

Discussion Prompts



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The first part in *italics* of each bullet point is a quote from the story. The explanation that follows helps guide discussion with the child.

Page 1 & 2 in paperback / hardcover book (Page 1 on slideshow and in video)

* The **Good Shepherd** represents our savior, Jesus Christ, the son of Abba God, our heavenly Father. The Good Shepherd in the story is a picture of Jesus. Just as a shepherd lovingly cares for his sheep, Jesus lovingly cares, guides and protects us.

*** “Every morning, He comes to the gate...”**

The Good Shepherd is always there for you—every morning and every day of your life. He is never late and never absent. He wants to walk with you through each new day and lead you in the right way.

*** “... calls each one of us by name. He never forgets a single sheep—He knows all our names by heart!”**

The Good Shepherd knows your name because He made you. He chose for you to exist and loves you deeply. He wants a personal relationship with you—just as He knows you personally, He wants you to know Him too.

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*** “The Good Shepherd walks ahead of us, calling our names as He goes.”**

The Good Shepherd goes before us and shows us the way. He knows where we should go and what is best for our lives. When we follow Him, we can trust that He is leading us to good and safe places. We don’t have to rush ahead—He walks in front and invites us to follow.

*** “His voice is always kind and gentle, and I know it right away—because I belong to Him.”**

The voice of the Good Shepherd is loving, calm, and gentle. As we learn to follow Him, we begin to recognize His voice. The more we listen and choose to obey what He says, the easier it becomes to know when He is speaking to us.

*** “He leads us to quiet, peaceful places.”**

The Good Shepherd leads us to places of peace and rest. He never leads us into danger or harm. When something brings fear, confusion, or destruction, it is not from the Good Shepherd. He always desires peace and goodness for us.

*** “There is soft, sweet grass to nibble and cool, sparkling water to drink.”**

In the places where the Good Shepherd leads us, He provides everything we need. Just as sheep need food and water, He takes care of our hearts and our lives. We can trust Him to care for us each day.

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“I always feel safe with the Good Shepherd, because He truly loves His sheep. He will do anything to protect us—even give His own life.”

The Good Shepherd loves His sheep very much and keeps them safe. Just as sheep have enemies like wolves, bears, and lions, we also have an enemy who wants to harm us. But when we stay close to the Good Shepherd, Jesus, we do not need to be afraid. Jesus gave His life on the cross because He loves us

and wanted to save us. Like a shepherd who would give his life for his sheep, Jesus will do anything to protect us.

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*** “When I wander too far, my Good Shepherd calls me back with His gentle voice.”**

When we start to drift away from Jesus or try to live life without Him, the Holy Spirit gently calls us back. The Good Shepherd never stops loving us, and He always invites us to return to Him.

*** “If I get too close to the edge of a cliff, He comes and walks between me and the danger—so I don’t fall. When dark clouds fill the sky and the wind begins to blow, He gathers us close and says, “Don’t be afraid. You are safe with Me.””**

No matter where we are or what is happening in our lives, Jesus is always near. When things feel scary or difficult, He stays close and protects us. When we remain near the Good Shepherd, we can trust that we are safe in His care.

Page 9 & 10 in paperback / hardcover book (Page 5 on slideshow and in video)

“Every day, my Good Shepherd calls me to spend quiet time with Him. He tells me how much He loves me ...”

Jesus invites you to spend time alone with Him every day. In quiet moments, He reminds you how deeply you are loved. Talking with Jesus and being close to Him helps your heart grow strong and peaceful. Spending time with Him is an important and special part of each day.

Page 11 & 12 in paperback / hardcover book (Page 6 on slideshow and in video)

*** “He tells us stories ...”**

God speaks to us through His Word, the Bible. Through His Word He teaches us how to live, how to make good choices, and how to trust Him when things feel hard or confusing.

*** “He says there is one who pretends to be a shepherd—but he is not kind or good. No wolf, bear, or lion is as unloving as the bad shepherd.”**

The story reminds us that there is an enemy who pretends to lead but does not love us. The Bible teaches that the devil wants to harm and deceive, just like the bad shepherd in the story. This helps us understand why it is important to follow only the Good Shepherd.

*** “But we don’t have to be afraid—not when we stay close to our Good Shepherd.”**

Even though we should be careful and wise, we do not need to be afraid of the devil. When we stay close to Jesus, we are safe. Just as the sheep are protected when they remain with the Good Shepherd, we are protected when we stay close to Him.

