

What does the Bible say about credit cards?

(by George Battey)

The Bible does not explicitly speak about credit cards, but it does implicitly speak about them.

When a person uses a credit card it means they are borrowing money. For example, if you slide your credit card thru a card reader at the gas pump, you are purchasing gas on credit. You have not actually paid for the gas until you receive your credit card bill in the mail. When you make your payment for the credit card bill, then and only then is your gas paid for. So, when you purchase gas with a credit card, you are borrowing money for three or four weeks until your bill arrives in the mail.

Some people pay their entire credit card balance off each month. In other words, if they purchased \$1000 worth of goods, they receive a bill from the credit card company for \$1000 and they pay that entire amount all at one time. Now they owe nothing to anyone.

More often people pay only part of their credit card bill. Even worse, some people pay only the minimum requirement. When people pay only the minimum requirement, it will take years and years to pay off the balance. These people are actually becoming more and more in debt because they continue to use their credit card and increasing the amount they owe. The credit card company adds a finance charge – sometimes up to 20% or more. The debt grows and grows until it becomes unmanageable.

On Saturday, November 29, 2008 I was in a small department store. A woman in front of me was making a small purchase and was going to use her credit card to pay for her merchandise. I noticed she had a fist full of cards in her hand. She slid the first card thru the card reader and the card was denied. She tried the next card. It was denied. She tried a third and fourth card. I believe it was card number five which was finally accepted! This lady had about four credit cards charged up to their maximum limit and was working on running up a fifth card to its maximum limit!

Does the Bible say anything about this?

Proverbs 22:7 (NKJV)

7 The rich rules over the poor,

And the borrower is servant to the lender.

Think about that. When someone borrows money they enslave themselves. They become a servant to the lender.

Try borrowing money from your brother or sister. Or borrow money from a close friend. Tell them you'll pay them back next month. You become a slave to these relatives or friends. If any of them see you going out to eat, they will give you an evil look and mumble under their breath, "*He can go out to eat at a restaurant, but he can't pay me back.*" Or they will begin to say cutting statements to you like, "*Where did you get that new coat? You owe me money, but you seem to have enough to buy new clothes.*" Truly "the borrower is servant to the lender."

The Bible also speaks to the issue of making promises and breaking those promises. When a person borrows money and makes a promise to repay that money, it is wrong to break that promise.

Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 (NKJV)

4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it;

For He has no pleasure in fools.

Pay what you have vowed —

5 Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

When people get credit cards, they make an agreement or promise to repay what they purchase with those credit cards. When people run up the balances to the maximum limits and then have no intention of paying the bill, that is stealing. Let's be honest about this. This is wrong. It's lying; it's cheating; it's dishonest; it's breaking a promise.

Are Christians allowed, in God's eyes to borrow and borrow money without ever repaying? No. God expects Christians to repay the money they borrow.

Matthew 5:37 (NKJV)

37 But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

This is Jesus Himself speaking. Jesus said when a Christian says "yes," he means "yes." A Christian cannot say "yes" and mean "maybe."

If a Christian says, "I will repay the debt if you loan me the money," then that Christian must do what he said he would do. To walk away from debt with no intention of repaying the debt is sinful and those who do this will face God in judgment for stealing and cheating others. This is a serious matter.

The best policy is to not use credit cards. Pay for everything with cash. If you do not have the cash to pay for what you want, then don't get it until you have the cash. When you pay cash for everything, you do not owe anyone money at the end of the month.

When you have paid all your bills and are living debt-free, you are not in such a crisis if you should lose your job – because you are debt-free and owe no one anything.

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

Five steps in God's plan of salvation:

- 1) **Hear** the word of God (Rom 10:17).
- 2) **Believe** Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 16:16).
- 3) **Repent** of sins (change from living a sinful life) (Acts 2:38).
- 4) **Confess** your faith verbally before men (Rom 10:10).
- 5) **Be baptized** (immersed) in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19) for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Mark 16:16 (NKJV)

*16 He who **believes** and is **baptized** will be saved; ...*

Acts 2:38 (NKJV)

*38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent, and** let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; ...*

After being baptized, one must continue to be faithful (Acts 2:42; Mt 28:20; Rev 2:10).