

# FIRST (SCOTS) SERMONS

YOUTH SUNDAY: THE DAY'S THEME WAS LIGHT

“FOLLOW THE LIGHT”

Scripture Lesson: John 8: 12

*This sermon was preached by Hugh Buxton on Sunday, February 11, 2024  
at First (Scots) Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina.*

**John 8: 12**

## **Jesus the Light of the World**

*12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”*

## **Follow the Light**

I am so happy to see so many familiar faces in attendance today. As you already know, the theme of Youth Sunday this year is “light.” We can find stories referencing the concept of light throughout the Bible, which have opened doors to fresh insights and opportunities for so many believers.

Today, I will be focusing on one specific example of light, found in John, Chapter 8. In this verse, Jesus speaks to the lukewarm believers and non-believers in his teachings. He states that he is the light of the world, which is no small thing for someone to claim. By doing so, he is asserting himself to be on the same level as God, which is known to be true, because Jesus is God’s only begotten son, brought to us to show us how to live God’s intended way. In this second “I AM” statement that Jesus gives to us in John Chapter 8, we learn that we can use him as the light that will lead us out of darkness. Jesus, who was the perfect image of a human, sacrificed his position as the right-hand man of God, to save us from our sins. He came into our world, a world full of grief, pain and struggle, to guide us on the right path towards our salvation. As we trust his guidance, we will prevail through adversity and unfair challenges thrown our way each and every day in our cruel and unjust world. By walking alongside our savior, through the darkness, we will have the light of life.

Obviously, we have come a very, very long way since the time of Jesus. We have evolved as a society in nearly every way, from multibillion dollar infrastructure projects being thrown together year by year, to the infinite abyss of the digital world, accessible by the little rectangles in our pockets. However, our worldly distractions away from the teachings and lessons that Jesus has provided for us, have exponentially grown as well. Naturally, we take the easier path through life, rarely pushing ourselves outside of our comfort zones. We suffer from everyday struggles that plague our mind. Temptation to do the wrong things has never been so easy to fall into.

Personally, I struggle with staying on task during the week. Like most of the youth at this church, I am an athlete and involved in many other activities at school. Nearly every day, I am attending a practice or meeting after school which takes up an extensive time out of my weekdays. By the time I get home, all I want to do is curl up in my bed and begin the infinite scroll on social media, diving into the lives of so many people, who are just pixels on my screen. However, when I

do fall into this trap of temptation and procrastination, I end up having unnecessarily long nights, finishing the work I could have been doing earlier, for school the next day.

This repeated process leads to little or no improvement of my grades and reflection of my academic ability to my teachers. This I have come to realize as I am in the peak of my junior year of high school, beginning the college search and the long phase of standardized testing. I know that if I am to reach the benchmarks I have set for myself, I need to focus on the opportunities I have. I need a guide in my life to set me on the right path, through the darkness of procrastination, to the light of discipline. I made it my goal this semester, to put in the extra effort I know I can do when I stay on task, in my classes to show improvement to not only myself, but to my teachers. Specifically, in my English class with Mrs. Anna Smith, who is notoriously known to be a tough teacher; I have seen significant improvement already with my writing process an analysis of texts both in and out of the classroom. I plan to continue making academic progress in this class, to use that knowledge later down the road in the college essays that I will shortly begin to write. I could not do any of this without the guidance of Jesus Christ. He has been the light in my life through times of struggle and hardships I have faced in the previous year. He has walked with me and brought me out of these hardships, and into the light of life, so that today I can glorify him for the unspoken guidance I have received.

In order to establish a life worth living, we have to follow the teachings of Jesus. It is as simple as that. However, that is much easier said than done. Every waking second, we are faced with morally right and wrong choices of how to spend our time and opportunities. One of my favorite quotes is: "Do it or don't, time goes on." I read this quote for the first time a few months ago, and it gave me a fresh insight on what it really means to spend our time wisely. For those of you who struggle with time management like me, I strongly believe that looking towards the light of the world, Jesus Christ, will allow you to accomplish the goals you have set for yourself in the near future. Why waste time doing things that aren't beneficial to your growth? Rather, anchor your faith in the rock of Jesus Christ and let him serve as your guide towards the unique path God has planned so meticulously for you. He is by your side, through the lowest of lows and the highest of highs. Everyone here today is destined to do great things, and I believe we all can accomplish them, through the light of our lord and savior, Jesus Christ.

Thank you.