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*** “The little creature hopped away, and I followed, curious to see where it would go.”**

Sometimes things may look interesting or exciting and can tempt us to move away from Jesus. This reminds us to be careful of anything that pulls our hearts away from Him. When something becomes more important than Jesus, it can slowly lead us away from His care.

*** “I wandered further and further... until I couldn’t hear the Good Shepherd’s voice anymore.”**

The more we move away from Jesus, the harder it becomes to hear His voice. Just like Molly could no longer hear the Good Shepherd when she followed the rabbit, we need to stay close to Jesus so we can hear Him clearly and remain safe.

*** “I was lost.”**

When we wander away from Jesus, we can begin to feel confused, lonely, and lost inside. Staying close to the Good Shepherd helps us know where we belong.

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*** “Master! Master!” I called, but there was no answer. I ran this way and that, searching for my Good Shepherd—but I couldn’t see Him anywhere.”**

When someone is lost, everything feels confusing and scary. Just like Molly ran around not knowing where to go, life can feel that way when we drift away from Jesus. Without listening to His voice, it is hard to know the right direction. This reminds us how important it is to stay close to the Good Shepherd.

*** “Then, from behind a bush, I saw another sheep. But something felt different. This sheep didn’t look like anyone in my flock. Its wool was dark, and its eyes didn’t look kind.”**

When we are lost and away from our Good Shepherd, the enemy looks for a chance to come into our lives. Just like the black sheep appeared when Molly was alone, wrong influences can show up when we are far from Jesus and try to lead us even farther away from Him.

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*** “Hello, little lamb,” he said. “You look lost. Come with me. My shepherd will show you the way.”**

Sometimes people may say kind or helpful words, but their hearts are not leading toward Jesus. This reminds us that not everyone who offers help is truly guiding us back to God. We must be careful and listen for the voice of the Good Shepherd.

*** “He stepped closer, and I felt nervous. But I didn’t know what else to do... So I followed him.”**

When we feel lost, scared, or unsure, it can seem easier to follow others or do what everyone else is doing. This teaches us how important it is to pause, be careful, and remember that the Good Shepherd is the one we should follow.

* **“All the sheep had black wool ...”**

Those who choose wrong paths often gather together and encourage each other to keep making bad choices. This helps us understand why it is important to stay close to the Good Shepherd and His flock.

* **“... and eyes that didn’t look kind.”**

A person’s character often shows in how they act and look. This reminds us that those who do not follow the Good Shepherd may not show kindness or love. God helps us notice when something feels wrong so we can be careful and stay close to Him.

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* **“Suddenly, a loud, rough voice shouted,...”**

The voice of the bad shepherd is very different from the voice of the Good Shepherd. While Jesus speaks gently and lovingly, the enemy’s voice can be loud, harsh, and frightening. It may accuse us or make us feel scared or ashamed.

* **“Hey, you there! Where did you come from?”**

When you belong to Jesus, you may stand out among those who do not follow Him. This reminds us that living God’s way can sometimes make us look different—but that is a good thing.

* **“He slammed his staff on the ground with a thud.”**

The enemy tries to scare and intimidate people. He uses anger and fear to make others feel small or powerless. But the Good Shepherd’s strength protects us, and we do not need to be afraid when we stay close to Jesus.

* **“He wore a dark cloak,...”**

The dark cloak shows how different the bad shepherd is from the Good Shepherd. Jesus represents truth, light, and goodness, while the enemy represents darkness, lies, and sin. This helps us see why we should always choose to follow Jesus, who leads us in love and truth.

* **“... and his eyes looked angry and mean.”**

The angry eyes show the bad shepherd’s heart. They remind us that the enemy is filled with anger and hate. Jesus is very different—His eyes are gentle, kind, and full of love. Sometimes, we can sense what is in a person’s heart by the way they act and look.

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* **“He let out a harsh, croaky laugh—”**

The bad shepherd laughs when someone is lost or scared. This shows that the enemy has no kindness or compassion. He does not care when someone is hurting.

* **“... but then he smiled and said, “Sure, follow me.””**

The enemy often lies and pretends to be helpful. He may speak sweetly or make things sound easy so people trust him. But his goal is never to lead anyone back to Jesus. He wants to deceive and lead people farther away from God.

