

April 17, 2009

Dear Partners in Ministry:

“Can I come out now? Is it safe?” Those are the questions many investors are asking themselves, having huddled in their figurative “bomb-shelters” for well over a year as the economy and financial markets plummeted.

The good news is that after months of negative news and returns, the markets began to show some life in March 2009 on news of a few positive earnings reports and other sketchy signs the economy is recovering. The markets historically begin to recover before the economy does, so this rally could be a harbinger of better things to come.

What we all need to remember, though, is that it took a long time to get us to where we are today, and the recovery may well take longer. Mathematically, the Dow has lost over 50% of its value from the peak of about 14,000. That means that we need growth of greater than 100% to return us to that level. If the stock market returns an average of 10% per year beginning now, it will still take that retirement account about eight years (with compounding) to fully recover!

Patience, therefore, is required. We need to remember that there is still plenty of bad economic news out there, so the probability is high that we are not yet in a sustained upturn. The Foundation’s endowment pool has been restructured to fit this new reality, so we are ready to minimize future harm while taking advantage of future gains.

Thank you for allowing us to continue to serve you in this difficult time!

In His service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grady L. Rockett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "R" at the end.

Grady L. “Pete” Rockett  
President