

# FIRST (SCOTS) SERMONS

## “THE VOICE THAT CALLS YOU HOME”

Scripture Lesson: John 10: 1-18

*This sermon was preached by Hugh Buxton on Sunday, February 9, 2025  
at First (Scots) Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina.*

### John 10: 1-18

#### Jesus the Good Shepherd

1 *“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.*

7 *So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*

11 *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”*

#### The Voice That Calls You Home

Good morning,

I am very happy to see so many familiar faces in attendance for the youth Sunday service. Today, we have the joy of worshiping together around the theme of animals, a beautiful part of God’s creation that often teaches us valuable lessons about faith, trust and God’s care.

A question that was on my mind as I wrote this sermon was: Why are we referred to as sheep in the Bible? I’m sure many of you have asked yourself this too. Well, Sheep are dumb. They are known to follow others blindly, without a clue of their destination. We are compared to sheep because we can follow anyone without thinking, we sometimes lack even a simple sense of

direction, and we cannot defend ourselves in times of trouble. Sheep are also emotional animals and can recognize their shepherd's voice distinctly. Again, just like sheep, we also get anxious, stressed, and feel sadness. It is important we listen for the shepherd's voice to keep us calm in times of trouble. Back during the time of Jesus, sheep were highly valuable possessions in communities. Wealthy men who owned flocks of sheep were provided meat, milk, wool, and offspring from their flock. Shepherds made countless sacrifices to protect their flock, because they knew their livelihood was at stake.

Ultimately, God compares us to sheep because we are priceless to him. Just like sheep, we have no direction without Jesus, the Good Shepherd. We lack protection on every side, and we were never meant to carry a heavy load alone. Furthermore, we need someone to show us a better way, so we don't settle for less.

Now Imagine a shepherd standing in a field, calling out to his sheep. Despite the noise around them, they recognize his voice and follow. Why? Because the sheep know he will lead them to safety.

In John, Chapter 10, Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd. In verse 3, He tells us, "The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out." We are the sheep of Jesus. He knows every single one of us personally, and if we listen, He will guide us. But there are other voices in this world—voices of fear, doubt, and temptation. The question then becomes, whose voice are you following?

In the world today, we can be led astray by countless different voices. We often hear sayings like, "Do whatever makes you happy" or "Live your truth", but those voices from society can often promote self-centered realities, encouraging people to prioritize personal desires over God's truth. We also live in a time where comparison and competition are at the forefront of most activities. Many of y'all have probably heard the saying that "Comparison is the thief of Joy". Well, this cannot be more true. Constant comparison leads to insecurity, envy and dissatisfaction with the unique creation you are. We have all been made in God's image, and we should seek our identity in Christ, and not by measuring ourselves to others.

Jesus states in Verse 9, "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved." There is only one way to true life and that is through Christ. The enemies and thieves come to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus, he came to give life, abundant life. Many believe that if they achieve enough, climbing the corporate ladder, earning degrees and winning awards, they will finally feel satisfied. However, They may end up sacrificing family, friends and even their own health in pursuit of success. Often when they reach their goal, they feel unfulfilled, wondering "Is this all there is?" Others chase wealth, thinking that more money will bring happiness. The bigger the better. Yet many wealthy people admit they still feel empty. While success and wealth are not bad, they become idols when we rely on them for meaning. True peace, joy and purpose come from Jesus, who offers us eternal life, which is something the world cannot give.

Then, in verse 11, He gives the greatest promise: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." Unlike a hired hand who runs when danger comes, Jesus stood in our place, sacrificing Himself on the cross. He did not do this out of obligation, but out of love.

We often struggle to do certain things through love and not just as mere obligations. I can get caught up in only caring about myself and miss out on opportunities to support others when they

need it. Jesus teaches us to love your neighbor as yourself, because love is the foundation of God's kingdom and the fulfillment of His law. By loving others as we love ourselves, we reflect God's love and demonstrate true faith in action.

And this love isn't just for some, it's for all. Finally in verse 16, he says, "I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also." His invitation is open to everyone. His sacrifice was for all mankind, not just those who claim to be his followers.

As Christians, we are called to follow Jesus's example of love and selflessness, by sacrificing our own time, comfort and peace to bring others into the light of Christ. This can be done through small, mundane actions like choosing to act with integrity even when it's difficult, so that others see Christ in your actions, or set aside time in your day to pray for others around you. Larger callings like traveling on mission trips, mentoring small groups of new believers on their faith journey or even taking time to listen to someone's struggles also can leave positive impacts on those around you.

Regardless of the actions we take to bring others closer to Christ, it is most prominent to remember what Jesus did for us. That his death on the cross provided atonement for our sins, offering forgiveness, salvation, and victory over death. His sacrifice demonstrated God's sacrificial love and opened the way for believers to have direct access to God and eternal life.

So, I ask you today, as the sheep of God's flock: Are you listening to His voice? Have you entered through the right door? And do you trust in the Good Shepherd who sacrificed everything for you? If not, He is calling you now. Will you follow?