

A Post-Truth Era

Who knew that there was a competition for Word of the Year? As it turns out, Oxford Dictionaries actually contemplates such things: “After much discussion, debate, and research, the Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2016 is *post-truth* – an adjective defined as ‘relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief’”.

Spin Doctors

While not achieving Word of the Year status, this concept appears to have come into use in the mid-80s and was added to the Oxford English Dictionary in their 1993 draft addition. When you think about it, three decades seems a long time for one term to catch up with the other. While "false testimony" goes back to the Ten Commandments and has always been in human nature, it is now celebrated as a means to an end. Perhaps "The Prince" would be proud.

Underpinnings

It is easy to see where this impacts politics and the politics of government. How does this in turn impact our finances? What I sense from people is, in a word, uncertainty. This makes planning for financial security challenging at best. We have become conditioned to accepting the post-truth reality of kicking the can down the road economically, as well as politically.

Perspectives

New Year's seems a perfect time for looking at the year ahead. While I can't change the condition of post-truth in society, I can go against the grain and offer concepts which you might feel have a ring of truth:

- The less debt you have, the more you own; the more debt you have, the more it owns you
- You can choose to control lifestyle or to let it control you
- Putting money away for a rainy day is especially good before the monsoon season
- Staying employable is more important than staying employed
- Creating multiple sources of income in retirement makes the possibility of losing one of them less concerning
- Anything government provides, it can take away
- Finding investments that generate reliable cash flows can work wonders over time
- Societies and people that produce, progress

- Planning for always having a balance in the checkbook can relieve a lot of stress

Bottom Line

One thing that makes sense when you understand post-truth is why our country is so polarized. When emotions and beliefs suspend the opportunity for people of differing views to search out and to give weight to objective facts, finding common ground for agreement almost can't happen by definition. Still, finding financial truths that work in favor of a more secure future can help you personally, even in a post-truth world.

Your Feedback

I would love feedback on this newsletter. Future issues may include a host of good ideas, insights, specific steps to take financially, life insights and of course "Wit and Wisdom". Most importantly, I'd like it to be of value to you and to encourage an exchange of great ideas and insights. Please send your feedback to:

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