

God is My Shepherd!

4-Week Daily Devotional *with* Activities



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Getting Started

You will never have someone care for you better than God does.

The Bible shows you how God cares for you by using the picture of a shepherd. You might not know much about shepherds and sheep right now. That's ok! You will when you're done with this book! You will learn to trust your good shepherd. He enjoys caring for you!

Getting to know God isn't hard, but it does take time – just like with other people.

Each day you will see **verses from the Bible** written out.

They will be beside this picture



These are God's words to you. They will help you know him better.

God's words are always true. You can believe them.

You will also find **activities** in this booklet. They will help you understand the truths.

This picture



will show you where they are.

At the end of each day, there is a final activity. **It will help you think about God, talk to him or listen to him.** This is the time you can grow to know your good shepherd, God, better.

You will see the



picture there.

Plan a time every day to spend with your shepherd, God.

It might become your **favorite** time of the day!

Ready to find out how God is your shepherd?

Let's get going!

WEEK 1

I Am God's Sheep

- DAY 1** How do I know if God is my shepherd?
- DAY 2** What is a shepherd like?
- DAY 3** What are sheep like?
- DAY 4** David, A Man After God's Heart
- DAY 5** David's Heart Loved God
- DAY 6** David's Heart Loved God
- DAY 7** Activity

Sheep are not smart. But they always know one person. It is their shepherd.

Sheep trust their shepherd. At night they enter the door of their pen that the shepherd opens for them.

**ACTIVITY**

A pen is a piece of land with a fence around it.

Draw a picture of a sheep pen with a shepherd at its gate.



Only the sheep that belong to the shepherd at the gate (door) can go into the pen.

When Jesus was on earth, he called himself a shepherd.



In John 10:11 Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd."

**ACTIVITY**

Circle the type of shepherd that Jesus is.

Right! He is good!

Listen to what else Jesus said about himself



John 10:7,9 says, "So Jesus again said to them, '... I am the door of the sheep ... If anyone enters by me, he will be saved.'"

Jesus is the door to life and a friendship with God! How do you enter that door? By believing in Jesus.



Acts 16:31 says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."



To believe in Jesus means that you are **100%** sure that Jesus died to pay for your sins and give you a new life in his kingdom. **It means you now trust in Jesus.**

To be saved means that you now belong to God. He will now take care of you!

Do you believe in Jesus? Are you trusting in Him?

yes no

If you believe in Jesus, then you have been born again! You are a part of God's kingdom, and God is your King!

- 1 – I belong to God!
- 2 – God is my shepherd!
- 3 – God will care for me!



Say them out loud with excitement



On your picture write "Jesus" beside the shepherd. **Draw** a sheep in the pen and write your name on it.

Tell Jesus thank you for being the door to life with God.

Do you know much about shepherds? Most people today don't.

Here are **5 words that describe a good shepherd.**



Write one number (1-5) in each box as you read the word.

- Rules Over** – Good shepherds take responsibility for their sheep. They know their sheep belong to them. They are in charge of every sheep.
- Protects** – Good shepherds keep the sheep safe from wild animals. They are always ready to help a hurt or scared sheep.
- Guides** – Good shepherds take their sheep wherever they need to go. They lead them to food, water, and places to rest or sleep.
- Provides** – Good shepherds give their sheep whatever they need. They take care of them when they are sick or have babies.
- Loves** – Good shepherds love their sheep. They give each one a name and speak kindly to them.

Since God is your good shepherd, these words all describe him too!



Read through the 5 words again. Which one surprises you the most about God? Why?



Psalm 100:3 says, "Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

We are God's sheep! We belong to God. This means that God rules over us and is in charge of us.

God is the best one to be in charge of you. He knows you better than you know yourself.

He loves you more than you can imagine. He can take care of you better than anyone else. He is ready to be a **good shepherd** to you!



Write the words from each box (that you numbered at the beginning) in the blanks below.

1. God _____ me!

2. God _____ me!

3. God _____ me!

4. God _____ for me!

5. God _____ me!

Read each one out loud as you talk to God. After each one, say "Thank you, God!"

Now you know something about shepherds. Here are 5 words that describe sheep.



Write one number (1-5) in each box as you read the word.

-
- Helpless** – Sheep cannot live on their own. Sometimes they roll onto their back and get stuck! They always need a shepherd in charge.
- Needy** – Sheep cannot take care of themselves. They can't find their own shelter or good food.
- Unwise** – Sheep do not make good choices. They will drink dirty water. They will leave their shepherd and go where it is not safe.
- Weak** – Sheep worry. This makes them sick. Sheep's bodies are not strong. Sometimes they get tired when they walk too far.
- Stubborn** – Sheep always think they know best. Even when they don't! They fight against the shepherd to get their own way.

Remember that we are the sheep!



Psalm 95:7 says, "For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."

Do you use these words to describe yourself? Probably not! You might not even like some of them. **But these words show us why we need God as our good shepherd.**



Write the five words about sheep on the left. Turn back to yesterday's lesson and write the five words about the shepherd.

Sheep

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Shepherd

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Read the sentences below out loud. You really do need a good shepherd!

I don't always know the best choice. My good shepherd does and will guide me!

I can trust my good shepherd to protect and care for me when I am worried!

My good shepherd will never stop loving me no matter how I act.



Which sentence do you need to remember this week?

Write it down somewhere. **Read** it every morning this week.

Have you heard of a man in the Bible named David? He was pretty important.



Check each story you've heard before. (If you want to read one, the Bible reference is listed.)

