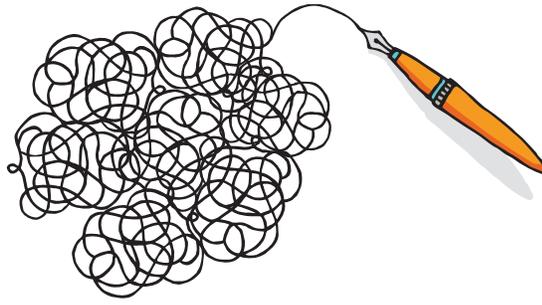


**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE
CHILDREN'S CURRICULUM**

Later Elementary
The Writings





THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

Lesson 1 - Later Elementary

Bible Basis: Psalm 23 found in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings*, page 16
Key Verse: Psalm 23:6 (NirV): "...your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life."
Key Idea: God gives me everything I need.

Master Supplies List

- stuffed animal dog or cat
- self-stick flip chart paper
- markers
- tape
- Bibles
- *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings*
- Family Page (1 per student)

Optional Supplies

You will need the following supplies based on which option(s) you choose in Step 3 | Explore More.

- Option 1: My 23rd Psalm worksheet (1 per student), Bibles, pencils
- Option 2: cord, scissors, beads, metal spring hooks (1 per student), super glue
- Option 3: butcher paper, marker, magazines, scissors, glue sticks



- Option 4: audiovisual equipment to play music or project a video (optional)
- Option 5: Life of David script (1 per student)

STEP 1 | Come Together (10 min)

Supplies: photo of your pet, or a photo of a pet from one of the students in your class

Note: This activity is written as if speaking about your own dog. Adjust the wording as necessary.

- ASK: Do any of you have a pet? *(take responses)*
- SAY: It's a lot of fun to have a pet, but it's also a serious responsibility. You are in charge of making sure your pet has everything it needs. I have a pet dog named Scraps.
- SHOW the picture of your own pet. Allow the students to pass the photo from one to another whenever they respond to a question.
- ASK: What are some things Scraps needs that I can provide for him? *(food, water, shelter, exercise, attention, chew toys, veterinary care)*
- COMMENT: I love Scraps, and I want to give him everything he needs. That means I give him all of those good things you mentioned.
- ASK: Do you think Scraps wants food, water, exercise, and toys? *(yes, of course)*
- EXPLAIN: I can't just give Scraps everything he wants. The other day he wanted some chocolate off the counter. It would've made him sick, so I couldn't give it to him. He wants to run free, but I live near a busy street. I can't give him what he wants. Instead, I put up a fence to protect him because I give him what he needs.
- ASK: Who knows better what Scraps needs, me or him? *(you know better)*
- SAY: Today, we'll learn that God gives us everything we need. That doesn't mean he always gives us everything we want. God is good and loving. We can trust him to know what's best for us.

KEY VERSE

- INTRODUCE this week's Key Verse. Repeat the verse slowly a few times until the students are able to say the verse from memory. (Note: You also may choose to review last week's Key Verse together.)

Psalm 23:6: "I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the LORD forever."



STEP 2 | Hear the Story (20 min)

Supplies: self-stick flip chart paper, markers, scissors, Bibles

DAVID

- ASK: What do you know about David from the Bible? (*take responses*)
- COMMENT: Many of you know how David defeated Goliath. Some of you know he was a king of Israel. But David was also a songwriter. He wrote more than 70 songs or poems, called psalms, that you can find in the Bible
- DIRECT students to find Psalm 23 in their Bibles.

PSALM 23

- GIVE each student (or pair of students) a sheet of flip chart paper and marker. Assign each student or pair one section of the psalm to copy onto the top part of the page. You may choose to divide the psalm into six verses or 14 sentences, depending on the size of your group. Cut off the extra paper.
- TAPE the verses or sentences to a wall or board in order.
- READ through the psalm, with each student or group reading their own section aloud.

THEN AND NOW

- SAY: David wrote this psalm based on his world and his experiences. Listen to the psalm again, with some background information.
- READ aloud verse 1, and then 1 Samuel 17:12–15.
- EXPLAIN: David took care of his father’s sheep. He knew a shepherd had to make sure the sheep had everything they need. For David, it was a clear comparison to think of God as a shepherd, taking care of his every need.
- ASK: What are some other ways we think of God? (*Possibly: a loving father, a righteous judge, a best friend, a wise teacher*)
- CONTINUE reading the psalm, interjecting the background information about David and asking students to share their own life applications.

