

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

10-17 year olds

Week 1

The Lord is my Shepherd

The Lord is my Shepherd

The objective is the goal or main teaching point of this week's study. If you convey one thing to your players, make it this.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. Each week's memory verse will be in bold.

Our lessons for our older age groups are designed to be more discussion-based. This section is for the coach to read ahead of time so that he/she understands the goal of the discussion and is able to direct the conversation.

Objective This study will show the kids that the Lord is our Shepherd. He takes care of us, and we must follow Him.

Scripture Passage:

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters."

Psalm 23:1-2

Coaches Guide

Psalm 23 compares us to sheep, which is not very flattering. Sheep are not smart, fast, or strong, and are easy prey for predators. That's why they need a shepherd to lead, protect, and provide for them. Likewise, we need the Lord as our Shepherd to lead, protect, and provide for us.

Sheep need grass to eat, calm water to drink, and a safe place to lie down where they will not be threatened by predators. A good shepherd will guide the sheep to these things. Our verses say that the Lord is like this good shepherd. He provides for not just our physical needs, like food or water, but also takes care of our spiritual needs, such as giving us wisdom in His Word and the ability to talk to Him in prayer, and gives us all kinds of extra blessings as well.

Some people don't want the Lord to be their Shepherd because that means He is the boss of their life, but that would be like a sheep thinking that it didn't need a shepherd and wandering off on its own. Most likely, that sheep would get lost or eaten. Just as the safest place for a sheep to be is under the care and leading of the shepherd, the best place for us to be is following the Lord. Yes, that does mean He gets to lead us rather than us leading ourselves, but like the Shepherd in Psalm 23, He leads us into places that are for our good, even if they are not the places that we wanted to go.

We all have a choice to make: are we going to live our own way and do what we want, like a sheep without a shepherd, or will we follow the Lord and allow Him to lead, protect, and provide for us?

Team discussion gives questions to ask your team in order to discuss today's topic. Use the information from the coaches guide to steer the conversation toward the biblical truth.

"On the Field" gives some in-game situations where today's lesson can be applied, while "Off the Field" gives examples from everyday life. Encourage them to do the things you listed during the game today.

These are some final notes/goals to accomplish this week. These are not meant to be read, but are instructions for the coach.

Team Discussion

1. What animal would you compare yourself to? Do you know what animal the Bible compares us to?
2. How are we like sheep? How is the Lord like a Shepherd to us?
3. In what ways does the Lord provide for us?
4. What would happen to a sheep if it thought it knew better than the shepherd and decided not to follow the shepherd? The same way, why is it important for us to follow and obey the Lord?
5. Is the Lord your Shepherd? If not, you can make the decision to follow Him and ask Him to forgive your sins and be your Lord and Savior.

On the Field

- In everything we do, we should follow the Lord our Shepherd. That includes soccer. When you play, act in a way that honors Him, which includes playing fairly, acting humbly, and respecting teammates, coaches, opponents, and the refs.
- The Lord provides not just the things we need, but also gives extra blessings, like a chance to play soccer. Thank Him for allowing you to play.

Off the Field

- As our Shepherd, the Lord takes care of our needs. Thank Him for all the things He provides for you.
- It's important to read the Bible in order to learn more about how to follow the Lord your Shepherd.
- You must choose to follow the Lord as your Shepherd. If you haven't put your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you can do that today!

The Game Plan

1. Learn and memorize Psalm 23:1-2 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
2. As this is the first week, take some time to make sure everyone on your team knows each other's names.
3. If the Lord is our Shepherd, that means we need to follow Him and do everything, including playing soccer, His way. Talk to your team about what that would look like.