

Art Birch on Debt

What if I could wave a wand and all would have same amount of money?
Soon the rich would have it again and those in debt would be in debt again.

Bible doesn't say "Don't lend," – but only "don't be the borrower."

The Good: borrowing can enable large projects – purchase of house, building of road

The Bad: borrowing can encourage bad financial management, e.g.:

- We may come to believe the lie that "I can afford it if I can only make the payments
- Borrowing makes us work harder because we have to pay interest on top of it all. (If we save, we gain interest, do not have to pay it.)
- Debt changes relationships – some relationships become strained, even ruined.

The Ugly: sometimes you simply can't pay. By any means..

- You can't save for retirement
- Debt can destroy your reputation, your marriage, almost everything.

The Way Out:

1. Surrender all you have to God
2. Love God, use money
3. Learn contentment
4. Work a plan. Budget and stay with it. Boundaries provide safety. Keep a page for each budget line. Or an envelop with cash in it for each budget line.
5. Give generously. Faithfully, joyfully, to the Lord's work. Start small. Go to a tithe.
6. Avoid paying interest – say “no” to cash advances.
7. Refuse to spend money you don't have
8. Replace loan payments with savings
9. Methodically pay off debt.
10. Ask for help - advice of wise friends and of God in prayer.
11. Start now.