



STUDY GUIDE

Punch Debt in the Face: Where Faith, Habits, and Strategy Finally Work Together

I. Getting Free from Debt

- A. After working with over 20,000 families, I want to share how thousands of families, many of them Christians who have tried everything before, finally eliminated their debt. How did they do it? *By fixing one thing almost nobody talks about!*
1. No complicated spreadsheet.
 2. No extreme budgeting.
 3. No new financial product.
- B. The families who finally got free from debt—who eliminated the debt and stayed free—were almost never the:
1. Most disciplined.
 2. The best with spreadsheets.
 3. Making the most money.
 4. They were the ones who changed one specific thing first.
 5. When that thing changed, everything else followed.

II. Are You in the Right Place?

- A. Be honest with yourself.
- B. The thing is, debt is NOT a math problem. It's an IDENTITY problem, so it takes a different solution to solve it.
- C. The person who sent you here didn't send you a random link. They sent you because they know you and think you are ready for this. They believed it would help you. I want to earn your trust enough that we can make it happen.

III. My Story

- A. My name is Jim Baker, a pastor, author, and financial coach.
- B. In 2007, I filed for bankruptcy.
- C. My shame was enormous.
 - 1. My soundtrack: "You blew it. You're done. You missed God's plan. This is your life now. Welcome to Plan B."
 - 2. But it felt more like Plan Z.
 - 3. What I didn't know: God is running a composting operation!

D. **The Compost Heap:**

- 1. Organic gardening depends on making your own soil.
- 2. How to make the best organic soil:
 - a. Take every piece of plant life in the kitchen that's rotting, slimy, moldy and stinking enormously ...
 - b. And pile it up with grass clippings and dead leaves.
 - c. That's your compost heap.
 - d. That's also your recipe for organic, gluten-free, dairy-free, sugar-free brownies: They're essentially compost!
- 3. However, there's a miracle in that compost heap:

- a. Internal combustion starts.
 - b. Steam rises.
 - c. When you turn it, more steam happens.
 - d. By spring, that disgusting pile of garbage becomes the richest, most life-giving soil in your garden!
- E. In 2007, God threw my entire financial life onto His compost heap.
1. In 2005, I'd gone to a real estate seminar for \$5,000, which I charged to my credit card.
 2. Within three months, I made \$70,000 in cash, more than double my annual pastoral salary.
 3. I thought, 'God is incredible. I'm unstoppable!'
- F. What nobody tells you about "sudden money": It reveals what was already in your heart.
1. Greed crept in quietly, like carbon monoxide.
 2. Then 2007 came. The real estate market didn't just crash, it had a nervous breakdown.
 3. Investment property I'd bought for \$115,000 sold for \$18,000. (Not a typo.)
 4. "Buy high, sell low": A terrible business plan!
 5. Ten months without an income turned into bankruptcy.

III. What I Wish Someone Had Told Me after Filing for Bankruptcy

- A. God doesn't just forgive your failures, He **composts them!**
1. He takes the worst parts of your story—financial mistakes, shame, debt disasters.
 2. Then He turns them into the most life-giving soil of your future.
- B. What I did next:

1. I devoured over 100 books on personal finance and Kingdom wealth-building.
 2. I returned to Church ministry.
 3. I taught our congregation for 18 straight weeks.
 4. Within one year, 25% of our people were completely debt-free, though some thought it was closer to 50%.
 5. In 2017, God asked me to share this with more people, whereupon I launched **Wealth With God**.
 6. 20,000 families responded:
 - a. Debt demolished.
 - b. Marriages healed.
 - c. Generosity unleashed.
- C. My worst shame became my greatest assignment. My deepest failure became the richest soil, and I believe yours will too.

III. The Destination

- A. Why most Christians stay financially stuck—it's not the reason anyone ever told them.
- B. I want to give you the inner game: The *identity shift* that must happen before any tactic can stick.
- C. I will share a simple, proven path to eliminating your debt, one that doesn't:
 1. Require you to be a math genius
 2. Require perfection
 3. Require a spreadsheet from the 1990's.
- D. I want to share **what life looks like on the other side**. Most people can't see that far, and until you can, you won't fight hard enough to get there.

IV. Information Isn't the Problem

- A. Most families already know the basics:
 - 1. That you should spend less than you earn.
 - 2. That credit card interest was bad.
 - 3. They've watched the YouTube videos, some even bought the books.

- B. Still, nothing changed.
 - 1. It's not laziness.
 - 2. It's not stupidity.
 - 3. It's not lack of discipline.
 - 4. It's *identity*.

- C. The pattern:
 - 1. Someone gets motivated. They make a budget. They start out strong.
 - 2. Life three: Life happens. A medical bill shows up. They buy something they shouldn't.
 - 3. Then the voice comes: "You can't do this. You've never been good with money. This is just who you are."
 - 4. Then they quit. Not because of the car repair, because of what the car repair said about them—at least what they believed it said.
 - 5. This is the poverty spirit / mindset / outlook. It's not a demon. It's just seeing only meager possibilities because that's all you believe you deserve.
 - 6. You will always act like the person you believe yourself to be.

