

Need an IRS Miracle? Try These 4 Tax Tips

“If you’re looking for a reason to refuse to pay your taxes, don’t open the Bible,” observed Crown CEO Chuck Bentley, in a national column, detailing tax advice for people who want to “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s” without breaking the bank. Tax planning should begin early, keeping in mind that getting ready today will save a large bill and problems later, but it probably won’t be possible to do what Jesus did in Matthew 17.

The Bible tells a story in which Jesus told Peter to go fishing at tax time, cutting open the first fish he would catch to find a coin to pay the temple tax. Bentley observed: “Only Jesus can go fishing for a tax plan.”

In 2014, the U.S. Tax Code was close to 74,000 pages, now including a requirement to document your healthcare coverage to comply with Obamacare’s mandates. In fact, U.S. Tax Code is twice the length of the King James Bible *plus* the entire works of Shakespeare combined. This level of complexity means that it will take some work (maybe even a miracle) to manage our taxes.

By following a few careful steps, tax compliance can be more easily achieved, but here is a place to begin:

Put your work in order and know the status of your fields: A good biblical principle for getting ready for taxes is to stay on top of all your resources and get organized. People often end up paying more taxes than they should because they haven’t taken the time to track their finances, both business and personal. Start by purchasing an expandable file to keep your paperwork together.

Neither a borrower nor a lender be ... to Uncle Sam: It’s

counter cultural to say this, but if you're getting a huge tax refund, you've made a mistake. Your cash has been used as an interest-free loan to the government. In 2014, average federal tax refund was \$3,034. According to , "A refund of \$3,000 means that the taxpayer could instead be receiving an extra \$250 in pay every month."

Use your computer for more than online shopping: Online filing for taxes has been available since 1990, and it's faster, safer and more secure than many other options. About 86 percent of us filed our taxes online last year, often a faster way to collect any refund owed. A simple 1040 EZ form can be filed online for free if your AGI—Annual Gross Income—was \$60,000 or less. Check out sites like .

Don't play Where's Waldo with the IRS: Correctly identifying yourself to the IRS is the difference between getting a refund check and getting a scary call from a federal agent about your missing forms. Proof read the forms. One of the top mistakes taxpayers make is including incorrect Social Security numbers for their children or spouses. And use this tax season as a reminder to protect your social security numbers from identity theft.

For more tips on saving money on taxes, [click here](#).

Chuck Bentley is the CEO of Crown, the largest Christian financial ministry in the world, founded by the late, Larry Burkett. He is an author, host of "My MoneyLife," a daily radio feature and a frequent speaker. Follow him on Twitter @chuckbentley. For interviews or speaking requests contact media@