* **“But his voice didn’t sound kind, and his way didn’t feel right.”**

When you belong to Jesus, you begin to recognize His loving voice. Even if the enemy tries to sound friendly, his voice and actions will feel wrong. The way Jesus leads is always different—full of love, peace, and truth.

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* **“For many days, I followed the bad shepherd—further and further away from my Master.”**

The enemy always tries to pull people farther away from Jesus. He is afraid of Jesus, who already won the victory on the cross, so he tries to take people far from Him.

* **“The bad shepherd did not tell the truth.”**

The Bible tells us that the enemy is the father of lies. He cannot be trusted and will always try to deceive.

* **“The water he gave me tasted bitter, and he fed me strange leaves.”**

Life away from Jesus never brings true joy or goodness. The enemy offers things that may seem interesting but are not good for us. These things feel strange because they are very different from the goodness we know with Jesus.

* **“He said they were good for me, ...”**

The enemy often says that wrong things are good. This reminds us to be careful and to trust what Jesus teaches us instead.

* **“... but one morning, I was scared to see some of the wool on my legs turning black.”**

When someone stays away from Jesus and spends time around bad influences, their behavior can begin to change. Slowly, they may start acting and thinking in ways that are not good for them.

*** “He wanted to make me a black sheep, too.”**

The enemy wants to pull people away from God and keep them from following Jesus. But Jesus never stops loving His sheep and always wants them back.

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*** “The black sheep were not kind to me. They pushed me and shoved me. One day, as we walked near a deep ravine, one of the black sheep bumped me with his head.”**

Even if bad influences seem friendly at first, they often end up causing harm. This teaches us why it is important to choose friends and leaders who are kind and loving, like Jesus.

*** “There was no way to climb back up—the rock was smooth and very steep. I was trapped.”**

When someone wanders far from Jesus, they can end up feeling stuck and helpless, not knowing how to get back on their own.

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*** “Maybe this will teach you, silly sheep.” Then he walked away.”**

The enemy is cruel and does not help when someone is in trouble. He abandons people when they need help the most.

*** “Master, please hear me,” I called. “I’m in trouble. Please find me, Good Shepherd.” I called over and over, far into the quiet night.”**

When we are in great trouble and don’t know what to do, the best thing we can do is call out to Jesus. He always hears His sheep.

Page 29 & 30 in paperback / hardcover book (Page 15 on slideshow and in video)

These pages show a time of deep trouble, like a strong storm that won’t stop. Sometimes life feels this way—scary and overwhelming. When we don’t even have words to speak, we can still cry out to Jesus in our hearts. He hears us.

Page 31 & 32 in paperback / hardcover book (Page 16 on slideshow and in video)

These pages remind us that Jesus may seem late sometimes, especially when things feel hopeless. But Jesus is never too late. He always comes at just the right moment to save and help us.

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*** “The stormy clouds had moved away, ...”**

When Jesus comes to help us, trouble begins to fade away, just like storm clouds clearing from the sky. Jesus always makes a way.

*** “He told me that the moment He saw I was missing, He left all the other sheep to come and find me. He never stopped searching—not until He found me.”**

Jesus loves each of His sheep deeply. The moment someone is lost, He begins searching. He never gives up and never stops until He brings them home.

*** “The Good Shepherd wrapped His arms around me, and tears fell from His eyes as He said, “Molly, I’m so happy I found you. I missed you very much.””**

When Jesus brings someone back after they have been lost, He is filled with joy and love. He is so happy when His sheep return to Him.

*** ““I’m sorry, Master,” I whispered. “I wandered away from You. I was not being obedient.””**

Saying sorry to Jesus is called repentance. It shows that we truly regret our choices and want to follow Him again.

*** ““Shh, little one,” He said gently. “Don’t worry your heart anymore. You are safe now. I love you very much.””**

When we say sorry, Jesus forgives us right away. He does not want us to feel guilty anymore. He comforts us and reminds us how much He loves us.

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*** “My Good Shepherd brought me back to His flock.”**

After Jesus finds us, He brings us back to a place of safety, love, and belonging.

*** “Slowly, the black wool on my legs turned soft and white again.”**

When we return to Jesus, the effects of wrong choices slowly fade. He restores our hearts and helps us become new again.

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Praise Jesus, who is truly our **Good Shepherd**—loving, faithful, and always ready to rescue His sheep.
