

References

Matthew 18:12-14;
 Luke 15:3-7; *Christ's
 Object Lessons*,
 pp. 186-192



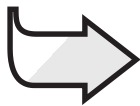
Memory Verse

"Your Father in heaven
 is not willing that any
 of these little ones
 should be lost"
 (Matthew 18:14, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that Jesus
 can find them
 wherever they are.
Feel loved and
 precious to Jesus.
Respond by letting
 Jesus save them from sin.



The Message

Jesus comes
 looking for me
 when I am far from Him.

Lost and Found

Monthly Theme

God's love finds me wherever I am.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus tells a parable of a shepherd who has 100 sheep and loses one of them. The shepherd leaves the 99 in a safe place and goes after the one lost sheep until it is found. When he finds it, he gently carries it home. Then he calls friends and neighbors to rejoice with him that the precious lost sheep is found.

This is a lesson about grace.

Many people are like lost sheep. They know they are lost, but can't find their way home on their own. As a shepherd values each sheep, the Godhead places high value on each person, and does whatever it takes to rescue and bring home anyone who is lost. The sheep's cry didn't save it, but the shepherd's search did. "Salvation consists, not in man's search for God, but in God's search for man" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 447).

Teacher Enrichment

"If he lose one of them. . . . The Eastern shepherd commonly knew each sheep personally and cared for it not only as one of the flock but for its own sake. Not only so, but the loss of a single sheep would make an appreciable difference in his income. In the parable the fact that the sheep became lost was evidently due to its own ignorance and folly, and once lost it seemed completely helpless to find its way back. It realized that it was lost, but knew not what to do about it. The one lost sheep represents both the individual sinner and the one world that has been lost. This parable teaches that Jesus would have died had there been but one sinner . . . as He did die for the one world that had sinned" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 815).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Lost Sheep Hunt</i> B. <i>Knowing the Shepherd's Voice</i>	Bibles, sheep cutouts (see p. 131), <i>Sing for Joy</i> songbooks Bibles, two blindfolds
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> , <i>The SDA Church Hymnal</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container with picture of sheep attached none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	adult helper dressed with Bible-times costume, shepherd's rod (tall stick), chairs to make enclosure, broom, adhesive bandages paper cups, plastic wrap, rubber bands, memory verse written for all to see Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Sing to the Shepherd</i>	words of song written for all to see (see activity), sheep cutouts from Readiness A or prepare some (see p. 131), box or envelope
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Lamb Puppets</i>	one black or white sock, two 1/2 - inch (1 cm) black pom-poms or wiggly eyes, two 3 x 2 - inch (8 x 5 cm) pieces of black or white felt to match the sock, one 1 x 2 - inch (2.5 x 5 cm) piece of red felt, glue or hot-glue gun, scissors, black marker, pencil, handful of cotton balls

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share experiences from last week's lesson. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- sheep cutouts (see p. 131)
- *Sing for Joy* songbooks

A. Lost Sheep Hunt

In advance, prepare a sheep cutout for each child (see page 131). Before the children arrive, carefully hide the sheep cutouts around the room. Ask the children to find a sheep and then sit down. Sing songs with the seated children while the others are still searching. (Collect cutouts to use in Applying the Lesson.)

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you ever feel like giving up?** (yes, no) **Lost sheep are not easy to find. What made you keep trying?** (friends found one, wanted to obey) **What if your own real lamb was lost?** (I'd try even harder.) Say: **Our Bible story is about a shepherd who searched for a sheep who had wandered off. Let's find and read our memory verse, Matthew 18:14.** Read aloud. **If we do wrong things that turn us away from Jesus, He will come looking for us too. Today's message reminds us of that.**



JESUS COMES LOOKING FOR ME WHEN I AM FAR FROM HIM.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- two blindfolds

B. Knowing the Shepherd's Voice

Form two equal teams. Have each team select a "sheep caller." The other members are "sheep." Teams are to make up a sheep call and practice it. Then the sheep callers stand on one side of the room. The other team members line up opposite, with the first one blindfolded. Team members spin the blindfolded person once. On "go" both of the sheep callers start sounding their sheep calls. The blindfolded team members go toward their sheep caller. Once the sheep reach the sheep caller, they remove the blindfold, run back to the team, blindfold the next person in line, and spin them around once. Repeat until all have had a turn.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many of you found your shepherd?** (Wait for hands to raise.) **Why was it not easy?** (We couldn't see.) **Would you have found your shepherd if you had not known your shepherd's call?** (no; maybe) Say: **Our Bible story today is about a sheep who had wandered far away from its shepherd. It was lost. Let's find and read our memory verse, Matthew 18:14.** Read aloud. **When we do wrong things, we might feel lost. Remember that Jesus comes looking for us when we wander away from Him. Our message reminds us of that.**



