

STRATEGIC STEWARDSHIP

Guiding You Through Life's Transitions



July/August 2020

A Stock Market Lesson to Remember

Confidence can quickly erode, but it can also quickly emerge.

Undeniably, spring 2020 has tried the patience of investors. An 11-year bull market ended. Key economic indicators went haywire. Household confidence was shaken. The Standard & Poor's 500, the equity benchmark often used as shorthand for the broad stock market, settled at 2,237.40 on March 23, down 33.9% from a record close on February 19.¹

On April 17, the S&P closed at 2,874.56. In less than a month, the index rallied 28.5% from its March 23 settlement. And while past performance does not guarantee future results, there is a lesson in numbers like these.¹

In the stock market, confidence can quickly erode – but it can also quickly emerge. That should not be forgotten.

There have been many times when economic and business conditions looked bleak for stock investors. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 30% or more in 1929, 1938, 1974, 2002, and 2009. Some of the subsequent recoveries were swift; others, less so. But after each of these downturns, the index managed to recover.²

Sometimes the stock market is like the weather in the Midwest. As the old Midwestern cliché goes, if you don't care for the weather right now, just wait a little while until it changes.

The stock market is inherently dynamic. In tough times, it can be important to step back from the "weather" of the moment and realize that despite the short-term volatility, stocks may continue to play a role in your long-term investment portfolio.

When economic and business conditions appear trying, that possibility is too often dismissed or forgotten. In the midst of a bad market, when every other headline points out more trouble, it can be tempting to give up and give in.

Confidence comes and goes on Wall Street. The paper losses an investor suffers need not be actual losses. In a down market, it is perfectly fine to consider, worry about, and react to the moment. Just remember, the moment at hand is not necessarily the future, and the future could turn out to be better than you expect.

Keep in mind that the return and principal value of stock prices will fluctuate as market conditions change. And shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost.

This material was prepared by MarketingPro, Inc., and does not necessarily represent the views of the presenting party, nor their affiliates. This information has been derived from sources believed to be accurate. Please note - investing involves risk, and past performance is no guarantee of future results. The publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional services. If assistance is needed, the reader is advised to engage the services of a competent professional. This information should not be construed as investment, tax or legal advice and may not be relied on for the purpose of avoiding any Federal tax penalty. This is neither a solicitation nor recommendation to purchase or sell any investment or insurance product or service and should not be relied upon as such. All indices are unmanaged and are not illustrative of any particular investment.

Sources:

- 1 WSJ.com, 2020
- 2 USAToday.com, March 21, 2020



Terry Ford*, CFP®, CKA®
tford@strategicsteward.com



Ed Fortier*, CFP®, CKA®
efortier@strategicsteward.com



Lee Penland*
lpenland@strategicsteward.com



Michael Pemberton*, RICP®, CKA®
mpemberton@strategicsteward.com

• A Mission To Serve •

- Advisors offering wealth management advice and services with excellence
- Creating close relationships with our clients on a long-term basis
- Encouraging the charitable and stewardship aspirations of our clients for the wealth that has been entrusted to them

Thriving in Love and Money - *How to have a great marriage relationship around money*



“The biggest barrier to married couples becoming financially free is their discomfort with talking about money with each other.” says Shaunti Feldhahn the author of “Thriving in Love and Money (5 Game changing insights about your relationship, your money, and yourself).”

Having completed thousands of surveys among married couples over a three-year period, her research shows 77% of married couples cannot discuss money well. Yet the problem, she claims, is not about the money.

Shaunti identifies five things that run underneath our responses to money in our marriages that every couple must address. Three of them are:

1. A Clash of values

We don't value what the other person values. Often there is one spender and one saver in the marriage; and this is not gender related. She shares an example from her own marriage where she and her husband (Jeff) meet for dinner early in their married life. Shaunti orders a Diet Coke, while Jeff orders water who believes paying for a drink is a waste of money and thinks to himself “doesn't she know how much student debt we have?” While Shaunti believes a Diet Coke is an inexpensive pleasure that's much more enjoyable than water, and knows they have debt but needs to enjoy life in this small way while paying the debt off.

They each had a different set of values in this area. While there might not be a wrong and a right in the spending vs saving conflict, or in most conflicts for that matter, each spouse needs to understand what their spouse values so that a deeper bond of love, trust and unity can be formed in their marriage.

2. A Clash of Fears

Men and women tend to have two different sets of fears, worries and insecurities running under the surface.

Men - 75 – 80% of most men's fear is: Will they'll be able to provide for their family? And to protect against this fear, some men will work excessive hours, irrespective of income level or job responsibilities.

Women - For women married to the men above, their fear is: Are we okay as a family? Meaning is everyone feeling loved and cared for? Women often respond by enhancing the closeness of the family, wanting to spend time together; which often involves spending money to “buy” family time (e.g. vacations; eating out; etc.).

It's vitally important to recognize our fears, understand how they motivate us, and be able to talk about them with our spouse.

3. Resistance to Unity

We are all, to some degree, resisting being one in marriage. And it comes out oftentimes in how we handle money. Whether it's having separate accounts, secret accounts, or even rushing to remove the Amazon delivery from the front door before our spouse sees it, we resist oneness. It's been said that money doesn't change you, it reveals you. What does the way you and your spouse handle and talk about money reveal about your marriage relationship?

