

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

4-9 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.

Here is where we will discuss today's passage with the players. This can be read off the page or summarized and explained in the coach's own words.

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

In the Word

If you could be any animal, what would you be? (Let them give answers.) Most likely, none of you picked a sheep. Sheep are not very smart, strong, or fast. And even if you think they look cute, you probably wouldn't want to *be* a sheep. But do you know what animal the Bible compares us to? That's right, sheep!

Now maybe you're thinking, "How am I like a sheep? I think I'm a lot smarter stronger, and faster than a sheep!" Sheep need someone who can lead them, provide for them, and protect them because they easily get lost, can't hunt, and are unable to defend themselves. They need a shepherd. The Bible says that, just like sheep, we need a Shepherd who can lead, provide for, and protect us. Psalm 23:1-2 tells us that the Lord is our Shepherd.

But what kind of Shepherd is the Lord? These verses tell us that He is a good and kind Shepherd who loves and takes care of His sheep. Sheep need plenty of grass to eat, water to drink, and a place to rest where they can feel safe from harm. We read that God is like a shepherd who brings His sheep to green fields full of grass where the sheep can lie down safely, and He leads them to calm water that is safe and easy to drink. The same way, the Lord takes care of us and provides the things we need. But He doesn't just care about our physical needs, like food and water. He also takes care of our spiritual needs. He protects us, speaks to us in His Word, and allows us to talk to Him in prayer.

In the Word (Continued)

Maybe you don't like the idea of the Lord being your Shepherd. After all, that means He's the boss. He gets to tell you where to go and what to do. But having this attitude would be like a sheep saying, "I don't want to follow the shepherd anymore. I want to go where I want and do what I want." What would happen to that sheep? It would probably get lost or eaten. The safest and best place for a sheep to be is following the shepherd. The same way, the best place for us to be is following our Shepherd. He tells us to do things like tell the truth, obey our parents, and treat others better than ourselves, and sometimes we don't want to do those things. But the Lord doesn't tell us to do these things so He can be mean and controlling. He loves us, and He know that obeying Him is what is best for us, just like following the shepherd is what's best for the sheep.

"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.

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!

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

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.