

## What Are the Benefits of a Long-Term Perspective?

[1 Peter 1:13-19](#)

1 Peter, Day 5

*Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*

- 1 Peter 1:13-19, ESV

If you listen to decent investment advisers, they will always tell you to keep a long-term perspective through the short-term ups-and-downs of the market. Whenever the stock market drops, it's easy to panic and think you've lost everything.

On September 29, 2008, the Dow Jones fell by more than 777 points in a single day. But that's just part of the story: From October of 2007 to March of 2009, the stock market lost half of its value, with the Dow Jones falling from over 14,000 to around 6,500. People panicked. Yet today, the Dow Jones sits above 26,500, far above the level it was at before the Great Crash that began the Great Recession. Keeping a long-term perspective kept wise investors from selling off and losing.

Of course, a long-term perspective in stock-market investing may be wise, but it's no certain guarantee of success. For Christians, we have an even better and absolutely certain long-term perspective. Jesus has guaranteed our future resurrection by His own bodily resurrection. He has promised that He is preparing a place for us in His Father's house in the New Heavens and the New Earth, and, unlike politicians and financial forecasters, He never breaks His promise.

Peter urges us believers to "*set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" To set your hope fully on one thing is to refuse to set it at all on anything else. In this case, Peter says that our hope should rest fully and exclusively on the grace that Jesus Himself will bring to us when He is revealed fully at His glorious return.

Peter's charge is an antidote to two poisonous pills that have harmed many believers: worldliness and perfectionism. If we set our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ, that means we cannot set our hope on the passing pleasures and meaningless materialism of this present age. Worldliness is a false promise, and it cannot satisfy anyone, much less a child of God.

But Peter's words also warn us against forms of Christian perfectionism, the idea that someone we can attain sinless perfection or complete sanctification in this life. One Christian group expresses this idea this way: "We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect." Besides the fact that "devotement" isn't even a real word, this concept is not a biblical concept. It is a false hope and one that leads Christians who embrace this false doctrine either to despair because they know they haven't received such grace from God or to arrogance because they think they have received it.

Peter paints a different picture for believers: a life of struggle against sin and the passions of the flesh, a life of striving after holiness by the grace of God. In this lifelong fight, a long-term perspective is of immense value, because we know we will receive the grace of perfection when Jesus returns, and not before then. So we struggle and we live in holy fear, hating the deeds of the flesh, and looking forward in confident hope to that day when we will finally receive the grace we long for.

When you set your hope fully on Christ, you are never disappointed, as long as you understand what He has given you now - forgiveness, adoption, security - and what He has promised to give you when He comes again - the glorious grace of sinless perfection.