

# **Dr. Bill Mounce, Sermon on the Mount Lecture 13, Matthew 6:25ff, On Worry and Trusting God**

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This is Dr. Bill Mounce in his teaching on the Sermon on the Mount. This is session 13, Matthew 6:25, and following, On Worry and Trusting God.

Welcome back to our last day. we're going to finish up the Sermon on the Mount, and, I had to say it once, Sermon on the Mount, and some pretty interesting passages.

I mean, it's been interesting, I think, but there are a couple of really fascinating, challenging passages we're going to look at today that are life-changing. So, good day. We had started on this section in the bottom half of, oh, let's pray, I'm sorry.

Father, we're going to look at topics of worry, topics of a critical gossipy spirit, topics of a challenge to choose one way or the other. These are hard topics and topics that I can't convey in class, obviously, but Father, I pray that you work in their heart, the student's hearts and minds, that you bring the verses and the teaching to their mind in the days and weeks ahead. I pray, Father, that all this has been helpful in affecting their preaching and that they will carry this over to their people in their churches and challenge them in some of these core, basic teachings that you've given us.

While at times we don't like your sermon because it's so frustrating, we do thank you for it, and we thank you that you're a patient God who's on the journey with us. We thank you for your patience as we learn over and over what these verses mean. In Jesus' name, amen.

Okay, we're down to section two, which is starting at verse 25. So, Matthew 6, verse 25. I think that this passage from 25 to 34, I wrote out a series of descriptives.

It's one of the most significant, probing, frustrating, convicting, encouraging passages in all the New Testament. It certainly is a passage that convicts all of us when it comes to our faith, and at the same time it convicts us. I think it also encourages us to trust our Heavenly Father.

The fact of the matter is most of us like to worry, right? It's my spiritual gift. That is my gift. I can create more things to worry about than Carter has pills.

I mean, it is my gift. My wife is amazed at what I worry about. It's getting better.

It is a good thing that life is a journey, but when we travel somewhere, I constantly wonder what I would do if the car broke down now. Would I go back, or would I go forward? Where was the last gas station? Where is the closest on or off-ramp? I wonder where the tow truck would tow us if we broke down now. And I just, I mean, I can create things to worry about that would just astonish you. And I got really convicted about this, actually teaching Sermon on the Mount several years ago.

And I said, you know, Lord, this is something I've got to, we've got to work on. And it's getting better. Our truck's got 160,000, and our Jeep has 120,000.

So, breaking down is a very real possibility. But it's, we all like to worry. We all like to worry.

If we didn't like to worry, we wouldn't do it. But I think we all like to worry. And part of it is, I think it gives us the illusion of control.

But as we're going to see, this is not an option. Worry is not an option in this passage. My dad uses the phrase that worry is, quote, practical atheism.

That's a great phrase to look at it. 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.

Right? And it's a sin. Philippians 4:6 to 7. Do not worry, but turn things over to God. So, this whole thing of worry is a topic that's dear to my heart.

And again, I'm working at it. But it's always a challenge. Okay.

The context of chapter 6 is this call to undivided loyalty to God. And when it starts, verse 25, with "Therefore," he's building off of his discussion of wealth rather than trusting wealth, right? Because either you choose wealth or you choose God. So, if you choose God, you're not choosing to amass earthly treasures.

So, since you're not going to amass earthly treasures, who do you trust? And the argument, the flow of the argument is that instead of trusting our own ability to make money, we trust God. So that's why it starts with a, therefore. So, Jesus states his thesis in verse 25.

Therefore, I tell you, do not worry. Okay, everything else is commentary. Do not worry about your, well, that's it.

That's the thesis. Why do you worry if, in light of our loyalty to our master, previous section, why do you worry if he will care for you? He created your body. He created your life.

He's promised to sustain your body, to sustain your life. Don't worry. Don't worry.

That's the thesis. Let me read it all. Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life.

And by life, I mean what you eat and drink, so don't worry about your body or what you wear. I'm sorry. Yeah.

Is not life more than food and the body more than clothes? So, there's your thesis. And there's just, there's so much in there that we can't go into much detail.

One of the sermons in my sermon series is about worldview. Do we really believe that there's more to life than food? Do we really live as if there's more to life than simply what we wear? That's a huge statement about how we approach life and stuff, and we don't have time to go into it. But anyway, that's the thesis in verse 25.

