

Overview Chart

| | Session Title and Scripture | Main Idea | Something to Remember |
|----------|--|--|---|
| 1 | Paul Sees the Light Acts 9:1–19 | Jesus changes Paul’s quest. | So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! —2 Corinthians 5:17 |
| 2 | Paul Doesn’t Quit the Quest Acts 9:19–28 | In the face of persecution, Paul doesn’t quit preaching. | Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. —Philippians 3:12 |
| 3 | Paul Mentors Timothy Acts 16:1–5; 2 Timothy 3:10–11 | Paul is a mentor to Timothy. | Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, and my suffering. —2 Timothy 3:10–11 |
| 4 | Paul Meets Lydia Acts 16:11–15 | Paul preaches, and Lydia becomes a follower of Jesus. | Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. —1 Thessalonians 5:11 |
| 5 | Paul and Silas Pray in Prison Acts 16:16–40 | Paul and Silas prayed and praised while in peril. | I can do everything by the power of Christ. He gives me strength. —Philippians 4:13 (NIRV) |
| 6 | Paul Begins a Church Acts 18:1–11 | Paul and his friends start a church in Corinth. | “Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you.” —Acts 18:9–10 |
| 7 | Paul Performs a Miracle Acts 20:7–12 | Paul saves a youth from death. | Paul went down and threw himself on the young man. He put his arms around him. “Don’t be alarmed,” he told them. “He’s alive!” —Acts 20:10 (NIRV) |

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| 8 | Paul Prophesies; All Hands on Deck! Acts 27 | Paul has a vision to trust God. | [Paul] took some bread and gave thanks to God. He did this where they all could see him. Then he broke it and began to eat. All of them were filled with hope. —Acts 27:35–36 (NIRV) |
| 9 | Paul Provides Comfort Acts 28:1–10 | Paul helps people, and they help Paul. | Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. —1 Thessalonians 5:11 |
| 10 | Paul’s Letter about Love 1 Corinthians 13:4–8, 13 | Paul writes to the church in Corinth about love. | And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. —1 Corinthians 13:13 |
| 11 | Paul’s Letter about Living as Christians Colossians 3:12–14 | Paul writes to the church in Colossae about how to live as followers of Jesus. | Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. —Colossians 3:13 |
| 12 | Paul’s Letter about the Fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:22–23 | Paul writes to the churches in Galatia about the fruit of the Spirit. | The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. —Galatians 5:22–23 |
| 13 | Paul’s Letter about Always 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 | Paul writes to the church in Thessalonica about what they should always be doing. | Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. —1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 |

Feedback

Tell us what you think about *Awesome Adventures: Paul’s Amazing Quest*. Would you recommend changes? Write to Curriculum Feedback, Presbyterian Publishing Corp., Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396. Or send your comments to support@pcusastore.com.



Every Sheep Counts!

Luke 15:1-7

Main Idea

Children will learn that Jesus loves them.

Something to Remember

"I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!"

—Luke 15:6 (GNT)

Background for Teachers

Shepherds—although the noble profession of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the great leader Moses; the shepherd king David; and the prophet Amos—were considered the bottom-dwellers of society by the time of Jesus. Sure, they provided a much-needed service in the way of meat, dairy products, wool, and sacrificial animals, but, nonetheless, they were considered unclean, both bodily and ritually. A shepherd's job was a 24/7 gig out in the fields with the flock, so a shepherd wasn't often seen in the synagogue and a shepherd couldn't always keep all the rules the Pharisees prescribed. This is why shepherds were lumped in with the general "sinner" population. It created a paradox: on one hand, God is compared to a shepherd and God calls leaders and kings to be faithful "shepherds" to God's people; on the other hand, shepherds were considered to be common folk that the well-to-do and keepers of the religious rules would not invite to a party at their homes.

In today's passage, a crowd gathered around Jesus; it is particularly noted that tax collectors and sinners were there. The scribes and Pharisees muttered, or at least spoke loudly enough that all could hear their not-so-subtle murmurings, how outrageous it was that Jesus kept company with the likes of those rule-breakers and cheaters. Then Jesus told a story about a lost sheep, one sheep out of a flock of one hundred, which would have been a large flock at that time. Everyone in the crowd would have understood that a shepherd would

know his sheep well. A shepherd guards his flock day and night. A shepherd does not lose sheep. If one strays, he searches until he finds it. Each sheep matters to the shepherd. In Jesus' story, one sheep strays from the flock and is lost. The shepherd searches and, upon finding the lost one, carries it back to the flock rejoicing and celebrating in the good news that the lost one is rescued and part of the flock again.

