# Sheep Without a Shepherd

MARK 6:30-34 (BSB) · TEACHER GUIDE · DIGDEEPER.AI

**THE BIG IDEA · SAY IT AT LEAST FIVE TIMES**

With the LORD as my shepherd, I lack nothing I truly need.

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 2): 1 Samuel 17:32-37, The Shepherd Who Wrote It. Its big idea: The LORD is my shepherd: he does for me what David did for lambs.
- After this passage (day 4): Psalm 23:2-3, Green Pastures, Quiet Waters. Its big idea: The Shepherd gives rest, restores my soul, and leads me rightly.

## Open

Recall last time (1 Samuel 17): David learned “The LORD is my shepherd” in a field. Today: the second half, “I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1). Ask: What is the difference between wanting something and needing it? Then read Mark 6:30-34, where a crowd lacks a shepherd. Big idea: With the LORD as my shepherd, I lack nothing I truly need. Ask one person what stuck from last time.

## Run Sheet

### 1. I Shall Not Want (Psalm 23:1, about 8 min)

The one thing: “I shall not want” is about need, and it rests on who the Shepherd is.

Ask: Does “I shall not want” mean God gives us everything we ask for? Why or why not?

### 2. Running Short (Mark 6:30-33, about 10 min)

The one thing: Even faithful servants run short; the Shepherd leads them to rest.

Ask: What were the apostles running short of, and what did Jesus give them?

### 3. Moved with Compassion (Mark 6:34, about 12 min)

The one thing: Jesus sees what the crowd lacks and supplies it, starting with his word.

Ask: Why do you think the first thing Jesus gave this crowd was teaching?

## Close (never cut it)

Read Mark 6:34, then Psalm 23:1. The crowd lacked a shepherd, and the Shepherd came to them. Say the line together: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

**PROTECT THE ENDING**

If the last section starts late, read v34 aloud and go straight to the close.

**KIDS SIDE ANSWERS**

Story order: 4, 3, 5, 2, 1 (top to bottom) · Feelings: The tired apostles sad, The crowd without a shepherd worried, The crowd hearing Jesus happy, Jesus seeing the crowd sad · Code: I SHALL NOT WANT

Act it out: Some children are the apostles in a “boat” (chairs), and the rest are the crowd. The crowd runs around the room to the other side and gets there first. Jesus steps out, looks at them kindly, and begins to teach them.

## 1. I Shall Not Want

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

**THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)**

- “Want” means to lack or run short (Hebrew chaser).
- Israel “lacked nothing” in the wilderness because God cared for them.
- A sheep with a shepherd does not go without what it needs.

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” (Psalm 23:1) A flock without a SHEPHERD lacks everything.

“They were like sheep without a SHEPHERD.” (Mark 6:34)

Discuss: Does “I shall not want” mean God gives us everything we ask for? Why or why not?

“I shall not want” is about need, and it rests on who the Shepherd is.

**MUST COVER**

- Psalm 23:1: the verb chaser means to lack or run short.
- Nehemiah 9:21: in the wilderness God sustained Israel “so that they lacked nothing.”

**IF THERE'S TIME**

- Exodus 16:18: in the manna story, “he who gathered little had no shortfall” uses the same verb.

Illustration idea: A child on a school trip who has no money in their pocket but knows the teacher has packed lunch for everyone.

**RUNNING THE DISCUSSION**

- Listen for: It's about needs, not wishes.
- Listen for: It depends on the Shepherd.

If it drifts: If the talk turns to prosperity, read Psalm 23:1 again and ask what a sheep actually needs.

**TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE**

With the LORD as my shepherd, I lack nothing I truly need.

Short on time? Drop the manna note. Keep the meaning of “want.”

Bridge → Mark shows what it looks like to lack a shepherd, and to be found by one.

## 2. Running Short

MARK 6:30-33 · ABOUT 10 MIN · SECTION 2 OF 3

### THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- The apostles return from their mission.
- Jesus invites them to rest with him.
- The crowd runs ahead and gets there first.

“Come with Me privately to a solitary place, and let us REST for a while.”

“They did not even have time to EAT.”

Discuss: What were the apostles running short of, and what did Jesus give them?

Even faithful servants run short; the Shepherd leads them to rest.

### MUST COVER

- v30-31: the apostles report everything; Jesus sees they have had no time to eat.
- v32-33: the crowd recognizes the boat and runs around the shore to arrive first.

### IF THERE'S TIME

- The Sea of Galilee is about thirteen miles long; a crowd on foot could beat a boat across a bay.

Illustration idea: A parent who notices a child is worn out and quietly cancels the afternoon's plans.

### RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: Even good work wears you out.
- Listen for: He cared about them as people, not just workers.

If it drifts: If the talk becomes a complaint about busy lives, bring it back to v31: the invitation is “Come with Me.”

### TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

The Shepherd sees when his sheep are running on empty.

Short on time? Drop the boat facts. Keep v31.

Bridge → Then Jesus sees a crowd that lacks a shepherd altogether.

## 3. Moved with Compassion

MARK 6:34 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 3 OF 3

### THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Jesus sees a large crowd.
- He has compassion: they are like sheep without a shepherd.
- He begins to teach them many things.

“He had COMPASSION on them.”

“They were like sheep without a SHEPHERD.”

Discuss: Why do you think the first thing Jesus gave this crowd was teaching?

Jesus sees what the crowd lacks and supplies it, starting with his word.

### MUST COVER

- v34: “compassion” is a gut-level word in Greek.
- v34: “sheep without a shepherd” echoes Moses' prayer (Numbers 27:17) and Ezekiel's promise that God himself would search for his flock (Ezekiel 34:11).

### IF THERE'S TIME

- Joshua, God's answer to Moses' prayer, has the same name as Jesus in Hebrew.

