



Camp Venture Counselor's Guide: Ages 6-12
Kings & Kingdoms Part 1: The Life of Jesus
Unit 5, Lesson 23

The Lost Sheep

Lesson Aim: To recognize we wander like sheep and Jesus is our Shepherd.

THE WORSHIP - AT THE CAMPFIRE

Who God is: The King Who Teaches

THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME

Kingdom Parable: Luke 15:14-7

What He has done: Jesus taught that God finds those who are lost.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37, 39

Unit 5: The King Who Teaches—Parables 1			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Aim
23	The Lost Sheep, Luke 15:4-7	Jesus taught that God finds those who are lost.	To recognize we wander like sheep and Jesus is our Shepherd.
24	The Sower, Luke 8:4-8, 11-15	Jesus taught about four different responses to God's Word.	To understand why some believe God's Word and some do not.
25	The Vine and the Branches, John 15:1-5	Jesus taught He is the Vine and we are the branches.	To understand what it means to remain in Jesus and bear fruit.
26	The Workers in the Vineyard, Matthew 20:1-16	Jesus taught about a fair and generous land owner.	To know God is fair and generous.
27	The Great Banquet, Luke 14:15-24	Jesus taught about guests invited to a banquet.	To see that we need to respond to Jesus' invitation.

COUNSELOR'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Hebrews 4:16. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for the way You draw us to You and teach us. Fill us with Your Spirit that we might teach the children. Amen."

WHAT is CAMP VENTURE? Camp Venture is a variation on the Kings & Kingdoms Units 5 and 6 standard version lessons. Both versions cover the same parables. Camp Venture offers different elements consistent with a camping theme. Children are referred to as campers and teachers are camp counselors. Decorate classroom or play area to create the Camp Venture experience. For example: camp tent, backpacks, photo board or album with photos of each camper, fire logs surrounded by stones as a flameless campfire, etc. Camp Venture is most often introduced as Sunday School curriculum during school vacation months but can easily be adapted as a Vacation Bible School curriculum.

TREASURE TREAT: The Treasure Treat for Units 5 and 6 is a Kingdom Parable Journal. Each week, campers receive Kingdom Parable Stickers to add to their journal. The journal and stickers are available at ResourceWell.org. You may print the stickers on sticker paper or on sturdy paper and attach with glue.

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THE WORSHIP THE WORD & THE WAY

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 25	Camp Games: Introduction to Camp Games	Poster board and markers for each team
THE WORSHIP – AT THE CAMPFIRE	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "The Lord Is My Shepherd" "The Fruit of the Spirit" "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" Additional Hymn Suggestion: "Amazing Grace" Additional Song Collection Suggestions: Absolute All Time Favorites For Kids Cedarmont Worship for Kids: Volume 2
		Worship Scripture Reading: Genesis 28:15	Bible
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	Lesson 23 Critter Kingdom script or storybook
THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME	Up to 10	Kingdom Parable: Luke 15:4-7	Bibles
	Up to 5	Parable Pal	Camp Cooler containing Parable Pal letter, "What Can Happen" cards (available at ResourceWell.org)
	Up to 5	Share a Prayer	None
	Final 5	Final Five Minutes	Kingdom Parable Journals, The Lost Sheep Kingdom Parable Stickers, Daily Ways or W's, Letters from Camp, basket, pencils, poster board, crayons or markers, optional: sandpaper, felt or cotton balls, prayer notebook, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord," CD player
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Snack: Lost Sheep Snack	Cupcakes, white icing, marshmallows or flaked coconut, plastic knives
	Up to 10	Game: Search for the Sheep	One sheep (a toy, a large cotton ball or a picture)
	Up to 10	Craft: Parable Wind Chimes—The Lost Sheep	Sturdy paper plate, ribbon, large bead, slotted wooden clothespin, black pipe cleaners, cotton balls, glue, tape, markers, scissors, hole punch
	Up to 5	Discussion: Being Lost and Found	None
	Up to 5	Bonus Parable: The Good Gifts	Bible open to Luke 11:5-13, The Good Gifts Parable Stickers (available at ResourceWell.org)
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Getting to Know You	None
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Color Decode	Colored paper, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, marker, scissors
	Up to 5	Bible Memory Verse Activity: The Wave	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster or Bible

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

THE WELCOME – CAMP GAMES

Welcome to Camp Venture! Each time before we worship, we will get to know each other better and have some fun with our Camp Games. First, let's dedicate this day of camp to King Jesus. Pray.