- David killed the giant, Goliath. (I Samuel 17)
- David was the 2nd King of Israel. (I Samuel 16:1-13)
- David wanted to build a temple for God. (I Chronicles 22)
- Jesus came from David's family. (Luke 1:32)



Which of these things would you have enjoyed doing? Why?

Before any of those things happened, David was a shepherd.



What kind of shepherd do you think he was?

A good shepherd

A bad shepherd

David was a good shepherd! Why? Because he had a good heart. Read what God said about David in Acts 13:22,



"I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will."

God saw that David's heart

- loved God more than anything else
- wanted the same things God wanted
- would always follow and obey him



What is most important about you?

Your heart

The things you do

Your heart is most important. Everything you do comes from your heart.



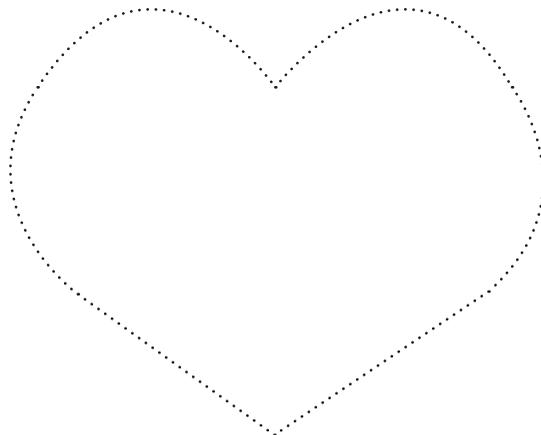
Luke 6:45 says, "The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil."



Write a prayer to God inside the heart below. **Tell him** you want a good heart. **Ask him** to help you.

- love him more than anything else
- want what God wants
- follow and obey him

God can make you a person after his own heart too!



David wasn't born with a good heart. No one is. David didn't make his heart good either. No one can do that. **Only God can change hearts.** He changed David's heart. He can change yours too!

Our hearts change as we grow in our love of God. Here are two ways David grew to love God more.

#1 David saw God in creation.

As a shepherd, David spent a lot of time outside looking at all that God created. Here is what he said one day,



"When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?" (Psalm 8:3-5)

As David thought about how big and powerful God is, he realized how small and weak he was. It surprised him that God still cared for him.



What is your favorite part of God's creation?

What do you enjoy about it?

What can it teach you about God?

#2 David took time to think about God and talk to him.

As a shepherd, David spent a lot of time by himself. Even while his eyes watched his sheep, his mind thought about God.

David learned to talk to God about everything in his heart. He learned to trust God for help. He learned how great God really is. It made him say,



“There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours.” (Psalm 86:8)



Read that verse out loud to God.



Even though you are young, God wants to start changing your heart.

Your heart changes as you grow in your love of God.

Talk to God. **Tell** him 3 things you love about him.

Ask him to help you love him more.



What are the two ways David grew to love God that you learned yesterday?

David saw God in _____

David took time to _____ about God and

_____ to him.

Here is one more way David grew to love God.

#3 David praised God through music.

David loved music. He played the harp and wrote over 70 songs that we know about. They make up part of the Bible – a book called Psalms.

Music helps put feelings into words. Music can help our minds remember truth. Some music can even help us love God more!



Can you think of a song you love that helps you remember truths about God? Take a minute to sing it right now!

Day after day David watched his sheep and thought about God. **One day he realized that God was his shepherd and he was like a sheep!** David loved this idea so much he wrote a song about it. Perhaps you've heard it!

Today we know David's song as Psalm 23. David wrote this while he was still young and still a shepherd. There are many truths about God and about us in it.



On the next page, you will find Psalm 23 and a picture of a shepherd with his sheep.

Color the picture. **Stop every few minutes to read Psalm 23 out loud.**

It's not long – only 6 verses! Try to read it 6 times.

Check off a box below every time you read it.

1 2 3 4 5 6

After you've colored the picture and read the Psalm, cut out the rectangle.

Put this somewhere where you can see it each day and be reminded that God is your shepherd and you are his sheep!

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.





Who is your shepherd?

And who is his sheep? _____ You are!

Choose ONE activity to help you love your shepherd more – just like David did!

As you do the activity, ask God to help you love Him more. Think about God as you do it. Talk to him about what is in your heart. Tell him how wonderful he is!

1. See God in creation.

Go on a nature walk and collect treasures you find. Think about how creative God is to make each one different and special! This creative God made you too!

Climb a tree. How amazing that this tree grew from a tiny seed or acorn! Nothing is impossible for God!

Count the stars. (Or at least try!) God has a name for every star! And this big God who controls the galaxies not only knows your name but made you with his own hands!

2. Take time to think about God and talk to him.

Read Psalm 23 again. Think about how the shepherd takes care of the sheep. Imagine you are that sheep and that God is taking care of you. Tell him how that makes you feel!

Write the word shepherd on a piece of paper. Think of something you love about God that starts with each letter. Talk to God about each one.

3. Praise God through music.

Listen to music that helps you think about God. Or sing songs by yourself. Imagine God is in the room with you (he is!). Imagine the smile on his face as he watches you praise him!

Write your own song about something you've learned this week.

Choose a familiar tune and put new words to it, or make up your own music. Here is an example to help you get started.

Tune: Farmer in the Dell

God is my shepherd. God is my shepherd.

God is my shepherd and I am his little sheep.

I belong to him. I belong to him.

God is my shepherd and I am his little sheep.

WEEK 2

Trust the Good Shepherd

- DAY 1** My Shepherd is With Me
- DAY 2** My Shepherd Enjoys Being With Me
- DAY 3** My Shepherd Gives Me What's Best
- DAY 4** My Shepherd Gives Me What's Best
- DAY 5** I Can Think about God and Trust Him
- DAY 6** Jesus Rested in God
- DAY 7** Activity

DAY 1

My Shepherd is With Me



Do you ever feel alone? Draw a picture of a time you felt alone in the last week.