Then what he's going to do is that he has a series of three lessons to help drive the point home about not worry. And the first is in verse 26, and it's a lesson from nature about food. He's going to draw an analogy.

And so, in verse 26, he says, look at the birds of the air. They don't sow, they don't reap, they don't store in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Just look at how God treats his creation.

He created it. He sustains it. Look at what's going on around you.

And then he draws the point. Are you not much more valuable than they? All right. So, he's saying, look intently.

He doesn't just look at the birds of the air as an under-translation. It's an emphatic Greek word. It means to look intently, to stop, to study, to learn from.

Do any of the translations you use say that? Do any of them say to look intently or do anything like that? Yeah, it's too bad. It, everything is; sometimes, I think everything in the Bible is either over-translated or under-translated. We just can't hit the nail on the head.

God loved the world. Wow, what is agapao kind of love? And you can't, you know, you just, you can't, that's a commentary. That's a sermon.

But here, the word is a Greek word that explicitly means to look intently, to learn. Yeah, consider is going the right direction. It is, it's emblepo, I think, yeah.

And it's, so it is, an emphatic form of the word look, but the whole point is to consider. Yeah, basically, one guy, he's a Dallas professor, did the Lexham translation, so he was not constrained by social translational mores in how he translated. Anyway, all right.

Look intently at the birds. Observe, study, learn. They don't worry about food.

They work hard, but they don't worry. So, there are a couple of arguments that are coming out of verse 26. Number one, God provides.

When we look at nature, we see God providing. You go, yeah, well, the birds die. Yeah, well, we die, too.

But he does take care of them. I'm up at our cabin. I love to feed the birds.

It feels like God told us to take care of the earth. And so, one way that I do that, frankly, is that we buy a lot of peanuts and a lot of bird feed. Because, and you put it out I just love watching the birds eat.

And they just eat and eat and eat and eat. And, you know, it's a, it's, I get to be a part of sustaining the life of 20 little birdies till the squirrel comes.

By the way, there is no such thing as a squirrel-proof birdcage. You are aware of that. You'll see them in the stores.

I don't think any of them work. We have a squirrel named Jake. He lives in our attic.

We actually let him live in our attic. And it's, he's so tame at this point that he'll eat peanuts out of our hand. My brother-in-law was up at the house once.

And he was, he spent all day feeding Jake. Jake was very happy. And he was sticking peanuts between his toes and stuff.

One time, Jake came, and Terry didn't see it. Jake thought his toe was a peanut, and that hurt.

That hurt. But anyway, I don't know. You know, whether it's through us or whatever, God provides.

So, you look at nature and go, God's providing for them. And then, secondly, we're of greater worth than them. Right? We're created in God's image.

The birds are not created. Speaking of birds in the attic, okay, yeah, there's one right up there. God provides.

We are of greater value than the birds. We were created in God's image. They are not.

We are the apex of creation. And so, three, we have to conclude that God will provide.

We have to conclude from nature.

And that's what's so wrong with worry. 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.

Well, that's hard, isn't it? Well, it is for me. It's so easy to worry, you know. Pastors are not exactly the best-paid profession on the face of the earth, except for a few.

You know, it's easy to worry. And yet God provides, doesn't He? I remember when we moved to Boston to work at Gordon-Conwell. We couldn't sell our house in Spokane.

We just tried everywhere we could, and we can't. So, we ended up renting it for not enough money. Boston is very, very expensive.

And so, we had a bigger house payment there than we've ever had before. And I'm talking to Rob. I asked how on earth this was going to work. And she goes, I have no idea. But we felt very strongly the Lord wanted us to go to Gordon-Conwell.

So, we said we're going to be obedient and try not to worry. A couple of years later, we paid the house off in Spokane. And we looked at each other and wondered how that happened. I'd go back, and if you have these experiences, you go back, and you do your budget, and you look at your income, and you look at your expenses, and you go, they don't match.

I mean, I hear stories like this all the time. The olive oil, the oil jar doesn't get empty, right? Elijah, is that Elijah? Yeah. Tires don't wear out.

Cars don't break. Clothing lasts longer than it should. You know, I mean, God has a way of taking care of us when we do what he's called us to do.

And so, the lesson is we look at the birds. We learn that God takes care of them. And so, he's also going to take care of us because we're of infinitely more value than the birds.

