

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



THEY FOLLOW HIM BECAUSE THEY KNOW HIS VOICE

John 10 (selected verses) The good shepherd and his sheep

Why did Jesus compare himself to a shepherd? And why are we like sheep? Just as a sheep knows the voice of its shepherd, Jesus instructs us to know, recognise and trust his voice.

Each child will need:

→ Pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

→ An image of a sheep pen

Start It

Play a game of guess the voice.

Ask: Are you good at recognising people's voices? If someone calls you, can you recognise who it is from how they say your name? How well do you know the voice of different Pixar movie characters? Can you guess the twelve voices?

Screen share: PIXAR Guess the Voice Challenge! (6mins 54secs)

<https://youtu.be/-ayTNzupg9Q>

● **Say:** How well did you do? Which voices were you able to hear? Sometimes it is hard to recognise the voice you are hearing. Or perhaps you recognised the voice but couldn't remember the name.

Ask: Is there a voice you have missed hearing lately? *(Be sensitive when asking this.)*

● **Say:** Today we are going to be exploring how Jesus instructs us to know, recognise and trust his voice.

Sing It

This great song of praise and worship includes the lines 'And I know I can trust because I have seen, that your words they are true, they have always been.'

'It's alright' (Great Big God Lyric Video) by Vineyard UK Kids Worship (3mins 19secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXzUIUQFLSM>

Tell It

● **Say:** Our story comes from John chapter 10 – one of four books we call 'the Gospels' which tell the stories of Jesus' life. In this story, Jesus was talking to the Pharisees. The Pharisees believed in God but often challenged and disagreed with Jesus' messages and teaching.

Video

Screen share: *The sheep and the shepherd Bible story* by LifeKids (1min 32secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmqPM6LpXLc>

🗨️ **Say:** Have you ever met a real-life shepherd? Sometimes we see pictures in our Bibles of a very clean, smartly dressed shepherd. But I wonder – what do you think a real-life shepherd might look like? As they work outside and with sheep, perhaps they prefer to wear old clothes with holes – and maybe they may even be a little smelly!

Ask: What do you think makes a good shepherd?

🗨️ **Say:** Shepherds are very dedicated; the sheep rely on the shepherd to look after them, and some shepherds stay with their sheep night and day. As we look at our passage of Scripture, we see what it is to be a good shepherd.

🗨️ **Say:** Jesus explained that he is our good shepherd. He knows us, loves us and cares for us. He even knows how many hairs there are on our head and prays to God for us. But do we know him? Sheep can recognise the sound of their shepherd's voice and Jesus wants us to listen for and recognise his voice.

Ask: Are you a good listener? What ways can we listen to God's voice?

Ask: When you think about sheep, what do you think of?

🗨️ **Say:** The Bible uses sheep to illustrate us; the sheep and the shepherd are people and God. As sheep need a shepherd, so do we, as people, need God.

Discuss

Prompt discussion using the following as some pointers.

- ➔ Sheep are often thought of as not being very smart because they tend to wander off on their own and can get lost without a shepherd to guide them. How can God be our guide?
- ➔ Sheep are thought of as being weak and easy prey without a shepherd for protection. How can God be our protector?
- ➔ Sheep may follow anyone who acts like a shepherd and so can be easily led in the wrong direction. How can God help us follow the right path?
- 🗨️ **Say:** Jesus is our good shepherd. He guides us through difficult times. He protects and cares for us when there is danger. He helps us make good choices in our lives.

Action It

Screen share: an image of a sheep pen.

🗨️ **Say:** Sheep shelter in pens with other sheep. Draw your own version of a sheep pen with a few sheep inside. On each sheep write or draw some examples of times when you recognise God has spoken to you or times you have trusted God.

Give children time to reflect and then invite children to share if they would like.

Pray It

🗨️ **Say:** Sheep without a shepherd wander around and can get lost, hurt or led astray. In Bible times, shepherds who were good at their jobs would go to great lengths to protect and care for their sheep. Jesus compared himself to a good shepherd, one who would lay down his life for his sheep – and that's what Jesus did.

🗨️ **Say:** Jesus made promises that he would save us. We can hear his voice through prayer and God's word.

Invite the children to repeat each line:

🗨️ **Say:** Dear God,
Thank you for being our shepherd.
Help us to listen to your voice and to respond to you.
Please guide and protect us.
We thank you for your love.
Amen.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.