Did you know that once you have a good shepherd, you are never really alone?



Psalm 23 tells us when the shepherd is with the sheep.

- *When they lie down on green grass (verse 2)*
- *When they drink water (verse 2)*
- *When he leads them down paths (verse 3)*
- *When they are scared (verse 4)*
- *When he prepares a place for them to eat (verse 5)*
- *When he anoints their head with oil (verse 5)*

The good shepherd is always with his sheep!



Find your Psalm 23 paper from last week. Find the words “for you are with me” in verse 4. Mark them in some way (underline, circle, or color them).

God is always with you too!



Psalm 121:4 says, “Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.” God never sleeps!

Hebrews 13:5 says, “I will never leave you.”

God being with you all the time is a big truth. This truth is called omnipresence. It simply means that God is “always present.”



Think of all the places you have been in the last week. **Write down** as many as you can think of.

God, your good shepherd, was in all of those places with you!

Omnipresence also means that God can be with everyone, in every place, all the time.

No one else can do that!



Set a timer for 2 minutes.

Read the sentence below as many times as you can in that 2 minutes. Each time add something new.

God is with me when I _____ . Thank you, God!



Think of someone you enjoy being around. Who is it? Why do you enjoy being around them?

A good shepherd loves his sheep. He enjoys caring for them. He enjoys being around them!

God is your good shepherd. He enjoys being around you! God never gets tired of you coming to him. God is always ready to welcome you.



How does it make you feel to know that God enjoys you? Does it make you love him more?

This next verse is about God. Whenever you see the word "**he**," you can also say "**God**."



Isaiah 40:11 says, "**He** will tend his flock like a shepherd; **he** will gather the lambs in his arms; **he** will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young."

The **underlined words** tell us how God treats his sheep.



Write the first word in this sentence.

God will _____ or care for his sheep. He loves them so much!

Write the next two words in this sentence.

God will _____ and _____ the little, baby lambs.
Have you ever had a baby animal that you held close and snuggled? That is how God acts too!

Write the last word in this sentence.

God will _____ the momma sheep that have babies. He knows it is hard for them and they get tired easily. He is very careful with them!

God is your shepherd! This is the way he feels about you!



Imagine now that you are the sheep in this verse.

- **Imagine** God caring for you in loving ways.
- **Imagine** God picking you up and snuggling you close to himself.
- **Imagine** God being very careful with you when you are tired or hurt.

What do you want to tell your shepherd? **Tell him** whatever you feel.

He loves you!

DAY 3

My Shepherd Gives Me What's Best



Circle the words that describe sheep. (See Week 1, Day 3 for help.)

- | | | | |
|-------|--------|----------|----------|
| Needy | Brave | Helpless | Obedient |
| Smart | Unwise | Stubborn | Weak |

Sheep are like newborn babies. They can't take care of themselves. They need someone to give them what they need.

The shepherd always knows what is best for the sheep. But sometimes sheep ignore what the shepherd gives them. Sometimes sheep go their own way. Draw a line to match the opposites



Draw a line to match the opposites

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| dead grass | in the pen |
| dangerous paths | fresh grass |
| out of the fence | safe paths |

They find dead grass to eat instead of fresh grass.

They climb on dangerous paths instead of safe paths.

They sneak out the fence instead of staying in the pen where it is safe.

God, the good shepherd, always knows what is best for you, his sheep.

But sometimes you ignore God's way and go your own way. Sometimes you are tricked into going your own way instead of God's way.



"Isaiah 53:6 is true of everyone.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way."

Sometimes we don't believe that God gives us what's best. Sometimes what we want looks better.



Do you know the name of the first woman God created?

Eve was the first person to go her own way. She didn't believe God had given her what's best. She disobeyed God instead of following him.

You were born with a heart like Eve's. **But your good shepherd is ready to change your heart!**



Ask God when you have gone your own way this week.

Listen to what he says to your heart.

Write down anything he tells you.

Tell God you are sorry for going your own way.

Ask God to change your heart so you will follow him.

DAY 4

My Shepherd Gives Me What's Best



Draw a picture of something you are hungry for right now.

You probably drew a picture of food, right? But did you know you can be hungry in a different way? **Your soul can be hungry.**

The boxes below will help you understand what your soul is.



Draw a picture in each box to help you remember each word under the box.

mind

heart

feelings

body



Add a plus sign (+) between each box. Now draw a circle around all of the boxes.

All of these things together are your soul. It is what thinks, chooses, feels, and acts.

Your soul is all of you!



Color the words below. Are they things you want?

happiness love
friendship attention
to be the best

Everybody wants these things. It's the way our souls were made.

Sheep want things too.

- They want to be safe.
- They want rest.
- They want good food.

Some sheep let the shepherd meet these needs. Other sheep try to go their own way and meet their own needs.



Who can meet the needs of the sheep the best?

the shepherd

the sheep

The shepherd can because he gives what's best.

You can try to meet the needs of your soul. But you can never do it. More friends or better clothes won't meet your soul's needs.

Only God can meet the needs of your soul. Your good shepherd wants to give you what's best.



Psalm 107:9 says, "For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things."

What a great promise from a great God!



Fill your mind with these truths. **Whisper** them to yourself throughout the day.

My good shepherd gives what's best.

God fills my hungry soul with good things.

Read the 4 truths from this week.

God is always with me.

God enjoys being with me.

God gives me what's best.

God gives me what my soul really needs.



Which truth is your favorite? Why? **Circle** it.

