



## Financial Check Up

Adapted from “Curing Recession Depression” series by Rod Loy

Most Americans are crisis oriented in every facet of their lives. We wait until there is a problem, most likely a major problem, before we take action. We live all-out, in the moment, until we have a problem.

The New York Times reported the following in 2017:

The federal judge and legal scholar Guido Calabresi likes to pose a conundrum to his law students. He asks them to imagine a deity coming forth to offer society a wondrous invention, one that would make everyday life more pleasant in almost every way. This invention comes with a cost, however. In exchange, the deity would choose 1,000 young men and women and strike them dead. Calabresi then asks the students if they accept the deal. In 30 years of giving the lecture at Yale, the answer is almost always no. At which point he delivers the lesson: “What’s the difference between this and the automobile?”

Modern society is impossible to imagine without the automobile, yet it’s also one of the biggest destroyers of life. In the United States, crashes claim 1,000 lives every nine days. Last year, 40,000 Americans died, about as many as from breast cancer and more than twice as many as from murder.

We put up with these costs because we imagine them as unavoidable human imperfection. We are willing to make some changes, like wearing seatbelts and driving sober, which have caused deaths to decline gradually for decades. But we assume there is no cure. We’ve accepted the deity’s offer: modernity in exchange for 1,000 lives, again and again and again.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, many Americans put up with the cost of financial debt, accepting it as part of everyday life. In exchange for years and years of monthly payments and added interest, some product or another can come home with them today. Unfortunately, we

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<sup>1</sup> David Leonhardt, “A Public-Health Crisis That We Can Fix,” *The New York Times*, March 7, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/07/opinion/a-public-health-crisis-that-we-can-fix.html> (accessed July 31, 2017).

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do not know what tomorrow may bring. Poor budget planning or tomorrow's emergency can cause monthly payments to exceed monthly income.

## COURAGE

**C1:** Think about a crisis that occurred in your life. When did you ask for help? Why?

**C2:** On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being on the cure side and 4 being on the crisis side, rate yourself on which side of the spectrum you tend to live your life. Why do you live here? Write out a plan to improve.

**C3:** On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very healthy and 4 being not very healthy, rate yourself on your financial health. Write out a plan to improve.

## STRENGTH

**S1:** To safeguard and prevent your life against financial crisis should be a goal of every man. Read and answer the following.

### Proverbs 13:11 (ESV)

- From this verse, what can you learn about financial crisis prevention?
- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you delay your finances. Write out a plan to improve.

**S2:** Think about some areas you can delay in your finances. You could delay your purchase, delay your upgrade (and bank the payment difference for a set number of months before you purchase or upgrade). You could even, upon receiving a raise, “delay” it by putting that extra amount into savings for the first year. Write out a plan to delay in some of these areas.

Read and answer the following.

### Proverbs 25:28 (ESV)

- How does this verse tie into delay?

**S3:** Our society teaches us instant gratification. Read and answer the following.

### Proverbs 21:5 (ESV)

- From this verse, why might men make horrible decisions about their life and career?

- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very slow and 4 being not very slow, rate yourself on how willing you are to wait on God's timing in your life. Write out a plan to improve.

## ENDURANCE

**E1:** The Bible is our guide-book for living. Read and answer the following.

### **Philippians 3:17 (ESV)**

- From this verse, in all areas of your life who should you model your life after?
- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you follow God's instructions on finances. Write out a plan to improve.

**E2:** If you do not obey God, ultimately you are going to lose. Read and answer the following.

### **Malachi 3:8–10 (ESV)**

### **Deuteronomy 11:26–28 (ESV)**

- If you want God's blessing, what do you need to do?
- If you obey God's principles for marriage, what will you get?
- If you obey God's principles regarding relationships what will you get?
- On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you follow God's principles for your life. Write out a plan to improve.

**E3:** When you start your financial life by obeying God, everything else seems to fall into place. Read and answer the following.

**Matthew 6:31–33 (ESV)**

- From these verses, write out at least two principles by which you can live your life.