourages kids to share, as time allows. He might ask kids about their families, what they like to do best on the playground, if they'd rather play in snow or water, or who their best friends are.)***

Leader: **It's been great getting to know you all today! That was a great idea, especially when we're learning that Jesus knows us. Jesus likes when we're friends with one another and we know each other, too. And we can get to know him!**

Theo: ***How do we do that? Do you know Jesus' favorite food?***

Leader: **I can't say I do. But I do know we can get to know Jesus when we read about him in the Bible and when we talk with him in prayer.**

Theo: ***Okay! Can we get to know Jesus right now by praying?***

Leader: **We'd love to! Let's talk with Jesus right now. (Leads kids in a short prayer.)**

Theo: ***I feel like I know Jesus better already.***

Leader: **Oh yeah, what did you learn about Jesus while I prayed?**

Theo: ***I remembered that Jesus is the best at loving us and he's a very good friend.***

Leader: **That's right!**

Theo: *I think I'm going to go tell my mom what I learned about Jesus today.*

Leader: **That sounds like a nice idea, Theo! Let's all give Theo a "woof, woof, goodbye"!** (*Leads kids in a "woof, woof, goodbye," and then places Theo out of sight.*)



Supplies

- index cards (1 per person)
- markers or pens (1 per adult or teen helper)
- stickers (optional)

Tip

- For younger preschoolers, you may let each child choose a sticker to go along with his or her name to help the child identify which card is his or hers.

Play a Memory Game

Say: **We're learning today that Jesus knows us. That means Jesus knows every little thing that makes you—including your name! Let's play a fun game about how Jesus knows and remembers all of us.**

- Divide into roughly equal groups by the number of adult or teen helpers you have, so each group has a helper who can read and write.
- Have groups sit in circles.
- Give each group the number of index cards they need, and give the adult or teen helper a marker.
- Have the helpers write each child's name on an index card. If there are children with the same name, the helper can write the initial of the kids' last names to differentiate.
- After everyone's name has been written on a card, the helper can shuffle all the cards and then lay them out facedown in the center of the circle.
- Starting with the child to the right of the helper, everyone can take a turn flipping over a card, and the helper will read the name aloud.
- If the card that was turned over isn't the name of the person who turned it over, then the card can be turned facedown again and the next person in the circle will take a turn.
- The goal is for everyone to turn over the card with his or her own name, so kids will need to pay attention as other kids turn cards over in case the cards with their names are turned..
- Helpers can shuffle the cards and play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Why was it hard or easy to keep track of the card with your name?**

Say: **When all the cards were facedown, they all looked alike, but we knew each one was special and different because each one had one of our names on it. Each of you is special and different to Jesus because he knows all the things that make you the only you there is. Jesus knows / like** [share an example of something you like to do that maybe not everyone knows about, such as taking pictures of birds] **and that I care a lot about** [tell about something or someone you care deeply about and why].

Ask: • **What people or things do you really care about?** Preschoolers might talk about family members, friends, pets, stuffed animals, or other favorite keepsakes such as blankets or books.

Say: **Jesus knows us, and that means he knows way more than just our names. Jesus knows about the things we like, the things or the people we care about, and so much more! Jesus is a wonderful friend because he knows us so well. We can get to know our friend Jesus better when we talk with him in our prayers, when we read the Bible, and when we learn more about him at church!**



CRAFT

Sheep on a Leash

[20 min]

Supplies

- disposable bowls (1 per child)
- glue sticks
- black paper
- white hole-reinforcement stickers (2 per child)
- cotton balls (about 25 per child)
- hole punch
- yarn
- scissors

Easy Prep

- Cut out a black oval for each child. Ours were about 2x2½ inches.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Talk About It

Say: **In our Bible story, we learned that Jesus is like a shepherd. We found out that Jesus knows us, and we can get to know him, too. In the Bible, Jesus told a story about sheep to help his friends understand how much he knows and loves them—and us, too! He said his sheep follow him and know his voice. Jesus meant that he protects us and shows us how to make good choices. And he knows us so well that he knows what’s the very best for us!**

Show the craft to kids. Say: **Let’s make sheep that will follow us to help us remember that Jesus is our shepherd.**

Make a Sheep on a Leash

- Give each child a bowl and a black oval.
- Kids can add eyes by placing two reinforcement stickers on their black ovals.
- Have each child turn his or her bowl upside down and glue the oval to the side.
- Kids can cover their bowls in glue and then stick cotton balls on to make sheep. As kids work, go around and use a hole punch to make a hole right under the face of the sheep.
- As kids finish, help them each tie a piece of yarn through the hole. The yarn should be long enough that kids can lead their sheep by it as a leash.

Lead the Sheep

Say: **Your sheep look great! Do your sheep follow you like Jesus said his sheep follow him, the shepherd?** Allow time for preschoolers to practice leading their sheep.

Say: **Jesus says he's the shepherd and we're the sheep because it helps us understand that Jesus knows us, protects us, cares for us, and loves us! And we can get to know him and learn from him, too!**

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