Navigator Outlook

April 2025

OneAscent INVESTMENTS

Investing that elevates

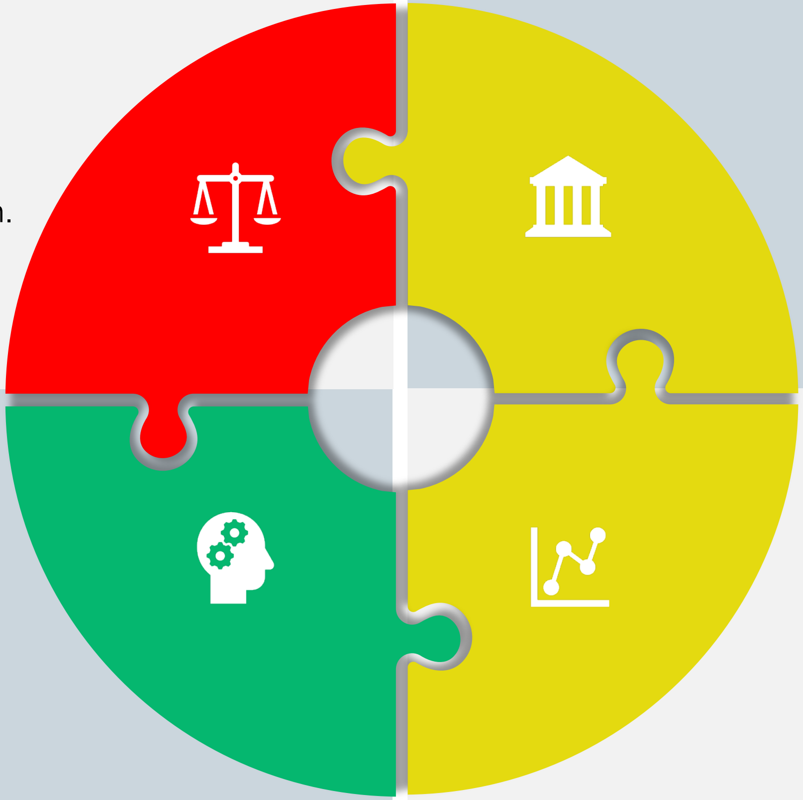
Navigator Outlook: April 2025

VALUATION

- The MAG-7 Valuation premium has compressed but presents a mixed picture.
- The S&P 500 P/E ratio is still well above long-term averages even after the recent correction.
- Corporate and High Yield Bonds are more attractive after spreads widened in March.

ECONOMY

- Economic Data is more volatile than at any time since the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- The Index of Leading Indicators triggered a recession warning signal.
- Recent data is pointing to accelerating consumer price inflation.



SENTIMENT

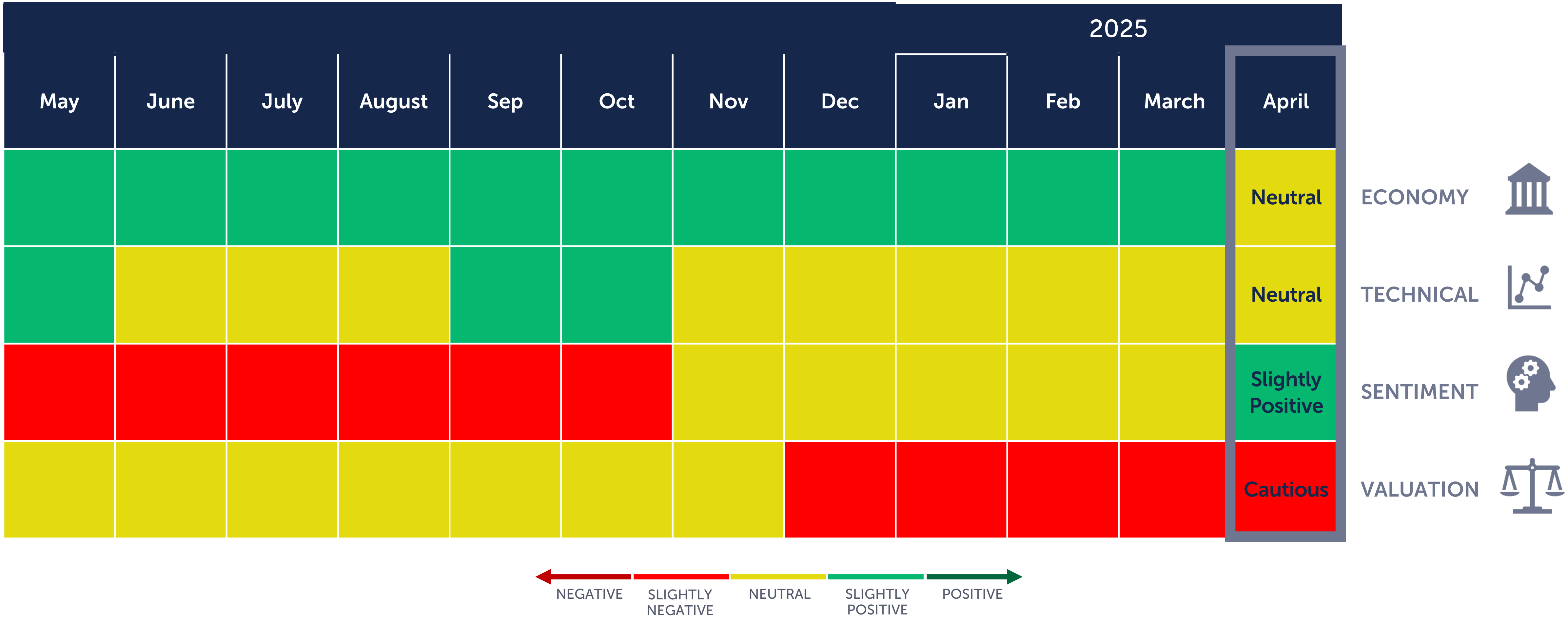
- Investor sentiment, traditionally a contrarian indicator, remained negative during March.
- Consumer Confidence is extremely low, nearing a contrarian signal.
- Tariffs are taking a bite out of Corporate America's CEO Confidence.