Reason number two is in 27; we don't, and it's just common sense. Well, what on earth is the point of worrying? It doesn't do any good. Verse 27, can any one of you, by worry, add a single hour to your life, or the Greek is ambiguous, as you know, add

a cubit or anything to your stature, is it inch or? What does the other, what's the footnote say? Okay, so yeah, or add a cubit.

Yeah, all right. Yeah, it's just, it's a translational issue. And actually, I didn't bring my text with me, anyway.

Yeah, so it just makes common sense. Why worry? It doesn't do any good. You can't, and you can't add a single hour to your life, no matter how much you worry.

So, it's just common sense. Thinking that worry can actually solve anything is as silly as thinking you can add an hour to your lifespan or 18 inches to your height. Stott, on page 169, has a really good way of saying it.

So then worry is a waste. It's a waste of time, thought, nervous energy. We need to learn to live a day at a time.

We should plan for the future, of course, but not worry about the future. One day's trouble is enough for one day, or each day has troubles enough of its own. So why anticipate them? If we do, we double them.

For if our fear does not materialize, we have worried once for nothing. If it does materialize, we have worried twice instead of once. In both cases, it's foolish.

Worry doubles trouble. That was beautifully stated, beautifully stated. Worry is, I came to the conclusion that worry is actually worse than that.

When you and I worry, what we're doing is telling God that we don't believe he cares about us. I mean, think of any familial relationship. Your spouse or your kids come, and they say, Dad, I just, I don't think you're going to feed me tonight.

Imagine how that would feel if your son or daughter said that to you. I don't think we're going to make it. I don't think you care enough about me to feed me or to clothe me.

And that's what we do to God when we worry if he's going to keep his promises to us. So, reason number two in verse 27 is just common sense. It doesn't make any sense to worry.

Reason number three is in verses 28 to 30. And again, he goes back to nature, and says, here's a lesson from nature about clothing. Yeah, the first lesson was about food, and this lesson was about clothing.

Verses 28 to 30. Why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith? And I know

this is early on in the ministry, but that must have stung for Jesus to turn to people who had committed to following him. And he calls them, oh you of little faith.

So, God creates and God sustains plant life. We are much greater to him than the flowers. And so, faith believes that God will treat us better than the flowers of the field.

And see, this is why it's an issue of faith. This is why he said you of little faith. Ultimately, it comes down to whether you believe that the God who creates and sustains all else and who created you and created me has enough faith to believe that he will sustain the life that he gave us. And this is an issue of faith.

In the sermon series, there's a separate sermon on this little faith business. And I just wanted to pop over to it and say a few things about a little faith. So, we'll leave the text, just the exposition of this phrase, and then we'll come back.

Martin Lloyd-Jones has a very interesting way of talking about this. He says, what does it mean to have little faith? Well, we all have, and any disciple of Christ has, enough faith for salvation. We have enough faith to believe that Christ did on the cross for us what we could not do for ourselves.

So, we believe that his death on the cross gives us access to the Father. But if we have little faith, it means that we don't have enough faith to trust God in the everyday activities of life, which, if you look at it, you go, oh, gee, I wonder which one was harder. Which one was harder, to die and give us access to the Father or to provide for his children? My guess is the first one was just a tad harder.

And yet, when we have little faith, we have enough faith for the first, but it means we don't have enough faith for the second. We don't trust his sustaining power, the sustaining power to give us food, clothing, and shelter. He says, you know, cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you, 1 Peter 5:7, as Peter says it.

But do we have enough faith to do that? And when we fit into the category of little faith, that's what we're saying, that we don't cast our anxiety on him because we don't think he's going to care for us. So, it's so important that we and our people, through your preaching and your mentoring and everything else, I think, really come to grips with what it means to have faith because, without faith, it is impossible to please him, right? That's the bedrock thing. That's what God wants.

God wants to be our God. He wants us to be his people. He wants us to live in a relationship with him, and he lives in a relationship with us.

And the base, fundamental thing that's needed for that to happen is faith. That's why Hebrews says that without faith, it's impossible to please God. That's this bedrock thing: We have to believe who he is, that he is who he says he is, and that he'll do what he says he'll do.