The Pharisees might have been a bit disturbed by this story. Jesus looks at them and says, "Suppose one of *you* has a hundred sheep." "No, he didn't!" they might have exclaimed. "He didn't just call us a dirty shepherd!" But he did. Not only that, Jesus let them know that the sinners that wander from the fold still belong in God's flock. We are not only to seek them and rejoice in their return, but we are also to have a party and break bread with them. Some of the Pharisees may have been fuming at that point, but Jesus reminded them that they are the caretakers—the faithful shepherds—of their people, and some of them may have ears to hear.

When we are lost and have strayed from the Shepherd's care, we matter to the Shepherd. Jesus will not let us remain lost and alone, frightened and abandoned. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, will search and find us and carry us home. Great rejoicing happens when we return to the flock, for each of us matters to the Good Shepherd!



You Will Need

Assemble

- Serving tray or baking sheet with 15–20 various small objects
- Serving tray or baking sheet with 100 coins (pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters)
- Towel

Bible Study

- Bible

Claim

- Copy of Resource Sheet 1 for each child
- Scissors
- Single-hole punch
- Cotton balls
- Glue sticks
- Scraps of black paper
- Black markers

- Pencils
- Paper
- Two large sheets of newsprint
- Markers or crayons
- Two sheep (*Cut simple sheep shapes from white paper. Use a black marker to make a face and ears.*)
- Copy of Comic Introduction for each child
- Copy of Comic 1 for each child
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons (*optional*)

Depart

- Large sheet of newsprint or craft paper with the heading "God's Amazing Son—Jesus"
- Markers and crayons
- Copy of For the Home 1 for each child
- Several copies of For the Home 2 and Comic 2 for children who will not be at the next session

Assemble

What's Missing?

Welcome the children as they arrive. Invite them to look at the tray of objects for about thirty seconds. Cover the tray with a towel. Turn around and remove one object. Show the children the tray of objects again, and ask them which object is missing. Play the game several times with the children.

Lost and Found

Invite the children to gather around the tray of small objects. Tell them to choose one of the items that they like. Invite the children to take turns sharing their name, what object they chose, and why they like it. If more than one child wants the same object, they may pass it to another person after their turn. Have the children put the objects back on the tray when they have finished.

Think of a time you lost an object, and share that story with the children. Invite them to share a time when they lost something. Ask them how they felt when they couldn't find it. Ask them to recount what they did and how they felt if they found the lost item.

What's Missing, Part 2

Show the children the tray you prepared with one hundred coins (pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters) on it. Let the children look at it for about thirty seconds. Turn around and remove one of the coins. Show them the tray again, and ask them if they know which coin is missing. Explain that this may seem difficult or nearly impossible, but they are going to hear a story about a man who knew exactly what was missing out of a hundred!



Bible Study

1 out of 100!

Tell the children that you are going to read a story to them about a shepherd and his sheep. Tell them that they are going to act out the story as you read it. Invite two or more children to be grumbling listeners, one child to be the shepherd, and everyone else to be sheep. Designate one child to be the sheep who wanders off. Tell the children that the story you will read is from the book of Luke, one of the Gospels in the New Testament. Read Luke 15:1–7.

You may want to read the story more than once and let the children change roles. After you have read the story and acted it out, share with the children the facts and one joke about sheep and shepherds from the sidebar.

Tell the children that Jesus calls himself the good shepherd (“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. . . . I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me” [John 10:11, 14]). Engage them in conversation by using the following questions:

- How is Jesus our shepherd?
- How are we like his sheep?
- What might be some ways that we get “lost”? (see Teaching Tip)
- What do you think happens when we have been “found,” or when we find our way back to following Jesus? (see Teaching Tip)

Claim

Be the Sheep

Give the children copies of **Resource Sheet 1** and instruct them to cut the page in two along the dashed line, separating the story prompts at the top of the page from the sheep puppet at the bottom. Tell them to put the story prompts aside and cut out the sheep shape. Instruct the children to use a single-hole punch where indicated to make the leg holes. Have them carefully cut on the marked lines to the outer circle of the leg holes. The children will put their index and middle fingers through these holes. Once the leg holes are cut, have the children draw faces on their sheep and glue on cotton balls. For the final touch, have the children cut out ears from the scraps of black construction paper and glue them on to their puppets.

