

Reshaping Your Family Budget During a Crisis
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Here is a guide to help you along in the process.

1. Commit to each other and to God, verbally or in writing, these three things:
 - TO PRAY...Practice your faith by letting “Jesus Take the Wheel”. He owns everything and knows exactly how to meet our needs using what He has provided to us. Continually seek His direction through prayer and then trust His answers, even when they don’t make sense to you.
 - TO LIVE WITHIN YOUR MEANS...Don’t spend what you don’t already have in the bank or a spending envelope!
 - NO NEW DEBT...Exhaust all other means and see if God doesn’t provide. Avoid these “convenient” temptations. They can hurt you more than help you.
 - Using a credit card
 - Credit card cash advances
 - Small loans
 - Home equity loans
 - Retirement loans/withdrawals
2. Take inventory of ALL of your available income and savings and consider other sources to supplement in the interim:
 - Barter services with family, friends, neighbors
 - Temporary job(s)
 - Unemployment benefits
 - Sell your non-essential property (clothing/shoes, accessories, household items, extra vehicles)
 - Non-Profit assistance
 - Government assistance
 - Sell your home and rent a less expensive property
3. Prioritize your expenses with a short-term vs. long-term view (needs vs. wants)
 - Basic Priorities
 - When you receive income, give back to God in appreciation of His provision for you
 - Shelter
 - Food
 - Utilities
 - Other Important Expenses
 - Essential Insurance/Medical
 - Essential Transportation (car payment, car insurance, gas...)

- Eliminate Non-essential Expenses...cut to the bone or delay them to keep your spending commitments of living within your means and no new debt.
 - Give every dollar of income a purpose **as soon as you receive it** so it won't be spent on something else. There are many ways to set income aside for different expenses...cash envelopes, budgeting apps, spreadsheets, etc. My personal preference is an envelope system (cash and/or app) as opposed to just a budget. Once an envelope is empty the funds are gone and won't be available again until it is replenished with more income. If it's empty, you can't spend it. If there's not much left it makes you think about whether you really need to spend that money.
 - After the essential expenses are covered, if you have income left to allocate and you don't owe any creditors, then put the extra in an emergency fund and **don't touch it except for emergencies**.
 - If your income has fallen short of expenses and you have bills you cannot pay...
 - Contact creditors right away to communicate your situation and seek assistance
 - Interest rate reduction
 - Payment plan adjustment
 - Utility emergency assistance
 - If a creditor becomes a "squeaky wheel" it does not mean they jump to the top of the priority list. Humbly communicate to each creditor that you are doing your best to avoid default and KEEP PRAYING for wisdom, provision, and strength.
4. Proverbs 21:5 says "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."...therefore AVOID:
- Impulse spending
 - Get rich quick schemes
 - Gambling
 - Financial decisions made through intimidation

In "Surviving the Aftershock - Recovery from an Economic Earthquake" Chuck Bentley wrote "It is time to be sober-minded and seek the wisdom of our God who can deliver us...We may not be able to control the world economy, but we can allow God to control our lives, and we can live our lives for His glory. That is all God asks of each of us...Purpose to not just survive but be in a position to serve others as a testimony to God's faithfulness to a hurting world...[Above all else] keep your integrity intact, do not allow the Enemy to divide your marriage, and continue to trust God for the outcome."

Here are links to some forms and how to use them and suggestions for FREE budgeting apps and programs.

How to Use Crown's Crisis Budget Templates

<https://vimeo.com/400063076>

Crown's Crisis Budget Template PDF

<https://www.crown.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CrisisBudget-2020-Fillable.pdf>

Crown's Crisis Budget Template Online

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YLW8MMsunOd_7kfnfenZI9Lw2hS96l--UN0cdlvSWec/edit#gid=0

Crown's Wants vs Needs Worksheet

<https://www.crown.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Needs-Wants-Desires-worksheet-fillable.pdf>

Christian Credit Counselors

https://www.christiancreditcounselors.org/crown/?utm_source=coronavirus_page&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=ccc

FREE Online budgeting software and/or apps:

Mvelopes

EveryDollar

Mint

Goodbudget

And MANY more... Search Apps for "Envelopes" or "Budget"