

# The Vanity of This Life and Its Pleasures

by John MacDuff

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*This sermon emphasizes the vanity of earthly things and the importance of setting our hearts on heavenly things, which bring true joy and satisfaction.*

**Duration:** 6:17

**Scripture:** Colossians 3:1

**Topics:** "Eternal Fulfillment", "Worldly Vanity"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the insufficiency of earthly possessions and pleasures to bring true and lasting satisfaction. It highlights the transient nature of worldly pursuits and the eternal fulfillment found in setting our hearts and minds on heavenly things, where Christ reigns. The message urges listeners to seek the everlasting joy, fellowship, and inheritance promised in God's kingdom, contrasting it with the fleeting and unsatisfying nature of earthly treasures.

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## Transcript

Is This All? By John MacDuff Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Colossians 3, 1 and 2 The history of six thousand years has given indisputable evidence of the insufficiency of all earthly objects to yield true and satisfying enjoyment. Man has needs which no earthly riches can supply. He has soul diseases which no human skill can cure.

He has fears which no mortal courage can quell. He has debts which no finite resources can discharge. And he has miseries which no earthbound sagacity can console.

In earthly things, to whatever extent they may be possessed, there is a lack of adaptation to yield real happiness. It is recorded of Caesar that he exclaimed when in possession of universal empire, 'Is this all?' His expectations of happiness were not answered by the attainment of worldly things. Reader, have you not often felt something similar to this? You may have set your heart upon some distant object, and oh, what sacrifices you made for its attainment! What self-denial did you undergo? At length, perhaps, the desire of your heart was granted you.

But was it what you expected? Were you not, on the contrary, led to exclaim, in the language of the disappointed emperor, 'Is this all?' It is an absolute certainty that the things of earth cannot satisfy the cravings of our immortal nature. Wealth, fame, learning, pleasure, domestic happiness, none of these things can do it. Whoever drinks of these waters shall thirst again, as the Saviour declared to the Samaritan woman.

But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. But the things of earth, besides being unsatisfying in their nature, are at best transitory in their duration. 'What are riches, uncertain,' is the epithet which the pen of inspiration employs in describing them, 1 Timothy 6.16. Will you set your eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle toward heaven, Proverbs 23.5. What is pleasure? Something that is only for a season.

What is wisdom? More precious than rubies, if it is the wisdom which comes from above. But if it is the wisdom of this world, it also is vanity and will soon pass away. What is fame? Often a bubble, no sooner blown than it bursts.

Yes, the earth itself is only temporary. A Roman general on one occasion, when elated by the splendors of a triumphal entrance into the imperial city which had been awarded to him in honor of the victories he had won, exclaimed, 'Ah, that it would continue!' But, alas, it did not continue. All the glittering pomp soon vanished, it floated away like a fleeting dream, and so with all earthly bliss it will not and cannot continue.

Had earthly things a character of abiding permanent belonging to them, men might with some semblance of reason make them the fit objects of their desires and pursuits. Such a character, however, they do not possess. The world with its lust is passing away.

Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? But, O blessed heavenly world, this fullness of joy, this unclouded vision of God and the Lamb, this sweet fellowship with saints and angels, this day without a night, this sky without a cloud, this sea without a ruffle, these ravishing melodies, this seraphic transport and exulting joy, they will continue and that forever. We have a priceless inheritance, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay, 1 Peter 1, 4. O what folly, O what madness, that my thoughts should go astray after toys and empty pleasures, pleasures only of a day! This vain world, with all its trifles, soon, alas, will be no more. There's no object worth admiring but the God whom I adore.

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