That's the bedrock part. And, you know, it'd be a great sermon series to talk about how do you grow in that kind of faith. And the point I came up with is, first of all, to recognize that we have to.

God calls us to trust him. And can you imagine the devastation, as I said, that would happen in a marriage or in a family if the spouse did not have faith and you did not trust you if your children did not trust you? And in reverse, part of learning about faith is, no, we have to.

We've been told. When I was worrying about the 14, the highway 14 that we travel, when I was sitting there worrying how close I am to a tow truck, am I still within cell range, that was a sin. And part of what started changing me was realizing it's a sin, and I have to figure this out.

I have to learn to trust. I have to learn not to worry. It's insulting and illogical to live in a lack of trust.

It's practical atheism that's unacceptable for God's children. We are called to believe all of God's promises. And so, I think part of moving forward in faith is simply the challenge that we must do it.

I think a second step in growing in faith is to learn to think rightly. And that's what the point that Jesus is making here. He said, look at the birds.

Stop just for a second. Take a breath. Take a break from your worry.

Look at what's around you. Look at how the animals are cared for. Look how they eat.

Look how beautiful the flowers are. Take some time and reorient your thoughts. And so theologically, one way to do that is to say, well, see, God loved me.

I was a sinner. Christ died for me. Does it make any sense to think that he won't continue to care for me? He's already done the really hard task.



He's turned my heart of stone into a heart of flesh that's malleable and can be influenced by the work of God's Spirit. Why wouldn't I believe that he would take care of me? Part of this is just stopping and thinking and getting your head cleared about it. I'm looking for a quote from Martin Lloyd Jones, but I can't find it.

Oh, well, it'll come up. And then, at times, I just think we just have to step out of faith. We just have to do it.

We have to, you know, God says, I want you to leave family and home and comfort and go to Boston and teach at Gordon Conwell. Oh, man, I'm just getting comfortable here. Sometimes, we're just called to step out of faith.

And that's ultimately how we learn, isn't it? As long as we stay in our nice comfort spot, as long as we stay where we know people and we know there's a salary. And, you know, your spouse comes to you one day and says, I really think we're being called the planet church. Really? Well, as soon as God tells me, then we can talk about it.

Come back the next day. You know what? I think you're right. I think we're supposed to step out in faith.

Man, what am I going to do for a living? Where are we going to live? How am I going to care for the kids? How? Oh, wait a minute. That's worry. So, I'm just saying part of moving from having little faith to having great faith is simply taking God at his word and stepping out and doing it.

I mean, there's a ton of other things, but those are the things that kind of struck me that are worth saying. I just think that you're sitting there, you're a new disciple of Jesus, and he says, oh, you of little faith. Oh, man, that must have stung.

You don't even have the faith that a bird has. So anyway, just odds, few odds and ends comments on that. By the way, there's another very interesting one. I don't see it in my notes, but I want to say something about it.

There's a very interesting thing going on here. Does God feed the birds for a two-pence bag? Mary Poppins. You guys did not watch movies down here.

Okay. Does God feed the birds? And it's easy to go, well, no, they come and eat out of my bird feeder, or they find seed on the ground, or they eat each other or, you know, if it's big enough, we have some eagles that nest near our cabin. It's just fascinating to watch them fish.

I don't feed the eagles. They feed themselves. Out every morning at seven, swimming, flying over the pond array, big old smallmouth bass.

Can you have a big old smallmouth bass? You can't, can't you? Yeah. When you catch them, they're big smallmouth bass. Okay.

You know, you see them, and hopefully, they'll catch more of the pike and get rid of them. But, you know, you see the birds flying, the fish and their talons and, and you go, is God really feeding them? Well, this is an issue of the whole worldview. And again, I was going to mention this in passing, but it's a fascinating topic.

When you think that the eagles are feeding themselves or the little sparrows are feeding themselves, it's a worldview thing. The Bible says God's feeding them. And God has set up the world and continues to be involved in the world such that he is enabling the birds to eat seed the eagles to catch fish, but ultimately, he is the one at work clothing and feeding his creation.

See, what's the worldview? It's how you look at reality. And when you, when you come to terms with that, it's a lot easier to then internalize and go, okay, yes, he gave me some intelligence. He gave me some opportunities and gave me a job.

That's ultimately not what's feeding me. That's ultimately not what's clothing me. Went to Walmart yesterday and bought a bathing suit.