JESUS COMES LOOKING FOR ME WHEN I AM FAR FROM HIM.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"God Knows Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 47)

"Wide, Wide as the Ocean" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 32)

"The Lord Is My Shepherd" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 48)

"Amazing Grace" (*The SDA Church Hymnal*, no. 108)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **When we give mission offerings, we help find ways for Jesus to find people who are far away from Him.**

You Need:

- container with picture of sheep attached



Prayer

Ask all the children who would like to be near Jesus, like sheep in a fold, to come and join you in prayer. Ask Jesus specifically to keep them all safe, near Himself, and to go and search for them if they ever wander away.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- adult helper dressed in Bible-times costume
- shepherd's rod (tall stick)
- chairs to make enclosure
- broom
- adhesive bandages

Experiencing the Story

Make an enclosure with chairs to represent a sheepfold. Place a broom across the entrance for a gate.

During the story the shepherd will call the children into the sheepfold. As they enter, the shepherd pretends to see bruises and places adhesive bandages on them.

Have one of the "sheep" children hide in another part of the room—to represent the lost sheep.

The shepherd tells (and acts out) the following story.

Read or tell the story.

It was evening. The cool wind felt good to me and to my tired sheep. They had bits of brush sticking to their coats, and some of them had scrapes and bruises I needed to attend to. Their hooves scraped along the rocks, as if keeping time with the bleating of the lambs. For me, it all sounded like music.

"Come back over this way," I coaxed a playful lamb that was trying to wander away.

The sheepfold was finally in sight. *[Shepherd points to the "sheepfold."]* I had made it out of piled rocks and thorn bushes. I was trying to keep robbers and wild animals away from my sheep.

[At this point the children line up to enter the sheepfold.] When I reached the sheepfold gate with my sheep, I carefully checked each one as they went inside. *[Shepherd removes the broom from the entrance. The "sheep" children walk one by one into the sheepfold. The shepherd watches them*

carefully.] I attended to any scrapes and bruises as I saw them. *[Shepherd makes motions of pouring on medicine. He puts an adhesive bandage on some of the "sheep."]*

I spoke soothing words to my sheep. Some of the impatient ones bumped against each other, eager to get in to rest. I knew how they felt. I was tired and hungry too. I was really looking forward to getting home myself. But as always, I would count every sheep before I left them for the night.

"Ninety-four, ninety-five, ninety-six," I counted. *[Shepherd counts the sheep going into the sheepfold.]* "Ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine." Ninety-nine? I was supposed to have one hundred. I decided I must have been so tired I missed one, so I started counting again. *[Shepherd counts the sheep again and frowns.]* ". . . ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine." I was sure I had counted every ewe, ram, and lamb. Then I realized the same little lamb I had called back to the flock earlier was missing. He had gotten away from me after all. Where could he be?

I quickly latched the gate to the sheepfold. *[Shepherd replaces the broom across the entrance.]* I didn't like the look of the dark, angry clouds. I was quite sure it wouldn't be long before a storm hit us. As I headed out to find the missing lamb, I didn't feel tired and hungry anymore. I just had to find it! It would be so afraid out there in the storm by itself.

I went back the way we had come, calling out every few steps. *[Shepherd cups his hands and calls his lost sheep, wandering around the classroom looking and listening for his lost "sheep."]* I called and called. I was really getting worried.

A stinging rain began to make the rocks slippery. The wind howled more

loudly. I wondered how the lamb could have gotten so far away from the rest of us.

Then, finally, I thought I heard something. Just a faint “baa” over to my right.

