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0 (40s):

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2 (48s):

My pleasure to welcome you here. The Clark Howard show our mission to serve and empower you to make better financial decisions in your life. In today's episode, I get to hear your beefs about me and I love it. Also, I'm really excited about a trend in grocery stores that can save you a ton on your bills. So it's really important to me that we're all in this together that we all learn together. I think about all of the suggestions that I get from you in questions, you post comments, suggestions, and complaints.

2 (1m 29s):

And so we have Clark dot com slash Clark. Stinks where you get a chance to give feedback to me where you feel My advice, opinion information is in complete off-base or in your opinion is just plain wrong. And then once a week producer Christa goes through your posts on Clark Stinks and shares her favorites with you right here on the podcast.

1 (1m 58s):

I should've never encouraged you to speak that much to think I'm pretty stupid, or you shouldn't be ashamed of yourself. Well, maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I'm wrong. I be you're right.

3 (2m 14s):

You miss the whole question of a listener who asked about the \$7,500 tax credit with the new electric Mustang. The listener asked how the \$7,500 credit works for their taxes and you rambled on talking about the auto industry is part in part in the tax credit. Please listen more carefully on the question and don't just ramble on without answering the question. William William,

2 (2m 38s):

Thank you. And you're right. I realized later that I did fail to answer the procedure. That what happens is when you file your tax return in 22 for tax year 21, that there is a section on the tax forum where you reflect the \$75 for the purchase of an electric vehicle from an automaker that qualifies for their full credit. It's a pretty simple credit to file for. And I was derelict in my duty getting off on a tangent and failing to say, just that, thank you for the post

3 (3m 22s):

Mark. All the great advice you give us about keeping our bank credit card and debit card accounts safe. You leave out one key tool that adds another layer of protection, text message alerts, most banks and credit card issuers Now have free text alerts. Whenever activity occurs on the account being immediately notified, wherever that whenever there's a transaction is such an easy way to know within seconds, if an unauthorized transactions occurred, you and your team are rock stars. Thank you for all you do. Jeremy,

2 (3m 50s):

Jeremy, thank you for that suggestion. And that is a great idea. And actually it's when I do, I have several of our set up so that I do get early warning when transactions happen. And I, what I did was so that when it's not for one of my \$3 fast food meals, I get notice when it's a larger transaction and I'm able to see as quickly as possible. And you can set with most of these notifications, whatever limit you Want. And I should mention quite quickly, Christa, we've had a lot of people comment about my eating habits and fast food and all of that.

2 (4m 34s):

And my kids sat me down for an intervention a month ago and a little more than a month ago, and talked to me about how much, what they consider to be unhealthy food. And particularly they were unhappy how much red meat I was eating. And I'm now six weeks into eating very little red meat, a lot of vegetables and a lot of salads. And I hope they're happy cause I miss my red meat.

3 (5m 6s):

That makes us all happy. We need your healthy man. Okay. Carl says, did you sleep through 1959 in history? Class, Alaska is a state to when you were speaking of States, governments suffering the most financially, you mentioned Florida, Hawaii and Nevada is suffering through the lack of tourist generated tax dollars. You went on to mention Texas and North Dakota due to losses. And the energy sector Alaska has nearly near total reliance on oil and gas for our state tax dollars, tourism and fishing, our Alaska second and third industries. So they're not able to help make up any difference.

2 (5m 45s):

Thank you. And I know that and I, I have seen the heat map of the States that are having a really tough time. And Alaska is one of them and it was my oversight. And I apologize. I will come to Alaska soon to make amends because I haven't been to Alaska lately. I've only been three times and I need to come enjoy it again. Now that I've had two vaccines in my arm,

3 (6m 12s):

You absolutely don't stink, but a conversation you had a few days ago about printers and printer ink made me think there might be a better way. Have you considered a monochrome laser printer? I have a Canon that I bought on sale for about a hundred dollars and I love it. I don't need to print in color. So I only have to buy

black cartridges. They're 20 twenty-five dollars on Amazon for too, and make about 2,400 copies. They make sharper copies, no clogging print heads, no mess, easy to change. And they last forever. I don't print much. So it's perfect for me. I use the copier and scanner much more than the print function. Thank you Clark and that's from Chris.