A good shepherd knows his sheep won't rest until they understand these truths. Then they will stop going their own way. They will trust their shepherd. Their true needs will be met.

When you understand these truths about God, you will rest too.

You **trust** your shepherd to care for you. You will **stop worrying** about taking care of yourself.

You **believe** your shepherd is always with you. You will stop **being afraid**.

You **know your shepherd enjoys giving you what you really need**. You will **stop looking for happiness** from people or things.

You can't stop worrying, being afraid or looking for happiness on your own.

God has to change your mind and heart. He does that as you ...



Think about God

Draw a picture for "mind"



Isaiah 26:3 says, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you."

You can fill your mind with truths about God. Over and over, all during the day and night. When you do, you begin to rest (have peace, not be afraid, stop worrying).



Trust God

Draw a picture for "heart"



Isaiah 30:15 says, "In quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

You can depend on (trust) God with your heart. Over and over, all during the day and night. You can ask HIM for what you need and know that He will give you what is best.



Make up motions for the truth you circled.

Think it with your mind and **trust it** with your heart over and over and over today!

Ask God to use this truth to change you.

DAY 6

Jesus Rested in God

Jesus is a picture of God. He shows us how much God loves and cares for people.

Jesus is also a picture of how to live a life that trusts God. He shows us what it looks like to rest and have peace.



To help imagine this story, **draw** a picture of a small boat out on the water.

A large, empty rectangular box with a dotted border, intended for a child to draw a picture of a small boat on water.

Now add something to show that it is evening.

And again, to show that there is a great storm with waves crashing into your boat.



How would you feel if you were in this boat? Circle all the words that would describe your feelings.

calm

anxious

scared

peaceful

worried

We know from Mark 4:35-41 that this boat has lots of men. One of them is Jesus. The men are anxious, scared and worried. Not Jesus. Read what he is doing.



“But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.” (Mark 4:38)

Jesus’ feelings were different! He was calm and peaceful! Why?

Jesus’ mind was filled with truths about God. Jesus’ heart trusted God to care for him.

He knew he was safe even in the middle of this storm.

Because Jesus believed God, he was able to rest and have peace.

The other men didn’t yet know and trust God in the same way Jesus did. That is why Jesus said to them,



“Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” (Mark 4:40)

Faith is trust in someone. **Jesus trusted God to care for him** like sheep trust a good shepherd to care for them.

You can trust God too. He is your good shepherd. He is always with you. He gives you what’s best. He is all powerful. Nothing is too hard for him. No problem is too big.



Tell God now that you trust Him.

Say the truth from yesterday again today. **Think it** with your mind and **trust it** with your heart!



You can **fill your mind** with truths about your good shepherd.

Your **heart can trust** your good shepherd.

Then rest and peace will come out of your life.

For this activity, you will need

- A cup
- Water
- Small, solid objects (rocks, marbles, ice, etc.)

Imagine that the cup is **your life** and that the **water is peace and rest**.
Imagine that the **small objects are truths about God**.

Fill the cup with water. (You will make a bit of a mess with this activity! Do this somewhere it's ok for water to spill out.)

Drop one object into the cup of water. Did water splash out?

This is a picture of what happens when truths about God go into your mind and heart. Rest and peace come out of your life.

Drop more objects into the water one at a time. As you do it, say a truth that you want to fill your mind. Or tell God something you trust him to do.

You can use these ideas or come up with your own ideas of what to say.

"God, you _____"

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------|---------------------|
| are always with me | are good | give me what's best |
| know what I need | enjoy me | are a good shepherd |

"God, I trust you to _____"

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| take care of me | give me what is best | bring good friends into my life |
| change my heart | hold me close and love me | give me what my soul needs |

Drop in objects until your cup is full of objects or until you run out.

Ask God to use these truths to change your mind and heart!

WEEK 3

Follow the Good Shepherd

- DAY 1** My Shepherd is My Guide
- DAY 2** My Shepherd is My Guide
- DAY 3** My Shepherd Protects Me
- DAY 4** My Shepherd is Patient
- DAY 5** I Will Listen to God and Follow Him
- DAY 6** Jesus Listened to God and Followed Him
- DAY 7** Activity

A guide is someone who helps another person know where to go. They lead people who do not know the way.



Check each box for a time you needed a guide.

At a new school

When traveling to a new place

Moving to a new city

At a museum

Other: _____

Sheep need a guide too. They don't always stay in one place. They love to walk all around. Soon they can end up all spread out.



Ezekiel 34:5-6 says, "My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill."

Sheep get lost easily. They wander too far and have no idea how to get home. They can get scared or hurt.

Sheep need a good shepherd to find them and guide them back home.

Sometimes you wander too. Sometimes you end up far away from your shepherd. Maybe you end up scared or hurt because of it.

God is your good shepherd. He will find you and guide you!



"I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out ... I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered ... [I] will bring them into their own land ... I will feed them with good pasture." (Ezekiel 34:11-14)

You can trust that God will always search for you and find you. He will rescue you. He will guide you back to wherever he is.



Isaiah 42:6 says, "I am the Lord ... I will take you by the hand and keep you."



Imagine God, your good shepherd,

- searching for you. Do you feel important to Him?
- finding you. Do you feel special?
- holding your hand and leading you to good places with him. Do you feel safe?

Tell God how you feel.

Sheep need a shepherd to guide them every day - even when they are not scattered or lost. Why? Sheep don't make wise choices on their own.

We need guiding every day too.

There are people in our lives who guide us. People who help us decide what we should do.



Circle the people that have guided you.

Teacher

Friend

Parent

Teammate

Leader

Pastor

Other: _____

Sometimes people can be good guides. But sometimes they can lead us the wrong way.

