Strike the Shepherd

MARK 14:27-50 (BSB) · TEACHER GUIDE · DIGDEEPER.AI

THE BIG IDEA · SAY IT AT LEAST FIVE TIMES

The Shepherd walked the right path himself, and leads scattered sheep back.

Open with it, bring it back after every section, close with it. By the end they should be able to finish the sentence for you.

- Before this passage (day 11): Mark 14:17-26, Jesus' Table. Its big idea: Jesus set his table with his enemy beside him, and gave himself anyway.
- After this passage (day 13): Mark 15:33-39, Forsaken. Its big idea: The Shepherd took the rod of judgment, so his rod and staff comfort us.

Open

Recall last time (Mark 14:17-26): Jesus set his table with his enemy beside him. Today: the second half of Psalm 23:3, “He guides me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of His name.” Ask: Have you ever been sure of the way and been wrong? Read Mark 14:27-28. Big idea: The Shepherd walked the right path himself, and leads scattered sheep back. Ask one person what stuck from last time.

Run Sheet

1. Paths of Righteousness (Psalm 23:3, about 8 min)

The one thing: The guidance of Psalm 23:3 rests on the Shepherd’s name, so it holds even when the sheep fail.

Ask: Why is it good news that the Shepherd guides “for the sake of His name” and not for the sake of ours?

2. Not What I Will (Mark 14:27-42, about 12 min)

The one thing: The Shepherd walked the right path himself, at great cost, and his obedience makes his sheep righteous.

Ask: What does Jesus’ prayer show about what it means to walk a path of righteousness when the path is hard?

3. Everyone Fled (Mark 14:43-50, about 10 min)

The one thing: The scattered sheep are brought back by the Shepherd, who goes ahead of them.

Ask: The sheep scatter, just as Jesus said. What did he already promise them about what would come after?

Close (never cut it)

Read Mark 14:27-28, then Psalm 23:3. The Shepherd was struck, the sheep scattered, and he went ahead of them. Say together: “He guides me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of His name.”

PROTECT THE ENDING

If the last section starts late, read v36 and v50 and go to the close.

KIDS SIDE ANSWERS

Story order: 2, 1, 4, 5, 3 (top to bottom) · Feelings: Jesus praying in the garden sad, The friends who fell asleep sad, The friends when the men came worried, The friends when Jesus came back for them happy · Code: HE GUIDES ME

Act it out: One child is the shepherd and walks a winding path around the room. The other children are sheep and follow. At one point the sheep scatter, and the shepherd goes and gathers each one back, saying, “Follow me.”

1. Paths of Righteousness

PSALM 23:3 · ABOUT 8 MIN · SECTION 1 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- The Shepherd chooses the road; the sheep follow.
- “Guides” is nachah, the verb for the pillar of cloud that guided Israel (Exodus 13:21).
- “For the sake of His name”: he guides because of who he is, not because of the sheep’s record.

“I will strike the SHEPHERD, and the sheep will be scattered.” (Mark 14:27) Psalm 23:3 says the Shepherd guides.

“After I have risen, I will go AHEAD of you into Galilee.” (Mark 14:28) A shepherd leads from the front.

Discuss: Why is it good news that the Shepherd guides “for the sake of His name” and not for the sake of ours?

The guidance of Psalm 23:3 rests on the Shepherd’s name, so it holds even when the sheep fail.

MUST COVER

- Psalm 23:3: “He guides me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of His name.”
- Psalm 31:3: “lead me and guide me for the sake of Your name.”

IF THERE'S TIME

- Ezekiel 36:22: “It is not for your sake that I will act... but for My holy name.”

Illustration idea: A mountain guide who goes back down the trail to fetch a hiker who wandered off, because a guide does not leave anyone behind.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: He guides, I follow.
- Listen for: His name, not my record.

If it drifts: If the talk turns to how to know God’s will for specific decisions, bring it back: the psalm is about who guides and why he keeps on.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

The Shepherd guides for his own name’s sake, and his name does not fail.

Short on time? Drop Ezekiel 36:22. Keep Psalm 31:3.

Bridge → On the way to Gethsemane, the Shepherd tells his sheep they are about to scatter.

2. Not What I Will

MARK 14:27-42 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 2 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Jesus quotes Zechariah: the Shepherd struck, the sheep scattered.
- Peter insists he will never fall away.
- In Gethsemane Jesus prays, “Not what I will, but what You will,” while his friends sleep.

“Yet not what I WILL, but what You will.”

“Watch and PRAY so that you will not enter into temptation.”

Discuss: What does Jesus’ prayer show about what it means to walk a path of righteousness when the path is hard?

The Shepherd walked the right path himself, at great cost, and his obedience makes his sheep righteous.

MUST COVER

- v29-31: Peter trusts his own sense of direction (Jeremiah 10:23).
- v36: Jesus says honestly what he wants and yields to his Father; Romans 5:19: “through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.”