Ps 23 Verse	Background Reading	Application Question
1	1 Samuel 17:12-15	David took care of his father’s sheep. He knew a shepherd had to make sure the sheep had everything they need. What are some other ways we think of God? (<i>a loving father, a righteous judge, a best friend, a wise teacher</i>)
2	2 Samuel 9:3, 6-7	David showed God’s kindness and care to Mephibosheth, and provided for him. How has God taken care of your needs? (<i>take responses</i>)



Ps 23 Verse	Background Reading	Application Question
3	1 Samuel 17:28–32	David wanted to do the right thing. Maybe this was in response to a mean older brother. When do you need God’s help to do the right thing? (<i>take responses</i>)
4	1 Samuel 17:33–37	David relied on God to protect him, just as he protected his sheep. As a shepherd, he found a rod and staff comforting. What do you find comforting? (<i>praying, reading the Bible, singing worship songs, journaling</i>)
5	1 Samuel 16:10–13	God chose David to become king of Israel. What has he done for you? (<i>take responses</i>)
6	1 Kings 2:1–3	David loved and served the Lord his whole life. As an old man about to die, this is what he thought was most important. How can you be sure you will “live in the house of the LORD forever”? (<i>by trusting in Jesus, obeying his commands, following God’s laws</i>)

- CONTINUE through the psalm one verse at a time. For each verse, read the background reading that illustrates the Psalm 23 verse using an event in David’s life. Summarize the background information about David, and ask the students to share their own life applications. (*The following chart provides guidelines for this discussion, and is not meant to be written out for the class.*)

STEP 3 | Explore More

Choose from these activity options to help children explore the lesson further.

Option 1: My 23rd Psalm (20 min)

Supplies: My 23rd Psalm worksheet (1 per student), Bibles, pencils

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the My 23rd Psalm worksheet.

- GIVE each student a worksheet.
- INSTRUCT them to write their own personal Psalm 23, using comparisons and examples that are meaningful to them.
- ASSIST them in referring to David’s example in Psalm 23 (e.g., David found a shepherd’s staff to be a sign of comfort. How does God comfort you?).
- INVITE students to share their psalm with a partner or the group if they are comfortable doing so.

Option 2: Psalm 23 Zipper Pull (20 min)



Supplies: cord, scissors, beads, metal spring hook as pictured (1 per student), super glue

Teacher Prep: Cut the cord into 8-inch lengths (1 per student). Sort through your beads to ensure you have the required number of each color.

- GIVE each student a metal clip, length of cord, and beads.
- INSTRUCT them to slide the end of the cord through the metal clip and tie a double knot.



- GUIDE the students to string colored beads onto the cord, working in this order from top to bottom. As you string each bead, explain how its color will help them remember part of Psalm 23.
 - white - The Lord (pure, sinless)
 - green - green grass
 - blue - quiet waters
 - gray - right paths
 - black - darkest valley
 - brown - rod and staff
 - “F” alphabet bead - feast (or a bead made of porcelain - dishes at a feast)
 - yellow - oil
 - red or heart-shaped - goodness and love
 - gold - house of the Lord
- INSTRUCT students to tie a sturdy double knot under the last bead. Secure both knots with super glue and set aside to dry.
- ENCOURAGE students to clip their zipper pull to a bag or jacket where it will remind them to recite the words of Psalm 23 or spark a conversation with a friend.

Option 3: Wants and Needs (20 min)

Supplies: butcher paper, marker, magazines, scissors, glue sticks

Teacher Prep: Divide the paper into three large sections labeled Spiritual Needs, Earthly Needs, and Wants.

Preview magazines for appropriateness.

- SAY: We can bring all our cares to God and know that he'll always give us what we need. Often, he also gives us what we want.
- ASK: What is the difference between a want and a need? (*take responses*)
- EXPLAIN: Actually, there are different kinds of needs. Earthly needs are ones our bodies need to survive. They're usually things we can buy at a store, like food or blankets. But spiritual needs can be met only by God. Being best friends with Jesus fulfills our need for peace, joy, and other spiritual needs.
- INSTRUCT students to look for examples of spiritual needs, earthly needs, and wants in magazines to cut out and glue to a class mural. They can use images, words, or even letters to create words.
- ASSIST students in coming up with ideas and categorizing them correctly (but expect some debate over things like a car or education).
- HANG the mural where others can appreciate it.

Option 4: Praise and Worship (15 min)

Supplies: audiovisual equipment to play music or project a video (optional)

Teacher Prep: Contact students a few days before class. Invite them to choose a worship song to play on an instrument, to sing along with, or to dance to. Ensure students' musical selections are appropriate for worship.

- SAY: David not only wrote songs, he danced and played an instrument.



- READ aloud 2 Samuel 6:14–15 and 1 Samuel 16:23.
- ALLOW students to use their musical talents to worship the Lord, just as David did. Those who brought an instrument can perform a song. Those who choose to sing a solo (or duet with a friend) can do so with the optional accompaniment of an online lyric/music video.

Option 5: Act it Out (15 min)

Supplies: Life of David script (1 per student)

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the Life of David script.

- ASSIGN roles to students and act out the skit. Choose six students to read the parts of David and all the rest to read the Chorus.

STEP 4 | Going Home (5 min)

Supplies: Family Page (1 per student)

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the Family Page.