There it was, just over there, beside some rocks. *[Shepherd looks happy.]* It lay in a crumpled heap, tangled in thorns, and bleeding. *[The shepherd goes and stands next to his lost “sheep” that was hidden in the classroom.]*

“You’ll be fine,” I said over and over to try to calm the little lamb. I worked gently at untangling its wool from the thorns. Then I scooped it up in my arms, and we headed back to the fold. *[The shepherd leads the “lost” sheep to the “fold.” It joins the others inside the enclosure.]*

When I got to the house, I shouted to my family, “Call the neighbors! I have found my lost sheep!” I was so happy, I just had to share the news with my family and friends.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did the shepherd build a sheepfold?** (To protect the sheep from robbers and wild animals.) **How did the shepherd feel in the evening?** (tired) **Why did the shepherd look for the lost lamb?** (He knew it could not find its way home.) **What did the shepherd do when he returned home?** (Invited his neighbors to help him celebrate.)

How does Jesus search for lost “sheep” (people) today? (He uses us to find them and tell them about Him through preaching, personal sharing, His Word, etc. Also, the Holy Spirit calls lost people.) **Where is the sheepfold today?** (Christ’s church) **When you or someone you know feels lost, what will you remember? Let’s answer with our message:**



JESUS COMES LOOKING FOR ME WHEN I AM FAR FROM HIM.

Memory Verse

Repeat the memory verse together, trying to find a rhythm, such as accenting the italicized words. “Your *Fa-ther* in *hea-ven* is not *will-ing* that *an-y* of these *lit-tle* ones *should be lost*” (Matthew 18:14).

Give each child a paper cup. Help each child cover their cup with a square of plastic wrap, fastening it with a rubber band. Stretch the plastic until it is tight enough to sound like a drum when tapped with a finger.

Have the children repeat their memory verse again, tapping out the rhythm they practiced. Repeat until the children know the verse.

(Adapted from Susan Lingo, *Written On Our Hearts* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995], p. 74.)

Bible Study

Have the children open their Bibles to Luke 15. Appoint some children to read verses 3-7. Then have the class find the answer to the following questions in their Bibles:

1. How long was the shepherd prepared to search for the lost lamb? (verse 4)
2. What did the shepherd do when he found his sheep? (verse 5)
3. Whom did he tell? (verse 6)
4. Where is there rejoicing when a sinner repents? (verse 7)
5. Whom does the shepherd in the story represent?

Debriefing

Ask: **Who is our shepherd?** (Jesus) **What did you learn from this story?** (That Jesus is like a shepherd, and He will do whatever it takes to find a lost person. He won’t give up.) **If you ever feel hopeless, what will you remember? Let’s answer with our message:**



JESUS COMES LOOKING FOR ME WHEN I AM FAR FROM HIM.

You Need:

- paper cups
- plastic wrap
- rubber bands
- memory verse written for all to see

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- words of song written for all to see (see activity)
- sheep cutouts from Readiness A or make some (see p. 131)
- box or envelope

Sing to the Shepherd

Distribute the sheep cutouts used in Readiness A or provide some (see page 131). Ask the children to write their names on one side of the sheep.

Have them sing the song below to the tune of "London Bridge" to remind them that God looks for us when we are far away from Him.

God will find me if I'm lost, if I'm lost,
if I'm lost.

God will find me if I'm lost.
He does love me.

I'm a sheep in Jesus' flock, Jesus'
flock, Jesus' flock.

I'm a sheep in Jesus' flock.
He does love me.

Ask the children to write on the other side of the sheep cutout the name of someone who may be far away from Jesus. Have them bring the sheep cutouts to you and put them in a box or envelope you are holding to represent a sheepfold. While they come forward, sing together

the following verse to the same tune:

God will find you when you're lost,
when you're lost, when you're
lost.

God will find you when you're lost.
He does love you.

(Adapted from The Children's Worker's Encyclopedia of Bible-Teaching Ideas: New Testament [Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, Inc., 1997], p. 26.)

Debriefing

Say: **A lost sheep knows that it is lost.** Ask: **If you were a lost sheep, how do you think you would you feel?** (scared, wanting to go home, etc.) **How would you feel when you saw the shepherd coming to rescue you?** (relieved, hopeful, thankful)

Say: **You are very valuable to Jesus, your Good Shepherd. If you ever feel that you are lost in life, always remember:**



JESUS COMES LOOKING FOR ME WHEN I AM FAR FROM HIM.

Say that with me.

Sharing the Lesson

Lamb Puppets

Give each child the items listed.