Illustration idea: A teacher who sees a child standing alone at break and walks straight over.

### RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: He put their needs before his own.
- Listen for: He saw that they were lost.

If it drifts: If someone asks why Jesus does not always seem to answer, admit it is hard, then return to what v34 shows about his heart.

### TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

Sheep without a shepherd lack everything; Jesus came to be their Shepherd.

Short on time? Drop the Joshua note. Keep v34 and Numbers 27:17.

Bridge → So come back to how the Shepherd sees you.

## With One Friend, Over Coffee

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

1. Start with the line. Say Psalm 23:1 together, then ask: What is the difference between wanting and needing?

2. Read it. Read Mark 6:30-34 together. It is five verses.

3. The interruption. Jesus planned rest, and a crowd got there first.

4. His response. Read v34 again: he had compassion, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

5. Leave the question. Ask: What are you lacking right now, and would you bring it to the Shepherd? Leave it with them.

### QUESTIONS YOU MAY HEAR

“Why didn't Jesus just send the crowd away?”

Mark says he had compassion on them. He saw people who needed a shepherd.

“What does “sheep without a shepherd” mean?”

People with no one to lead or protect them. It is an old phrase in Israel's Scriptures.

“Did Jesus ever rest?”

Yes. He offered rest to his disciples here, and Mark records him going off alone to pray.

“Why does it matter that he taught first?”

Mark shows the Shepherd feeding them with his word before he feeds them with bread.

## 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. Let the Bible do the talking**

v34 is a short, full sentence.

If you're new: Read it twice and ask what it shows about Jesus.

If you've taught for years: Lay Numbers 27:17 and Ezekiel 34:5 beside it.

**2. Know your people**

Many in the room will be tired.

If you're new: Give room to name tiredness without solving it.

If you've taught for years: Notice who in the room carries others and needs care.

**3. Guard the time**

Only five verses; do not wander into the feeding.

If you're new: Stop at v34; the feeding comes on day 5.

If you've taught for years: Use the pause before the feeding as a bridge.

### 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 you are exhausted and someone needs you, what is your first reaction?

- raise a problem: Jesus planned a rest and it was ruined. What would you have done?
- start in the text: Read v31 and ask what kind of leader notices that his team has not eaten.

### CLOSINGS

- restate the big idea: With the LORD as my shepherd, I lack nothing I truly need, and he sees you.
- allow quiet reflection: Read v34 and give a minute of quiet.
- pray the text: Pray v31: thank Jesus for inviting tired people to rest with him.

### WHEN CLASS GETS HARD

- Someone is burned out from caring for others.: Point to v31: Jesus noticed his workers' tiredness. Do not add another task.
- Someone feels like a scattered sheep with no one leading them.: Let v34 speak to them directly: this is exactly who Jesus had compassion on.
- 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

- Exodus 16:13-18
- Nehemiah 9:19-21
- Ezekiel 34:11-16

Free at digdeeper.ai/devotionals/mark/6-30-34/lesson

# Sheep Without a Shepherd

MARK 6:30-34 (BSB) · THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD · DIGDEEPER.AI

Key verse: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Psalm 23:1

### THE BIG IDEA

With the LORD as my shepherd, I lack nothing I truly need.

### 1. I SHALL NOT WANT · PSALM 23:1

- “Want” means to lack or run short (Hebrew chaser).
- Israel “lacked nothing” in the wilderness because God cared for them.
- A sheep with a shepherd does not go without what it needs.

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” (Psalm 23:1) A flock without a _____ lacks everything.

“They were like sheep without a _____.” (Mark 6:34)

Discuss: Does “I shall not want” mean God gives us everything we ask for? Why or why not?

### 2. RUNNING SHORT · MARK 6:30-33

- The apostles return from their mission.
- Jesus invites them to rest with him.
- The crowd runs ahead and gets there first.

“Come with Me privately to a solitary place, and let us _____ for a while.”

“They did not even have time to _____.”

Discuss: What were the apostles running short of, and what did Jesus give them?

### 3. MOVED WITH COMPASSION · MARK 6:34

- Jesus sees a large crowd.
- He has compassion: they are like sheep without a shepherd.
- He begins to teach them many things.

“He had _____ on them.”

“They were like sheep without a _____.”

Discuss: Why do you think the first thing Jesus gave this crowd was teaching?

Read this week: Exodus 16:13-18 · Nehemiah 9:19-21 · Ezekiel 34:11-16

# For Kids: Sheep Without a Shepherd

MARK 6:30-34 · NAME: _____

Big idea: Jesus is my Shepherd, so I have what I need.

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

☐ A crowd runs and gets there first.

☐ They go away in a boat.

☐ Jesus teaches them with compassion.

☐ Jesus says, “Come and rest.”

☐ The apostles come back tired.

### 2. HOW DID THEY FEEL? CIRCLE ONE.

The tired apostles: happy · sad · worried

The crowd without a shepherd: happy · sad · worried

The crowd hearing Jesus: happy · sad · worried

Jesus seeing the crowd: happy · sad · worried

### 3. WORD SEARCH

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

JESUS · BOAT · CROWD · SHEEP · REST · TEACH · SHEPHERD · WANT

### 4. SECRET CODE

1=A 2=H 3=I 4=L 5=N 6=O 7=S 8=T 9=W

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ | | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | | ___ | ___ | ___ | | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| **3** | | **7** | **2** | **1** | **4** | **4** | | **5** | **6** | **8** | | **9** | **1** | **5** | **8** |

### 5. DRAW IT!

Draw Jesus stepping out of the boat and seeing the big crowd.

### 6. MEMORY VERSE

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Psalm 23:1 Say it to a grown-up: ☐ ☐ ☐

Jesus sees me when _____. _____