

Children and family talk for 25th April 2021

Hello everyone, it's good to have you with me as we explore more of the Bible together and praise God. We will start today by singing;

Be bold, be strong:

Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you.

Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you.

I am not afraid, (No, no, no)

I am not dismayed, (Not me)
For I'm walking in faith and victory,
Come on and walk in faith and victory,
For the Lord, your God, is with you.

Morris Chapman. SoF 37, MP 49, JP 14 Copyright 1983
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Our Bible reading today is from John 10 verses 11 – 18.

Jesus began to explain how much he loved his followers and cared for their safety. How could he help them to understand? He began to talk about himself as a shepherd and his followers as sheep.

He said, 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd is even willing to give up his life to protect the sheep. ❁
A person who is paid to look after the sheep will not do this – when they see a wolf coming, they just run away and leave the sheep, with no one to protect them. This is because someone who is just paid to look after the sheep as a job is not truly the shepherd, and does not own the sheep. ❁

'But I am the good shepherd and I know my sheep very well. My sheep also know me and hear my voice when I call them. I lay down my life for my sheep by standing between them and the wolf, so that they are safe. I have some other sheep that you have not met yet. I must call them, and they will listen to my voice, too. Then there will be one flock, with one shepherd.

'This is why the Father loves me – because I am ready to die for my sheep, but I am also ready to be raised to life again. No one takes my life from me; I choose to lay it down. I have the power to lay my life down, and I have the power to take it up again. This is God's plan and I am going to live it out.'

John 10.11-18



Now let's sing again; **My Jesus, My saviour**

My Jesus, My saviour,
Lord there is none like you,
All of my days, I want to praise, the
wonders of your mighty love.
My comfort, my shelter,
Tower of refuge and strength,
Let every breath, all that I am,
Never cease to worship you.

*Shout to the Lord all the earth, let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the king.
Mountains bow down
And the seas will roar
At the sound of your name.
I sing for joy at the work of your hands.
Forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand.
Nothing compares to the
Promise I have in you.*

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Australia/Kingsway's thankyou music.

Let's talk about our Bible verses

Jesus compares himself to a shepherd in our bible verses today. A shepherd in those days, would have had a very important, if badly paid job. They had to really care for the sheep in their care, enough to be prepared to fight off attacks from wild animals such as wolves! A shepherd would have many animals in their care and had to know where the best places were to find good grass to eat, places to find fresh water to drink and safe places to stay overnight. The shepherd knows each one of them, so that if he calls them by name, they will come to him.

Jesus is explaining to his followers how much he cares for them. He is prepared to give up his life for them. This is part of God's plan, that Jesus will give up his life to save his people, and as we have been talking about the last few weeks in our Easter talks, this is exactly what happens. Jesus, the good Shepherd, gives up his life for us, his people, and has the power to take up his life again three days later. As David writes in Psalm 23; "God, my shepherd! I don't need a thing. You have bedded me down in lush meadows, you find me quiet pools to drink from. True to your word, you let me catch my breath and send me in the right direction." Isn't that a wonderful thought, that God is looking after us as a shepherd looks after the sheep, and continues to care for us all our lives, helping us to find the right path when we start to go the wrong way. Thankyou God!

Thank you, God, that we are your sheep;
that you care for us – awake or asleep;
that you know us as we grow day by day;
and for watching over us in work, rest and play.

Amen.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (Hold out hands as if expecting a present)

And the love of God (Put your hands on your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Hold hands)

Be with us all now and for ever. Amen! (raise hands together on the Amen)

The children's activity sheet from roots:

<https://www.rootsontheweb.com/media/22103/25-april-2021-activity-sheet.pdf>