TECHNICAL

- Technology returns declined in Q1 after two years of outperformance
- Market Breadth is not yet giving a strong bottoming signal.
- International technical data is better than US large cap data.

NEGATIVE | SLIGHTLY NEGATIVE | NEUTRAL | SLIGHTLY POSITIVE | POSITIVE

Navigator Outlook: April 2025

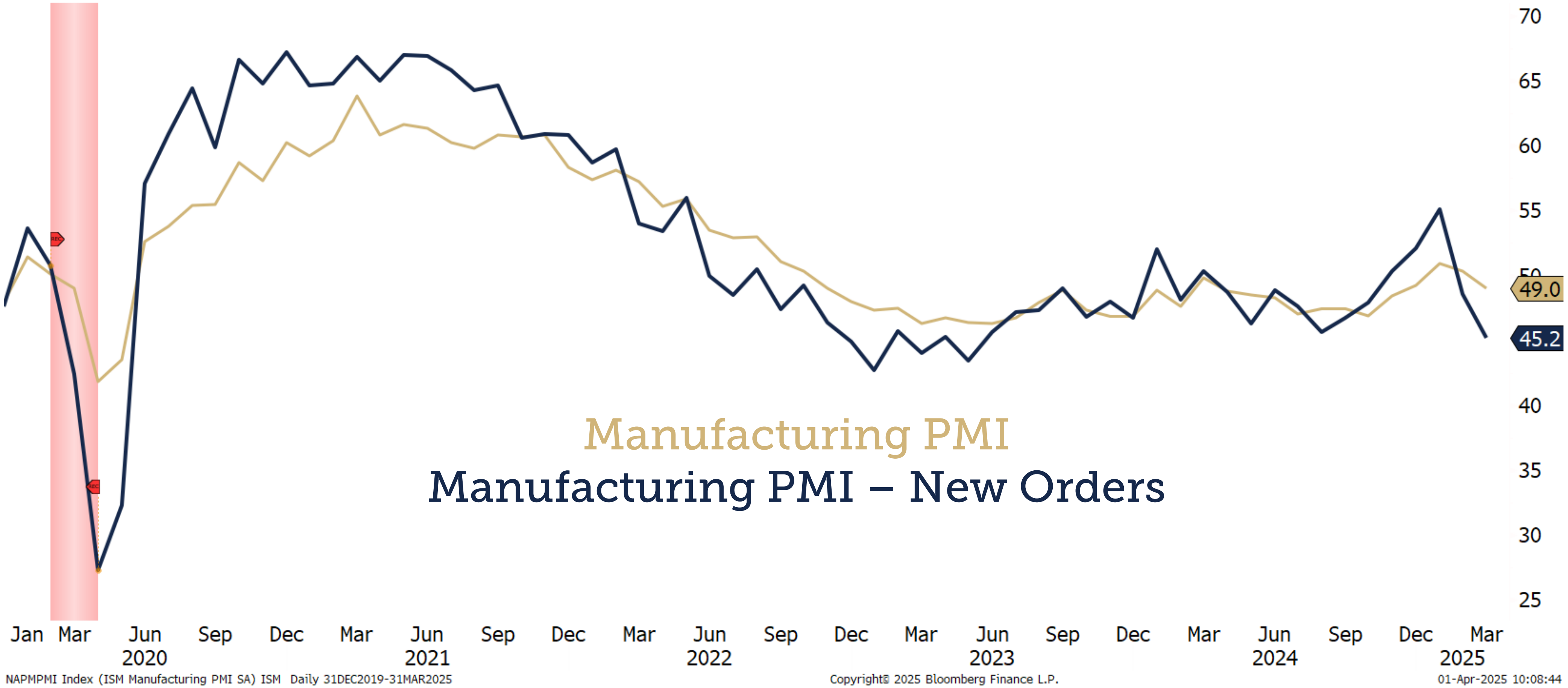


Asset Class Positioning: April 2025

	Asset Class	Positioning	Comment - *March*
STOCKS	US Large Cap	Neutral	Valuations are at the high end of historical ranges and multiple expansion may have run its course. Risks to profitability emerging as growth slows and tariffs are implemented.
	US Mid and Small Cap	Positive	Small and Mid-cap technical have weakened. Significant valuation discounts remain in place.
	International	Positive	Relative valuation still attractive, relative strength better than US and earnings revisions positive.
