

Economic Uncertainty—Part 2

Again this week, the news was dominated with stories of the uncertainty in the world economy. The “down-grading” of the U.S. Credit rating continues to cause turmoil and has caused many investors to back out of the markets.

Even in light of the turmoil, most financial planners and investment advisors continue to encourage investors to “take a long term approach” to investing and to view the downturns in stock prices as low-cost buying opportunities. They remind us that we haven’t lost a dime in a falling stock market, unless we sell our stocks in the down market. What counts is the share price when we sell. In light of the changes in the world economic system, I don’t know if that is wise counsel or not, but I do know that our God never changes and that his Spirit counsels us to take a long term approach to the Christian life:

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:12-15 (NIV)

Just as an investor, God expects the fluctuations as you struggle in your Christian walk and he cares much more about how you finish than about the fluctuations. In fact, in his Kingdom, it’s all about the finish. We tend to be sympathetic to the workers in the Parable of the Workers, who complained that it wasn’t fair to be compensated equally, based just on who was working at closing time.

“But he answered one of them, ‘I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ Matthew 20:13-15 (NIV)

That’s the beauty of God’s grace. You can take great comfort in that when you fall short of walking the Christian walk in the way you believe you should. The promise is that as we learn to walk in the Spirit, we are set free from being slaves to the law and we are being transformed into the image of Christ by faith, day by day.

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (NIV)

Men, learn to walk free from guilt and shame and to “walk in the Spirit” and you will be “transformed from glory unto glory” into the very image of Christ!