

Conversation Starters

- Does the total American debt figure surprise you?
- Why or why not?

Discuss

American debt is at an all-time high with most people living beyond their financial means, and most often for the latest and greatest material goods. While some debt can be strategic, consumer debt is often not and leaves us anxious and in financial bondage. The Bible gives us some cautionary wisdom regarding debt:

"The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender." ([Proverbs 22:7, NIV](#))

"Don't run up debts...." ([Romans 13:8, Msg](#))

"But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first getting estimates and then checking to see if there is enough money to pay the bills?" ([Luke 14:28, NLT](#))

- What are some examples of strategic debt?
- What are some examples of consumer debt?
- How is debt enslaving?

Breaking free from our debt is exhilarating for most people because of the ripple effect our finances have on our life. We reviewed four steps to eliminating our debt. First, we need to make a decision to change how we are living financially. Then, we need to swear off all debt moving forward.

- Do you have financial goals?
- Do you take time to be ruthless and thoughtful about every decision to take on debt?
- Would swearing off debt be difficult for you?

The final two steps for eliminating debt involve some planning. Starting a "snowball" plan involves putting as much and quick as you can towards each debt until eliminated, starting from the smallest and working towards the largest. By paying more upfront and paying it quicker, our final debt ends up being less than originally planned. Once we eliminate debt, it's important to create a new spending plan that reflects a debt free lifestyle.

- Why are plans important? What other areas of life involve planning?
- How is the principle of time and net cost attractive in the "snowball" plan?
- Do you regularly take time to evaluate your finances and how you're spending?

Next Steps

Write down a "snowball" plan this week for your debt to see what it would look like for you. Then, draft what a new spending plan (like the 10-10-80 plan) would look like. How does it compare to how you are living now?

There are several classes in the Meck Institute that you can take advantage of as well, along with others learning to trust God with money:

[Coffee & Conversations: Exploring Investments](#)

[Financial Peace University Preview Class](#)

Further Reflection

Read [Luke 14:28-30](#).

Pray

God, you are the ultimate provider of everything we have. Thank you for your wisdom and direction for how we can manage our finances. Help us to be disciplined and make wise decisions about debt and how to break free from the bondage that it can create.