Shaunti provides a helpful free resource for you and your spouse to take the first step toward thriving in love and money. It's available at this link - thriveinloveandmoney.com/assessment. We hope you will complete this assessment as well as consider working through her book with your spouse.

Cultivating Contentment

A Jewish man in Hungary went to his rabbi and complained, “Life is unbearable. There are nine of us living in one room. What can I do?” The rabbi answered, “Take your goat into the room with you.” The man was incredulous, but the rabbi insisted, “Do as I say and come back in a week.”

A week later the man returned looking more distraught than before. “We can’t stand it,” he told the rabbi. “The goat is filthy.” The rabbi said, “Go home and let the goat out, and come back in a week.” A week later the man returned, radiant, exclaiming, “Life is beautiful. We enjoy every minute of it now that there’s no goat—only the nine of us.” (*Reader’s Digest* [12/81].)

One of the most important things we can do in our walk with the Lord is cultivate contentment. As you can see from the above story contentment is a matter of perspective! How do we develop a contented heart? Pastor Steven Cole says, “contentment is cultivated by pulling the weeds of greed and by building your life on God and His promises.” Here are four strategies he recommends:

1. Acknowledge God’s ownership. Psalm 24:1 says, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.” In Matthew 25:14-30 the text refers to us as managers or stewards, not owners. God entrusts us with resources to be used for His purpose. “The owner lets us draw a reasonable salary, but to squander the owner’s assets on frivolous things for our own consumption is to be an irresponsible manager” (Steve J. Cole). One day we will give an account for what we’ve done with what He entrusted us with. (Romans 14:12).

2. Put your treasure where you want your heart to be. Jesus says in Matthew 6:21 “for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Randy Alcorn says “What we do with our possessions is a sure indicator of what’s in our hearts. What we do with our money doesn’t lie. It is a bold statement to God of what we truly value. According to Jesus, what we do with our money determines where our heart goes. Do you wish you had a greater heart for the poor and the lost? Then give your money to help the poor and reach the lost. Put your resources, your assets, your money and possessions, your time and talents and energies into the things of God. As surely as the compass needle follows north, your heart will follow your treasure. Money leads; hearts follow” (*Money, Possessions, and Eternity*).

3. Live in light of eternity. At the end of our lives, money will not be much use to us. None of us are getting out of here alive. None of us get to take any of our money with us when we die. When we give and do the work of Christ it sets our hearts on eternity. This uproots the weeds of discontentment by helping us see what we really long for is to invest in the eternal, not the temporal where we will spend eternity with the Lord.

4. Make it your aim to give more. Giving breaks the power of money in our lives leading to a more content heart. God may be sending you more to help you be more comfortable. As a good Father He does provide things for our enjoyment. But He may be sending more so you can use it to further His purposes. Try not to make 10% your stopping point. Look to increase your giving over time. By giving more, your heart will gravitate towards contentment and gratitude for what God has provided. In his book, *Money, Sex, and Power*, Richard Foster tells us how to dethrone money: “The powers that energize money cannot abide that most unnatural acts, giving. Money is made for the taking, for bargaining, for manipulating, but not for giving. This is exactly why giving has such an ability to defeat the power of money”.

Cultivating contentment is a daily battle. It’s a battle worth fighting. By using these four ways to pull the weeds of discontentment we can walk closer with God out of a thankful heart.

Steven Cole, Lesson 53: Cultivating Contentment (Hebrews 13:5-6), <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-53-cultivating-contentment-hebrews-135-6>



www.strategicsteward.com

CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

Kestra Investment Services, LLC does not offer tax or legal advice.

Strategic Stewardship is not a Registered Investment Advisor.

*Securities offered through Kestra Investment Services, LLC (Kestra IS), member FINRA/SIPC. Investment advisory services offered through Kestra Advisory Services, LLC (Kestra AS), an affiliate of Kestra IS. Strategic Stewardship is not affiliated with Kestra IS or Kestra AS.

News articles created by Marketing Pro, Inc. for use by authorized representatives and agents.

Photo credits: Google Images

Free to Travel at Last!

It is with a mixture of excitement and regret that we launch Chris Anderson into retirement. Chris has decided that now is the right time and while we will never be ready for her to leave, we are excited for her in this next adventure in life.

Chris joined us in 2006 and has been an integral part of our team for over 14 years. Chris took on the responsibility of becoming our insurance "expert" and has fought hard to get many policies placed. She has worn many hats and carried many loads and she will be sorely missed. But we know she will have plenty to keep her busy. With her three children scattered between Washington state, Hawaii, and Alaska and family in Pennsylvania, we know that Chris will be logging a lot of air miles over the next few years.



Her last day will be August 31, 2020 so you still have time to wish her well with an email (canderson@strategicsteward.com) or phone call.



Recommendations and Reminders



Freeze Your Credit

We recommend freezing your credit to add a layer of security against thieves trying to establish credit in your name. A credit freeze allows you to seal your credit reports where they can only be accessed by a personal identification number (PIN) that you know. This is free with all three credit bureaus. Go to clark.com/credit/credit-freeze-and-thaw-guide to learn more.



Unwanted 2020 Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)

The CARES Act and subsequent IRS guidance allows unwanted RMD's to be returned by August 31, 2020. This waiver applies to company savings plans and IRA's, including both inherited traditional and Roth IRA's. If you or anyone you know took an RMD and wants to return it, call us now.