On this first day at Camp Venture, we will divide into teams. Each team will create its own name and team banner. You will be on the same team for all ten Camp Venture sessions.

Counselor Clue: If you choose to not divide into teams, play the Search for the Sheep game in the Got Time? segment of this lesson.

GAME: INTRODUCTION TO CAMP GAMES

Purpose: To have fun creating team names and posters as well as encourage good sportsmanship, establish Camp Game rewards and rules, and explain the Camp Game point system.

Supplies: One blank poster board and set of markers for each team

Prepare: Place the poster boards with markers in opposite corners of the game area. Design your own rewards, safety and sportsmanship rules, and point system. Point system may include points for attending Camp Venture, completing Daily Ways or W³s, bringing a Bible, bringing a friend, winning a game, showing good sportsmanship, cheering for your team, playing fairly, tallying scores honestly and cheering for other teams when point tallies are announced.

Directions:

1. Divide the campers into 2, 3, or 4 teams according their birth month. (For example: All of the campers born in the first three months of the year are on a team, all of the campers born in the next three months of the year are on another team, etc.)
2. Explain the Camp Game rewards and safety rules. Explain point system you have designed.
3. With remaining time, each team decides on a team name. (Encourage creativity!) Team prints their team name on the poster and decorates it with markers.

You may earn points for your team by attending Camp Venture, completing your Daily Way, bringing your Bible, bringing a friend, winning a game, and showing good sportsmanship. At Camp Venture, good sportsmanship is respectful behavior towards others. It includes cheering for your team during the game, playing fairly, tallying scores honestly, and cheering for other teams when point tallies are announced. Bonus team points are awarded for cheering and encouraging other teams.

Grand Prize: On the final day at Camp Venture, all members of the winning team receive a surprise grand prize. The grand prize can be an ice cream party, pizza party, etc. Before closing on the last day, have the winning team invite all of the other teams to join the party. Always encourage good sportsmanship and cheering for each other.

Counselor Clues: All games may be adapted to a competitive or a non-competitive version. Camp competition provides an opportunity for campers to learn how to compete, encourage other campers, and to be gracious winners and losers. For added fun, be very generous with the points. For example: 100,000 points for 1st place, 75,000 points for 2nd place, 40,000 points for 3rd place, and 30,000 points for 4th place. The teams will end up with point totals in the millions at the end of camp.



Jesus as the King who teaches

THE WORSHIP — AT THE CAMPFIRE

Counselor Clue: To help campers identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as campers move from one area to another.



We gather at the campfire to worship Jesus as the King who teaches. As our Teacher, Jesus told stories called parables to teach us about His kingdom. Today, we will hear the Parable of the Lost Sheep. Just as the shepherd watches over and rescues any lost sheep, Jesus is our Shepherd watching over us. Read Genesis 28:15.



Let's thank Him by giving our money offering to the church. Play: "Amazing Grace" or "The Lord Is My Shepherd" as background music while collecting the offering.

Jesus is called the Good Shepherd. We also call Him our Teacher, Savior, and King. A Hebrew name for the Lord is Yahweh. In our Bible Memory Verse Song, we celebrate that we can go to Yahweh everyday! Sing Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord." You may also choose to sing songs that focus on Jesus as our Shepherd.



Perform Critter Kingdom script or read storybook: Kings & Kingdoms Unit 5, Lesson 23, including the reciting of the Camper's Code:

Camper's Code

I will love God with all my heart.
I will love my neighbor as myself.
I will be a light wherever I go.