	Emerging Markets	Neutral	Relative valuation remains attractive, but global policy uncertainty poses risks to the outlook.
BONDS	Core	Positive	Bond yields have fallen slightly but remain in the middle of the range of the last year. Yield levels remain compelling relative to risky assets.
	Treasuries	Positive	Treasury yields stabilized in March after falling in January and February, reflecting a balance of inflation and recessionary risks.
	Corporates	Neutral	The yield premium of risky bonds has widened but remains narrow relative to history; corporate default expectations remain low, offsetting the lower premium.
	Mortgages	Positive	Mortgage yields spreads remain attractive relative to their credit risk, maintaining an attractive risk/reward advantage relative to corporate bonds.

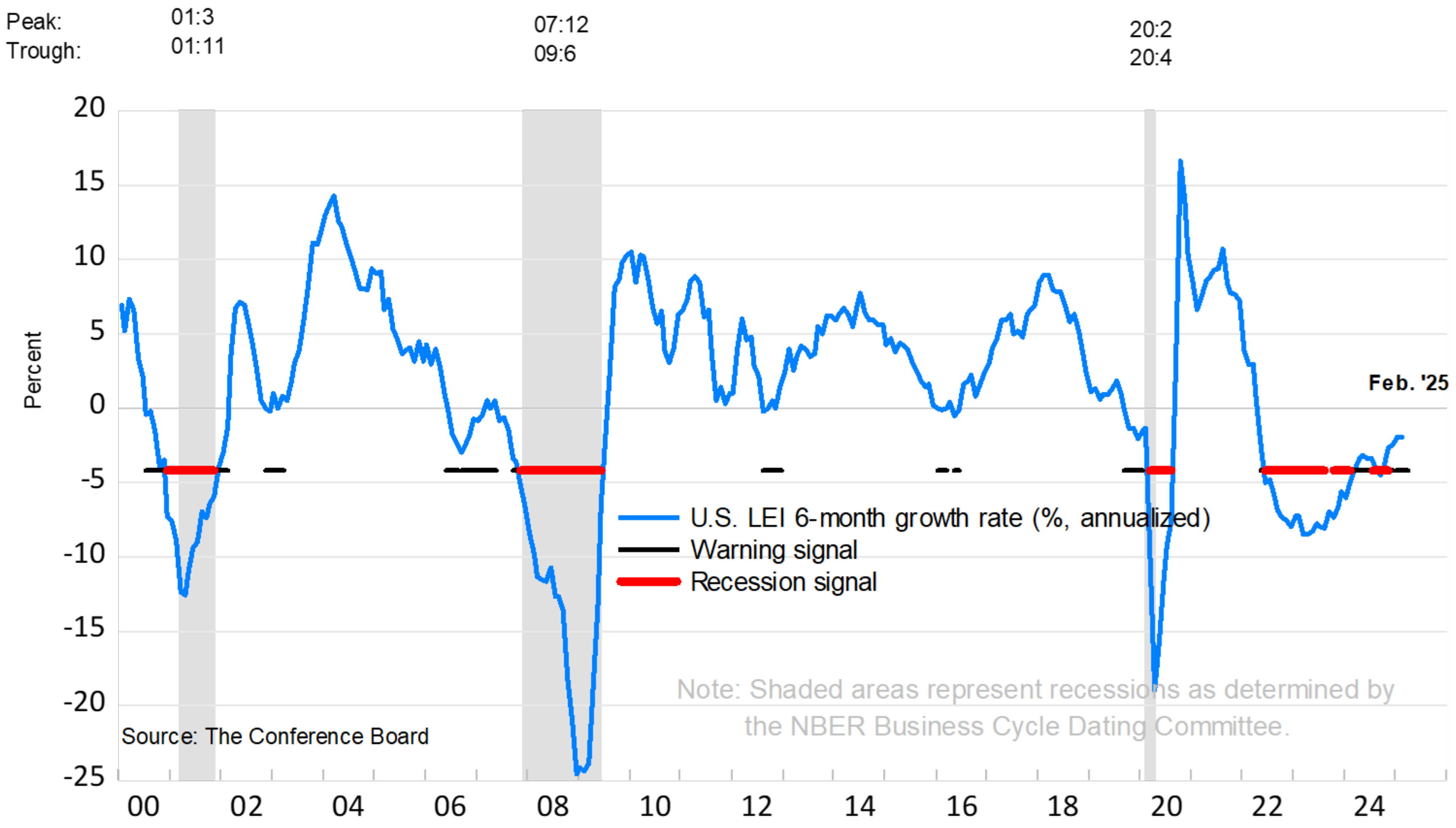
Economic data is more volatile than any time since COVID-19

