



## **SHEPHERD**

### **Jesus Came as the Great Shepherd**

Christmas is full of festive events—parties, concerts, family gatherings. And often, that means being around people we don't usually spend time with. It can pull us out of our comfort zones—away from our cozy routines and familiar faces.

But what if God is calling us to something more this season? Something that feels risky but meaningful?

We can choose to stick with what's familiar—or we can see these moments as opportunities. A conversation at a party, a quiet act of kindness, or an invitation to church might be the start of someone's journey toward Jesus.

In the video, when Joseph sees the shepherd chasing after a lost sheep (Ezekiel 34:11–12), he's reminded that Jesus chases after us too—every one of us. Even the irritating Elf who keeps waking Baby Jesus is welcome at the manger of mercy.

This Christmas, as you attend events and meet new people, ask God to help you notice who might need to be “chased after” with love. You could be the one to introduce someone to the truth that sets them free.

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## Discussion Questions

- **Let's start with the shepherds.**
  - What do you think shepherds do to take care of their sheep?
  - *(Leader tip: Invite everyone to share one idea, even silly ones!)*
- **Read John 10:27–28 together.**
  - What stands out to you in this verse?
  - How does it make you feel to know that Jesus calls you by name and promises to never let you go?
  - *(Leader tip: With kids, invite them to imagine Jesus calling their name like a shepherd calls sheep.)*
- **Think about Jesus as the Good Shepherd.**
  - Can you think of a time when Jesus guided, protected, or “found” you when you felt lost or unsure?
- **Let's talk about meeting new people.**
  - How do you usually feel—nervous, excited, unsure?
  - Why do you think that is?
  - Is it easy or hard for you to talk to someone you don't know?
- **Jesus calls us “sheep,” and He is the “Good Shepherd.”**
  - Why do you think He uses that picture?
  - *(Leader tip: You might mention that sheep need help and direction—and Jesus lovingly gives both.)*
- **Have you ever been lost?**
  - What happened?
  - How did it feel at the time?
  - How did it feel to be found again?
  - *(Leader tip: This can be about being physically lost or feeling spiritually distant.)*
- **Think about the Elf in the video—the one who kept interrupting.**
  - Do you have any “Elfs” in your life—someone who's difficult or irritating?
  - How might you show them patience, kindness, or an invitation this Christmas?

## Activity: Jesus the Good Shepherd

### The Lost Sheep Search (Stuffed Animal or Cut-Out Hunt)

#### Supplies:

- 10 small stuffed animals (or paper sheep cutouts)
- A Bible or nativity set (optional)

#### Instructions:

- Have an adult hide the stuffed animals or paper sheep around your home, yard, or classroom.
- Assign someone to be the “Good Shepherd” and go search for all the lost sheep.
- Celebrate when each sheep is found—cheer, ring a bell, or bring them to a “manger” spot.
- After the game, reflect:
  - *“How did it feel to find the sheep?”*
  - *“How does it feel knowing Jesus searches for us when we’re lost?”*

### Lost Sheep Printable Hunt (with Encouragement Verses)

#### Supplies:

- One-page printable with 10 sheep, each with a truth about God’s love
- Scissors and tape
- Optional: basket or manger for collected sheep

#### Instructions:

- Print and cut out the 10 sheep (each with a short encouraging message like “Jesus knows my name”).
- Hide them around your space.
- As each one is found, read the message aloud and reflect on what it means.
- After all are found, lay them out or place them by a nativity scene.

#### Reflection Prompt:

- *“Which message stood out to you most today?”*
- *“Why do you think Jesus wanted us to hear these things?”*

## Who's Your Elf? (Sheep Name Drop Activity)

### Supplies:

- One-page printable of blank sheep
- Pen or marker
- Nativity set or “manger space”

### Instructions:

- Think of someone in your life who can be difficult to love—or who may feel left out or forgotten.
- Write their name inside a blank sheep shape.
- Place that sheep near the nativity or manger scene to remind your family:  
*“Even the Elf is welcome at the manger.”*
- Consider praying for the person or doing something kind for them this week.

### Reflection Prompt:

- *“What might it mean to ‘chase after’ someone with kindness?”*
- *“Why do you think Jesus wants us to include everyone in His love?”*



