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If you are an employer, our monthly newsletter, "Benefits

Buzz", will provide you, in brevity, up-to-date information on Employee Benefits such as health & life insurance and 401K plans. To subscribe, [email us](#) and write Benefits Buzz in the subject.

What Keeps You Up at Night?

- Retirement
- Estate Planning
- Life Events
- Family Security
- Eldercare
- Financial Basics

"Statements without documentation are only opinions."

FBG
First Benefits Group, Inc.
Pioneers in Financial and Healthcare Strategies

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Gone Fishin'

How is investing like fishing?

Depending on the type of fish you are hoping to catch, you arm yourself with the best equipment and bait for the species, and then go to an appropriate "fishin' hole" to obtain the big catch. You cast your line and sometimes you score big. At other times you may return empty handed. If you are like me, you may spend several hours simply feeding the fish and crabs with your bait.

In the investment world, many people are looking for that big catch. They arm themselves with financial reports, advisors, and their savings account and toss it into the marketplace. Sometimes their accounts show great gains, while at other times, huge dips.

The biggest difference between fishing and investing is the significance of the potential loss. Therefore, when dealing with your lifelong earnings, we believe a safe haven for at least a portion of your money is imperative. The amount of money in the safety net is a unique decision for each individual.

Below are some ideas for protecting your money. Is it time to re-evaluate your position?

Innovative Thinking on a Very Popular Subject - Money

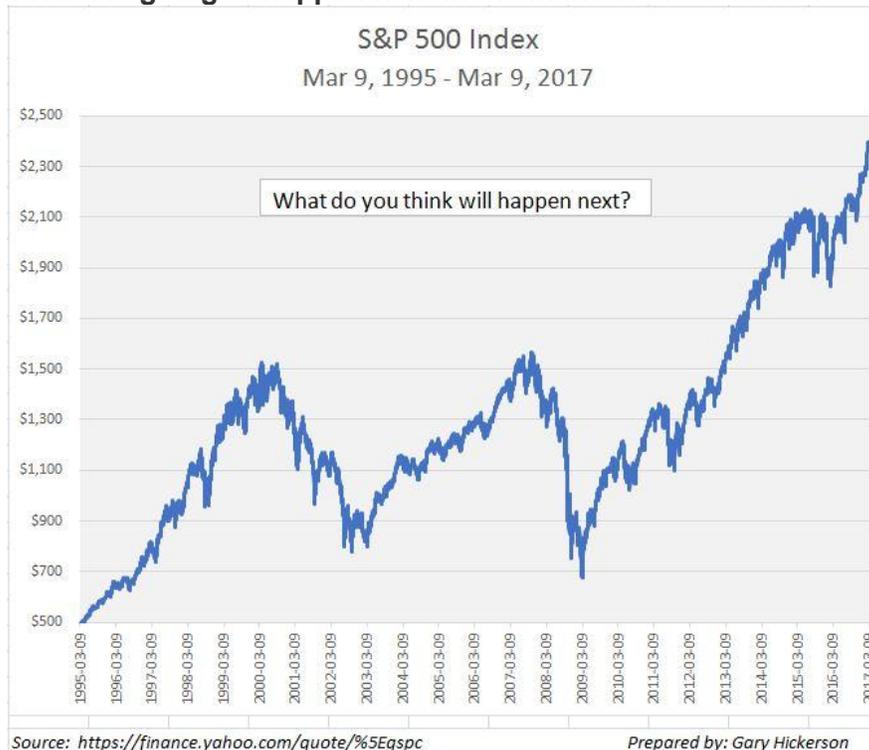
1. Is your approach to handling your money common or uncommon? Many advisors use a common approach for creating wealth. They like to find financial products with apparent higher rates of return (growth). Often times, that is their only focus. The uncommon approach is to acknowledge that return is important, but only after avoiding threats and fulfilling obligations. Avoiding threats starts with the question "What happens when I die, become disabled, lose my job, or there is a major correction in the marketplace? Have I adequately prepared?" Fulfilling obligations includes having enough *cash flow* to support lifestyle requirements regardless of unexpected events.

2. How does your money grow inside an investment account? Money does not compound inside an investment account if the value of the account is determined by the marketplace. Investment accounts grow under three conditions:

- The account increases in value as a result of changing market conditions.
- Dividends are declared, and the proceeds are put into the investment account.
- Additional monies are added to the account.

3. What are some of the disadvantages of an investment account? Most investment accounts are subject to market risk and market fluctuations. Your value is usually determined by market conditions. Your outcome is determined by the market place, not compounding. The additional risk in down markets is your need to access cash for an unexpected event, yet have no other source for the money.

4. What is going to happen next in the market? You decide.



5. Planning for Retirement Income - the Basics. When you retire you will share a common experience with many other retirees - You won't be taking home a paycheck. It is important to consider essential income.



6. Words of wisdom on asset allocation from Warren Buffett's partner, Charlie Munger. "Diversification is a way to protect financial consultants and stock brokers from ever looking really bad, but it also stops them from looking really good. What happens with broad diversification-holding a portfolio of, say, fifty or more different stocks-is that the winners will be canceled out by the losers, just as the losers will canceled by the winners." We often mention this in our newsletter is "asset location is as important as asset allocation." It is important to understand the difference between saving and investing.

7. The Affordable Care Act is here to stay, at least for the foreseeable future. Open enrollment for 2018 is November 1, 2017 through January 31, 2018. You can enroll in the Affordable Care Act/ObamaCare, outside of those dates under the Special Enrollment Period (S.E.P). It is designed for persons who have a change of circumstances. You must fall into one of these categories in order to qualify for enrollment:



*Marriage or Divorce * Change of Employment * Change of Address (restrictions apply) * Became Self Employed * Started a New Job * Lost Job * Birth of Child * Released from Prison*

The S.E.P provides an extra enrollment opportunity to avoid a penalty for the balance of the year.

8. Are any of your cost-of-living expenses inflation proof? A colleague just placed a 30-year fixed rate loan on his house. The loan rate was 4.3%.This means his 360 payments are guaranteed at the same interest rate for the life of the loan. He laughed when I suggested he should go to his favorite supermarket and gas station and see if they

will consider freezing their prices for the next 30 years.

9. Does your financial adviser have a process? This is a good question to ask in your initial interview. An excellent process usually contains the following components:

- Discovery (advisor asks a lot of questions and requests information)
- Analysis
- Education
- Client Specific Strategies
- Verification of Recommendations
- Monitoring the Results

10. A new life begins when the major breadwinner incurs a long term disability. Your basic needs of food, shelter and clothing, and educating the children don't disappear. A long-term disability can be financially devastating when earned income stops but the bills keep piling-up. Your ability to earn income could be your most valuable asset. Make sure you protect it!

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We are financial and insurance educators.

Our approach is unique and uncommon. We teach our clients how to be more efficient with their money. We can verify that being more efficient with your money is the safest method for building a solid foundation of protection and wealth.

There is more to be gained by avoiding losses than picking apparent winners.

We are experts in identifying threats to current and future lifestyles, and developing strategies to minimize or eliminate these threats.

To schedule a complimentary, no obligation appointment to discuss your personal circumstances, please call our office at 941.361.3057 x4.

Sincerely,

Terry O'Brien, Frances Lane, Gary Hickerson, BJ Mangrum