V. The Principle that Changes Everything

- A. Identity always drives behavior—always.
- B. Romans 6 gives the pattern. "Don't you know ..." is identity truth. Then, "Consider yourself ..." is identity mindset.
- C. Know yourself, then see yourself from that truth.

- D. You don't behave your way into identity. Identity behaves its way out of you.
- E. The Rambo story: Someone who acted completely out of who he was, a counter-terrorism expert, when he thought he was in danger.
- F. What's we're going for: **A new identity** that naturally produces new behavior.

VI. The Three Freedoms Path

- A. Until something changes on the inside, nothing will stick on the outside.
- B. The path, in this exact order:
 - 1. Free on the inside.
 - 2. Debt free.
 - 3. Financially free.
- C. You cannot skip Item #1.

VII. The Identity Piece

- A. When you think about your finances, what they actually are, what's your inner soundtrack?
 - 1. Most people: "I'm just not good with money. I'll never get out of this. I've tried before and it didn't work."
 - 2. All those things are a lie—not a mistake, not an exaggeration.

"They will be standing firm like a flourishing tree, planted by God's design—deeply rooted by the brooks of bliss, bearing fruit in every season of their lives. They are never dry, never fainting, ever blessed, ever prosperous." (Psalm 1)
 - 3. Psalm 1: It's not about someone else. That's *your* identity *right now*, as a Kingdom person—connected to rivers of living water, as a planting of the Lord. All you do prospers.
- B. Why most of us don't live like that. Why? **There is a competing system running in the background.** Most financial teachers never address that.

“You cannot serve God and Mammon,” Matthew 6:24.

- C. Your hopelessness about your debt is a bigger problem than the debt! If you keep living inside of that lie, it becomes a stronghold of the enemy.
- D. The debt on your spreadsheet is a math problem. *The hopelessness in your chest is a spiritual problem*, the thing we must deal with first.
- E. Take 30 seconds to talk to God about your debt. Quiet your heart and ask Him, “Holy Spirit, what lie have I been believing about my financial situation?”
- F. Whatever surfaces, that’s the stronghold.
- G. Jesus named it 2,000 years ago: Mammon, a philosophy built around one core lie: **Money is your source.**
- H. Mammon says it’s the thing that determines whether you’re safe, whether you’re enough, whether your future is secure.
 - 1. It lives in your head, not just your bank account.
 - 2. It sounds like this: “If I just had a little more, I could finally relax.”
- I. The shift that breaks Mammon’s power: God is not a resource. He is THE Source.
- J. Money is not the point. It’s a tool:
 - 1. A tool that serves your calling, your family, your generosity, when it’s in its right place.
 - 2. A tool that controls you, stresses you, and owns you, when Mammon has convinced you that it’s the source.
 - 3. When that distinction becomes real to you, something you actually believe, and not just intellectually, your entire relationship with money shifts.
- K. **Normal** in our culture:
 - 1. “Borrow, spend, stress, repeat.”
 - 2. Normal: \$16 trillion in consumer debt.
 - 3. Normal: A retirement account that won’t fund two years of retirement.
 - 4. Normal: Financial anxiety, as the permanent background noise of life.
 - 5. **Normal is not the Kingdom standard.** You were not made for normal!

VIII. When Debt Loses Its Power over You

- A. Debt loses its power the moment you decide it no longer gets to define you.
- B. Until that moment, debt is not just a number on a statement, it's a voice:

"You'll never get out of this. You're bad with money. You tried before and it didn't work. This is just who you are."

- C. When you decide inside, "This is not who I am anymore," you stop acting like a victim of your debt and start acting like someone who is eliminating it.
- D. The moment your shift occurs is where freedom begins. Not when the numbers change, when YOU change.
- E. Say this: "**Debt does not get to define my future.**" God just needs your decision. He's not intimidated by your numbers.

IX. Punching Your Debt in the Face

- A. Two ways people usually deal with debt:
 - 1. They sit down with debt, negotiate with it, rearrange it, consolidate it, move it from one card to another—manage it.
 - 2. You step into the ring and stop negotiating, reorganizing, or pretending it's under control. Then you decide, "This thing is going down." (Punching debt in the face!)
- B. Debt survives when you manage it, but it dies when you attack it.
- C. The debt weapon: **The Snowball.**
 - 1. You list your debts from the smallest balance to the largest.
 - 2. Make minimum payments on everything except for the smallest one.
 - 3. On that one, throw every extra dollar on it you can find.
 - 4. When that debt is gone, you take everything you were paying on it and roll it into the next debt. Repeat.

