

Dr. Bill Mounce, Sermon on the Mount, Session 13, Matthew 6:25ff, Worry and Trusting God Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Mounce, Sermon on the Mount, Session 13, Matthew 6:25ff, Worry and Trusting God, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Bill Mounce's Sermon on the Mount Lecture 13 focuses on **Matthew 6:25-34**, specifically addressing the topics of **worry and trusting God**. Mounce argues that **worry is a form of practical atheism**, demonstrating a lack of faith in God's provision. Through biblical analysis and personal anecdotes, he illustrates **God's care for creation** as a reason for believers to trust Him for their needs, emphasizing that **seeking God's kingdom should be the priority** over anxieties about daily life. The lecture encourages listeners to **live in the present** and have faith that God will provide necessities.

**2. 22 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Mounce, Sermon on the Mount, Session 13 – Double click
icon to play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (New Testament → Gospels → Sermon on the Mount).**



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3. Briefing Document: Mounce, Sermon on the Mount, Session 13, Matthew 6:25ff, Worry and Trusting God

Briefing Document: Dr. Bill Mounce on Worry and Trusting God (Matthew 6:25ff)

Overview: This lecture by Dr. Bill Mounce delves into Matthew 6:25-34, focusing on Jesus' teachings about worry and the importance of trusting God for our basic needs. Mounce emphasizes the convicting, frustrating, yet encouraging nature of this passage, highlighting that worry is not an option for believers and stems from a lack of faith. He unpacks Jesus' arguments against worry, using examples from nature and common sense, and culminates in the call to seek God's kingdom first.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. Worry as "Practical Atheism" and a Sin:

- Mounce begins by acknowledging the human tendency to worry, even jokingly calling it his "spiritual gift." However, he quickly pivots to the seriousness of worry, quoting his father's phrase: **"worry is practical atheism."**
- He elaborates, "When you and I worry about those things that God has told us he will take care of. We are acting as if God doesn't exist, or at a minimum, doesn't care."
- He connects worry to a lack of trust in God's promises and cites Philippians 4:6-7 as a command not to worry but to turn things over to God.

1. Context: Undivided Loyalty to God:

- Mounce sets the context of this passage within the broader theme of chapter 6, which is a call to undivided loyalty to God, contrasting it with the pursuit of wealth.
- The "Therefore" at the beginning of verse 25 links this section to the preceding discussion on choosing God over earthly treasures. If one chooses God, the natural question is whom to trust for provision, leading to Jesus' command not to worry.

1. Jesus' Thesis: "Do Not Worry":

- Mounce identifies verse 25 as Jesus' central thesis: **"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?"**

- He notes that everything following this verse serves as commentary and justification for this command.

1. Three Lessons Against Worry:

- **Lesson 1: From Nature (Food - Verse 26):** Jesus points to the birds of the air, who do not sow, reap, or store, yet are fed by their heavenly Father. Mounce emphasizes the emphatic Greek word used for "look," urging believers to **"look intently," "observe, study, learn"** from nature.
- The arguments derived from this lesson are: God provides, and humans are of greater worth than birds (created in God's image), therefore we should conclude that God will provide for us.
- Mounce highlights the sinfulness of worry in this context: "To worry is to believe that God will not sustain what He has created. Rather, what we're called to is to trust that God will treat us better than He treats the birds."
- **Lesson 2: Common Sense (Futility - Verse 27):** Jesus asks, "Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" Mounce underscores the utter uselessness of worry in achieving anything positive, quoting Stott: **"So then worry is a waste. It's a waste of time, thought, nervous energy."** Stott's point that "Worry doubles trouble" is also highlighted. Mounce adds that worry implies a disbelief in God's care, similar to a child doubting their parent's provision.
- **Lesson 3: From Nature (Clothing - Verses 28-30):** Jesus directs attention to the flowers of the field, which neither labor nor spin, yet even Solomon in all his splendor was not dressed like one of them.
- This leads to the question: "If that is how God clothes the grass of the field... will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith?"
- Mounce emphasizes that worry about clothing is an issue of faith. He delves into the meaning of "little faith," drawing on Martin Lloyd-Jones, who suggests it's having enough faith for salvation but not enough to trust God in the everyday provisions of life. **"We have enough faith to believe that Christ did on the cross for us what we could not do for ourselves... But if we have little faith, it means that we don't have enough faith to trust God in the everyday activities of life..."**

1. Growing in Faith:

- Mounce suggests several steps to grow in faith, including: recognizing the imperative to trust God (as worry is sin), learning to think rightly by observing

God's provision in creation and his past actions (Christ's death), and stepping out in faith.

