

3-6 | June 14

Bible Story: The Story of the Lost Sheep • *Luke 15:1-7 (Supporting: 1 Timothy 1:15)*

Bottom Line: Jesus made a way for you to be part of God's kingdom.

Conversation Starter: What is the way to God's kingdom?

Monthly Memory Verse: *"May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven."* • Matthew 6:10 NIV

1. Opening Activity

What You Need:

- Offering container
- Party hats
- Cotton balls

What You Do:

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Give each kid a party hat.
- Explain that they need to wear their party hat over their eyes so they can only look through the small hole at the end to see.
- Scatter a few cotton ball "sheep" on a table or on the floor.
- Challenge them to find all the "sheep" while looking only through the tiny hole in the party hat. It will be surprisingly difficult and disorienting.
- Let them try for a minute, then allow the kids to take the hats off and easily find the sheep.

What You Say:

"That was pretty tough, right? When you're only looking through a tiny hole, you can miss a lot of what's right in front of you. It's easy to get a limited perspective. In our Bible Story today, some people had a very limited perspective about who belonged in God's kingdom. But Jesus told them a story called a parable to show them they were missing the big picture. Let's go hear it."

2. Video on Jellyfin

Lead the children in worship to one song and then watch today's video lesson.

3. Prayer

"Let's open up today in prayer. Dear God, thank You for being like a good shepherd who came after us. Thank You for searching for us and celebrating when we are found. We are so happy that Jesus made a way for us to be part of God's kingdom. We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

4. One Found Sheep Craft

What You Need:

- “One Sheep” Activity Page
- Cardstock paper
- Cotton balls
- Glue sticks

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print the “One Sheep” Activity Page, one per child. Have each child write his/her name on their paper.

During the Activity:

- Give each child their own sheep page, a glue stick, and several cotton balls.
- Point to the sheep and say, “This is the one sheep from our story!”
- Tell them to rub glue inside the sheep’s body.
- Then press cotton balls onto the sheep to make it soft and fluffy.
- Encourage them to fill their whole sheep with cotton balls.
- As they work, remind them that this sheep is very special and important.

After the Activity:

- Let kids admire their fluffy sheep and connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity:

“Today we heard a story about a shepherd and his sheep. One sheep wandered away and got lost—but the shepherd went looking for it!”

During the Activity:

“This sheep is the one that was lost. Let’s make it soft and fluffy with cotton balls! (Demonstrate.) The shepherd didn’t forget about this one sheep—he went out to find it because it was so important to him. (Pause.) Just like each of you is important!”

After the Activity:

“Your sheep look amazing—so soft and fluffy! In our story, the shepherd went out to find the one lost sheep, and when he found it, he was SO happy! That’s how much God loves you. You are never forgotten. You are so important to Him!”

“You had a problem called sin that separated you from God, like the sheep that wandered away. But Jesus loves you so much—He came to find you, to save you, and bring you back to God. And He is so happy when you are with Him!

Who made a way for you to be part of God’s kingdom? [Bottom Line] Jesus made a way for you to be part of God’s kingdom.”

5. Corral the Sheep

What You Need:

- Bible marked at Luke 15:1-7
- Floor tape
- Pool noodles
- Utility knife
- White, latex-free balloons

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Make a square “pen” with floor tape on the floor in one corner of your room.
- Separate the kids into four groups or less depending on how many kids you have.
- Cut pool noodles in half, one half per group.
- Inflate balloons and tie a knot, one per group.

During the Activity:

- Open the Bible to Luke 15:1-7 and read the Bible Story out loud to the group.
 - Share these key points from the Bible Story:
 - “There were some mean people who thought Jesus should only spend time with people who always made good choices.”
 - “Jesus wanted to teach something about God, so He told them a story.”
 - “The story was about a shepherd who had 100 sheep, but one got lost!”
 - “The shepherd left the 99 and looked and looked for his lost sheep.”
 - “When he found it, he brought it home and was so happy!”
- Share that today the kids are going to be shepherds!
- Give each group a balloon.
- Explain that the balloons are their sheep!
- Give the first kid in each group a pool noodle. Explain that the pool noodles are their shepherd’s staffs.
- Explain that the goal of the game is to corral the sheep into the square floor tape pen.

- Say to the kids: “Oh no, our sheep have wandered away! We need to work together like good shepherds to get all the sheep back into their pen. You can only use your pool noodles to gently guide them.”
- The kids will take turns gently pushing the noodles to herd all the balloon sheep into the “pen.” The first kid will push the balloon to the pen then pick up the balloon and bring it along with the pool noodle, back to the next child in line.
- Cheer them on as they cooperate.
- Continue until each child has had a turn.

What You Say:

“Great job, shepherds! You worked together to get all the sheep safely back into the pen.

“In the story Jesus told, the shepherd had 100 sheep, but he noticed one was missing. This shepherd could have just decided to leave the lost sheep on its own. After all, he had 99 other sheep, right? But the shepherd loved every one of his sheep. That means he cared deeply for the one lost sheep. So the shepherd went out into the wild and searched far and wide until, at last, he found it! That one sheep was so important to him that he left all the others to go find it.

“When the shepherd found the lost sheep, he was so delighted to have that one lost sheep back home that he couldn’t contain his joy. He put the sheep joyfully on his shoulders, carried the sheep home, and invited the whole neighborhood to come celebrate with him! Jesus said: *‘I tell you, it will be the same in heaven. There will be great joy when one sinner turns away from sin. Yes, there will be more joy than for 99 godly people who do not need to turn away from their sins’* (Luke 15:7 NIV).

“This story that Jesus told shows how God feels about each one of us. We each had a problem with sin, and that sin kept us away from God. We needed a way back to God, because we couldn’t find our way home. Sin was keeping us from being close to God. So Jesus paid for our sin and made a way for all of us to come back home to Him and be God’s forever friend!

“Jesus made a way for us to come home to God! And when we come home to God, we join His kingdom! **[Bottom Line] Jesus made a way for you to be part of God’s kingdom.**”