The place we're going to go on the, um, where are we going? Yeah. Outer Banks. We're going to the Outer Banks.

My wife got a hotel for me and the two kids. And it's got a lazy, lazy river. Have you ever seen those? I've never seen them, only heard about them.

They're just, they're just, you get an inner tube and float down the river, I guess. So, I need a bathing suit. So, I'll go, and I bought a bathing suit.

Did God provide that bathing suit for me? Well, if I, if I think biblically about the world, the answer is yes. The only reason my card was accepted is because God, in his graciousness, is sustaining his creation. The birds, the flowers, his children.

It's a whole worldview. I mean, one of them was just a quick comment I made in a sermon once. And I was thinking about one of the guys in the church.

And he had lost his job, and he's a friend. And I knew how it was really, really bothering him. And I just made a comment.

I said, kind of a stereotypical comment, but I said, men, your job is not to provide for your family. Your job is to care for your family. Which, of course, is what the wife's job is to care.

And the reason I said it is because of this passage. And my friend came up to me with tears in his eyes, as I recall, after the service. And he said that was so freeing.

Now, I'm still going to look for a job. I'm still going to work really hard when I get one. But God has promised to give me the basic necessities of life if I seek his kingdom, which is where we're headed.

And it took my friend a while to get a job, but God provided. And it was just a freeing concept for him. But it's a worldview kind of thing.

So, I challenge you with that in your own battle with worry: wherever you are on that spectrum, how do you look at reality? And when you see the birds feeding, do you say, thank you, Lord, for caring for them? When you see the deer across the river, you know, getting water, say, thank you, Lord, for providing the river to feed your wonderful animals and give me a place to ski. You know, I mean, it's a worldview thing. I encourage you to think along those lines.

Okay, so reason number three was a lesson from nature about clothing. God creates and sustains all that he makes. Well, he creates all, and he sustains all that he makes.

We are of infinitely more value than the birds and the flowers. So, do we believe that he will take care of what he creates? You all are being very quiet this morning. It's just so rich, theologically.

You're just soaking it in, right? Fear not. Fear not. I wouldn't believe it, but he never leaves.

Tim. No, never does. Being laid off will test you in ways that almost nothing else will.

It's scary and terrifying. What I've seen, especially going on highways in Africa and Panama, Ecuador, it takes more faith to drive on the highways than to trust God for salvation and save the care. It takes more faith to drive on the highways in some third world countries than it does to... How so? Just because it's so dangerous? The highway we take from Nairobi to Eldoret... Oh, this is in Africa, okay.

...is the third most dangerous in the world. Really? So, we fly. So, if you're going to retell the story of the Good Samaritan, you say, once a man went from Nairobi to... Eldoret.

Eldoret, yeah, all right, yeah. Yes, sir. Yeah, I think that... I appreciate you... Your own faith and I think the thing that I've noticed, and that's why I'm studying all of this, is this idea of this God behind so many.

And there's this God that Jesus is talking about. So much of it depends on our understanding of who God is. If there's a prayer, I'll pray.

I'll live. Yeah. Right. Right. Right. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Good. Let me repeat this. So basically, the point is that there's a God behind the sermon, and so much of the sermon is helping us understand who God is, and how God functions, and so these are, in a sense, all application points, but they keep driving us back to what is our understanding of who God is, and is it the right understanding? Yeah, that's a very good point.

This little thing, is this as a grain of mustard seed? If you're going to compare this to the grain of mustard seed, you have to say this is less than a grain. I think the point of the grain of a mustard seed casting the mountain into the ocean is that the power is not in your faith but in the object of your faith. So I think a slightly different point is being made, that if I truly believe it's the will of God that Mount St. Helens be cast to the Pacific, I don't need a ton of faith; it's the power to move Helens. And considering the last explosion, which is not that far off, the power is in the God that actually moves the mountain, and this is a different point that we so often have so little faith in the character of God.

If you ever are in the Pacific Northwest, you have to go see Mount St. Helens. It's right off the five. I have not ever seen anything like Helens in my life, anywhere in the world.

When that thing blows, what'll happen? You get within about 20 miles, and all of a sudden, you notice all the trees are knocked down, but the weird thing is they're all knocked down in the same direction, and it goes for about 20 miles. When Helens blew, it disintegrated everything within five miles. Nothing.

