



New Year resolutions

Crown Financial Ministries New Zealand



Does money burn a hole in your pocket? Does buyer's remorse set in after you have spent your money? If this sounds familiar, how can you manage your spending next year so you can buy the things you need and also save for the things you need in the future?

In order to change spending habits, you must first understand how habits are shaped and the ways spending behaviour can be changed. You must identify spending that gives immediate satisfaction but does not help reach your financial goals.

How to change the spending habit

1. Establish self-discipline. Put all spending under God's control. In so doing, we become managers of God's finances. All spending should then be from the vantage point of whether He would be pleased with the purchase. With God's guidance, any bad habit can be broken.

Learn to recognize the drive that places you in a difficult spending situation. Avoid unplanned spending by having a purpose for the shopping trip, a time limit, and a written plan. Make a list before you go shopping and then stick to it, limit the number of trips to the shop and avoid shopping when hungry or depressed.

2. How far money goes usually depends on how badly we want something. We need to be in control of our money, under God's direction. Allowing our desires to control us limits what we do.

Once spending has been brought under control, determine how much needs to be spent each month in every area of your budget. If you have difficulty with income not equalling spending, then you need to cut some of the spending. Look at your budget realistically and see where you can start trimming.

A budget is a spending plan. With it, you can organise and control your financial resources, set and realise goals. Every purchase should be considered in light of the established spending plan. Buying any non-budgeted items on impulse should be avoided, especially if those non-budgeted items will need to be purchased with a credit card or other form of loan.

3. Be accountable to another person for a specified period of time for everything you spend. If there is accountability, you will be more inclined to be cautious in your spending habits—a look now, buy later attitude. Shop around before buying and learn to say no. Keep a record of spending and purchases and share these with your accountability partner.
4. Establish a want-to-buy list. Whenever you feel you need to buy something that is not budgeted, put it on the list. Research online price comparison sites to see what the best price for the item is. Is it likely to be on special in the future?

If you still want the item after spending time doing some research, you will have thought about it and probably will be getting the best buy on the item. Remember to give God time to provide in unexpected ways.

Conclusion

Putting a New Years resolution into practice often requires more than just self-determination on our behalf, especially when we are being constantly bombarded with messages to spend money on things we don't really need. Have a plan and someone you are accountable to.