God, your good shepherd, is always a good guide. He knows what is best for you.

He knows all the right paths to take. He is ready to guide you!



Psalm 32:8 says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you."

Counsel is another word for guide. God says,

- "I will teach you the right way to go!"
- "I will guide you to what is best!"
- "I always see you and know what you need!"

Think of 3 things you need a good guide for right now.

- a decision you need to make
- help with a problem
- help to know what is wrong or right



Draw a picture of each one.

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God guides you as you read his word, the Bible. He gives you truth that shows you what to do in your life.

God also guides you as you talk to him. He will give ideas to your mind and heart. These ideas will always agree with the Bible.



Use the verse below to **talk to God** about the 3 pictures you drew.



Psalm 143:8 says, "In you I trust. Make me know the way I should go."

Tell God about one picture. Then **read** the verse out loud.

Repeat this for each picture.

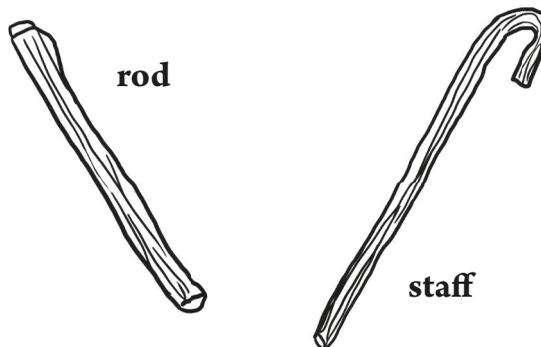
Sheep cannot protect themselves. They can't fight against wild animals. They can't keep themselves from getting hurt.

Shepherds must protect their sheep.

Most carry a rod and a staff to help them.

A shepherd uses the **rod** to fight wild animals.

A shepherd uses the **staff** to hook around a sheep's neck or stomach and pull him to safety.



The Bible tells us of David (the young shepherd) killing a bear and a lion.

Draw a picture of David protecting his sheep from wild animals.

A large, empty rectangular area enclosed by a dotted line, intended for drawing a picture of David protecting his sheep from wild animals.

God, your good shepherd, is ready to protect you.



Psalm 23:4

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, For you are with me; Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

This verse means:

You will go through dark and scary places during your life.

You don't need to be afraid.

God, your good shepherd, is with you!

God will protect you

Some people think that because they trust God bad things won't happen to them. That's not true. This verse teaches us that bad things will still happen, just like they do to sheep.

If God is your shepherd, when the bad things happen, you are not alone! God's eyes always see you. God always cares about you. God will protect your mind and your heart. He will help you remember truth. He will help you trust Him.



What hard time is happening to you now?

Fill your mind with these truths about whatever is happening.

- God is with me in this hard time.
- God will protect me and care for me.
- I don't need to be afraid!
- I will trust God!

Ask God to help you believe these truths.



Do you ever get tired of helping people over and over? Do you get angry when someone keeps doing the same unwise thing over and over?

Good shepherds don't get tired or angry because of these things. Good shepherds help their sheep over and over. They rescue them from unwise choices over and over.



Do you think you would make a good shepherd? Why or why not?



God never gets tired of being your shepherd. Write "always" in each blank as you read the sentence.

God _____ enjoys being with me.

God _____ gives me what is best.

God _____ guides me.

God _____ protects me.

Sometimes you might feel like God can't love you anymore. Sometimes you might think that

God is angry at you. But he's not. Read Lamentations 3:22-23,



*"The **steadfast** love of the Lord never ceases; his **mercies** never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your **faithfulness**."*

There are 3 big words in that verse.

If something is **steadfast** it means it is sure. You can count on it.

God's **mercies** can be many things. It can be patience. It can be feeling sorry for someone who is scared. It can be wanting to help someone who needs it.

Faithfulness means keeping promises. A faithful person can be trusted and counted on.

This verse means

God's love for you will never stop!

Every morning God is ready to help you! Every morning he sees when you are hurt or scared. Every morning he is patient with you!

God will never stop acting this way toward you. You can trust him!



Here is another verse with these truths.



"But you, O Lord, are a God **merciful** and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in **steadfast** love and **faithfulness**."

(Psalm 86:15)

Give thanks to God by saying it to him over and over!

Sheep learn to **trust** their shepherd as he cares for them.

They learn to **listen** to his voice.

And they learn to **follow** him.

God wants you to learn these things too.



Color in each word as you read it.

1. **Trust** God

You can **trust** God with your heart. You can depend on him. He will always give you what is best!

2. **Listen** to God

As you trust God, you will come to know his voice. Sheep **listen** to their shepherd's voice. They know he cares for them. They know his voice is kind and good.



*Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “**Trust** God from the bottom of your heart; don’t try to figure out everything on your own. **Listen** for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he’s the one who will keep you on track.” (The Message)*

Trusting God is good because then you are not trusting yourself. God is wiser than you. God knows what will happen in your life even when you don’t. It is good to trust him!

Listening to what God says is good because you are listening to the one who knows everything! As you learn to know God’s voice and listen to it, you will know the right way to go.

3. **Follow** God

When you trust God and listen to his voice, then you want to **follow** him!



John 10:4 says, "The sheep follow him, for they know his voice."

Following God is good because God knows the best way to live! You will always be well-cared for by your good shepherd.



Draw a heart in the 1st box, ears in the 2nd box and feet in the 3rd box.

Trust

Listen

Follow

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Ask God to help you

Trust him with your heart

Listen to him with your ears

Follow him with your feet



Did you know that God is actually 3 persons?

God the Father¹

God the Son (Jesus)²

God the Holy Spirit³

They are three in one!