ECONOMY



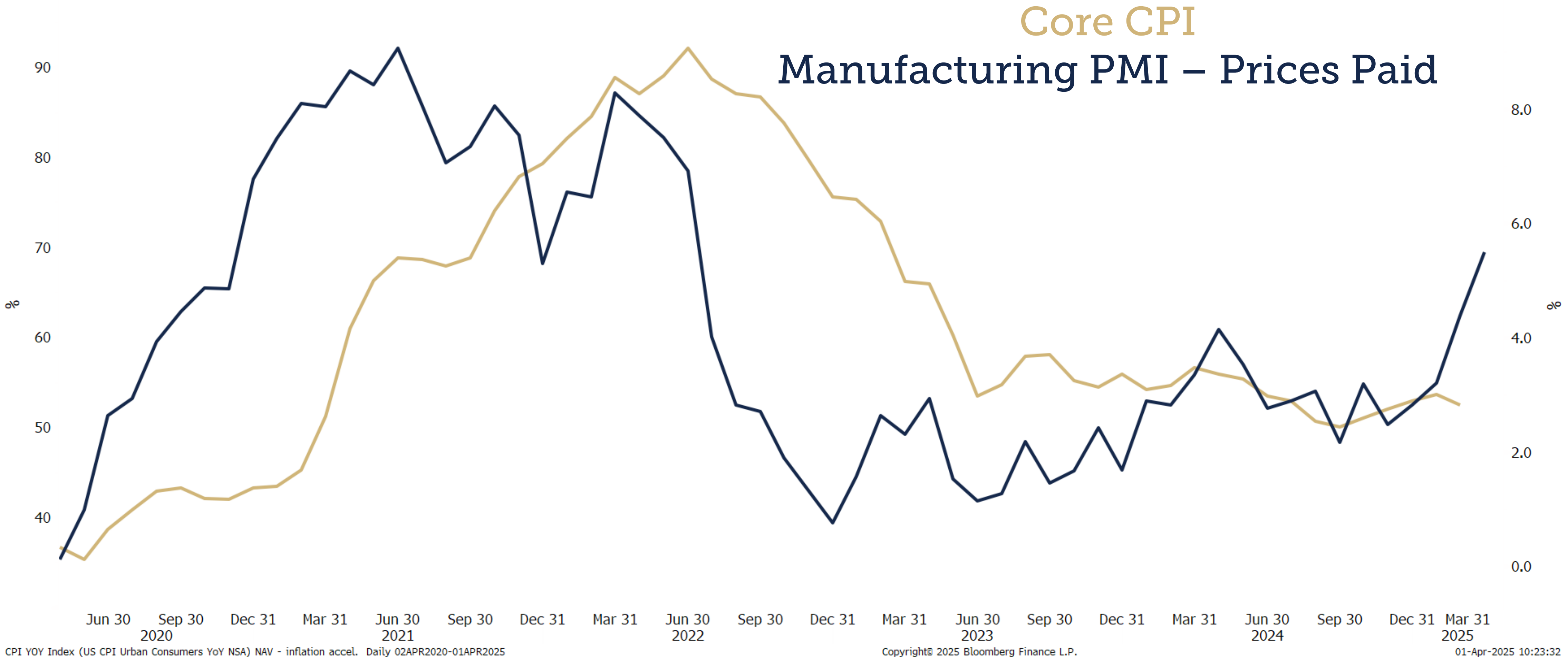
Sources: Bloomberg, National Association of Purchasing Managers

