



Rev. Georgetta Head

If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more and running over. Whatever measure you use in giving—it will be used to measure what is given back to you.

Luke 6:38

2009 was a tough year for a lot of people. Many lost their jobs; homes being foreclosed; businesses went under, credit card companies playing games with interest rates, and bankruptcy was at an all time high. What a depressing year for many! If you are reading this article and have experienced financial setbacks, don't give up there's still hope.

Recovering from a financial setback is difficult, but can be done if discipline and a new way of thinking is applied. First we need to acknowledge God in every situation, including your financial setback. Talk to God and ask Him for wisdom and help to endure this temporary setback.

Secondly, Proverbs 27:23-24 tells us to *"be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds; for riches are not forever, nor does a crown endure to all generations."* God is telling us here that we need to know at all times the status of the possessions He has entrusted to us and to maintain what we have, because riches do not last forever. Hence, we are accountable for the management of our finances. When our finances dry up, or we experience financial setbacks, we need to seek God's advice on creative ways to replenish our bank account.

Start by conducting an inventory of all your worldly possessions. What do you possess that is sellable—a second car, multiple TV's, etc., list these items in the local paper to sell or have a yard sale. The point here is to raise money quickly for emergencies or to pay off small debts.

Thirdly, take on a second job (this should be done on a temporary basis); or if you have a hobby or craft that can earn you extra money start marketing to neighbors, family, friends, and co-workers about the craft or hobby you are selling to raise extra money.

Now, make a list of your outstanding debts (liabilities). Record the balances owned and the monthly payments for all creditors. You can't make plans to eliminate your debt unless you know what is owed and to whom. If you have received money from a yard sale or items sold via a newspaper listing, sum up that money. If you have enough money to payoff any of the small debts on your list, then this should be your first priority. Payoff the small debts!

Next call your creditors and discuss what arrangements can be made to settle your outstanding debt—lower interest rate or negotiate a lower balance. Always ask to speak to the individual who has the ability to make decisions. The customer representative who answers the phone has a "canned" speech and can not make major decisions, such as a lower interest rate, so ask for a manager or supervisor and don't take "no" for final—be persistent! Creditors are willing to work with you, so don't ignore them, they won't go away.

If the creditors refuse to lower your interest rate or to negotiate a lower balance, then seek help from a Consumer Credit



Consulting agency. They have negotiating power with creditors that we may lack (due to the habit of constantly being late or ignoring their calls), they can negotiate a lower payment and get your interest rate down so that you are able to manage the monthly payments.

Now let's discuss "renewing the mind!" What caused you to suffer this financial setback? Overspending due to unhappiness; in a bad relationship, trying to keep up with the Joneses, etc. Seek God's help to become free from these demons. God desires for His children to be whole and not living anxiously or fearfully. The scriptures tell us to *"not be conformed by this world (or things of this world); but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind through Christ Jesus."* The devil (our enemy) loves to play games with our mind by convincing us that "things" will make us happy. Let me ask you, "every time you used that credit card, how long did that "happiness" last?" Only God can give you everlasting happiness.

We need to learn to live a life of simplicity. Learn how to live and enjoy life with less. God does not want His children copying the world. The world says "buy now, pay later." God says *"owe no man nothing except love."* The world says, "but it's beautiful and will bring lots of pleasure." God says, *"the borrower is a servant to the lender."* Renew your mind with the Word. The Word has over 2,500 scriptures to help you avoid financial woes.

The world says material possessions makes one prosperous. The scriptures tell us differently. True and meaningful prosperity comes from the Lord. He tells us obedience to Him and His word will make us successful and prosperous: (*Joshua 1:8-9 says "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."*)

You want to live debt free? Why not try it God's way? Aren't you tired of hiding from creditors? Read the Word and see how God divinely took care of his people. The scriptures tell us to *"love the Lord with all our heart and soul and He will give us the desires of our heart."* What do you have to lose? Let God's principles lead you into financial freedom!!