

Debt Principle -Borrowing Presumes on the Future.

When you borrow money, you are *presuming* that you will have sufficient income in the future to service the debt. Since we do not know the future [Proverbs 27:1], there is a risk that we will be unable to make the loan payments and experience financial difficulties. God warns us:

"Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." *Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."* [James 4:13-15 emphasis added].

Since only God knows the future (1 Kings 7, Isaiah 46:10), it is critical that *you spend quality time with the Lord in prayer*, listening to God's voice (John 10:27) in order to determine if it is God's will for you to borrow money. God has promised to direct us [Psalms 32:8].

If you are contemplating borrowing some money, then I recommend that you work through the 7 questions below before making a decision to borrow.

1. Have you developed a budget beforehand, to ensure that you can afford the loan payments? [Luke 14:28-30]. For a free copy of my Excel-based budgeting system, send an e-mail to thomas@copland-ca.com.
2. Do you understand your responsibility to repay the entire loan? (Psalm 37:21) What kind of a "light into a world of darkness" is a Christian who does not repay his debts or does not pay his debts on time? [Matthew 5:16] Clearly this nullifies their testimony.
3. Have you prayed and given God a chance [Psalms 37:7] to provide the cash or an alternative at a lower cost, in a manner that is glorifying to Him? In Deuteronomy 28, God promised his people, that if they fully obeyed Him, they would not have to borrow.
4. Have you considered that God may *not* want you to have it? "Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matt 16:24). See also Hebrews 13:5.
5. Is the item that you plan to purchase a necessity? Can you do without it? God has promised to meet our needs [Matthew 6:31-33], not our wants and desires.
6. If you are married, have you (husband and wife) prayed sincerely for God's direction [willing to accept a yes or no answer], and if so, do both of you have God's peace that He wants you to borrow the money (John 14:26-27).
7. Most importantly, have you spent sufficient time in prayer, seeking God's specific will before borrowing? In Jeremiah 29:11-14, God makes it clear that he does have a plan for you!

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

It is at *the planning stage* that God will usually direct us [Psalms 32:8], *if* we take the time to seek His will and listen to his voice [John 10:27] in respect of any major financial decision. Receiving God's specific direction before you make any major financial decision, will enable you to avoid a lot of financial problems later.

In my view, if you can sincerely say yes to all 7 questions above, then I believe it is God's will for you to borrow the money. However, as demonstrated in my financial moments on saving, you would be wise to pay off the loan ASAP, in order to minimize your interest costs.