- He uses the analogy of a marriage or family to illustrate the damaging nature of a lack of trust.

1. **Worldview and God's Sustaining Role:**

- Mounce stresses that understanding God's role as the ultimate provider is a matter of worldview. Even when we work and earn, it is God's graciousness that sustains the entire system.
- He shares an anecdote about a friend who found freedom in the idea that a man's primary job is to *care* for his family, not just to *provide*, as provision ultimately comes from God.

1. **Conclusion: Seek First His Kingdom (Verses 31-34):**

- Jesus concludes by reiterating, **"So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them."**
- The positive command is given in verse 33: **"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."** Mounce clarifies that "all these things" refer to the basic necessities of life, not luxuries.
- The final reason not to worry is that God is our Father, committed to providing for His children within the family of faith.
- Mounce emphasizes that filling our minds with worry pushes God out, while focusing on God and His kingdom leaves less room for anxiety.
- He addresses potential misunderstandings, clarifying that not worrying does not equate to laziness; believers are still called to work hard, but ultimately trust in God's provision.

1. **Living in the Present:**

- Verse 34, **"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own,"** is highlighted.
- Mounce quotes Martin Lloyd-Jones on the active and imaginative nature of worry, transporting us to future anxieties that may never materialize.

- He stresses the importance of staying focused in the present, trusting that tomorrow will bring its own challenges and God's sufficient grace to meet them.

1. **Accepting God's Provision:**

- Mounce shares personal anecdotes of financial hardship to illustrate that God's provision may not always come in the way we expect or desire. He emphasizes the need to trust not only God's power but also His wisdom and love in how He provides.
- The story of buying a meal for a homeless man and the experience of living on limited resources highlight the often humbling and unexpected ways God can meet our needs.
- Ultimately, the lecture circles back to the core issue of trusting God's character and being willing to accept His provision in His way.

Key Quotes:

- "worry is practical atheism."
- "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?"
- "look intently at the birds."
- "To worry is to believe that God will not sustain what He has created."
- "So then worry is a waste. It's a waste of time, thought, nervous energy."
- "Worry doubles trouble."
- "If that is how God clothes the grass of the field... will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith?"
- "We have enough faith to believe that Christ did on the cross for us what we could not do for ourselves... But if we have little faith, it means that we don't have enough faith to trust God in the everyday activities of life..."
- "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."
- "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Conclusion: Dr. Mounce's lecture powerfully unpacks Jesus' teaching on worry, revealing it as a fundamental issue of faith and trust in God. He challenges listeners to examine their own hearts and worldviews, urging them to actively choose trust over anxiety and to seek God's kingdom as their primary focus, confident in His promise to provide for their needs in His perfect way.

4. Study Guide: Mounce, Sermon on the Mount, Session 13, Matthew 6:25ff, Worry and Trusting God

Study Guide: Matthew 6:25-34 on Worry and Trusting God

Key Themes:

- The prohibition against worry as a command from Jesus.
- Worry as practical atheism, demonstrating a lack of trust in God's provision.
- The call to undivided loyalty to God, choosing Him over the pursuit of wealth.
- God's provision for creation (birds and flowers) as an analogy for His care for humanity.
- The greater value of humans created in God's image compared to the rest of creation.
- The futility and wastefulness of worry, as it cannot change the future or add to one's life.
- The issue of "little faith" as a failure to trust God for daily needs after believing in Him for salvation.
- The importance of actively seeking God's kingdom and righteousness as the antidote to worry.
- God's role as a loving Heavenly Father who knows and will provide for the needs of His children.
- The sufficiency of each day's own troubles, emphasizing the need to focus on the present rather than future anxieties.
- The understanding that God's provision may not always align with our preferences or expectations.

Quiz:

1. According to Dr. Mounce, why is the word "therefore" significant at the beginning of Matthew 6:25?
2. What does Dr. Mounce's father mean by the phrase "practical atheism" in relation to worry?

3. Describe the two lessons from nature that Jesus uses to illustrate why we should not worry, and what is the main point of each analogy?
4. What does Dr. Mounce explain about the Greek word translated as "look" or "consider" in Matthew 6:26, and why is this significant?
5. Explain the common-sense argument against worry presented in Matthew 6:27.
6. According to Martin Lloyd-Jones, what is the difference between having enough faith for salvation and having "little faith"?
7. What does Dr. Mounce suggest are some ways to grow in faith and overcome worry?
8. Explain the shift in focus from the negative command not to worry to the positive command in Matthew 6:33.
9. What does Jesus mean by "all these things" that will be given to those who seek first God's kingdom and righteousness?
10. How does Dr. Mounce interpret Jesus' statement in Matthew 6:34 about not worrying about tomorrow?

