



FEAR LESS

DAY 4: CULTIVATING GRATITUDE FOR THE GOOD SHEPHERD

INTRODUCTION

Start with prayer, then ask...



DISCUSSION QUESTION:

What is the biggest thing you have ever wished for or asked for? Why did you want it?



DISCUSSION QUESTION:

What is worry? What kinds of things do you worry about? Why?



READ TOGETHER: Ezekiel 34:1–16a (*Young kids: read only verses 11–16a*)

DIGGING DEEPER



DISCUSSION QUESTION:

How does this passage describe God as our shepherd?



DISCUSSION QUESTION:

What language and images does God use to describe how a good shepherd provides for his sheep?

This passage talks about how many of the leaders of Israel—government and religious leaders—weren't taking care of their people the way God had told them to. God said all His leaders are supposed to see their job as service to their people instead of being in leadership for their own fame or power or glory.

If you've ever seen the movie or play, *Annie*, it would be like the difference between the way Miss Hannigan treated Annie and the way Daddy Warbucks treated her. Miss Hannigan treated the orphans like slaves, making them serve her and do things for her. Daddy Warbucks took care of Annie and made sure she had all she needed.

God said He was going to get rid of the bad leaders and take care of His people Himself. He would provide for them like a good shepherd. Look back at the passage and find all the things God said He would provide for His sheep.



READ TOGETHER (again): Ezekiel 34:14–16a

As the good shepherd, God provides for all the need of His sheep—safety, food, water, rest, health.

APPLY IT TO LIFE

God is making it clear that we don't have to depend on human leaders alone; He will take of us Himself. Our parents do a great job taking care of us. But even if you get lost or your parents weren't around, God would take care of you. If you are ever in a situation where you are scared or worried, and your parents aren't there, you can talk to God. He will be there for you to comfort you and take care of you like a good shepherd takes care of His sheep.

You may hear grown-ups talking about being worried about what is happening in the world right now. Maybe your mom or dad may be worried about their jobs. They may be talking about not spending money on things right now, because things are a little uncertain. Being wise and frugal and cautious in this time is a good idea, but there is no need to worry. God promises that He will provide for our needs. He may not give us everything we want in life, but He will provide everything we need. We can trust Him to take care of us!



PARENT STORY:

Share a story about a time when you had a need and God provided what you needed or a time when you chose to trust in God when you were uncertain.



FAMILY ACTIVITY:

Make a "*He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*" craft (You can sing the song too!).

Take a coffee filter, open it up flat, and draw an outline of the map of the world on it with blue and green markers. If your kids are very young, don't worry about getting the map just right; they can create their own "world"! Sprinkle the filter with just a little bit of water (using a wet toothbrush to flick water on it is perfect) and let it dry. The filter will look kind of marbled. Glue the filter on a piece of construction paper. You may have to cut it into a smaller circle to make it fit. Then trace their hands or draw a picture of hands and lay their handprints on the bottom of the world, as if their hands are holding the world.

Remind them that God has all things in His control. He provides for everyone, all the time!

You may also want to watch , Saddleback Kids "Don't Worry" video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PG1LjFO99dA>

**PRAY TOGETHER:**

Dear God, thank you so much for always providing what we need, even when the world around us seems uncertain. We trust that no matter what is going on, you've got the whole world in your hands. In Jesus's name, Amen.

**MEMORIZE TOGETHER:**

"My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus" – Philippians 4:19