Kingdom Parable

THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME

Counselor Clue: Tent time should take place in a corner of the classroom, under a tent, or any covered space. Remove chairs and have campers sit on mats or sit-upons.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Camp Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Camp Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word—knowing God is my goal."

Welcome to Tent Time! At the campfire, we talked about the Parable of the Lost Sheep. A parable is a story. Jesus told parables to teach us about the kingdom of God.



Listen carefully as I read the parable Jesus told over 2,000 years ago. You'll find it in Luke 15:4-7. If you brought your Bible, you may read along silently with me.

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us? Choose a camper to pray aloud. Read Luke 15:4-7.

Who does the shepherd stand for in this parable? (Jesus.) **Who does the lost sheep stand for?** (Someone who has wandered away from God.) **Jesus is the Good Shepherd for all who believe in Him. Jesus loves His own sheep. He always finds them when they wander away.**

How can we stay close to Jesus? (Think about Him; pray and read the Bible; as we make choices, think about what He wants us to do.) **Why is it unwise to do our daily activities without remembering to stay close to Jesus?** (We forget to do what Jesus would do. We may be tempted to sin—to do things that are wrong in God's eyes.)

When we wander away from Jesus, we may be tempted to sin by making wrong choices. What did Jesus say happens in heaven whenever a sinner repents and turns back to following Jesus? (There is rejoicing, which is celebrating.)



Parable Pal

THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME

During Tent Time, we always open our Camp Cooler to find something from our Parable Pal about the kingdom of God. Let's see what our Parable Pal can show us about the lost sheep. Counselor opens cooler and reads the letter from the Parable Pal.

Hello Campers,

I'm your Parable Pal, and I hope you are having fun on your first day at Camp Venture! You know, I've seen sheep wander away from their shepherd just to eat grass. The funny thing was, the sheep could have stayed close to the shepherd because there was plenty of that grass near the shepherd's feet! In the same way, we are much better off if we stay close to Jesus in everything we do!

Pull out the first "What Can Happen" card. Brainstorm what can happen if you don't stay close to Jesus when you are with your friends. For me, I sometimes talk badly about others. How about you?

Now, open the card and talk about some wise choices you can make when you stay close to Jesus while you are with your friends. For me, Jesus helps me be kind and have more fun!

Check out the second card. What is something you can be tempted to do when you are trying to win a game? Once, I made fun of the other team for losing. That was wrong! What about you?

Now open the card and talk about some wise choices you can make when you stay close to Jesus as you try to win a game. I can choose to be positive and cheer for the other team. How about you? (Optional: Review cards 3-5.)

Can you think of other things that you like to do that are better when you do them while you are close to Jesus? See if you can stay close to Jesus in everything you do today!

**Keep cool, campers!
Your Parable Pal**

THE WAY *continued...*



SHARE A PRAYER

Let's thank Jesus, as our Shepherd, for bringing us back to Him when our hearts wander. Ask campers for individual praise and prayer requests. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

Lord Jesus, thank You for watching over us and bringing us close to You. You know our needs—the ones we shared out loud and the ones we hide in our hearts. We lift all these up to Your throne now. Pause for a moment of silence. **We can't wait to see the way that You will answer each one.**

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

KINGDOM PARABLE JOURNAL: Today, your Treasure Treat is a Kingdom Parable Journal and the Lost Sheep Kingdom Parable Sticker. You will also receive a bonus sticker for the Parable of the Good Gifts (see Bonus Parable in GOT TIME?). You can discover more about this parable in this week's Daily Way (W³ for older students). Keep your Kingdom Parable Journal at home and collect all twenty Kingdom Parable Stickers by joining us here each time.

