

Out of Sight, Out of Mind

There's a lot of truth in that old saying. We tend to pay attention to the things that are here and now, even when we know something else is really more important. But if it's over there, or off in the future, we tend not to think about it.

I'll buy that, Budget Guy. But what's that got to do with money?

Everything. Because that's the way we are with money, too. Tell me, how often anymore do you pay for things with cash? How much cash do you even carry around with you?

Not much. I mostly use my credit or debit cards. Sometimes I write a check, although I've started paying bills online. That's pretty cool! I even did a bunch of my Christmas shopping last year online. Sure makes things easier! So what's wrong with that?

Not much, except for the fact that you end up spending more.

No way! I check out the prices. I comparison shop. I think I get some pretty good deals! So get to the point, BG, and tell me where you're going with this.

When we use things other than cash to buy stuff, we spend more because we buy more. That's not just a theory, it's been documented. Do you know, for example, why most fast food places now take credit and debit cards? Because when they tested it, they found that the average charge order is 20% to 30% higher than the average cash bill! It's tempting to believe that's because only gluttons or large groups use charge cards in fast food joints, but the truth is that the cost of what we buy feels less when we don't pay cash. So we feel like we can buy more.

This is all very subtle and subconscious, but just think about it for a moment. When you pay cash for something, you suffer an immediate loss. You have to give up something, real money, in order to get what you're buying. Studies have shown that it affects the same part of our brains as is affected by other losses, even the loss of a loved one.

But when you pay with a credit or debit card, for example, the card goes right back into your wallet. What you actually give up is out of sight, and so means less to you. Intellectually you know it's there, but emotionally it just doesn't have the impact of giving it up here and now.

Take the Cash-For-A-Week Challenge— Make the Budget Guy Put His Money Where His Mouth Is

For one week, pay for everything with cash. If you don't find yourself looking at your spending and your money differently by the end of that week, let me know and I will contribute \$100 to the Endowment Fund in your honor. See the article for the details.

Hmmm. Well, this is all very interesting, BG, but what does it mean for me? You want me to go retro and pay for everything with cash?!

Would that be such a bad thing? Look, maybe just knowing that we're wired this way will

help you make better financial decisions. But if you find yourself wondering where the money goes, can't seem to make ends meet, or just want to get more for your money, try the Cash-For-A-Week Challenge:

- ❖ At the beginning of the week, estimate what you expect to spend during the week and set that much cash aside.
- ❖ For that week, pay for everything, and I do mean everything, with cash. Yes, that includes even regular bills like your utility bills. (I know that will be a little inconvenient, but don't forget that there are payment centers in most grocery stores.)
- ❖ Be sure to get (and keep) receipts for any important payments (like utility bills).

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Children's Ministry News

3rd, 4th & 5th graders... Sign up NOW to dive into summer fun with Club H2O!

**July 28th - August 1st
9 a.m.—1 p.m.**

Drop-off & pickup at Portable C.

At Club H2O, we'll spend five fantabulous days getting wet, wet, wet, as well as wading deeper into God's Word. We'll make a splash at some of the top water spots in and around Austin, so it's sure to be a great week. Don't forget your sunscreen!

For more information, check the Club H2O webpage at www.shpc.org/children/events/clubh2o.php OR contact Pastor Mike or Britta at 892-3580 or britta@shpc.org.

The cost (by check) will be \$30 for one child/\$50 for two or more. Sign up today!



DEFINITION OF THE MONTH:

UpStreet: On Sunday mornings, this is a place where kids, K-5th grade, learn to trust God, make wise choices, and build lasting friendships. On UpStreet, we believe the

Bible should never be boring, worship can be really loud, and good leaders really care.

Each week, students gather in small groups with their assigned shepherd (who mentors them for the entire school year) at the beginning of the hour. The first 15 minutes is spent "plugging in" to each other and the monthly virtue on which we are focusing. From there, everyone moves to large group worship. During large group worship, our host presents the

lesson, Scripture is presented to us in creative ways by a storyteller and an accompanying media presentation, and we praise God in prayer and song. This time of worship lasts about 25 minutes. We then return for the final 15 minutes of the hour to our small groups to engage in lively activities and fun exercises designed to help us "catch on" to the virtue and Scripture lesson being taught.

HUMILITY PUTTING OTHERS FIRST BY GIVING UP WHAT YOU THINK YOU DESERVE

cont'd from Budget Guy

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That's all there is to it! It's only for a week - how hard can it be? You have nothing to lose, and I'm betting you will gain some insights into your spending habits that will help you improve your financial situation.

By the way, do me a favor. Tear this article out of the newsletter and take the challenge

now. If you set the newsletter aside, you know what will happen. It will be, well, out of sight and out of mind!

I'm here to help you improve your financial life. It's free and confidential. **Just call the Budget Guy**, Allen Gunter, at 301-1246, or send an email to BudgetGuy@shpc.org.

For a wonderful look at what the Bible says about money, check out the **Crown Financial Ministries Small Study Groups**. Contact Chris Gordon (484-1905; cgordon1@austin.rr.com) or Roger Wade (301-4921; rcwactuary@austin.rr.com) for more information.