They all have the same power. They all are always perfect. And they all work together to love and care for you.

Jesus was born as a baby. He lived on earth for 33 years. When he was on earth, he limited some of his abilities as God.

Instead of doing whatever he wanted, Jesus listened to his father, God. Isaiah 50:4 tells us how he listened to God.



*“He wakes me up, opens my ears to listen as one ready to take orders.”
(The Message)*



What do you think of when you hear about someone who takes orders?

Jesus was ready to do whatever God wanted him to do. Every day he listened so that he could do whatever God asked.

Later when Jesus was on earth he said,



“For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.” (John 12:49)

Jesus followed God's commands. He said what God wanted. He did what God wanted.

This is what it looks like to follow God.

Draw a picture of Jesus listening to God and following him. What do you think he said to God?



Draw a picture of you listening to God and following him. What would you say to God when he tells you something?



Jesus **always** listened to God and obeyed Him perfectly. You can **never** do this.

God knows that. That's why Jesus came. He was perfect since you can't be.

Jesus wants to change your heart. He can help you listen and obey.

Thank Jesus for being your perfectness! **Ask** him to change your heart.



Choose a game to play to remind you of the truths from this week.

Game 1 will remind you that

- God will **find** you!
- God will **guide** you!
- God will **protect** you!

God, your good shepherd loves to care for you in this way! You are special to him.

Game 2 will remind you that

- You can **trust** God!
- You can **listen** to God's voice!
- You can **follow** God!

The best way to live is to trust, listen to and follow God. He knows best!

Game 1 (like Hide and Seek)

- Find 1-3 people to play this game with you.
- Choose one person to be the shepherd. Give them something to use as a rod and a staff.
- Find a spot you can use for a sheep pen.
- Put all the other players (the sheep) into the pen. Then have them scatter all around and hide.

The shepherd will go and find the sheep. As the shepherd looks he can say, *"I will find you. Don't be afraid!"*

A sheep can pretend to be in danger (at the edge of a cliff, or about to be eaten by a wild animal). The shepherd can use the rod and staff to protect and rescue the sheep. The shepherd can say, *"I will protect you. You can trust me!"*

Once the sheep is safe, the shepherd can lead the sheep back to the pen. The shepherd can say, *"I will guide you back to the pen. Follow me!"*

Play several times. Allow different people to be the shepherd each time.

Note 1: On the next page you can find the sentences for the shepherd to say. Cut them out and take them with you to help remember what to say.

Note 2: If you can't find anyone to play with, use some stuffed animals or other objects to be the sheep. Hide them all around yourself and then be the shepherd who goes to find and rescue them.

Game 2 (like Follow the Leader)

- Find one person to play this game with you.
- Find something you can use as a blindfold.
- Find a place where you can safely lead another person from one place to another.
- Choose a spot to be the starting point. Choose another spot to be the sheep pen.
- Choose one person to be the shepherd who guides the other. The other person, the sheep, needs to put on the blindfold.

The shepherd stays close to the blindfolded sheep and guides them with instructions of where to go next. Instructions should be simple and clear. The shepherd slowly guides the sheep from the starting point to the sheep pen. Along the way the shepherd can say,

"You can trust me!"

"Listen to my voice."

"Follow me!"

Once you finish, switch places with the other person.

Note 1: On the next page you can find the sentences for the shepherd to say. Cut them out and take them with you to help remember what to say.

Game 1

“I will find you. Don’t be afraid!”

“I will protect you. You can trust me!”

“I will guide you back to the pen. Follow me!”

Game 2

“You can trust me!”

“Listen to my voice.”

“Follow me!”

WEEK 4

Thank the Good Shepherd

- DAY 1** The Lord is My Shepherd!
- DAY 2** My Shepherd Cares for Me
- DAY 3** My Shepherd's Way is Right
- DAY 4** My Shepherd Never Changes
- DAY 5** My Shepherd Gives Abundant Life
- DAY 6** My Shepherd is Always on My Side
- DAY 7** Activity

DAY 1

The Lord is My Shepherd!



Imagine you are a sheep and your good shepherd comes to find you.

Where are you?

Does your shepherd need to rescue or help you?

How does your shepherd treat you?

How does your shepherd look at you?

What does your shepherd say to you?

David had lots of time to think as he cared for his sheep. He spent time imagining God as his good shepherd. **The longer David imagined God caring for him, the more excited he got.**



Have you ever had exciting news that you couldn't wait to share? Think about what your face looked like as you told your good news. Think about what your voice sounded like.



David was so excited to share about God being his shepherd. **Read the first sentence of Psalm 23 with excitement!**

"The Lord is my shepherd."



Read it out loud with excitement 5 times. Each time **say** the underlined word the loudest.

The Lord is my shepherd.

David thought about all the ways God cared for him. David knew that God guided him and was with him. David knew God protected him and provided what was best. **David was ready to rejoice and thank God.**

You can do the same thing.



Psalm 79:13 says, "But we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will give thanks to you forever."

Every time you think about your shepherd, you can get excited. You can give thanks to him forever!



Finish each sentence with something you love about your shepherd.

My shepherd _____

Read one sentence with excitement and then say, "I give thanks to you forever!"

Repeat this for each sentence.



Think about a sheep who has a good shepherd. What does that sheep have to do to care for itself?

Nothing! A good shepherd takes care of everything! The sheep is satisfied. It doesn't want or need anything else.

Remember that David imagined God as his good shepherd. He knew that God took care of everything for him too. **David was satisfied. He didn't want or need anything else.**

That's why his second sentence in Psalm 23 is,



"I shall not want."