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE: Did anyone bring in a completed Daily Way from last time? Praise or reward those who return a Daily Way. Distribute Lesson 23 Daily Way 5-day Bible study. **Complete this week's Daily Way at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Bring it back next time to win points for your team here at Camp Venture.**

W³ CHALLENGE (For Older Campers): Take home today's W³ Journal Entry as your personal devotional study. Keep your journal entries together at home in a notebook or in your Bible. Distribute W³ Journal Entry #23 instead of the Daily Way. **Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible!**

PARABLE POSTER PROJECT: Until it is time to be dismissed, let's work on our Parable Poster Project. Before class, draw the outline of a sheep partially hidden by a rock on poster board. Using crayons or markers, campers take turns adding to the drawing of a sheep partially hidden by a rock. Assign one camper to print "The Lost Sheep" on the poster. Optional: Use sandpaper for the rock and felt or cotton balls for the sheep's wool.

Counselor's Clue: Save the Parable Poster each week to hang in the room or create an oversized book.

LETTERS FROM CAMP: Write a Letter from Camp to someone in your home to let them know what you did today. Write your favorite thing about today and something special about the parable you just learned. Sign it and take it home.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord," in the background as campers wait to be dismissed.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SNACK: LOST SHEEP SNACK

Purpose: Campers will eat a snack while personally connecting to the story.

Snack Suggestion: Cupcakes, white icing, marshmallows or flaked coconut, plastic knives

Alternative Snack: Marshmallows, coconut cookies, or another white or fluffy snack

In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, what did the shepherd do after he brought the lost sheep home? (Called his friends and rejoiced.) **Let's decorate cupcakes to look like sheep and celebrate that God always finds those who are lost.**

Directions:

1. Campers decorate cupcakes with frosting and marshmallows to look like sheep.
2. Serve drinks.
3. Camper prays to thank God for the snack.
4. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **"What is the best celebration you have ever had?"**

GAME: SEARCH FOR THE SHEEP

Purpose: To find the lost sheep just as Jesus finds us when we are lost.

Supplies: One sheep (a toy, a large cotton ball or a picture)

Optional: Place a robe and a shepherd's crook in the center of the circle for the camper searching for the lost sheep to wear as a costume.

Jesus told parables. What is a parable? (A story that teaches a lesson.) **Jesus told many parables to teach about God's kingdom. Today, we heard Jesus' parable about a shepherd who searched for his lost sheep. Let's play a game and search for the lost sheep.**

Directions:

1. Campers sit in a circle.
2. Choose one camper to hide the sheep while the other campers cover their eyes.
3. Once the sheep has been hidden, the camper touches the head of one of the campers in the circle and says, "You are the shepherd! Your sheep is lost!"
4. The campers open their eyes and cheer, "Find the sheep!" while the shepherd jumps up to search for the lost sheep.
5. The camper who hid the sheep may give the shepherd clues by saying "warmer" when the shepherd is close to the sheep and "colder" when moving away from the sheep.
6. After the shepherd finds the sheep, repeat steps 2 through 6 to play again.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: PARABLE WIND CHIMES–THE LOST SHEEP

Purpose: Create a wind chime strand to remember Parable of the Lost Sheep.

Supplies: Sturdy paper plate, ribbon, large bead, slotted wooden clothespin, black pipe cleaners, cotton balls, glue, tape, markers, scissors, hole punch

Prepare: Cut a 20-inch and a 30-inch ribbon. Punch three holes in each paper plate: two holes in the center, about two inches apart, and one hole about one inch from any edge. Cut a pipe cleaner in half.

Optional: Before attaching any of the ribbons, decorate the paper plate wind chime base. Knot ribbon above plate around a large bead. Use white beads and ribbon to match sheep. Substitute beads with any materials available: buttons, shells, stones, small metal objects, etc. Display a finished craft.

Counselor Clue: Parable Wind Chimes will be completed in Lessons 23-32 as the parables of Jesus are taught. Each session, a new strand representing the parable will be added to the paper plate base of the wind chimes. To maintain balance in the wind chimes as they are being created, punch holes directly opposite from each other when adding a new strand. Be sure to have extra paper plates and 30-inch ribbon hangers available for new campers who join camp in future sessions.

