



On the Same Page

Psa. 16:11 You will make known to me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Forever-Family Fellowship

We will teach and practice truth-and-love relationships with brothers-sisters in Christ that must survive/thrive in the present because we believe that these relationships will last forever

All-Week-Long Worship

As the local body of believers gathers each Sunday for worship, we will inspire a worship experience for all age groups that will travel with you all week long. What we do on Sunday will assist you in your singing, in your praying, in your devotion, and in your witness.

Conversely, it is as you worship all-week-long that you will be prepared to enter into gathered worship on Sunday.

Day-to-Day Discipleship

As followers of Christ, we are disciples every single day. Respect for and commitment to Scripture is essential. We will show you how to interact with and respond to God's Word, both as individuals, and in groups.

Moment-by-Moment Mission

God, the Architect of the world and of our lives arranges appointments and interruptions. Each of us is called to represent His Son for the glory of His Name. We will cultivate a mind-set for moment-by-moment mission, whether close to home, or far away.

Great Cry and Little Wool

It won't surprise you, if you have read recently, that I am dipping from the well once again of C.H. Spurgeon and his *John Ploughman's Pictures*. The artwork at the beginning of the present chapter shows a man shearing his animal in order to collect wool. The problem is that he is shearing, not a sheep, but a pig. That explains our title, in that the pig gives "great cry" but "little wool".

The first application is to **our pursuit of pleasure**. Listen to the critique: "There is noise enough - laughter and shouting and boasting; but where is the comfort which can warm the heart and give peace to the spirit? Generally there's plenty of smoke and very little fire in what is called pleasure." If our entertainment makes us miserable, **perhaps we are seeking to gather wool from a pig**.

But then one could speak of **the entertainment that takes place at church**. Is this also an end in itself? Of course, there are different types of churches, and thus different types of entertainment. For some, it might be the band. For others, the preacher or homily. For others, the people with whom they rub shoulders and exchange conversation. It might be the experience of the grand cathedral, or even the joy of watching the children. Each and all of these most likely have less to do with entertainment described in our chapter as "all fizz and bang and done for." You carry the experience with you as you exit the doors and resume normal life. I pray that it is deeper, touching not only the senses but also the soul. And for the churches seeking to draw crowds as though they were a stadium or coliseum, you may just get what you deserve: **great cry and little wool**.

Of course, there are other applications as well. Have you ever heard a person **laugh loudly**, not because of happiness but because they merely wanted people to believe that they were happy? Wouldn't it be better just to find the true source of happiness and enjoy it rather than pretending? Or perhaps worse, the person who **grumbles and complains** about the miseries of

their life, and, lo and behold, we find their life is not all that bad. Why not focus on what is good instead of bad? Why not be thankful for the blessings? The persons who plays the martyr may soon find a response from others that secretly hopes your martyrdom finds success. **Great cry and little wool.** It is present in politics and marketing and the workplace and in our own souls.

The Sheep has been sheared and He has given His wool. We don't have to shear it ourselves. What we must do is to embrace the proper Resource, not a pig, but the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and find in Him what is good and true and beautiful.

The Works of John Bunyan, Complete 3 Volume Set, John Bunyan, and George Offor

Many Christians live and do in this world, as if religion were but a by-business, and this world the one thing necessary; when indeed all the things of this world are but things by the by; and religion only the one thing needful (Luke 10:40-42)

Notes:

Our **Annual Meeting** will be this Sunday, January 26 at 10 a.m. Regularly scheduled **Sunday School classes** will resume next Sunday.

Ladies Bible Study meets on Tuesdays, 10 a.m. with a study of Ezra and Nehemiah

Men of Action breakfast/meeting, Saturday, January 25, 8 a.m.

Next Sunday, February 2, is our Lord's Table service (11 a.m.) and also American House service at 3 p.m.

Weekly Worship @ 11:00 a.m.

This Sunday, January 26, we will complete our exposition of Titus 1, the 3-chapter letter from Paul to Titus that is the source for our Winter sermon series, "**Grace and Good Works.**" Having seen the qualification for elders last week (see below), we move on to those selfish and greedy men who must have their influence in and among the congregation removed. This is no mere competition of rivals, but rather a distinction between pure/impure, or grace/greed.

Last Sunday, January 19, we continued on to the passage which describes the qualifications for elder or overseer, which are qualities to which we should always aspire. This message, "**Character Matters,**" is based on Titus 1:5-9. [Listen to the message here](#)

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