Gather the children and write a story together. Ask the children to think of names for their sheep. Use the story prompts and compile their answers into a story.



Sheep:

- Live in a flock and have best friends.
- Can learn their names.
- Have a great sense of hearing and a wide range of vision, but a poor sense of sight.
- Can recognize individual faces—both sheep and humans—and remember them for several years.
- Cannot get up if they fall onto their backs. They need help or they could die.
- Cannot defend themselves. They will go the wrong way unaware of the dangers around them. They need a shepherd.

Shepherds:

- Know each sheep. They don't need ear tags to identify them.
- Stay with the sheep if they are out at night.
- Don't lose sheep! If one wanders off, a shepherd will search for the sheep.
- Will defend the sheep against wild animals.

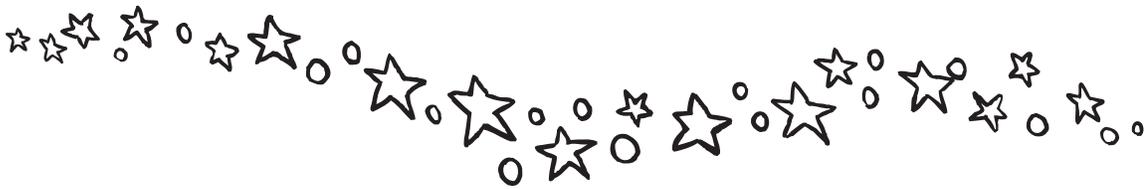
Joke:

Where does a shepherd take a sheep to get a haircut? To the baa-baa shop!



Teaching Tip

Metaphors are difficult for younger children to understand. You may want to ask this question if your group is primarily older children. Help them understand that being “lost” is not just in a physical sense, but how we may “lose our way” from following Jesus.



Ninety-nine Sheep

Form the group into two teams. Give each team a sheet of newsprint and a marker for each child. Tell the teams that when you give the signal they will each draw a flock of ninety-nine sheep. Say "Go!" and let the children draw. While the children are drawing, hide the two sheep you prepared. When the groups have finished drawing, have someone from the other team count the sheep to make sure there are ninety-nine sheep. Tell the children that one sheep must be lost because there should be one hundred sheep in the flock. Have the teams search for the lost sheep you have hidden. Rejoice and celebrate when each team's sheep is found.

Comic Book

Hand out a copy of **Comic Introduction** to each child. Invite older children to pair up with younger children and read the introduction page together. When they finish reading, hand out copies of **Comic 1** to read together. If there is extra time, they may begin to color the pages.

Teaching Tip

In each session, you will add a news story and picture to the newsprint or craft paper labeled "God's Amazing Son—Jesus!" Keep the paper and display it in subsequent sessions.



Teaching Tip

Share your class newspaper with the congregation. Display it each week on a bulletin board or in a prominent place in your church.

Depart

Read All about It!

Gather the children together and draw their attention to the prepared sheet of newsprint or craft paper with the heading "God's Amazing Son—Jesus!" Tell the children that they are going to make a newspaper telling of the good news about Jesus. Invite a child to write the headline "Every Sheep Counts" as the first story. Ask the children what they want to remember about the story they heard today. Write one or two suggestions for the news story. Invite a child to draw a simple picture next to the news story.

Hear All about It!

Invite the children to repeat after you with a "shout out" echoing your lines:

Hear all about it!
Celebrate!
Jesus loves me!
I'm so happy!