IF THERE'S TIME

- Gethsemane means oil press.
- John 12:27-28: “Now My soul is troubled... Father, glorify Your name!”

Illustration idea: A leader who takes the hardest assignment himself so that his team can follow behind him.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: He chose the right path at great cost.
- Listen for: The disciples trusted themselves.

If it drifts: If the discussion becomes about whether Jesus could have refused, return to v36: he asked honestly and chose his Father’s will.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

In Gethsemane the Shepherd walked the path of righteousness for us.

Short on time? Drop the oil press note. Keep v36.

Bridge → Then the arresting party arrives, and the sheep run.

3. Everyone Fled

MARK 14:43-50 · ABOUT 10 MIN · SECTION 3 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Judas leads an armed crowd and greets Jesus with a kiss.
- Jesus says the Scriptures are being fulfilled.
- Everyone deserts him and flees.

“Then everyone deserted Him and FLED.”

“But this has happened that the SCRIPTURES would be fulfilled.”

Discuss: The sheep scatter, just as Jesus said. What did he already promise them about what would come after?

The scattered sheep are brought back by the Shepherd, who goes ahead of them.

MUST COVER

- v49: nothing here takes God by surprise.
- v50 with v28: the scattering is real, and so is the promise to go ahead of them into Galilee.

IF THERE'S TIME

- John 18:8-9: “let these men go,” so that he lost none of those given to him.
- 1 Peter 2:25: “now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

Illustration idea: A shepherd who counts his flock at dusk, finds the gaps, and goes out into the dark to bring each one back.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: They all ran.
- Listen for: He went ahead of them anyway.

If it drifts: If people dwell on who was most to blame, return to v50: everyone fled, and every one of them was brought back.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

The Shepherd walked the right path himself, and leads scattered sheep back.

Short on time? Drop John 18:8-9. Keep v50 and 1 Peter 2:25.

Bridge → So hear the psalm line again beside the scattering.

With One Friend, Over Coffee

ABOUT 30 MINUTES · FOR A FRIEND WHO IS CURIOUS, OR NOT SURE

1. Start with getting lost. Ask: When were you sure of the way and turned out to be wrong?

2. Read the psalm. Read Psalm 23:3: “He guides me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of His name.”

3. Read Mark. Read Mark 14:27-50 together.

4. The Shepherd and the sheep. Jesus walks the right path in Gethsemane; the disciples, sure of themselves, all run.

5. Leave the question. Ask: Why does it matter that he guides “for the sake of His name”? Leave it with them.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HEAR

“What does “for the sake of His name” mean?”

God acts in keeping with who he is. His guidance rests on his faithfulness, not on how well the sheep are doing.

“Why did Jesus quote Zechariah?”

Zechariah 13:7 foretold the Shepherd struck and the sheep scattered. Jesus shows it is happening as written.

“Did Jesus want to die?”

He asked honestly, “Take this cup from Me,” and then chose his Father’s will: “Yet not what I will, but what You will.”

“What does this mean for me?”

Whoever has wandered can come back. Peter, who ran, wrote that the sheep have “returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25).

Evergreen Principles

Four standards every week. The rest rotate: each lesson brings the few that fit its passage best.

EVERY LESSON

1. Pray before you prepare

Teaching the Bible is spiritual work first (John 15:5).

If you're new: Pray for your class by name during the week.

If you've taught for years: Pray for the one person you find hardest to reach.

2. Study the text first

Understand the passage yourself before any help.

If you're new: Read it in two translations; write your own questions first.

If you've taught for years: Don’t lean on old notes. What did you miss last time?

3. Teach one big idea

People remember one sentence, not four points.

If you're new: Write it in 12 words or fewer before anything else.

If you've taught for years: Test every story against it. If it doesn’t serve it, cut it.

4. Point to Christ

All of Scripture points to him (Luke 24:27).

If you're new: Ask: what does this show about Jesus?

If you've taught for years: Show grace as the reason for obedience, not just the rule.

FOR THIS LESSON

1. Make it concrete

Mark names the places and the hours.

If you're new: Trace the walk from the upper room, across the Kidron, to the olive grove of Gethsemane on a map.

If you've taught for years: Use Mark 14:26, 14:32 and John 18:1.

2. Let the Bible do the talking

Jesus’ prayer carries the passage.

If you're new: Read v36 aloud twice, slowly enough for people to hear each phrase.

If you've taught for years: Then read Psalm 23:3.

3. Let the passage land the way it lands

It ends with everyone running away.

If you're new: Do not rush past v50.

If you've taught for years: Let the silence sit, then read v28.

BEFORE CLASS

- ☐ Read the passage three times
- ☐ Big idea in one sentence
- ☐ Opening and close chosen
- ☐ Know what you’ll cut
- ☐ Handouts, pens, extra Bibles
- ☐ Prayed for the class by name

Openings, Closings & Hard Moments

Pick one opening and one close; rotate so class doesn't get predictable.

