

# Vanities Social and Political. 4:1-16

by W.J. Erdman

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*The sermon emphasizes the futility of life's pursuits and the fleeting nature of human endeavors, highlighting the vanity and self-centeredness of humanity.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 39:5, Proverbs 23:4, Ecclesiastes 1:14, Ecclesiastes 3:11, Ecclesiastes 4:1

**Topics:** "Vanity Of Life", "Eternal Purpose"

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## Description

In this sermon by W.J. Erdman, the preacher reflects on the endless cycle of vanity and hopelessness that plagues humanity. He observes the oppression and suffering in the world, leading to a deep sense of despair and questioning the value of existence. Erdman highlights the futility of worldly pursuits and the fleeting nature of success, fame, and power, emphasizing the transient nature of human endeavors. The preacher underscores the self-centeredness of each generation and the ultimate insignificance of earthly achievements, pointing to the eternal truth that life without a deeper purpose is like chasing after the wind.

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## Transcript

But this Seeker after all that is done under the sun, cannot remain in the self-complacent enjoyment to which he resorts. He must, like wind and wave, move and turn in ever restless mood. He turns, he looks, and lo! another vanity! He beholds all the oppressions done under the sun, and declares, for the comfortless oppressed, it were better to be dead; yea, for both living and dead, it were better never to have been at all! Here is another descent into hopelessness; just as at the beginning, in regard to his own experiences and labors, he revolved his thoughts until he made his heart despair, so now he thinks it better never to have been, on seeing the sad experiences of his fellows.

And then he beholds vanity after vanity, social and political; how the successful rich man is envied of his neighbor; how the lazy fool derides the rich man's striving after wind; how the lone miser toils in vain, never knowing the good of companionship; and how the wise youth, in place of an old and foolish king, will be the idol of the fickle multitude for a season, only to be neglected and forgot ten in his turn. It is humbling, but very true in every age and all lauds, that each generation is self-centered and cares naught for what was before or what will be after it. Not to be always popular and "daily swallowed by men's eyes," proves life and royalty to be but vapor, and all effort and "bold emprise" a striving after wind.

"Die two months ago and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year! "

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