2 (6m 49s):

Chris, thank you for that suggestion. And that's my oversight to not talk about monochrome laser printers. When I talk about all the problems with the printer costs with Hewlett Packard printers, inkjet printers, by the way he went, Packard, laser printers are really expensive for ink too. You found a way to do it a lot cheaper on your, you said cannon cannon. And the thing you mentioned about printing a whole lot. Less that's true for most people now is we use printers a lot less than we used to is we've really become more comfortable doing things, all electronic, where we used to print out so much

3 (7m 33s):

And I'll go, Clark spoke about using three TVs and the tablet to watch four NFL games. At the same time, he also is always telling us to cut the cord or drop the dish. How is he watching that many games at once without the NFL Sunday ticket? Last I checked the Sunday. Tickets only available on direct TV is Clark a satellite subscriber. And if not, how do you get all of those games?

2 (7m 56s):

David, David, what an insult, a satellite, the subscriber. What are you saying long, long ago, far, far away. I did suffer satellite abuse. Not anymore. You now under certain circumstances can have streaming of NFL Sunday ticket and have it is an independent product instead of having it from the Ripoffs direct TV satellite, and it was a gift. My daughter gave me who's a college student because college students are eligible to have the streaming NFL Sunday ticket.

2 (8m 42s):

And can you think, you know, people say I'm the hardest person in the world to buy gifts for. Can you think of a better gift for me then having NFL Sunday ticket near the podcast and loving it, the

3 (8m 56s):

Tone of kindness, helpfulness and respect is refreshing in these stressful times, but your advice on mortgages Clark Stinks in one show, you rave about the merits of a 15 year mortgage. In essence, paying off the mortgage ASAP, a blink later, you give the thumbs up to a fellow listener for his plan to not pay off his home in favor of refinancing a 30 year to a 30 year mortgage with his goal of investing the difference. Pick a lane on this mortgage stuff. Clark Tom,

2 (9m 26s):

Tom, thank you. I'm trying to imagine what the particulars of that conversation would've been that I would of

said, yeah, go with the longer mortgage invest what you would've put in a way to a mortgage payment. If you did the 15 year, that sounds really odd for me. I don't know if maybe I'd hit my head that day because with the typical spread between the interest rate on a 15 year and a 30, when you were going into a mortgage, if you can afford the monthly payments go in the 15 year, usually people's greatest reluctance in doing the 15 year loan is when they're worried, what happens if they don't have enough money that month to make the payment and they go, and the 30 year, which was the argument I've had with you, Christa on how many home purchases and refinances, you know, I'm in a 15 year Now no, I refined to a 15 year early year.

3 (10m 29s):

W it was last year I did in 2020.

2 (10m 32s):

I had no idea. Fantastic. I, I mean, I love the 15 year. Hey, it's got to go along with my other favorite children and the 15 year low. And I just love because you think about your age, Christa it means that if you had a 30 year, you would owe money into your retirement years with a 15 year. You own your home free and clear before retirement. Yep.

3 (11m 1s):

OK. You constantly talk about how Amazon is more expensive than brick and mortar stores. As an economics major. You always forget about opportunity costs. If driving costs 50 cents a mile, and I have to drive three miles each way to Walmart, that's an extra \$3 that just spent. And if you're forgetting about time and traffic time, exercising and time with your family, when you add all that up, Amazon is not so expensive. So tell Christa is, has been to keep on ordering Derrick.

2 (11m 29s):

Okay. So the real truth, the real reason Amazon is a huge money saver. And Krista's house is where did your husband buy everything? Before he started buying everything from Amazon,

3 (11m 42s):

When used to work a ton at odd out of the house, there's a CVS near our house. And he would go by something on the way home, like groceries,

2 (11m 51s):

Groceries at CVS, I'm dying.

