

## CA 10 EMAW 10 LIVE ON LESS THAN YOU EARN

### Music Theme

**FOSTER:** Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. Today we continue our discussion on how to handle our money biblically. And I want to start with a question for you: when it comes to your finances, are you a warrior or a worrier?

We're going to discuss the importance of living on less than we earn. Why is this important? Because when we overspend, we tend to be worriers don't we? We worry about how the bills are going to be paid. We worry about our marriage because we're fighting over money issues. We wish we could live on less than we earn, but is that even possible? We'll find out when we return to Champions Arise.

### *Music theme in – 5 S.*

### Music theme out

**FOSTER:** Kent, I'm really glad we're talking about this issue. I think a lot of men struggle in this area.

**KENT:** I think you're correct. Two of them are probably in this room. Your earlier question was powerful—in the financial area, are we warriors or worriers? The temptation to live beyond our means—to overspend—is greater than it's ever been. Too many of us **yield** to that temptation, and as a result, we are worriers.

**FOSTER:** Why is that so true Kent? Why do the pressures to overspend seem to be so much worse now than in the past?

**KENT:** Our conversations have been based on Lonnie Berger's book, "Every man a warrior". And his goal is to make us **warriors** that live out God's truths in our lives, **not worriers** about the world—particularly where finances are concerned. And he says that a big reason the pressures seem greater is because of the easy availability of credit.

In the year 2006 approximately 6 billion—that's Billion with a B—6 billion credit card offers were sent to people—just in the United States. And they all offer the promise of a better life. Getting all those things **you deserve**.

**FOSTER:** It's amazing how contrary that is to the contentment we learned about in our last program.

**KENT:** Yes. We read First Timothy 6:9 which says, "Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction."

Where this verse says "want to get rich," it could easily say "want more things."

**FOSTER:** Kent, you're not saying credit cards are bad, right?

**KENT:** Oh no. properly used, they can be a great tool. Unfortunately, most people, including Christians, don't use them properly. Proverbs 22 verse 7 says "*The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.*" Most people are borrowing money they don't have to buy things they really don't need. So they are slaves to the lender and worriers instead of warriors that live in God's truths.

**FOSTER:** And we can borrow money in other ways than just credit cards.

**KENT:** Absolutely. Student loans are a big drain on people's finances. Or you can borrow from relatives or friends. Even with those check cashing places, you're really borrowing money, because they are lending you money, against your paycheck, but for a fee. That fee is money that you should be using to pay bills or put in savings. Instead you're giving it to the check cashing company. But in all these cases, instead of denying ourselves and trusting God, we're deepening our debt.

**FOSTER:** and deepening our debt is bad

**KENT:** that's right.

**FOSTER:** But I want to look at why. If the problem is as bad as we all know it is, apparently a lot of men don't understand how debt is actually affecting them. So let's get specific. Why is debt bad?

**KENT:** Well first, I think you're right. A lot of us don't understand this and as Christians, if we are to offer hope to our unsaved neighbors and coworkers who are drowning in debt, we have to lead the way. So here are four reasons why debt is bad.

The first reason is, personal debt lowers your standard of living. For example, if you owe \$5000. And you're paying \$720 a year in interest, that is \$720 you don't have to apply to other things like home improvements, or a men's retreat, or a marriage conference. And **this** is the big deception; because you lose that \$720 a year in small \$60 increments (\$60 a month) you don't notice that you've lost \$720.

My friend, what could you do if I put \$720 in your hand right now? And keep in mind, standard of living is much more than the things we have. Biblically, the standard of living includes things like, **peace in our home**—money problems is a major stressor on marriages, **sleeping well at night** because we aren't worried about money. How about **joy in your heart**, because you appreciate God's faithful provision in your life. That is a **true** standard of living and that is what many of us are lacking, because of debt.

**FOSTER:** You're listening to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. We are talking about learning to live within our means and how debt can make that even more difficult. Kent, you said there were four reasons debt was a problem. The first one was it lowers our standard of living. What is the second reason?

**KENT:** The second reason debt is a problem is: overspending works against you. Foster, imagine you are in a row boat on a lake and water is coming into the boat. What would you do?

**FOSTER:** you'd get that water out as fast as you can

**KENT:** Exactly. You'd grab the bucket and start scooping the water out of the boat. Now what if you're in the boat, water is coming in, and you watch your friend grab the bucket, reach over the side, fill the bucket and dump it into the boat. You'd yell "what are you doing? You're supposed to get the water out, not add more in!"

If you're living beyond your means, spending more than you're bringing in, you're essentially taking the bucket and pouring water into your debt-filled boat. And what's going to eventually happen?