Jesus told stories to teach about God’s kingdom. What do we call those stories? (Parables.)
Over the next ten lessons, we will learn many of the parables Jesus taught. Each week, we will add a new strand to our Parable Wind Chimes to remind us of the parable we learned. Let’s begin by making our wind chime base and a strand for Parable of the Lost Sheep.

Directions:

1. Thread the 30-inch ribbon through the two holes in the center of the plate. Hang plate upside down and tie a knot on the bottom of the plate to create a hanger.
2. Thread the 20-inch ribbon through the hole on the edge of the plate and tie a knot large enough to prevent the ribbon from pulling back through the plate.
3. Tie a bead to the bottom of the 20-inch ribbon.
4. Draw a sheep’s face on the round end of the clothespin.
5. Bend the two half pipe cleaner sections in half and slide between the two prongs of the clothespin to create four sheep legs. Secure with tape.
6. Attach the sheep to the 20-inch ribbon with tape or by tying it to the ribbon.
7. Glue cotton balls onto the clothespin to create a fuzzy sheep body.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

DISCUSSION: BEING LOST AND FOUND

Purpose: To help campers understand the concept of being lost and then found.

Supplies: None

Have you ever wandered away from your parent or grandparent and then noticed you were lost? What were you paying attention to when you wandered away? Who found you?
(Campers respond.)

When we want something so much that we think only about that thing, it is as if we wander away from Jesus and forget to stay close with Him.

BONUS PARABLE: THE GOOD GIFTS

Purpose: To introduce and discuss another parable Jesus taught His followers.

Supplies: Bible open to Luke 11:5-13, The Good Gifts Parable Stickers (available at ResourceWell.org)

Today's bonus parable is the story of the good gifts. Camper or counselor reads Luke 11:5-10.
Why did the man go to the trouble of getting out of bed late at night to give bread to his friend? (Because the friend knocked and asked so boldly.)

Jesus wants us to pray to God boldly, asking for what we need. What did Jesus say will happen when we ask, seek and knock? (The Bible says: "Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.") **To ask is to pray to God for whatever you need. To seek is to search for what God is doing and look for the ways He may be answering your prayers. To knock is to boldly pray and ask God to give you what you need. When you pray, remember to A.S.K. (Ask, Seek, Knock!)**

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37, 39

DISCUSSION: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Purpose: Campers get to "love their neighbors" by learning about their favorite things.

Supplies: None

Directions:

1. Gather in a circle and assign each camper a partner seated next to him or her.
2. Partners quietly share a few of their favorite things to do.
3. Each partner introduces his or her partner to the class and tells everyone the partner's favorite things to do.

GAME: COLOR DECODE

Purpose: Campers unscramble and learn the words to the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Colored paper, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, marker, scissors

Prepare: For every four campers, cut a sheet of colored paper into four equal-size cards. On each of the cards write one of these phrases from the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart"/ "and with all your soul"/ "and with all your mind."/ "Love your neighbor as yourself." Display the Bible Memory Verse poster.

Directions:

1. Say the Bible Memory Verse together.
2. Mix up all of the sets. Note: If campers do not divide evenly into groups of four, give one or more campers two cards of the same color.
3. Give each camper a card.
4. On your signal, the campers are to search for the other three campers with matching color cards.
5. Once together, the campers put their cards in the correct order of the Bible Memory Verse and sit down. (They can use the Bible Memory Verse poster as a reference.)
6. **How should we love God?** (With all our heart, soul, and mind.) **How should we love our neighbors?** (As ourselves.) **Jesus told parables to teach us how to live together in God's kingdom. The parables teach us how to love God and each other.**
7. Play again, as time allows.

GAME: THE WAVE

Purpose: To help campers memorize the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Poster or Bible

Directions:

1. Assign one phrase from Matthew 22:37, 39 to each camper or team.
2. As helper directs, each camper or team quickly stands, says assigned phrase while raising both hands up to the sky and then down to thighs and sits down.
3. Repeat three times, faster each time.