Spirit Lake is at the bottom, and the entire lake got pushed out of it. The side of the mountain fell down into the water bed. When the water came back down, it was now 200 feet higher than it used to be.

And this is just a volcano. And you start hearing the number of what it takes to disintegrate. It didn't just blow-up trees.

There's nothing there. It disintegrated them. And you realize our God spoke the universe into existence.

And this is just a mountain blowing out sideways. Anyway, what they've done is they've done a very good job of not helping, quote, and rebuilding nature itself. And the naturalists are just loving this because they watch it.

So, what you're seeing is the natural... is God's way of regenerating a devastated land. And I've never seen anything like it before. There was a time when I was walking down to Spirit Lake, and I turned a corner, but I couldn't see anyone else.

And I stopped for a second. I go, am I on the moon? I mean, it's just fascinating. Actually, one of the chapters in the book I'm working on is about Mount St. Helens and what you can learn about God by going to the mountain.

But if you ever get in the Pacific Northwest, do yourself a favor. Get to Mount St. Helens. I don't think there's anything like it.

So anyway. What was I... There's actually a... Oh! You take systematics. Sometimes, you start with a view of Scripture.

But what's the first major topic in every systematic theology? Theology proper is the doctrine of God. And that's what you were saying: everything comes out of our understanding of God. I mean, just absolutely everything extends with that.

And that's why the Bible starts with Genesis because that's where you start learning so much about who God is as a creator God, as a sustainer God, as a relational God, as a holy God, as a God who, you know, when He covered Adam and Eve with fur, where did that come from? He killed an animal. Now, I don't know where you are on this, but I think C.S. Lewis is right. I think the animals could all talk.

And they were certainly friendly. They were not eating each other. Everyone came to Adam, and he named them.

I mean, he had a personal relationship with the animals. And Adam and Eve sinned, and God killed one of his pets, basically, and wrapped it around them. This is not a nice cardigan.

I mean, this is a dead animal that you used to have a relationship with at one level or another. So, you've got God being a redeeming God. You have substitutionary atonement.

I mean, everything's in Genesis 1, 2, and 3. But it starts with, who's God? And I actually think Wayne's Systematics starts with the Doctrine of Scripture, which is an understandable place to start. But then they all start with theology proper, the Word about God. All right.

Let's just finish off this. The conclusion, then, is in verses 31 to 34. So, don't worry.

He's coming back to his theme. So don't worry. Don't say, What are we going to eat? What are we going to drink? What are we going to wear? He goes, The pagans, those who live outside of a covenant or relationship with God.

And the old translation is Gentiles, which makes it sound like it doesn't apply to non-believing Jews. And it does apply to non-believing Jews. And that's why the NIV goes with pagans, as I said.

For the pagans, those outside of a covenant or relationship with God run, at least, a new covenant relationship, for the pagans run after these things. I mean, they're obsessed with food and drink and clothing.

The pagans run after these things. Your Heavenly Father knows that you need them. I mean, he's not stupid.

He knows you need clothes. He knows you need food. He knows you need a drink.

Don't worry about something that's not your responsibility to worry. So, what do we do? And this is my favorite verse in the Bible. Seek first his kingdom.

Seek first his righteousness. And then all these things. And what are the all these things? What's the antecedent? Food, clothing, shelter.

Not a Mercedes-Benz. It's not a BMW. Not a cabin.

But all these things. The basic necessities of life. Our needs, not our greeds.

All these things can be given to you. Now, the birds work hard. We're supposed to work hard.

But ultimately, it's God who gives. So therefore, don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow's going to worry about itself.

Each day has enough trouble of its own. All right. So, he restates the thesis in verse 31.

Don't worry. And then he gives us two final reasons, doesn't he? In verse 32. Number one, God's our Father.

That'd be reason number one not to worry. Gentiles and the non-believing Jews are outside the family of faith. God is not their Father.

He is not committed to providing their food, clothing, and shelter. Now, He does at some level. He makes the rain fall on the just and the unjust, right? But He has no obligation to provide the necessities of life for those outside the family of God.

But He is your Father if you are a child of faith. He is your Father. He has committed to providing these to you.

So, reason number one is that God is our Father. We live in a father-son, father-daughter relationship. I'm just going to say that's just the final reason.