Show the children how to put the socks on their hands and then press some of the cloth between their fingers and thumbs to make puppets.

Tell the children to use their pencils to make dots where they think the eyes should go, and then glue the pom-poms or wiggly eyes over the pencil marks.

Then show the children how to trim the edges from all the felt pieces so that one end on each is rounded. Using the felt that matches the sock, tell the children to pinch the square ends and glue them to the place where the ears should go. Then have them glue the red piece of felt—a tongue—inside the lamb's mouth.

Give each child a handful of cotton balls (at least ten) and have them glue the cotton balls to the top of their puppet's head. They can color the cotton balls black before gluing them if they are making a black sheep.

(Adapted from *Bible Story Crafts & Projects Children Love* [Loveland, CO: Group Publishing Co., 1995], p. 97.)

Alternative idea: Have the children use a black marker (on a white sock) to draw eyes, ears, nose, and mouth before adding the cotton balls.

Debriefing

Say: **This week, using your sock puppet, you can tell the story we studied today to someone who didn't come to our Sabbath School. To whom will you tell it? (Children share names.) What else will you tell them? (Jesus loves them very much and will keep searching for them.)**

Share today's message when you and your puppet tell your story. Let's say it together again:

JESUS COMES LOOKING FOR ME WHEN I AM FAR FROM HIM.

Closing

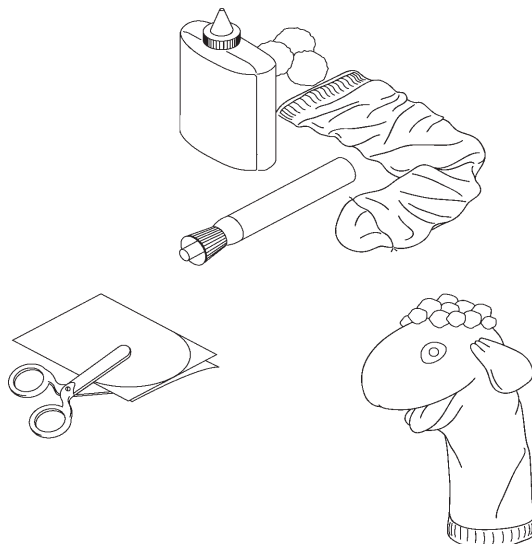
Thank Jesus in prayer for rescuing us from being lost in sin.

Remind the children to use their Bible Study Guides every day and to do the daily activities.

You Need:

For each child:

- one black or white sock
- two 1/2 - inch (1 cm) black pom-poms or wiggly eyes
- two 3 x 2 - inch (8 x 5 cm) pieces of black or white felt to match the sock
- one 1 x 2 - inch (2.5 x 5 cm) piece of red felt
- glue or hot-glue gun
- scissors
- black marker
- pencil
- handful of cotton balls



Lost and Found

References

Matthew 18:12-14;
Luke 15:3-7; *Christ's
Object Lessons*,
pp. 186-192

Memory Verse

"Your Father in
heaven is not will-
ing that any of
these little ones
should be lost"
(Matthew 18:14,
NIV).

The Message

Jesus comes
looking for me
when I am far
from Him.

Seven-year-old Carla was with her mother at the market. She wandered away to watch a man showing how a toy plane worked. When she looked around, her mother was nowhere in sight! Carla was afraid. She was lost and didn't know what to do.

A long time ago, a little lamb was lost. Let's read about it.

Broken bits of bushes stuck to the wool of the tired sheep as they moved along the path. The shepherd gently guided his flock of one hundred sheep. The scraping sound of their hooves on the rocks mixed with the bleating of the young ones. It was music to the shepherd's ears.

"Come back over this way," he coaxed, smiling at a playful lamb.

The sheepfold was in sight now. Like most of the sheepfolds in the area, the shepherd had made it secure. He had piled many rocks on top of each other. Then he had placed thorn bushes along the outside of the rocks.

Finally, the shepherd and the sheep reached the sheepfold gate. As each one went into the sheepfold, he checked it

carefully for cuts or bruises. He ran his strong but gentle hands over every sheep. The shepherd spoke soothing words and poured medicine on sore places. The impatient animals bumped against one another, eager to get in to rest. Tired and hungry, the shepherd would be glad to reach home as well.

