

You will need...

- An anorak, wellington boots (and anything else you have to hand, to dress up like a shepherd!)
- At least one cuddly sheep. “Hide” one of the sheep beforehand in a visible place out of the children’s eye line (perhaps at the back of your space), where the children will be able to watch you find it.
- Use any other toy sheep you have to represent the 99 sheep. These could be pictures or a variety of cuddly sheep

The story

Story	Actions
This term, we are finding out that God cares for everyone. This is a story that Jesus told, to help us understand how much God cares for people who don’t know Him yet.	
It is all about a shepherd – that’s why I’m all dressed up like this! I’ve got my coat and my boots on, ready for a day in the fields with my sheep.	Put on coat and boots
I’ve got 100 sheep. It’s my job to look after them and keep them safe. Every day I take them to places where there is good grass to eat. At night I sleep out in the fields with them to protect them from wild animals. I care about every single one.	Show your other 5 or so sheep. Take three steps to the left with them. Take three steps to the right with them. Point to each sheep in turn.
And because each one matters to me, I keep counting them all the time, to make sure that none of them are lost. 1, 2, 3, 4 It takes a lot of counting to keep track of 100 sheep! Let’s count them together.	1....2....3....4....5 (And repeat if the group warms to it)

<p>One day, I was counting my sheep as normal. Something terrible happened. I counted my sheep as usual, but there were only 99. One was missing! So, I left the 99 sheep in the field and set off to look for the one that was lost.</p>	<p>1....2....3....4.....5..... 98....99 Look fearful. Look behind you. Look beside you. Leave those sheep you're holding behind, out of reach of the children.</p>
<p>I looked everywhere. There are so many places a sheep could get lost - in a ditch ... by the river ...in the woods ... stuck in a hedge ... I must have walked for miles.</p>	<p>Go on a 'sheep hunt' round the room (make sure the children can still see you ... maybe walk round the circle, across the stage etc). Keep stopping to look under chairs, behind obstacles.</p>
<p>Then, at last, I found him! Hurray! I have found my lost sheep!</p>	<p>Find the sheep you had hidden earlier! Look really, really happy.</p>
<p>I picked him up and carried him all the way home, and put him back in the field with the other 99. I was so happy to see him that I rushed round telling all my friends. "Great news! I've found my lost sheep!!" "Isn't it brilliant? I've found the missing sheep!" "I'm so happy! I've found the sheep who got lost!"</p>	<p>Rush excitedly round, telling people. Return to the other sheep and place the lost sheep with them.</p>
<p>All my friends were happy too. And that night, every one of my 100 sheep was safe in their field again.</p>	<p>Take off coat and boots</p>
<p>God is like the shepherd in the story and we are like sheep. Jesus said that when we don't know God- it is like being lost - we are not where we belong. In his family. Safe. But because God cares for us, he goes and finds us, and doesn't give up until he has brought us safely back home to be with Him in his family. God cares for people who don't know him yet, just like the shepherd cared for the lost sheep.</p>	
	<p>Sing - God's love is the best love</p>



Top Tips

- Everything needs to be said with plenty of intonation, life, interest and volume to keep toddlers interested. It will sound odd!