I'll leave it at that. So, you get this final argument about why we shouldn't worry. And then what he's going to do, he's been stating his thesis negatively.

Don't worry, don't worry, don't worry. And in verse 33, he's going to shift over and state it positively. So it's somewhat the same thing.

Rather than worry, seek His kingdom. Hunger and thirst, to use the Beatitude language, hunger and thirst for His righteousness. And then, because He is our Father, He'll provide for His children what we need to live.

Live more for God than we live for ourselves in this world. God's kingdom is more important than our own kingdom. Remember the Lord's prayer: Thy kingdom come.

And if we do that, He will take care of us. The consequence is that we're into verse 34. The consequence of all this is that there's simply no room to worry.

There's no room to worry. When we worry, we fill our minds with the lack of... It's kind of like the image that I like is that our minds are finite. That our minds can only hold so much information.

And so if we fill our minds with the lack of trust, if we center in on ourselves and our problems and our fears, if we focus on our worry, then what we're doing is that we're pushing God out. Because there's just not enough room for both. But if we seek God above all else, if our minds are saturated with Him, His love, His wisdom, trust in Him, and confidence in Him, then there isn't room, or at least as much room for worry.

And we can just relax knowing that we're in His arms and that He will take care of us. I think it's just, for me, a helpful image. It doesn't mean that Christians can be lazy or not work, right? Birds work hard.

Paul ostracizes, exercises church discipline, 2 Thessalonians, to lazy people that were living off the church. It doesn't mean we don't work hard. But ultimately, as we do

our work, as we do what God has called us to do, God ultimately is the one providing, and we have to trust that.

In verse 34, this is where I got Martin Lloyd-Jones's stuff. 34 is so tongue-in-cheek. It's neat.

Don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow is going to worry about itself. There are going to be things that he's not saying you should worry about tomorrow, but tomorrow is going to bring its own set of challenges.

And we have enough to focus on today. So just stay in the present. Stay in the present.

Don't be worrying about tomorrow. Martin Lloyd-Jones says, Worry is an active force. Worry has a great imagination.

It can imagine all sorts of things, right? All sorts of possibilities. Worry transports us into the future, and we experience worries that don't even exist. This is what Stott was getting at in his thing, wasn't it? Is that if you worry about something that doesn't happen, you worry unnecessarily.

If it does happen, you've worried twice. You worry today. You worry tomorrow. So don't worry about tomorrow.

Stay focused in the present. Tomorrow might have its own challenge. Don't be preoccupied with our daily security, either today's or tomorrow's.

Tomorrow will most certainly come with its own challenges and frustrations. And, I would add, tomorrow will also come with God's grace that will be sufficient to carry us through tomorrow. Boy, you've got to trust not only the power of God but also the wisdom of God and the love of God.

Because His way of providing for you may not be what you want, right? I mean, that's part of the real thing. He may provide for you by opening up a bunk at the local homeless shelter, right? And the question is, do you love and trust Him enough to accept His decision of how He's going to provide for you? An interesting experience last night. Well, it's not a big deal, so I'll tell you.

We've been talking about money yesterday, right? We've used illustrations to help people out, and I walked up to Chick-fil-A to get a peach milkshake because Matt says they're the best things in the world. Well, basically, he implied it; he didn't say it. And so , I went up there, and there was a guy sitting on the street corner and on a chair with a sign asking for money.



And, you know, as we shared, I don't normally give. And there was just something different. I'd like to say it was his spirit, but it was just something different.

And I walked into it, and I sat there. What do I do? Well, I'm not going to give him any money. I won't do that. But, you know, I don't know him, I don't know his story, I don't know why he's there.

And I walked into Chick-fil-A, and I talked to the gal behind the counter, and I said, do you see him out there all the time? And she goes, I've only seen him there once or twice before. So, I just bought him a Chick-fil-A dinner and gave it to him. And he was so thankful, so appreciative, and you could kind of tell based on how he talked that there were other challenges he was facing.

I got to thinking that he had no idea. I don't know if he's a Christian or not, but he had no idea how he was going to be provided for. Maybe it's smart to sit in a chair with a sign outside of a Chick-fil-A and what's on the other side of the street there? Is that a Waffle House or an IHOP or something? Maybe there's some planning there. But I got to thinking, he had no idea where his food was coming.