OPENINGS

- ask a real-life question: When were you sure of the way and turned out to be wrong?

- use an object: Hold up a trail map and ask: who drew this, and why trust it?
- raise a problem: If the shepherd is struck, who guides the sheep?

CLOSINGS

- restate the big idea: The Shepherd walked the right path himself, and leads scattered sheep back.
- call back to the opening: Return to the times people were sure and wrong, and read Mark 14:28 beside them.
- pray the text: Pray Psalm 31:3 together: “lead me and guide me for the sake of Your name.”

WHEN CLASS GETS HARD

- Someone feels they have wandered too far to come back.: Point to Peter: he ran and denied Jesus, and the Shepherd brought him back (1 Peter 2:25). The guidance rests on the Shepherd’s name.
- Someone is facing a hard decision where the right path is costly.: Point to v36. Jesus was honest about what he wanted and still chose his Father’s will. He walks with those who follow.
- Silence after a question: Wait. Then rephrase simpler, or ask them to talk to a neighbor first.
- One person dominates: “Thanks. Let’s hear from someone who hasn’t spoken yet.” Talk privately if it continues.
- A question you can’t answer: Say so, write it down, bring an answer next week.
- A tangent takes over: “Great question. Let’s catch it after class so we can finish the passage.”

READ THIS WEEK

- Zechariah 13:7-9
- John 10:1-18
- Psalm 31

Free at digdeeper.ai/devotionals/mark/14-27-50/lesson

Strike the Shepherd

MARK 14:27-50 (BSB) · THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD · DIGDEEPER.AI

Key verse: “He guides me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of His name.” Psalm 23:3

THE BIG IDEA

The Shepherd walked the right path himself, and leads scattered sheep back.

1. PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS · PSALM 23:3

- The Shepherd chooses the road; the sheep follow.
- “Guides” is nachah, the verb for the pillar of cloud that guided Israel (Exodus 13:21).
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“I will strike the _____, and the sheep will be scattered.” (Mark 14:27) Psalm 23:3 says the Shepherd guides.

“After I have risen, I will go _____ of you into Galilee.” (Mark 14:28) A shepherd leads from the front.

Discuss: Why is it good news that the Shepherd guides “for the sake of His name” and not for the sake of ours?

2. NOT WHAT I WILL · MARK 14:27-42

- Jesus quotes Zechariah: the Shepherd struck, the sheep scattered.
- Peter insists he will never fall away.
- In Gethsemane Jesus prays, “Not what I will, but what You will,” while his friends sleep.

“Yet not what I _____, but what You will.”

“Watch and _____ so that you will not enter into temptation.”

Discuss: What does Jesus’ prayer show about what it means to walk a path of righteousness when the path is hard?

3. EVERYONE FLED · MARK 14:43-50

- Judas leads an armed crowd and greets Jesus with a kiss.
- Jesus says the Scriptures are being fulfilled.
- Everyone deserts him and flees.

“Then everyone deserted Him and _____.”

“But this has happened that the _____ would be fulfilled.”

Discuss: The sheep scatter, just as Jesus said. What did he already promise them about what would come after?

Read this week: Zechariah 13:7-9 · John 10:1-18 · Psalm 31

For Kids: Strike the Shepherd

MARK 14:27-50 · NAME: _____

Big idea: Jesus leads us on the right path.

1. PUT THE STORY IN ORDER! NUMBER THE BOXES.

☐ He prays to his Father.

☐ Jesus goes to a garden.

☐ Men come and take Jesus.

☐ His friends all run away.

☐ His friends fall asleep.

2. HOW DID THEY FEEL? CIRCLE ONE.

Jesus praying in the garden: happy · sad · worried

The friends who fell asleep: happy · sad · worried

The friends when the men came: happy · sad · worried

The friends when Jesus came back for them: happy · sad · worried

3. WORD SEARCH

S U H D O G O Y J
S H E P H E R D E
S W A T C H F Y S
H G A R D E N F U
E G V P B D O N S
E S D A P R A Y U
P K U T H S H V O
O D G H B V S V V
L E A D V S O R V

JESUS · GARDEN · PRAY · PATH · SHEEP · WATCH · LEAD · SHEPHERD

4. SECRET CODE

1=D 2=E 3=G 4=H 5=I 6=M 7=S 8=U

___	___		___	___	___	___	___	___		___	___
4	**2**		**3**	**8**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**7**		**6**	**2**

5. DRAW IT!

Draw a shepherd walking in front on a winding path, with sheep following behind him.

6. MEMORY VERSE

“He guides me in the paths of righteousness” Psalm 23:3 Say it to a grown-up: ☐ ☐ ☐

Jesus leads me on the _____ path. _____