

## Bible background

Luke 15:1-7

## Aim of lesson

To show that God loves everyone, even those who do things that are wrong or silly, and this means that God loves each one of the children in your class.

## Preparation required

Cut out the sheep in your activity book. Hide them around the room. You will need cotton wool or lint and a large box.

## Suggested outline of lesson

1. Ask the children to hunt for the sheep and bring them to you to put in the box which represents the sheepfold or pen.
2. Explain why the shepherd would bring his sheep to the fold. Count the sheep to see that they are all there. Tell them the story of the shepherd who discovered that one was missing. Talk about what the shepherd would do. Stress that he cares about each of the sheep and that Jesus taught that God cares about each one of us just as much. Discuss the danger that might come to the lost sheep if the shepherd does not find it.
3. Use the song 'God Loves' to teach that just as the shepherd does not say 'Oh well, never mind that one, I've still got lots more' neither does God think like that of us, even though he has everyone in the world to care for. If the children are able to understand that the words are speaking metaphorically, it may be appropriate to use the second and third verses to personalise the thought that God will seek for us when we are lost - but be aware that the children may think the parable is saying that if they become separated from their parents, God will literally come to find them.
4. The children could make their sheep, gluing cotton wool or lint on to them, and take them home.

## Alternative activities

1. Make sheep masks with paper plates and cotton wool.
2. Make sheep folds out of modelling clay, Lego or blocks. Have some toy sheep to count, or make some out of modelling clay.
3. If you have a sand tray, you could dampen the sand and sculpt a landscape, build a sheepfold and add some plant cuttings for bushes and stones for rocks or cut the shapes from card. Use toy figures and sheep or make from modelling clay. The children can take turns to hide one of the sheep for the shepherd to find.
4. Make a collage picture.

## Relevance to the children's lives

Discuss how we can be 'lost' to God. He can always see us so he always knows where we are. However, if we choose to be selfish and do not care about what God teaches is we can get lost because our lives have gone in the wrong direction.

## Prayer

Ask the children each day to say thank you to God for loving them.

## Verse

'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' Luke 15:6.

## Song

God Loves

(Tune: The Good Ship Sails On The Alley Alley O)



- v.1 God loves Mary very, very much (*Use the names of all your class in turn.*)  
very, very much  
very, very much  
Yes, God loves Mary very, very much  
And I'm glad that God loves me too.

For children who understand the concept of being 'lost' the second verse can be sung with the child named in the centre of the circle while the others walk around.

- v.2 And if she's lost he'll come and find her  
come and find her  
come and find her  
And if she's lost he'll come and find her  
All because our God loves Mary.

For the second verse the class walk around shading their eyes with one hand as though seeking.

- v.3 And when he finds her, he is very glad  
he is very glad he is very glad  
And when he finds her, he is very glad  
He is delighted he's found Mary.

For third verse skip round in circle and clap for the last line.

*Music: Traditional.*