

Quicksand of Debt

At times you may feel overwhelmed and unsure of your financial future. There are some warning signs of danger to determine whether you are actually sinking in the quicksand of debt. God wants you to live a peaceful life. Challenges with finances can affect your spirituality and emotional health. Do any of these situations describe you?



1. **You've robbed God:** You do not return a faithful tithe to God and rationalize your disobedience. God "can put holes in your pocket and blow on it". In Malachi 3:8-10, God seeks from us a faithful tithe to Him. Tithe is 10% of whatever your increase is. When you spend it on something else, God considers it to be robbery. He also promises a blessing to those who faithfully return His tithe and give a freewill offering. In Deuteronomy 30:9, 10, God promises a blessing to the obedient. In 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, God encourages us to give cheerfully.
2. **You do not know how much money you have.** This is due to a failure to keep track of your expenditures. Try writing down on an index card or in a small notebook every expense for a week. Then continue to document your spending for a month. Keep receipts. You may prefer an online

program or app to track your spending. Every single time you spend money, it should be accounted for. These records will be beneficial when you are trying to distinguish between wants and needs. You will be able to create a budget or spending plan.

3. **You run out of money.** Is there more month than money? A budget or spending plan will help you determine how you will use your money. Are you spending, sharing, saving, or investing money?
4. **You get disturbing calls and letters.** Are bill collectors calling and writing you? Are you afraid to answer your phone or open your mail?
5. **You shuffle money around.** You are shuffling money around to make payments. Some call this robbing Peter to Pay Paul. The money never seems to cover expenses.
6. **You have no savings.** You can't even save a small amount.
7. **In an emergency, you're out of luck.** You do not have any money set aside for an emergency. You must prepare in advance because a rainy day will eventually come when you least expect it. Although \$1,000 is commonly suggested, get started now even if you struggle to save \$100 or \$500. Don't continue to procrastinate.
8. **You pay bills late, or only the minimum on your credit card bills:** You don't pay bills on time and get assessed a late fee. If you only pay the minimum, you will be paying for many years and accruing interest.
9. **You use Credit Cards Too Often:** You charge daily expenses and/or bills on credit cards. This will cause you to sink deeper in the quicksand of debt. Debit cards deduct money directly from your checking account. Credit cards rack up charges and are simply loans with interest if not paid before the grace date. Remember that swiping with either plastic card leads to excessive spending.
10. **You use payday or title loans:** If you resort to payday or title loans, you may get caught in a cycle of loans. A budget or spending plan will help you control your spending.
11. **You are worried about your finances:** You worry about money. This can become so stressful that your physical and emotional health may suffer.
12. **You argue over money:** You and your spouse or other family members argue over money. Stress and discord as a result of debt can lead to the breakup of families. Teach children and teens that "money does not grow on trees".

1 Timothy 6:10 is often misquoted. It reads "For the love of money is the root of all evil for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Money is a neutral tool. When we deal honestly and fairly with God, our thoughts and actions will be more positive and productive. Let God help you get out of the quicksand of debt.

Try these Helpful Money Management Apps

It is possible to track daily expenditures the old-fashioned way, with pen

and paper. However, some prefer to use an App on their phones. Here are several popular money management apps.

Mint.com

This popular, free online mobile app will help you track and manage your money. You can create a personalized budget with it. It provides financial summaries and alerts by text message or email.

EveryDollar: Monthly Expense Tracker & Manager (Ramsey Solutions)

Track your monthly expenses and view spending habits. Users who reviewed it claim it as an easy to use and helpful budget app. Dave Ramsey fans will enjoy this one.

GoodBudget

This app functions as a cash envelope budget system without carrying around actual physical envelopes. You determine the categories for your envelopes. It does not require connection to a bank account to begin creation of your envelopes.

Pinterest

The social networking on Pinterest allows you to access the wealth of wisdom from other individuals seeking to be financially secure. Enter phrases such as money management, money saving challenge, no-spend weekend or month, financial planning, financial freedom, debt reduction, debt free, meal planning, or money saving tips and see what you find!

I recommend any older books written by Larry Burkett that you can find. He was a trailblazer in money management from a Christian perspective. **Crown Financial** continues his legacy and also provides a Money Map that is impressive. You may notice Burkett's influence on popular advisors and authors.

Your Money Counts by Howard Dayton

Money and Marriage God's Way by Howard Dayton

Debt-Proof Your Marriage by Mary Hunt

Debt Proof Your Kids by Mary Hunt

The Financially Confident Woman by Mary Hunt

Personal Finances (Includes Family Budget Models) by Larry Burkett

The Total Money Makeover by Dave Ramsey (Famous for his Financial Peace Seminars)

More Than Enough by Dave Ramsey

Smart Money Smart Kids by Dave Ramsey & Rachel Cruze

Faith-Based Family Finances by Ron Blue