

## Market Review and Outlook—March 6, 2017

**The Roller Coaster Continues, Joyously** One year ago, all ten stock categories in the table below showed losses for the past three months and one year ([as shown on the next page](#)). Every one. Emerging Market stocks were down 21½%, Natural Resources had fallen over 27½%. Taxable bonds were up 3% while muni bonds were down slightly. In this report the opposite is the case. EVERY ONE of the ten stock categories shows gains in the past quarter and year. Emerging Market stocks are up 25½% and Natural Resources gained over 34%. Muni bonds are up 3% while taxable bonds are down a fraction.

**Why?** Let's start with oil. Oil fell to \$31 a barrel in January 2016, lower than during the 2008-2009 financial crash, lower than it had been for well over a decade. This dragged down earnings for the S&P 500 stocks by over 20%, and stock market values tumbled. Fast forward to February 2017 and oil has risen 70% (yes, 70%) to over \$55 a barrel, and S&P 500 earnings are expected to come in 20% greater than a year ago.

The surprising November election results also have boosted stocks, both US stocks and, more recently, foreign stocks. For the first time in six years we have one party controlling the White House and Congress, and the first time Republicans controlled both in eight years. US investors are looking for higher economic growth and profits resulting from expected lower regulations, and also from the Trump Administration's push for significantly boosted spending on infrastructure. Global manufacturers are confident in the future across the globe, for the US, for developed markets (including Europe), and even for emerging markets (except for Brazil and Greece). Their level of confidence is substantial.

**What to do? Rebalance!** Any time you have a very strong or very weak quarter, the benefits of rebalancing are significant. If you rebalanced last March, you sold bonds and bought stocks, stocks which likely rose 15-30%. It is time to seal in some of those profits. The figures in the table below represent paper gains. To turn them into dollars, you need to sell some of the winners. While bonds could face headwinds in the coming quarters, they should provide much more stability than stocks. Stick to your plan—now should be a perfect time to rebalance.

Category	3 Months	12 Months	3-Yr Avg	5-Yr Avg	10-Yr Avg
<b>Fidelity Govt Cash Reserves</b>	+0.06%	+0.13%	+0.05%	+0.04%	+0.79%
<b>Intermediate Term Bond</b>	+1.33%	+3.06%	+2.38%	+2.47%	+4.07%
<b>Intermediate Muni Bond</b>	+1.97%	-0.23%	+2.61%	+2.36%	+3.44%
<b>Large-Cap Stock</b>	+7.29%	+23.36%	+8.39%	+12.33%	+6.63%
<b>Mid-Cap Stock</b>	+5.90%	+26.35%	+6.58%	+11.97%	+6.88%
<b>Small-Cap Stock</b>	+4.74%	+31.53%	+6.18%	+11.80%	+6.76%
<b>Foreign Large-Cap Stock</b>	+6.93%	+15.08%	-0.74%	+4.38%	+0.94%
<b>Foreign Small/Mid Cap Stock</b>	+7.73%	+17.26%	+0.89%	+6.92%	+3.01%
<b>Diversified Emerging Markets</b>	+8.27%	+25.50%	+0.41%	+0.20%	+2.25%
<b>Technology</b>	+9.85%	+33.19%	+11.27%	+13.68%	+9.41%
<b>Real Estate</b>	+7.39%	+15.62%	+10.02%	+10.31%	+4.01%
<b>Natural Resources</b>	+2.23%	+34.25%	-4.28%	-1.38%	+1.35%
<b>Moderate Allocation (50-70% stocks)</b>	+4.91%	+15.43%	+4.43%	+7.24%	+5.11%

*The data in this table comes from Morningstar and is as of February 28, 2017*

*Information herein should not be construed by any consumer and/or prospective client as a solicitation to effect, or attempt to effect, transactions in securities, or the rendering of personalized investment advice for compensation.*

## Market Review and Outlook—March 4, 2016



**The Roller Coaster Continues, Painfully** All nine stock sectors listed below have 3- and 12-month losses. Nonetheless, the balanced Moderate Allocation approach has outperformed bonds for the past 3, 5, and 10 years, and this is why we advise that investors take a long-term, balanced approach to investing. Such a long-term approach requires patience and discipline, and putting up with short-term, paper losses.

The global price of oil has plummeted over the past two years, dragging down most stock markets with it. Despite making up less than 7% of the S&P 500, the Energy sector has produced losses in the past year that have kept the S&P from maintaining the upward trajectory it has enjoyed since 2009. This ‘monopolizing’ of the S&P occurs periodically, in 2008 by the financial sector, and by the technology sector in the late 1990s (and in 2000). The key point is that oil will stabilize at some point (it now trades at where it was in early January), and **an S&P recovery doesn’t need the energy sector to become profitable**, but to just stop losing money. If/when oil prices actually climb, the S&P will have a tailwind.

In the meantime, the stock market losses shown below have produced **attractive stock prices**. The S&P 500 yields 2½%, well ahead of 10-year treasuries which yield only 1¾%. JP Morgan presents six ‘valuation measures,’ and every one of them shows that US stock prices are cheaper than their 25-year average. Foreign stocks are similarly cheaper than average, and emerging market stocks are sharply cheaper.

The current theme for bonds is “**Lower for Longer**”; interest rates are expected to take longer than we expected to return to ‘normal levels.’ It is interesting that the last time the Fed rate was very low was in 2004. The Fed boosted the Fed rate by over 4% in 17 steps over two years. During this time, the S&P 500 returned +12% (annually, without dividends), while at the same time bond investors were lucky to earn their interest without price declines. Quality bonds hold up when fear rises, as you can see in the 3-month figures, below. Opportunity bonds should fare much better than quality bonds when fear subsides, given their low prices and higher yield. This is the reason that we couple the two together.

Any time the markets move sharply, up or down, **you should rebalance**. If stocks have risen sharply, it is good to seal in some gains. If stocks have fallen, as is the case now, we have a good opportunity to buy stocks on sale. While there are many figures in **red** below, long-term investors should see **green**.

Category	3 Months	12 Months	3-Yr Avg	5-Yr Avg	10-Yr Avg
Fidelity Govt Cash Reserves	+0.00%	+0.01%	+0.01%	+0.01%	+1.26%
Intermediate Term Bond	+0.59%	-0.32%	+1.51%	+3.28%	+4.27%
Intermediate Muni Bond	+1.74%	+3.00%	+2.49%	+4.62%	+3.88%
Large-Cap Stock	-7.62%	-9.10%	+8.67%	+8.28%	+5.48%
Mid-Cap Stock	-8.87%	-12.71%	+6.77%	+6.63%	+5.42%
Small-Cap Stock	-11.39%	-13.55%	+5.27%	+5.62%	+4.77%
Foreign Large-Cap Stock	-9.97%	-14.93%	-0.18%	+0.02%	+1.26%
Foreign Small/Mid Cap Stock	-8.09%	-9.28%	+2.91%	+3.33%	+3.20%
Diversified Emerging Markets	-8.77%	-21.51%	-8.05%	-4.95%	+1.48%
Technology	-10.93%	-8.83%	+11.83%	+7.14%	+6.76%
Real Estate	-3.30%	-5.10%	+7.04%	+8.41%	+5.23%
Natural Resources	-12.07%	-27.67%	-10.69%	-8.70%	-1.34%
Moderate Allocation (60% stocks)	-5.37%	-7.87%	+4.35%	+4.96%	+4.58%

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