3 (11m 54s):

I did read this post to him last night and he was like, absolutely opportunity costs.

2 (12m 0s):

So yes, the other thing is that, all right, and it goes two ways on this, that if you go to a physical store, you're likely to buy on impulse items that if you're just going to buy a linear purchase and buy a single item online may be you buy less stuff. Spend less money. So one of the concerns the grocery stores have had with curbside pickup and delivery versus people coming into the store is that people don't impulse buy as much. So the, for those reasons, even if Amazon is a more expensive way to shop for some people, it may actually be net cheaper for them.

3 (12m 42s):

And we had a few about this recently, I heard you rave about Wise's entry into the home security systems as an owner of a monitored, but self installed wireless system, myself. I was very interested. It took me less than five minutes online to disqualify the why system. Why? Because it's totally wifi dependent with no cellular. Back-up. All the burglar would have to do is snip the incoming internet cable, where it enters the house. At the same time, they cut the landline. If there is one and just kick the door in and help themselves, can we say penny-wise and pound-foolish my system makes a cell call so that the system functions normally, if the internet or router isn't working, I pay 15 to, I do pay \$15 a month for monitoring, but I'm surprised you missed it.

3 (13m 26s):

Clark and that's from Sandy,

2 (13m 29s):

Sandy. Thank you. And you know, Right, Now the system I'd be replacing is the ring security system. And it does have both the wifi and the backup cellular monitoring. And so if burglars are that determined to break into your home, that they cut the wifi, two of them, then you're completely right. The other issue though, is wifi is not always the most reliable thing. And I got notices that I've cut over to sailor back up at least twice a week on my home security system. So that is a great suggestion. I appreciate all of yours. And if you feel like I've really missed the Mark on something, please go to Clark dot com slash Clark Stinks and coming up next, I got to talk about one of my favorite topics.

2 (14m 22s):

You getting a deal on your groceries.

0 (14m 26s):

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4 (15m 8s):

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4 (15m 46s):

today@carmax.com,

2 (15m 53s):

Americans really were not into going to supermarkets anymore, or the supermarket industry had become a no growth, really a negative growth industry as Americans pivoted to doing so much of their dining out, instead of dining in people were spending usually more than half of what they spent on food at restaurants and supermarkets were becoming less and less relevant. And what I heard somebody once referred too, and I occasionally call stupid markets because you buy stuff, you then have to do things too, before you can eat lot of work, right?

2 (16m 36s):

But the thing is we rediscovered the supermarket where the Corona virus and supermarkets have had huge increases in sales, through the Corona virus era. Some of that is going to stick going forward is I think about one of my brothers who he and his wife used to eat out every meal. And now he considers himself to be a chef and he'll send me pictures of the food that he has prepared. And he is doing more and more exotic dishes and food has become an event not just to eat, but to go through the whole preparation and cooking stuff.

2 (17m 22s):

So is, it looks like the people will go back to eating and restaurants. There is going to be some stickiness to people eating at grocery stores. Are you buying food at grocery stores that they then prep and eat at home and prices at supermarkets have gone up a decent amount over the last year, but at the same time, the industry is going through massive Transformation. So, you know, sometime in the next year, the German supermarket chain Aldie is going to be the third largest supermarket in the United States that their prices are so much cheaper than a typical supermarket.

2 (18m 6s):

You're usually saving somewhere close to 40% on your groceries. They just are adding stores. Typically two to three new Aldi's open every week around the country. They've been expanding the States that we're in

and they, when they come into a market, they change the pricing in that market. They force the incumbents out of fear to lower their prices. Something much like what happened on the Eastern seaboard over the last couple of years, when all these are tribal Leedle L IDL came along the Eastern seaboard from New York to Georgia and very heavily in the Carolinas and Virginia.

2 (18m 52s):

And is these German grocers invade the United States. All of these actually have been in the United States for two generations now, but never with any big presence until the last 10 years, the German supermarkets operate a completely different business model than what we're used to. A lot of Americans despise Aldi and Lidl because selection is highly limited. You're not going to find 24 different types and varieties of catch-up. You're going to find one. And in every category you're going to find very, very, very limited selection.

