**ONE MAN AND HIS DOG**

**By Rod**

*This sketch is based on Matthew 25: 31-46 – the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. It uses the old TV programme One Man And His Dog which may be familiar to older folk. The humour comes mainly from a person playing the part of the dog – and later one as a runaway goat. The serious impact comes at the end when the church is divided in two.*

*CAST*

*Phil Dribble The presenter*

*Ewan Ramsbottom Expert commentator*

*Joshua Davidson The shepherd*

*Shep His sheepdog*

*Goat*

*N.B.*

* *As well as shouting commands, Joshua could have a whistle that he could use intermittently to send commands to his dog*
* *There needs to be a post where Joshua can stand. Attached to the post is a long rope that he can use to ‘pen in’ one side of the church.*
* *Phil and Ewan are separate (perhaps in the pulpit) as they are commentating on the events they see.*

Phil Good morning, everyone, and welcome to another edition of ‘One man and his dog’. I’m Phil Dribble and alongside me is Ewan Ramsbottom.

Ewan ‘Ullo everyone.

Phil Ewan will be explaining what is happening as we watch the shepherds in action.

Ewan And their dogs.

Phil Yes, of course... the shepherds and their dogs in action. So, who have we got today, Ewan?

Ewan I think we’re in for a real treat today, Phil, because it’s the very experienced pairing of Joshua Davidson and his border collie Shep.

*[Enter Joshua and Shep who make their way to the post.]*

Phil As Joshua makes his way to the post from where he will control things, we wait for him and Shep to begin their work.

Joshua Away to me. *[Shep runs anticlockwise towards crossing halfway back in church.]*

Phil That seems a rather confusing instruction, Ewan. ‘Away to me’?

Ewan It’s the Outrun. He is telling his dog to run away from him in an anticlockwise direction.

Phil I didn’t know dogs had watches.

Ewan Of course they have – haven’t you heard of the dogwatch?

Phil Oh very droll. Anyway, Shep seems to understand what he is supposed to do. *[By this time Shep has run round further than half way, going past the centre of the aisle]*

Joshua Come bye. *[Shep stops circling anticlockwise and returns to middle of aisle]*

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Phil Is he singing an African song ‘Kumbaya my lord’ to keep his spirits up?

Ewan No, he is telling the dog to turn round and circle clockwise.

Joshua Stand. *[Shep stops centre aisle]*

Ewan He wants Shep to slow down and stop. This is a crucial phase as they try to lift the sheep.

Joshua Get back. Get out. *[Shep retreats backwards to back of church]*

Phil What is happening?

Ewan Shep is too close to the sheep. They are looking nervous. Joshua wants him to retreat a little.

Joshua Lie down. *[Shep stops at the back of the church]*

Ewan Shep has gone back far enough.

Joshua Stand.

Phil I must say, there are some funny looking sheep in amongst the flock.

Ewan Oh, they are not all sheep.

Phil What do you mean?

Ewan Some of them are goats.

Phil Goats! Are you sure?

Joshua Stand.

Ewan Oh yes. There’s an easy way to tell.

Phil What’s that?

Ewan The sheep have tails pointing down, but the goats have tails pointing up.

Phil Oh yes. I see now.

Joshua Walk up. *[Shep moves slowly up the aisle]*

Phil Shep is starting to move towards the sheep – and goats.

Ewan Yes, they have begun the fetch and drive.

Joshua Take time. *[Shep stops at centre aisle cross point]*

Phil They are going very carefully.

Ewan Yes, you don’t want to lose one before the shed.

Phil What shed? I can’t see a shed.

Ewan The shedding ring, that’s where the flock will be divided.

Phil What, into sheep and goats?

Ewan Exactly.

Joshua In here. *[Shep moves up the aisle to front]*

Ewan That’s the command to separate the flock – to shed the goats.

Phil He seems to have managed it perfectly: sheep on the left and goats on the right. *[Goat gets out of seat and starts to move across aisle]*

Ewan Maybe not quite perfectly – there’s one runaway.

Joshua Look back. *[Shep turns, sees runaway and goes after him, overtaking him]*

Ewan Joshua has seen the problem and has told Shep to go back and sort it out.

Phil Well here’s a challenge - to bring that goat back into line without losing the separation.

Ewan This is where teamwork between shepherd and dog is so vital. They must pen only the sheep. *[Joshua moves down the aisle dragging the rope behind him penning off the left hand of the church.]*

Joshua There. *[Shep stops beyond the goat ready to herd him back]*

Phil Shep seems to have caught the runaway goat and prevented him from joining the sheep.

Ewan Yes, now he has to drive him back to the other goats.

Joshua Walk on. *[Shep drives goat back to his seat]*

Phil Shep has got his goat.

Ewan he certainly has. What a clever dog he is.

Joshua That’ll do. *[Job done, Shep returns to his master’s side]*

Phil Well it’s job done for Joshua and Shep. How many points would you give them Ewan?

Ewan Oh I think it’s the maximum 100. They were faultless in outrun, lift, fetch, drive, shed and pen.

Phil What even with the runaway goat?

Ewan Oh, that’s exactly what you expect. When they realise what’s happening the goats don’t want to be separated from the sheep.

Phil Well there we have it, ladies and gentlemen. With the help of his dog, our Shepherd has penned all his sheep so they are safe and sound. The goats on the other hand have been separated and excluded.

*THE END*