

The Maintenance Plan

Becoming a good steward of God's resources is a lifetime pursuit. Over the past weeks, you have established a balanced budget based on your goals, income, expenses, and family needs.

A balanced budget allows you to manage the resources God has provided for you while living within your means. Maintained, the budget informs you when you spend more than you allocated. It also provides the tools to help you make wise financial decisions. It can minimize the influence of emotions in making those decisions since you have information to guide you. As you move from creating a budget and establishing a balanced budget, the next step is maintaining the budget.

The Maintenance Plan provides the user with steps to follow to control spending, by category, and to know your financial well-being, continuously. Therefore, the system should be simple while still accomplishing its goal. The *Crown Spending Tracker Sheet*, by month, is the document utilized for the Maintenance Plan.

The following steps will set you on a path of Financial Stewardship throughout your life. They are:

- List the income and expense totals, by categories, each month from your budget.
- Consider income and expenses that are variable during the year.
- Transfer money from short- and long- term savings for *monthly Variable Spending* allocations to the appropriate income or expense category during the month when they occur.
- Review total expenditures daily, weekly, or bi-monthly, as needed.
- Stop spending from a category when money from that category is spent.

At the end of each month, evaluate as indicated:

1. Determine monthly totals for the income and spending by category, assessing surplus or deficit amounts.
2. Examine the year-to-date budget.
3. Analyze year-to-date actuals.
4. Evaluate year-to-date actuals to budget.
5. Review income and expense allocations as frequently as needed, when there is a change, and annually.

Rejoice in obediently walking with God and trusting Him as you celebrate God's provision for you and your family.