2 (19m 36s):

And that's part of the magic by doing large production runs of a small number of inventory items, there able to get much lower prices through the system, and then lower prices to you by having far fewer skews, you know, variety of items, they have far less spoilage, far fewer items that end up lingering on the shelf, going past their sell by date. And they have to be trashed and most everything that Leedle in all of the cell or private label, their own products for the good and the bad.

2 (20m 16s):

My kids hate almost everything under the Aldi saver it's brand, which are there snacks, or you think they're just absolutely terrible, which lowers their calorie counts. That's great. I just keep buying them anyway. So you have to like their private label items. And typically I love their private label items. I think their yogurt is better than the national brands. And I think many of their items are superior to the comparable national brand, but at a fraction of the cost, they don't give you bags. You have to, you don't have bagging help at all.

2 (20m 59s):

You have to put your own items in your cart. You have to rent your card at all to you. You have to pay a quarter that you got back when you return the cart. I think that's really smart. No cars get dings in the parking lot at all. D from people abandoning a cart that then rolls into your car. I wish the leader would do that in the U S as well. They do in Europe. They don't do that here, but it is a whole different way to shop that you benefit, even in directly, if you don't shop with the Germans, because the traditional supermarkets and the market are so terrified of them and lose so much market share to them over time that it forces them to employ some of the techniques of reducing variety and offering lower prices.

2 (21m 51s):

I guess everybody wins except the traditional markets stockholders Christa

3 (21m 57s):

Clark Susan in Florida says my son doesn't want to continue paying his student loans because the interest and payments are paused. He's employed full time and lives at home. Still. I want him to keep paying on them to bring the principal down. He only has a few expenses. What do you say?

2 (22m 13s):

I would say that the compromise of the two of you is that he puts the monthly payment into a savings account every month during the holiday period for Paying on student loans. And then all of that money is dumped against the balance. The second, the payment holiday is over, and that would be the compromise. That would make sense between the two of you, your instincts, or on the money, because if he takes the money, he would of put towards the Student Loans. If he was having to pay his agreed and blows it out on other things, he's missed a once in a lifetime opportunity to eat up that student loan balance.

2 (22m 57s):

And putting that money aside into a separate savings account would be the way for you to assure yourself that he's being responsible with the money and that'll get it done. I would say, normally, an adult child that you let him do his own thing, but he's living under your roof. So that restrict some of his freedom. And it's okay for you to impose a rule on him.

3 (23m 26s):

Okay. Clark and this is from Ash and the other way,

2 (23m 28s):

That's for my kids too. You come back home as an adult, you have rules.

3 (23m 34s):

Okay. Ashe in Florida says a friend of mine advised me to do a special needs trust for our disabled son, who is 12 with an online legal service. Do you advise to do it this way, or sit down with an actual financial planner or attorney? We don't have anything in place right now in terms of any type of will or living well for his future.

2 (23m 55s):

So as a parent, wanting to do right by a special needs child, the first step before a trust is doing a five 29 ABLE account ABLE accounts are wonderful. They are designed to not interfere with any public benefits that a disabled child or adult with disabilities would normally be eligible for. The ABLE account can be funded with up to \$15,000 in a year two under current law is I remember capped at a hundred thousand dollars total that can go in to one. You avoid a lot of the fees that are involved with normal trust arrangements, and the money is designed to be used for the benefit of a disabled child when you were no longer with us to provide for needs that they would have.

2 (24m 51s):

So the able accounts are a cousin, or maybe more of like a sibling of the five 29 college savings plans. There are several really good five 29 accounts offered. And the key is you want the expenses and total to being less than one half of 1% is to whether trust arrangements are valuable as well. I say you have to rely upon the expertise of a lawyer who specializes in wills, estates and trusts. I'm not a lawyer, and I'm stepping outside my bounds to talk about the benefit or lack thereof of doing a trust.

2 (25m 35s):

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