- THANK God for loving us, guiding us, and giving us everything we need.
- GIVE each student a copy of this week's Family Page.
- SAY: Give this page to your family when they pick you up. It will remind you to tell your family about God our shepherd.
- INVITE students to practice telling you what they remember about the 23rd Psalm.
- REVIEW today's story and Key Idea as you wait for the students to get picked up.
- HELP students practice saying today's Key Verse from memory.
- REMIND students to prepare for next week's lesson by reading *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings, Days 6-10*
- REMIND each student to take home any activity sheets or craft projects and the Family Page.

FAMILY PAGE

Lesson 1: The Lord Is My Shepherd

Bible Basis: Psalm 23 found in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings*, page 16

Key Verse: Psalm 23:6 (NIRV): “I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the LORD forever.”

Key Idea: God gives me everything I need.

How to Use This Page

This week, your family can read the Bible Basis passage from page 16 in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings* to help your child remember the lesson. Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table, while driving in the car, or just about anywhere. The Living Faith activity is designed to remind your child of the Bible lesson through a drama or other engaging activity. The Extra Mile idea provides interactive ways for your child to connect with the story.

Table Talk

1. Tell me about a time when you didn't get what you wanted. How did it turn out?
2. How is God like a shepherd?
3. What do you do when you are afraid or need comfort?
4. How can you be sure you will live in the house of the Lord forever?

Living Faith

Option 1

There are so many ways to praise the Lord! Write a poem. Sing a song. Play an instrument. Dance to worship music. Follow David's example and use your talents (or at least your enthusiasm) to worship the Lord. Invite a few friends or relatives to join you and turn it into a praise party!

Option 2

Memorize all of Psalm 23. At six verses long, this is a worthy challenge. Each day, practice the chapter in different ways. Write it on index cards, read it from the Bible, type it on a computer, say it out loud. Before you know it, you'll have the whole psalm hidden in your heart!

Extra Mile

- As a family, explore some of David's other psalms. Discuss the differences between psalms of praise (Psalm 29), repentance (Psalm 51), lament (Psalm 13), and wisdom (Psalm 37).
- Remember to thank God for giving you everything you need. Every day this week, spend time as a family sharing something God has given you. It can be something tangible, like the food on your table, or intangible, like the courage to speak up for what's right. You may find you like this exercise enough to make it a regular routine!
- Look for opportunities this week to talk as a family about wants versus earthly needs versus spiritual needs. Your children constantly are bombarded by media messages that appeal to their "wants." Make sure you counter this influence by pointing out how God provides for all of our *needs*.

Prepare for Next Week

Help your student prepare for next week's lesson by reading *The Books of the Bible for Kids*, *The Writings*, Days 6-10, and encourage your student to respond with journaling.

If you are reading *The Books of the Bible*, *The Writings* with your small group, you are discussing your questions and insights with them from week to week. Include your family in the conversation about this week's reading, using the following discussion starters:

- What did you read that you never knew about before?
- Was there anything you wondered about?
- What did you learn about loving God?
- What did you learn about loving others?

Name _____ Date _____

MY 23RD PSALM

¹ THE LORD IS MY _____, HE GIVES
ME EVERYTHING I NEED.

² HE LETS ME _____
_____, HE LEADS ME _____
_____.

³ HE GIVES ME _____, HE GUIDES
ME IN THE RIGHT PATHS FOR THE HONOR OF HIS NAME.

⁴ EVEN THOUGH _____,
I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. YOU ARE WITH ME. YOUR _____
AND _____ COMFORT ME.

⁵ YOU PREPARE A FEAST FOR ME RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY
ENEMIES. YOU _____
_____, MY CUP RUNS OVER.

⁶ I AM SURE THAT YOUR GOODNESS AND LOVE WILL FOLLOW ME
ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE. AND I WILL LIVE IN THE HOUSE OF
THE LORD FOREVER.

SKIT: LIFE OF DAVID

Characters

Chorus	Shepherd David	Author David
Ancestor David	Fugitive David	King David
Warrior David		

Chorus: The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need.

Shepherd David: I am the youngest of my father's eight sons. I watch over our sheep. When the prophet Samuel came looking for the Lord's chosen one, my father didn't even call me in from the field at first.

Chorus: He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters.

Author David: I spent many long, lonely days out in the desert with the sheep. Perhaps that's when I first started composing songs. In those quiet moments with the Lord, I tuned my heart to him. Eventually, I wrote more than 70 psalms.

Chorus: He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name.

Fugitive David: When King Saul tried to kill me, the Lord helped me do what was right. I easily could have killed Saul in the cave where I was hiding, but I didn't do it. I cut off a corner of Saul's robe to show him I could have killed him. But I would not harm the Lord's chosen king.

Chorus: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me.

Warrior David: As a young shepherd, I killed a lion and a bear. As a boy too small to wear armor, I struck down a mighty giant. As a soldier, I led my men against enemy armies. I was not afraid because I knew the Lord was with me. He gave me victory.

Chorus: You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over.

King David: The Lord chose me as king when I was still young. After many years of patiently

waiting, and even being abused by King Saul, I took the throne. I united the people of Israel and brought the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem.

Chorus: I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Ancestor David: Hundreds of years after my death, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He is called the "son of David" and traces his family tree back to me. I am remembered as a man after God's own heart.