Another way you can say this is,

"I don't need a thing." (The Message)

You should say this sentence with excitement too!



Read it out loud with excitement 4 times. Each time **say** the underlined word the loudest.

I shall not want.

I shall **not** want.

I **shall** not want.

I shall not **want**.

It's easy to think you need a lot of things. Maybe there's something all the cool kids have that you want. Maybe you wish something was different in your family or your home.



Draw something you need or want.

A large rectangular area with a dotted border, intended for drawing.

Remember from Week 2 Day 4, **God knows the true needs of your soul. He will always meet those needs.** But he may do it in a way you don't expect.

God doesn't always meet our needs with things. He often satisfies us with something of himself – mercy, love, faithfulness.



Psalm 90:14 says, "Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."



Circle the words, "steadfast love."

You can count on God's sure love. It is one way he gives what you truly need!



Think of the things God gives you as your good shepherd.

How do they make you glad?

Three horizontal lines for writing a response.

Tell God how his good care makes you glad!



List some things or people that help you know what is true.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Did you remember to list God, your good shepherd?

God loves you and wants what is best for you. You can trust him to always tell you what is true and right.



Psalm 119:151 says, "But you are near, O Lord, and all your commandments are true."

This verse has 2 important ideas in it.

#1 – Everything God says is true.

You can trust what God says. He will never lie to you. He will never trick you.

#2 – God can help you know what is true no matter where you are.

God is always with you! You will never be somewhere where God is not with you.



Draw pictures of 2 places you will be this week where you will need to know what is true.

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God can talk to you in different ways.

- Sometimes he puts ideas **into your mind**.
- Sometimes he guides **your heart**.
- Sometimes he speaks to you through **the words of the Bible**.

The ideas God gives you will **always agree with the Bible**. The things he guides your heart to do **will always agree with the Bible too**.

The Bible is God's words to us. It is full of truth. You can always believe God and his words in the Bible. They are the words of your good shepherd who loves you and cares for you.

You can trust your shepherd and his words to you.



Talk to God about the two pictures you drew.

Ask him to tell you what is true and right.

Ask him to help you hear his voice and trust him.

Thank him that he is always with you and ready to speak truth.



Do you like things to change? Or do you like things to stay the same?

Sometimes change is good. It's good to change your clothes when they're dirty!

But when things stay the same, they bring security or safety.

A good shepherd brings security to the sheep. The sheep know that they will **always** be cared for. They feel safe. This helps the sheep trust and rest.

You can trust that God will always be your good shepherd.



Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."



How do you feel knowing God will always be your good shepherd?

David, the shepherd, wrote Psalm 103. **He gives us several truths about God that will always be true.**



Verse 8 says, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."



We've seen some of these words in several verses during this study.

Circle any important words you've seen before.

God wants you to know what he is like! **You can always count on God to be patient, kind and loving.**



Verse 10 says, "He does not deal with us according to our sins."

God is always ready to welcome you when you turn away from your sin and back to him.
Your sin is never too great for God to forgive.



Verse 14 says, "For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust."

Remember, God calls you his sheep! Sheep are helpless, needy, unwise, weak and stubborn. God doesn't expect us to be strong enough to take care of ourselves.

He is always ready to care for you!



Read those verses again.

- Verse 8
- Verse 10
- Verse 14

Which one helps you feel the most secure or safe? _____

Write that verse below in your own words.

Thank God that he never changes!



Imagine you are a sheep with a bad shepherd. You have to find your own food and shelter. You have to look out for yourself and protect yourself.

Does that sound like a good life?

yes no

Imagine you are a sheep with a good shepherd. He finds shelter for you. When you are sick, he cares for you. He protects you and rescues you.

Does that sound like a good life?

yes no

A good life for a sheep is when it is well-cared for.

The same is true for you. **A good life is one where you know you are always loved and cared for.** Jesus gives you this life when you trust him.

Read what he says about himself in John 10:10,



“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

Jesus gives you more than you will ever need for whatever happens. That’s what abundant means - more than enough!



What is one way God has given you more than enough of something?

Psalm 23:6 talks about abundant life.



“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Every day of your life God gives to you from his goodness.

Every day of your life God’s patient mercy is a gift to you.

And he has promised that one day you will live with him in heaven forever.

You will be with your good shepherd forever in a perfect place!

What a good life to have God caring for you every day for forever



Write down a day next year. _____
(month) (day)

Write down what year it will be 10 years from now. _____

Write down how old you will be in 50 years. _____

Thank God for giving you abundant life on these days and every day!

God loves you more than you can ever imagine!

God loves caring for you, protecting you and guiding you. God loves hearing your voice and holding you close. He loves to rescue you and carry you.

You matter to God. He will do whatever it takes to care for you as his sheep.

Think about what he's already done.



John 10:11 says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

Jesus is speaking in this verse. How did he give his life for his sheep while he was on earth?



Draw a picture of a cross.

A large, empty rectangular box with a dotted border, intended for the student to draw a picture of a cross.

There is no way anyone could love you more than this.



John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

If Jesus loved you enough to die and save you, he loves you enough to take care of you now.



Deuteronomy 31:8 says, "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."



Color the words in this verse you love the most.

God won't leave when trouble comes. He won't make you figure things out on your own. He won't get tired of being your shepherd.

God is always on your side!

It means you don't have to take care of yourself. It means that you always have someone to trust and depend on.

It means you can trust him. You can depend on him. You don't have to be afraid!



Thank Jesus for dying on the cross to save you.

Thank God that he is always on your side!

Tell God you trust him and want to depend on him.

**You get to practice being a shepherd today!**

Find something that can be your sheep. It needs to be small enough that you can carry it around with you all day. (Perhaps a stuffed animal, or a painted rock.)

