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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

Are you still frustrated because you're living day-to-day or paycheck to paycheck? Annoyed with constant hourly calls from creditors? Then it's time for you to surrender your will to God and allow Him to teach you how to be free from worry and anxiety of too much credit card debt or the need to impulse shop.

If you are trapped in the credit card debt, how do you break the cycle? How do you get out of debt when you are in over your head? Let's explore some steps you can take to break the "power of debt" in your life.

First, you need to stop trying to be self-sufficient. God's Word tells us that *"apart from Him, we can do nothing."* Ask God for help in your financial decision making. Make a firm decision today to break the power of debt in your life and ask God to give you the strength, wisdom, and discipline to become debt-free.

Second, stop purchasing items on credit. Crises or the unexpected will happen especially in the area of finances, but as God's children we don't want to pick up Satan's camouflage of credit cards which will just mask the problem, instead we want to go to God in prayer for a solution for those unexpected expenses. God sees and knows what's happening, He's just waiting for you to pick up the weapon of warfare of prayer and trust in Him. God doesn't operate in the "buy now pay later" mentality. God operates in the power of faith. When you make your crisis bigger than God you will never prosper in your finances.

Thirdly, start a debt-reduction plan. This means using a budget and writing goals. *God's Word tells us that "a prudent man foresees the difficulties ahead and prepares for them; the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences (Proverbs 22:3 TLB).*

Set a short-term date to be debt free and be determined to see it through. Do a financial inventory of the debt you owe. Prioritize your bills from the smallest to the largest. This step is very important. Once you determined which bill is the smallest, make this bill the priority to pay off first. If you have to do an inventory of the material possessions in your home to raise money to help pay off this small debt, do it.

Once that small bill is paid off, use the surplus of that money to pay off bill number 2, when that bill is paid, use surplus from bill number 2 to pay off bill number 3, continue in this manner until all credit cards are paid off. (Note, make sure you are making payments on other bills while during this process.)

Fourthly, it's time to start saving money for the future. You need to spend less than you make and you will always have a surplus. As one of your goals, try to learn to live on 70% of your income (i.e., 10% tithe, 20% savings, and 70% budgeted expenses). With a 20% savings account you will be able to set aside money for emergencies, to purchase items on your goal list and to start an investment fund.



If you are in over your head you want to start applying godly principles to your life immediately:

Put God first. Sow into God's kingdom (local church) your first 10% tithe.

Pay yourself second. As you sow into God's kingdom, sow into your future. Start by setting aside 10% and gradually working up to 20% of your income for savings.

Reduce bills and outgoing expenses. Eat at home more often. Don't purchase new clothing without planning for it first. Give yourself an allowance and learn to live on the allocated allowance (when your allowance is gone don't spend from other categories)

Don't add new debt. When tempted to spend what you don't have, stop and ask God for strength to walk away. Memorize scriptures and speak them out loud when tempted.

Deuteronomy 8:18 *states that God has given each Christian the power to get wealth so that He might establish his covenant in the earth.* God has placed in each one of us the ability to take control of personal financial situations, to live successful lives, and to make a positive contribution to society. Jesus already paid the price for our prosperity, spiritually and otherwise *"He became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9). God wants us to get our financial houses in order, He wants us to learn to be good stewards over the money and resources He entrusted to us.

So contrary to what some think, living debt-free is not difficult, it's about living a disciplined life using godly principles and making wise financial choices.

Remember, God owns it all. Learn to spend less than you make. Start your plan (budget) today. Pay your 10% tithe and pay yourself 10-20% (savings). And, finally, never, never be a surety (cosigner) on a loan for anyone.