Answer Key:

1. The word "therefore" connects the discussion about worry to the preceding verses about choosing between serving God and serving wealth. Since one cannot serve both, those who choose God should trust Him for their needs instead of amassing earthly treasures.
2. "Practical atheism" means that when we worry about things God has promised to take care of, we are acting as if God does not exist or does not care for us. It is a failure to believe in God's promises and His ability to provide.
3. The first lesson (Matthew 6:26) is from the birds, illustrating that God feeds them without them sowing, reaping, or storing, emphasizing God's provision for His creation. The second lesson (Matthew 6:28-30) is from the flowers, showing that God clothes them beautifully even though they do not labor or spin, highlighting God's care for even the temporary aspects of His creation.
4. Dr. Mounce explains that the Greek word (likely *emblepo*) means to look intently, to observe carefully, and to learn from. This is significant because Jesus is urging His listeners to actively consider and draw conclusions from God's provision in nature, not just to glance at it.

5. The common-sense argument is that worry is futile because it cannot add a single hour to one's life (or a cubit to one's stature). It is a waste of time, thought, and energy that accomplishes nothing positive.
6. Martin Lloyd-Jones explains that having enough faith for salvation means believing that Christ's death provided access to the Father. Having "little faith" means lacking the trust to believe that God will provide for our everyday needs like food, clothing, and shelter, despite the greater act of salvation already accomplished.
7. Dr. Mounce suggests several ways to grow in faith: recognizing it as a necessity and a command, learning to think rightly by reorienting thoughts towards God's past provision (like the sacrifice of Christ), and stepping out in faith by taking God at His word even when it's uncomfortable.
8. After repeatedly stating the negative command "do not worry," Jesus shifts to the positive command to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness." This offers a proactive alternative to worry, focusing on prioritizing God and trusting that He will then provide for their needs.
9. By "all these things," Jesus refers to the basic necessities of life: food, drink, and clothing (and by extension, shelter). It does not refer to extravagant or materialistic desires but rather the fundamental requirements for sustaining life.
10. Dr. Mounce interprets this as a reminder to focus on the present day and its challenges, rather than becoming preoccupied with anxieties about the future. Each day will bring its own difficulties, and God's grace will be sufficient for those challenges when they arise.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Discuss the implications of understanding worry as "practical atheism" as presented in the lecture. How does this definition challenge common attitudes towards anxiety, and what are its practical consequences for a believer's life?
2. Analyze the effectiveness of Jesus' use of nature (birds and flowers) as arguments against worry in Matthew 6:25-34. What specific points does He make through these analogies, and how do they appeal to logic and faith?
3. Explore the concept of "little faith" as discussed in the lecture in relation to trusting God for daily provisions. Why might someone who has faith for salvation still struggle with trusting God for their material needs, and how can this gap be bridged?
4. Examine the relationship between seeking God's kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33) and overcoming worry. How does prioritizing God transform one's perspective on material needs and anxieties about the future?
5. Reflect on the idea that God's provision may not always align with our desired outcomes or methods. How does this understanding challenge our expectations of God, and what does it require of us in terms of faith and acceptance?

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Worry:** A state of anxiety and unease over actual or potential problems, often characterized by excessive or intrusive thoughts about negative future outcomes. In the context of the lecture, it signifies a lack of trust in God's provision.
- **Practical Atheism:** A way of living as if God does not exist or does not care, even while perhaps intellectually acknowledging His existence. In this context, worry is considered practical atheism because it acts as if God will not fulfill His promises to provide for His people.
- **Undivided Loyalty:** A commitment of devotion and service to one master or priority, without being torn between conflicting allegiances. In Matthew 6, Jesus calls for undivided loyalty to God rather than to wealth.
- **Provision:** The act of supplying what is needed, especially food, shelter, and other necessities. In the lecture, it refers to God's act of caring for and sustaining His creation, particularly His people.
- **Little Faith:** A state of belief that is insufficient for fully trusting God in the practical aspects of daily life, even if there is belief in foundational truths like salvation through Christ.
- **Seek First His Kingdom:** To prioritize God's reign, rule, and purposes in one's life above all other concerns, including material needs and personal ambitions.
- **Seek First His Righteousness:** To prioritize living in accordance with God's standards of holiness, justice, and moral uprightness.
- **Antecedent:** The noun or noun phrase that a pronoun refers to. In the context of Matthew 6:33, "all these things" refers back to the previously mentioned needs of food, drink, and clothing.
- **Worldview:** A fundamental set of beliefs, values, and assumptions about the nature of reality and how the world works. The lecture emphasizes the importance of a biblical worldview in understanding God's active involvement in providing for His creation.
- **Sufficient Grace:** The enabling power and divine assistance that God provides to meet the specific challenges and needs of each day. In the context of Matthew 6:34, it implies that God will equip believers to handle tomorrow's difficulties when they arrive.