**FOSTER:** You're going to sink. Like that couple we talked about last week.

**KENT:** yes Jack and Karen. That was a very sad story. From such a great beginning, they accumulated so much debt they eventually declared bankruptcy and got a divorce. But at Champions Arise we don't want any of the men listening to take that path.

The third problem with debt is: it's easier to get into debt than to get out. Once you are in debt, besides having to stop the habit of overspending, you also have to be willing to drastically reduce your lifestyle in order to pay off your debt.

And the fourth problem is: debt can set up a cycle of generational bondage to borrow money. One example is college students who take out loans. Many are just getting their college loans paid off in their mid-40s...just when **their** children are ready to leave for college and they get loans. And another generation of debt is created and repeated.

So these are four reasons debt is a problem. Now let's look at some steps we can take to get out of debt.

**FOSTER:** And these principles apply regardless of how you got into debt

**KENT:** yes. I'm glad you clarified that since we have men listening that are in a variety of situations. These steps apply universally.

The first step for getting out of debt is assessing your current financial situation. Write down all of your bills and total them. Write down all of your income and total it. Then see what the difference is. Do you have more income or expenses?

**FOSTER:** Kent, don't people know where they are financially?

**KENT:** No. most people have no idea. They may know that they are living beyond their means, but they're often shocked to see how bad the problem is. Very important step to write it down.

The second step toward getting out of debt is confessing your sin to God. Are you in debt because of pride, or envy, or covetousness, or fear?

**FOSTER:** Wait, what do you mean by fear?

**KENT:** Sometimes we know there's a problem, but we're afraid to tell our wife or to take the steps to fix it. Telling the family things are going to change can be hard. And that actually leads us to the third step.

Pray with your wife for the wisdom and strength to stop yielding to the temptation to overspend. It is very important work your way out of debt as a team.

The fourth step is to get help. There may be financial people in your church. There are some good Christian ministries online that help people with financial problems. Getting help serves two purposes. You will get the expertise and guidance you need to help you change the course. But it will also help you to be accountable to the plan. And creating a plan is the last step.

You need to have a written plan that includes:

- a written budget
- a way to keep track of your spending
- a way to maintain transparency and accountability – basically you eliminate the ability to spend money without the other spouse knowing about it.
- and it should include a timetable for getting out of debt.

**FOSTER:** These steps all seem very doable.

**KENT:** They are. The toughest part is getting started. But the good news is God wants to help you. Which is why quiet times with God are so important.

Right now, you're probably making financial decisions without even asking God about it.

But when we have regular quiet times, reading the Bible, praying, and memorizing scripture, we are far less likely to pray for a fancy new car instead of "a car". Because we'll be less concerned about what our neighbors have and more concerned with how we can honor God with our finances.

Quiet time with God will also gives us the strength to resist the temptation to overspend.

First Corinthians 10 verse 13 says, "*No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*"

**FOSTER:** Time really went quickly today, Kent. Let's recap what we've learned.

**KENT:** ok. But, first one quick thing: God's word doesn't say that debt is sin, but the Bible gives many warnings about getting into debt. Today we looked at four problems debt causes.

1. Lowers your standard of living.
2. Overspending works against you
3. It is easier to get into debt than to get out.
4. Debt can set up a cycle of generational bondage to borrow money

We also discussed steps that can help us to overcome debt. Those were

- assess your current financial situation.
- confess your sin of overspending to God
- Pray with your wife for the wisdom and strength to stop yielding to the temptation to overspend

- get help
- create a written plan

Debt always presumes that the future is guaranteed to be secure. And we all know that this isn't true. Unexpected things happen. Jobs get lost, illnesses happen, unexpected repairs can occur. When we depend on If-come instead of income we can have major problems when situations like these occur.

So, my friend, getting into debt was probably easy, but getting out of debt is hard. Maybe your wife or family **like** things the way they are. But as the spiritual leader of the home, you want to get good godly counsel as to how to take steps to get your family back to a biblical way of handling money.

**FOSTER:** Thanks Kent. I'm reminded of what it says in the book of James chapter 4 it says, "Look here, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town... and we will do business there and make a profit." How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow?... What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that." Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it..." (NLT: 13-17)

My friend, you know what to do now. I encourage you to take today's lesson to heart. Listen to this program again and take steps today to live within your means. You can stop being a worrier by applying God's truth to your finances.

***Music Bumper out***

***Closing Music Theme in*** (Program close)

**FOSTER:** Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today we discussed the importance of living within your means. The material for this program is from lesson #2 in the book "Every Man a Warrior," Volume 3, by Lonnie Berger. There is a lot more information on finances in his book. You can find more information on his book and other programs in this series at our website [championsarise.org](http://championsarise.org). I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.

***Music bumper out***