And yet the Lord provided for him. Same way, and it may not be, I mean, it'd be; I remember when we went through a really difficult time when we left Azusa and went up to Spokane initially; I was writing software. I wrote a church management software package and a donor management software package.

A company in San Francisco was going to sell it. I quit my job at Azusa, moved to Spokane, and was going to program for a while. And it turns out the company is in San Francisco, and I don't think they ever had any intention of paying me.

And so, we're up there. You know, there's nothing more worthless than a Ph.D. in New Testament. I don't have an MDiv, but I have a Master's.

I'm doing it. You can't go to a church and say, I'd like to work on staff. Where's your MDiv from? They don't have one.

You know, you got a Ph.D., oh, so you can, but that doesn't apply to the real world. You know, a Ph.D. in New Testament is worthless if you don't have a teaching position. Just about worthless.

And we were sitting there going, I don't know what's going to happen. And I was on the phone talking with someone. This is back when we used to get charged for long-distance phone calls.

And my wife came down. She said, who are you talking to? And I said, well, someone in Grand Rapids, I think. She goes, okay.

She said, just let me tell you something. I said, okay, so, second. She said I'm okay with this.

You need to know we have \$10. So, you may want to wrap up the phone call. Hey, I'll send you an email.

Or maybe back then, it still was a letter. And I was hung up. And it was an interesting period of time.

Best time of our life. Absolutely impoverished. We had a house.

But we had absolutely nothing. And we went on wicks because the kids were still little.

And it was so hard for Robin to take money like that. And embarrassing, frankly. You never think you're going to have to live on government subsidies.

But we got a lot of eggs and a lot of peanut butter for a couple of years. One day, in the mail, came a check for \$200. And Robin opened it.

Bless her heart. She goes, I hate this. I said, \$200? I could buy something other than peanut butter.

But it was hard. It was hard for both of us. It felt beaten down.

But it kind of got to the point where we say, there's no way that we can provide for ourselves. So, I wonder what the Lord is going to do this month. And it almost got kind of, not a game, but it was just an exercise of faith.

Like, oh, okay. Oh Lord, what are you going to do this month? And eventually, I got a call out of the blue to do some typesetting. I went, ooh, well, I like computers.

I can figure this out. And I got to the point where I typeset almost all of Zondervan's books if they had Hebrew and Greek in them. So, I typesetted for about three years.

It's just the Lord. And the point of all that was to say, sometimes we don't like how he provides. It's not the way we want.

It's not enough. Or it's not the right kind of money. When you've never been given money as a charity, that first check is really hard, isn't it? I think most of us have had something like this.

It's really hard to take it. So, I think part of the worry issue is, well, God, I think you can take care of us, but I'm not convinced that I like the way you're going to do it. And God says that's really not your call, little flower.

Grasshopper. I will treat my little grasshopper the way I want to. So, I think that's part of worry, too, is that, okay, I'm not going to starve.

My kids aren't going to go without clothes, but it's... I mean, I like going down to the Salvation Army to buy my undergarments. God says that's not the point. So I think this whole thing of worry goes back to what you were saying, Jason. It really goes back to our view of God.

Do we trust Him? And it's not just trust His power. Are we willing to accept how He does things for us? And that is a challenge. Because I would never tell my kid to go buy his underwear at the Salvation Army.

Used underwear. I'm not going to do that. But it may be that God... I have friends that that's where they buy all their clothes.

They're perfectly happy with it. They get the biggest kick out of it. And they don't mind the Lord providing them with used undergarments from the Salvation Army's thrift shop.

Or wherever thrift shop they go to. That's the kind of faith that God wants from us. And if we have it, we can wholeheartedly seek His kingdom, seek His righteousness.

We can watch Him give the basic necessities of life to us as He chooses, in the way He chooses, and in the amount and the quality that He chooses. And so, we're called just to live in the present, to focus on His kingdom, and whatever challenges we have today, whatever challenges there will be tomorrow, we'll meet those challenges tomorrow. But not today.

Okay? Hard stuff. I think when you start really pushing down into this chapter. How many pictures have we all seen? Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Fluffy, nice, gold-trimmed frames. When it comes down to it, it's really, really hard.

This is Dr. Bill Mounce in his teaching on the Sermon on the Mount. This is session 13, Matthew 6:25, and following, On Worry and Trusting God.