"Ninety-four,

ninety-five, ninety-six," the shepherd counted. Every morning he took his sheep to pasture. And every evening he counted them as he brought them home.

"Ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine," he kept on counting. *Ninety-nine?* What? thought the shepherd. *I'm so tired tonight that I didn't count correctly.* Slowly he counted again. A frown crossed his face. "Ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine." His eyes checked every ewe, every ram and lamb. Oh no! Where was the little lamb the shepherd had been calling back to the flock? It was there just a short time ago. Now it was nowhere in sight. That one sheep could be anywhere!

Carefully, the shepherd latched the gate to the sheepfold. He turned back the way he had just come in spite of the rising storm. He called out to his missing sheep. *I'll really have to listen*, he thought. *With the wind blowing like this it will be hard to hear, especially if my lamb is hurt.*

The shepherd called. Then he listened. Then he called again. Carefully the shepherd worked his way in the dark back over the rough ground. *Where are you, little one?* he thought.

A stinging rain began to make the rocks slippery. The wild wind howled. How could the small lamb have strayed so far in such a short time?

Straining once more to hear anything, he paused. "Yes!" he shouted into the storm. "Yes, I found you!"

There it was, just over there, beside some rocks. The lamb lay in a crumpled heap, tangled in thorns, and bleeding.

"OK, OK, you'll be fine." The shepherd's gentle words calmed the frightened lamb. He untangled the thorns and scooped the lamb up into his arms. "I'm so glad I found you," he whispered. "Let's go home."

The rugged shepherd hiked back over the slick trail again. But this time he smiled. This time he was holding his rescued one close. Bursting into the



house, the shepherd gently laid the sheep down.

He cried joyfully. "I have found my lost sheep!" He was so happy! He wanted to share the good news with his friends.

When we wander far from Jesus, He comes looking for us too. We are His "sheep." He loves us so much. And He is very happy when all His sheep are safe at home again.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Together with your family read and discuss Luke 15:3, 4. The shepherd had _____ sheep. He lost _____ of them. How many did he have left? _____.
- Look in a book and find out three things you didn't know about sheep.
- Make nine paper sheep. Write two words from your memory verse on each one. Write Matthew 18:14 on the ninth sheep. Cut out the sheep and put them in the right order. Then thank Jesus for sheep.

Sunday

- If possible, play "Hide and Seek." (Choose a family member to be "It." "It" closes their eyes and counts to ten while everyone else hides. Then "It" says, "I am coming to find you," and searches for the "lost.")
- Find a place to sit and read your Bible lesson story.
- Read and discuss Matthew 18:14. Thank Jesus for His love for children.

Monday

- For family worship discuss Luke 15:5, 6.
- Make family plans to invite some neighbors to rejoice with you Friday evening. Plan to share a meal and tell them what God has done for your family. Ask Jesus to bless your plans.
- Sing "The Lord Is My Shepherd" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 48).

Tuesday

- With your family read and discuss Luke 15:7. Ask each person to name three things for which they praise God. Then thank God for those blessings.
- Ask: Have you ever "rejoiced" when someone who wasn't close to Jesus came back to Him?

Let your family tell about it.

Wednesday

- Read and discuss Matthew's version of the lost sheep story (Matthew 18:12-14) for family worship.
- Did you show someone the lamb puppet you made in Sabbath School? Did you tell them about the lost sheep? (If you don't have a lamb puppet, make one with a white sock. Glue some cotton balls on top of the puppet's head. Add some cloth ears, some button eyes, and draw a mouth.) Ask Jesus to bless that person.
- Have the puppet say your memory verse. Save the puppet for Friday.

Thursday

- With your family, read and discuss Jesus' words in John 10:11, 14.
- Write a letter to Jesus. Thank Him for loving you and taking care of you. Sing "John 3:16" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 24) before prayer.
- Arrange your memory verse sheep in order.

Friday

- For worship today, use your sheep puppet to tell the Bible story to your family and guests. Read Luke 19:10 together. Tell what it means to you.
- Ask everyone to close their eyes while an adult hides your memory verse sheep around the house. Then have everyone open their eyes and search for them. Have everyone put their sheep in the right order on the table. Then say your memory verse without looking at the sheep.
- With your family and guests, sing some praise songs. While you share a meal or refreshments, tell about something God did for your family this week.
- Thank Jesus for your friends.