Keep your sheep with you from the time you wake up until the time you go to bed.

Pay attention to it at all times, just like a shepherd closely watches his sheep.

Pretend to

- give it food
- find it shelter
- lead it to quiet waters
- let it rest
- hold it close
- show it love
- keep it safe

After you have cared for your sheep for a day, come back and think about these questions.

Was it easy or hard to think about your sheep all day long? Why?

Did you ever forget about your sheep? When?

What did you enjoy most about being a shepherd?

How did this activity help you think differently about God as your shepherd?

What do you want to say right now to your good shepherd? Take a few minutes and talk to him!

Closing Challenge to Child

You did it! You finished all 4 weeks!

Even though you finished this book, **God is still your shepherd every day.**

He still enjoys being with you.

He still wants to give you what is best.

He still wants to guide you and rescue you.

You can keep trusting God and following Him.

Remember that he is always on your side. He will never leave you.

You can always say,

“The Lord is my shepherd; I don’t need a thing.”

You can keep filling your mind with truth about your shepherd.

Do some of the extra Day 7 Activities from the book. They can help you get to know your good shepherd even better!

Read Psalm 23 each morning when you get up. Or read it at night before you go to bed. There’s nothing special about just reading or saying the words. But they can help you fill your mind with truths about your good shepherd.

Use these verses to help your heart trust him more.

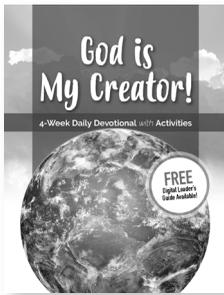
Use these verses to help you talk to your shepherd.

If you have more questions about your good shepherd, ask the person who helped you work through this book. Or ask an adult you know loves God. They would love to help you!

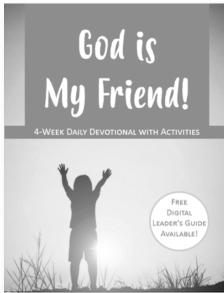
Never forget that God is your good shepherd!

He will always care for you no matter what!

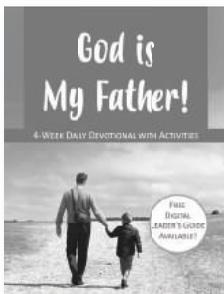
Other Titles in Devotional Series



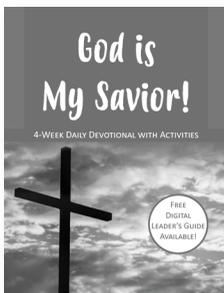
God is your Creator! God thought of everything when he made the world. God thought about you and designed you even before you were born. Everything about you is just as God wanted you to be. He enjoys you—you can enjoy him, praise him and do the good things he has for you to do. This four-week devotional is full of activities to help you explore God's world and how special it is that God made you with his hands!



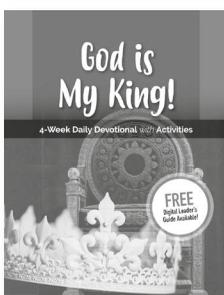
God wants to be your friend! Did you know you can talk with him using simple words from your heart, just like you do with your other friends? You can learn to listen to God too! God enjoys spending time with you. This four-week devotional is full of activities to help you get to know God, your always and forever friend!



God is the best Father you can ever have! God delights in you, his child. He is on your side! He has adopted you into his family, and you belong to him. Nothing can ever change that! You can go to your father, God, anytime. He is always ready to help. This four-week devotional is full of activities to help you know just how special it is to have God as your Father!



God is the Savior! Jesus is the only one who can save you from sin and from a hopeless life. Only he has the power to give you a new life! God the Savior is so generous. He gives himself and his help to anyone who believes in him. Because of his great love for you, you will want to love him with all your heart, mind, and soul! This four-week devotional is full of activities to help you know God the Savior better and love him even more!



God is your good King! He is over all and in charge of everything. Everything God does is good because his heart is good. You can trust him to rule well over his kingdom. You can help show God's kingdom to people around you as you do God's will and follow his ways. This four-week devotional is full of activities to help you know and love the heart of your good king!



Printed copies available at www.amazon.com

Digital files available at www.FindingRhythmsEnjoyingLife.com

God desires a relationship with people and longs to care for them personally. This includes children!

It's not enough to teach children truths about God. Their souls were made to be in intimate relationship with God and experience God's compassion firsthand. This four-week daily devotional teaches children to follow their good shepherd as they

- Are assured of God's constant presence
- See God as their protector, provider, and guide
- Imagine God as their good shepherd
- Trust God with their heart
- Rest in God's tender care

Each day's devotional includes activities to engage the child in the content and a final activity to help the child engage personally with God.

*Do you want the children you influence to experience the benefits of God's personal and tender care of them? **God is My Shepherd!** can help you establish this connection with God, the good shepherd!*

FREE Digital Leader's Guide also available! This guide prepares you for a 10–15-minute weekly conversation with the child. The emphasis is to provide support and encouragement as the child pursues a personal relationship with God. Each weekly guide includes prompts for:

- Understanding the Content
- Asking a Question
- Telling a Personal Story
- Praying Over the Child

(Instructions for electronic delivery of the Leader's Guide are included inside.)



Carol Johnson holds undergraduate and master's degrees in education fields and served in a full-time ministry to children for 17 years. Carol has written children's lessons, developed children's curriculum, designed and implemented training for children's workers and taught children in a variety of settings. Carol's greatest desire is to come alongside others, including children, and practically help them establish personal rhythms that lead to intimacy with Jesus. You can find her online at www.FindingRhythmsEnjoyingLife.com