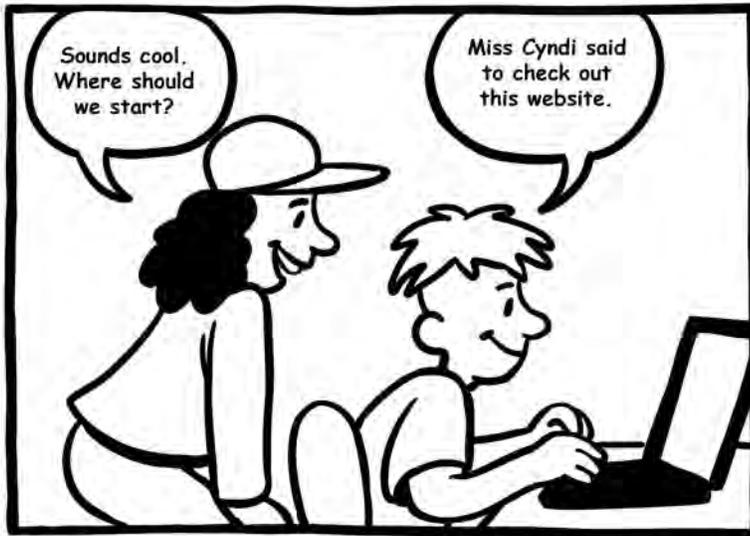
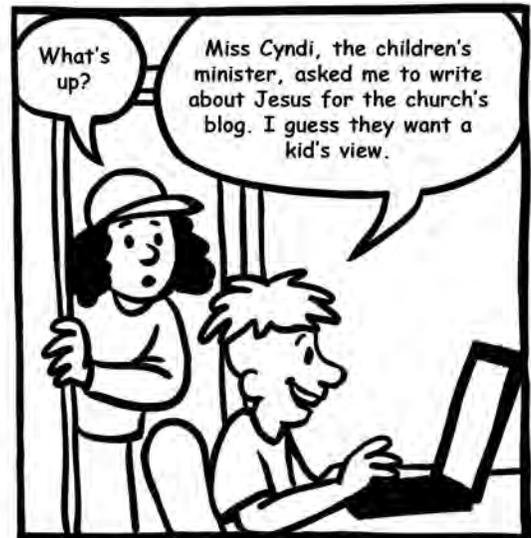
SEND HOME

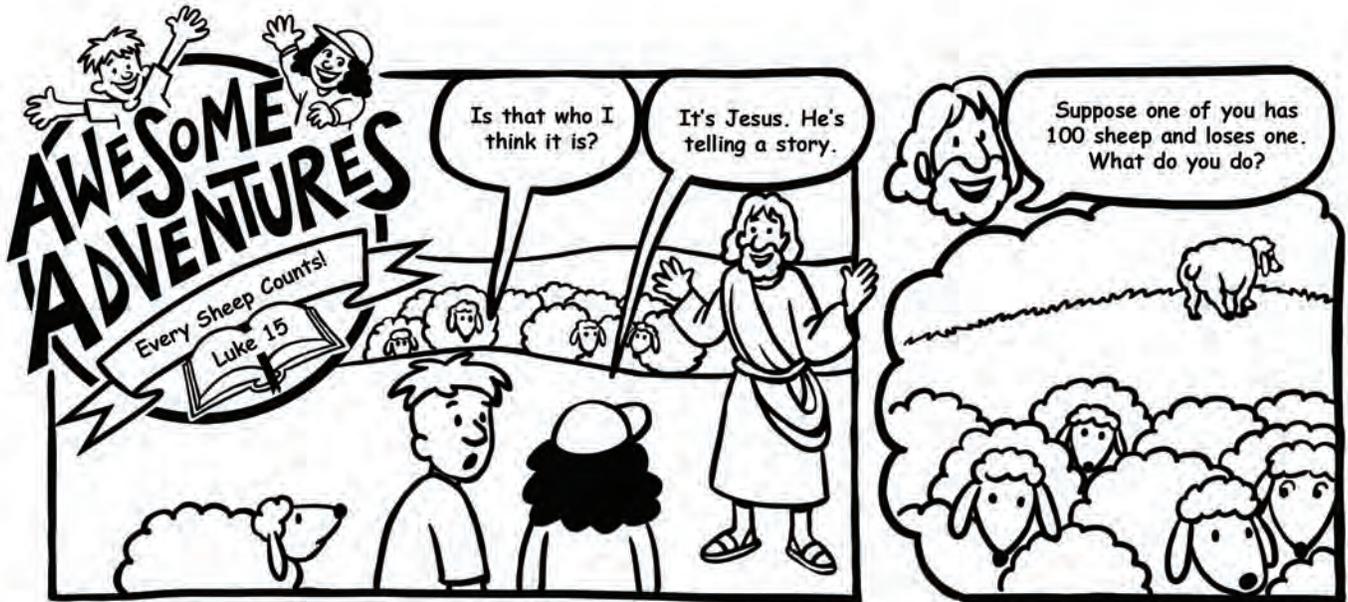
- Sheep puppet
- Copy of Comic Introduction
- Copy of Comic 1
- Copy of For the Home 1