5. FAQs on Mounce, Sermon on the Mount, Session 13, Matthew 6:25ff, Worry and Trusting God, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: On Worry and Trusting God (Based on Dr. Bill Mounce's Lecture on Matthew 6:25ff)

1. What is the central message of Matthew 6:25-34? The core message is a command from Jesus: "Do not worry." This passage calls for undivided loyalty to God, urging believers to trust in their Heavenly Father's provision for their basic needs (food, drink, clothing) rather than being consumed by anxiety about these things. The emphasis is on seeking God's kingdom and righteousness as the priority, with the promise that God will then provide for these necessities.

2. Why does Dr. Mounce consider worry to be "practical atheism"? Dr. Mounce's father used the phrase "practical atheism" to describe worry because when believers worry about the things God has promised to take care of, they are essentially acting as if God doesn't exist or doesn't care. It's a failure to trust in God's character and his promises, implying a disbelief in his ability or willingness to provide for his children.

3. What two lessons from nature does Jesus use to teach against worry? Jesus uses two analogies from nature: * **The birds of the air (Matthew 6:26):** Birds do not sow, reap, or store food, yet God feeds them. This illustrates God's provision for his creation and emphasizes that humans, being of far greater value than birds, can trust that God will also provide for them. The Greek word for "look" here implies an intentional observation and learning from God's creation. * **The flowers of the field (Matthew 6:28-30):** Flowers grow beautifully without laboring or spinning, and even Solomon in all his splendor was not dressed as magnificently. If God clothes the fleeting grass of the field, he will certainly clothe those of "little faith," highlighting that worry about clothing is a lack of trust in God's sustaining power.

4. How does worrying about the future impact us, according to the lecture? Worrying about the future is presented as futile and even harmful. It cannot add a single hour to one's life. Furthermore, as Stott is quoted, worry is a waste of time, thought, and energy. It can double trouble, as we worry unnecessarily if our fears don't materialize, and we worry twice (once in anticipation and once in reality) if they do. The lecture emphasizes the importance of living one day at a time, trusting God for each day's needs.

5. What does it mean to have "little faith" in the context of this passage? Having "little faith" in this context doesn't mean a lack of faith for salvation, but rather a lack of trust in God's sustaining power in the everyday aspects of life. It's the inability to believe that God will provide for basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter, even though believers have faith that Christ's death secured their salvation. Dr. Mounce suggests that trusting God for our daily needs might actually be easier than believing in the immense act of the crucifixion.

6. How can believers grow in their faith and overcome worry? The lecture offers several steps for growing in faith and overcoming worry: * **Recognize the necessity:** Understand that God calls us to trust him and that worry is both insulting and illogical, even a sin. * **Learn to think rightly:** Reorient thoughts by observing God's creation and reflecting on the theological truth that if God loved us enough to send Christ, he will surely continue to care for us. * **Step out in faith:** Sometimes, overcoming worry involves taking God at his word and acting in obedience, even when the future seems uncertain. * **Develop a biblical worldview:** Recognize that God is ultimately the one providing, even through our work and the natural processes of the world.

7. What does it mean to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33)? Seeking first God's kingdom and his righteousness means prioritizing God and his will above all else in our lives. It involves living for God's purposes rather than being primarily focused on our own earthly desires and needs. When believers make God their top priority, the promise is that he will then provide for their basic necessities. This seeking should be a deep hunger and thirst for God's righteousness.

8. How should a believer approach the challenges and uncertainties of tomorrow? The lecture emphasizes that believers should not worry about tomorrow because tomorrow will have its own concerns. Instead, they should focus on the present day and trust that God's grace will be sufficient for whatever challenges tomorrow may bring. Worry transports us into the future and causes us to experience anxieties that may never materialize. The key is to stay present, focus on God, and trust in his provision day by day.