



December 11, 2023

After we operate the principles of giving and receiving and abundantly share, how do we wisely steward the remainder of the abundance that God so richly supplies? One important step is to live within our means—within what we can afford. We don't want to spend more than we earn. Our first step to success in this category is planning.

*Proverbs 21:5* [English Standard Version]:

*The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.*

A budget is a plan for how we want to spend and to save our money. Budgeting is an important tool in financial planning. It is the allocating of our current income to cover current expenses, future expenses, and goals.

To begin, we ask ourselves what categories of our budget are a must for us to put our finances toward. We know we cannot live without food, clothing, and housing, so these categories are a must. How much of our means do we allocate to these categories? We allot a certain amount that is in balance with the money we have available and what meets our need, and we stay within that amount. There is no "proper" amount to spend for our budgeted categories, although certain guidelines may be followed. What we spend depends on the size of our income, our family members, where we live, our needs, our goals, and our individual likes.

We can use our budget as a tool to refrain from credit buying—from purchasing things with funds we do not have. Refraining from purchasing things with funds we do not have is part of living within our means. As children of the most high God, we do not allow the culture to define or dictate what we need to be successful. God's Word defines our success in life.

*Proverbs 15:16:*

*Better is little with the fear [reverence] of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith.*

Without a budget we may fall into the costly trap of credit buying, which can lead to having someone else manage our money through installment plans, loans, and interest charges. Spending money we don't have can leave us with no reserve for repairs, replacements, or other emergencies. A budget helps us avoid this. Getting God involved in our financial planning opens the door for Him to supply all our need.

We can also build savings into our budget.

*Proverbs 21:20* [New Living Translation]:

*The wise have wealth and luxury, but fools spend whatever they get.*

One of the strengths of a successful budget is that it helps keep us from spending extra money we have today, saving it instead for what we will need in the future. One example of this is saving a certain amount of our finances in an emergency fund. An emergency fund is money saved for unplanned expenses that can come up in life. A suggested guideline is to save the equivalent of three to six months of necessary living expenses such as rent, utilities, food, medications, transportation, and insurance. Then leave this money for emergency use only—like a job loss or a health challenge. This is a wise practice for living within our means.

Saving faithfully for the future, even in small amounts, will add up over time.

*Proverbs 13:11* [The Amplified Bible (1987)]:

*...but he who gathers little by little will increase [his riches].*

*I Corinthians 4:2:*

*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

As stated in *Life Lines: Quotations of Victor Paul Wierwille*, “The key to accomplishing anything is faithfulness.” Let's demonstrate our thankfulness to God by stewarding the finances He has blessed us with. We can do this!

By planning a budget, we can successfully live within our means—within what we can afford. With faithfulness, we will most definitely succeed. Enjoy stewarding the abundance that God so richly supplies!

*For more information, visit [www.theway.org](http://www.theway.org)*

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