Looking Ahead

For Session 2:

Make a welcome mat with the words "Jesus Welcomes Me All the Time!" You may make the mat in whatever way you choose. Whatever type of mat you make, be sure to adhere it to the floor so the mat doesn't slip as children walk on it.





Let us know when your child may miss a session and we will send home the comic-book page and the For the Home sheet so you can have a Bible adventure wherever you are.

Main Idea

Children will learn that Jesus loves them.

Something to Remember

"I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!"

—Luke 15:6 (GNT)

In class today . . .

. . . we began learning about God's amazing Son with the story of the Lost Sheep. The children heard how the shepherd left his flock of ninety-nine sheep to find the one missing sheep. In John's Gospel, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd" (10:11). The children learned some facts about shepherds and sheep, and considered how Jesus is like a good shepherd and how we are like sheep. They made sheep puppets and wrote or told stories about their lost sheep.



Talk with your child about . . .

. . . a time you lost something and how you found it. Talk about the excitement of finding the lost item. In our Bible story, the shepherd wanted to celebrate the finding of the lost sheep with neighbors.

If your child is old enough, talk about what you want your child to do if he or she should become separated from you at an event or store. This may be an upsetting subject for some children. Approach the subject with confidence, assuring your child that, just as we prepare for a fire with a fire drill plan, we prepare for being separated with a plan as well.

Jokes

As a way of reducing stress, some people say, "Laughter is the best medicine!" Think up some funny sheep jokes or other animal jokes to ease. Here are a couple of jokes to begin.

Question: What do you get if a sheep walks under a cloud?

Answer: A sheep that's under the weather!

Question: Where does a sheep keep his money?

Answer: In the baaaaank.

Math in the Home

For younger children, have them find things in the house they think are at least one hundred in number, and count!

Older children can think of all the ways you can end up with one hundred as the answer with multiplication or division. Make math arrays (patterns of rows and columns) that total one hundred—for example, five rows of twenty items. Wow! It would be hard to recognize that one sheep was missing!

Read a Book

Share a retelling of the Lost Sheep parable with your child.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep by Claire Miller.

Arch Books Bible Stories. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008.

Arch Books Bible Stories also has the companion parables Jesus told about being found: *The Lost Coin* and *The Parable of the Prodigal Son*.

Comic-Book Adventures



We have a summer-long collection of comic-book pages that introduce us to Jake and Anna, two children who have an adventure learning about God's amazing Son as they travel back in time to explore the Bible stories themselves. If you save each week's comic-book page, your child can make his or her own book of Bible adventures by coloring the pages, making a cover, and binding the pages into a book. The comic book will be a good reminder of all the stories your child will hear this summer.

Be the Sheep

Note to teacher: Photocopy this resource sheet for each person.

Materials: Scissors, single-hole punch, glue sticks, cotton balls, black markers, black construction paper scraps, pencils

Directions: Cut this page in half along the dashed line. Follow the directions on the bottom half to make a sheep puppet. Use the story prompts to write a story from the point of view of the lost sheep.

Story prompts:

- ? What's your name?
 - ? Where are you?
 - ? What do you like to do?
 - ? Who is your shepherd?
 - ? How did you get lost?
 - ? How do you feel being lost?
 - ? How were you found?
 - ? What happened when you were found?
-

Sheep Pattern

Directions:

1. Cut out the shape below.
2. Punch holes using a single-hole punch where indicated.
3. Carefully cut on the marked lines to the outer circle to make leg holes.
4. Draw a face on your sheep with a black marker.
5. Glue cotton balls to the sheep.
6. Cut out ears from black construction paper and glue them onto your sheep.
7. Put your index and middle fingers through the holes in the sheep to make your sheep's legs.