- D. The other way, the **Debt Avalanche**: Mathematically it shouldn't work that way. Paying the highest interest rate first should make you save more money over time, but it doesn't. **Paper doesn't have feelings, but you do.**

X. Why 'The Snowball' Works

- A. Paying off the first debt causes something to happen that no spreadsheet can calculate: You stop feeling like a victim of your debt and feel more like a fighter.
- B. The identity shift is worth more than the interest rate differential.
- C. A mathematically optimal approach causes people to quit in a month because they haven't seen a single win yet. *The math: Right. The psychology: Wrong.*
- D. Those who use the Snowball get a win in week six, another in month three, etc. It affects how they see themselves.
- E. Most people don't fail because the system is hard, they fail because they're trying to do it alone.
 - 1. When the first balance hits zero, for the first time you believe it's possible.
 - 2. The first win doesn't just eliminate a balance, *it changes what you believe about yourself.*

XI. What If There Is No Extra Money to Throw at the Debt?

- A. Most people are wrong about that. We all have invisible spending leaks where money goes out on auto-pilot.
 - 1. Things we've signed up for that we've forgotten about.
 - 2. Amounts small enough to ignore individually, but significant when you add them up.
- B. Exercise:
 - 1. Pull up the last 30 days of your bank and credit card statements.
 - 2. Find every subscription, every auto-renewal, every recurring charge. Write them down.

3. There is usually between \$150 and \$400 per month in spending that doesn't match a person's priorities.
4. \$200 extra/month on a \$5,000 debt means you're free in **under two years** instead of ten years.

C. To do:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what it feels like when the first debt is gone.
2. Then ask Him which debt He wants you to go after first. **That's your assignment.**

D. **Where the system meets reality:**

1. **What happens when life happens to you.** The car breaks down and you must pull from the debt fund, etc.
2. Every person who has ever quit a debt payoff plan quit in the messy middle—not because they didn't understand the strategy, but because they were trying to hold the line by themselves. **It's an "alone" problem.** Life hit harder than motivation could absorb.
3. Executing the plan through the hard months **alone** is the hard part.

E. **The vision.** Picture what life would look like when you're free.

1. Most people think like a gardener when they get out of debt, like they're tending a small plot, grateful for what's growing.
2. God is calling you to think like an orchardist:
 - a. Someone who doesn't just tend, but plants for a harvest 5, 10, 20 years from now.
 - b. He plants more than he needs.
 - c. He plants so his children have shade, so strangers can eat.
 - d. He's not greedy, he's being obedient: Jesus said your job is to multiply what's in your hand.

3. Freedom isn't the goal. Freedom is the platform. **The goal is what you build on it.**

XII. The Crossroads

- A. We must each decide how this story ends. (Are you actually ready to be free?)
 1. Today doesn't need to be complicated, just a turning point.
 2. Ask Holy Spirit to show you a picture of what your life will look like on the other side of this debt, what kind of freedom you'll have, what you'll get to be.
 3. Ask Him, "Is tonight the night I start moving toward that?"
 4. When the Holy Spirit invites, He also equips.
- B. People fail for **five main reasons**, over and over:
 1. They quit in the messy middle.
 2. They never actually face the numbers.
 3. Their spouse isn't on the same page.
 4. They don't know which habits are actually keeping them broke.
 - a. Most people don't have a spending problem, they have a habits problem.
 - b. Habits are fixable, but only if you identify the right ones first.
 - c. Most people try to fix everything at once and end up fixing nothing.
 5. They don't know what to do next week.
 - a. Decision paralysis kills more financial plans than almost anything else.
 - b. You get motivated, then you go home. There are 17 things you could do, and you don't know which one to do first, so you do nothing. The moment passes.

- C. **The 90-Day Freedom Path:** Built for the people who've had enough stress, enough minimum payments, enough pretending it's fine when it isn't.
1. **It's not a course you watch,** it's a path you walk, and **you don't walk it alone.**
 2. **The week-by-week roadmap:** Free on the inside, Debt Free, Financially Free—12 weeks, clear, sequential, no guesswork.
 3. **The Shame-Free Numbers Walkthrough.**
 4. **The 7 Habits Assessment and Replacement Guide.**
 5. **The Spouse Partnership Framework**—so you can stop fighting about money and start building together.
 6. **A private community** of people in the same season, walking the same road.
 7. **Three live monthly Q&A calls with me.**
 8. **The “Stuck?” Emergency Access protocol.**

XIII. Transformation Stories

XIV. The Thesis: Name It Before You Price It

- A. **What it costs.** The hard part isn't the system. The hard part is being alone while you work it.
- B. **The Freedom Path** is built, not to give you more content, but to make sure you are never alone at any point of the process.
- C. **You're not making an investment in a course,** but in not being alone.
- D. **It's not about the cost of the program.** It's the cost of staying where you are, of all the sleep you don't get, the generosity you can't give, the arguments you don't want to have, the version of yourself you will never because you stayed stuck.