Index of Leading Indicators triggered a recession warning signal in March



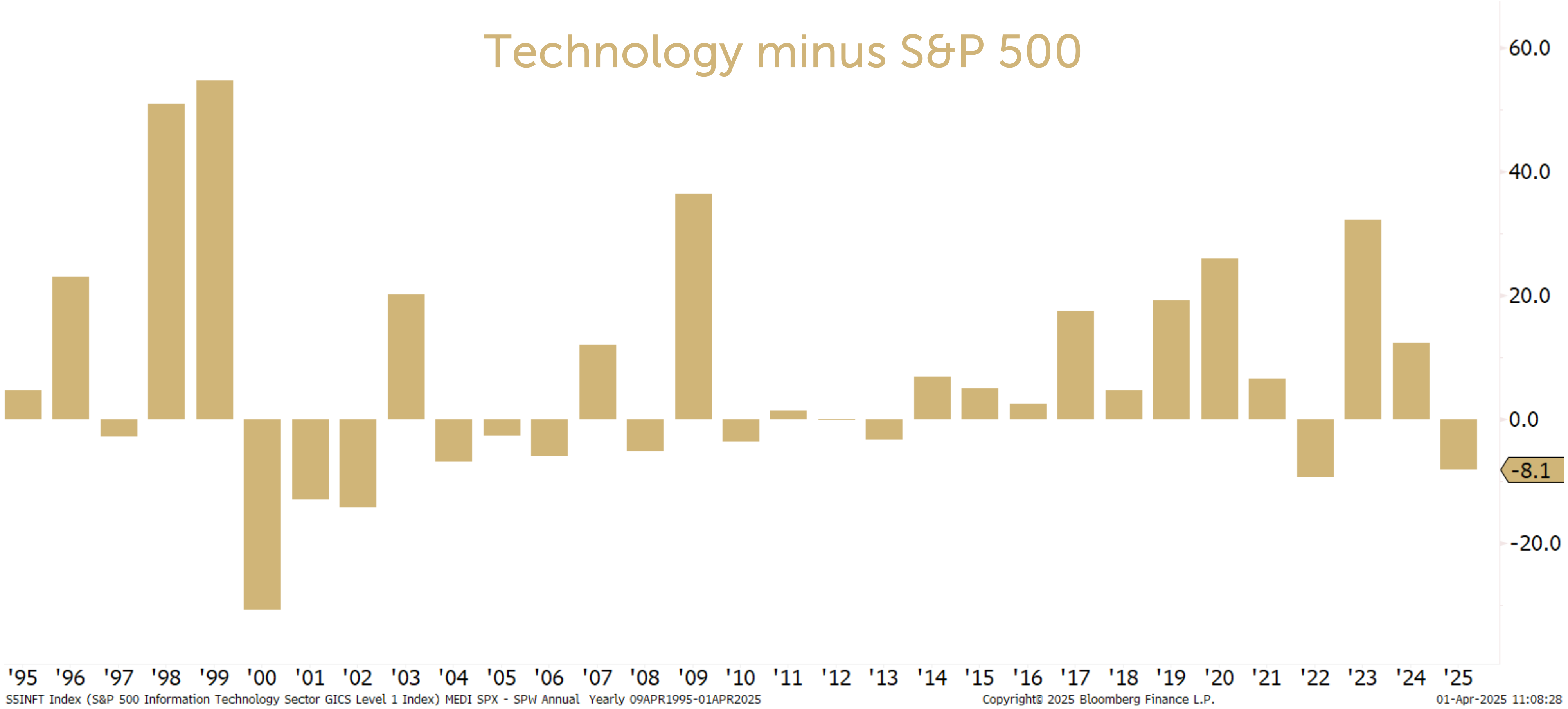
Recent data is pointing to accelerating consumer price inflation

ECONOMY



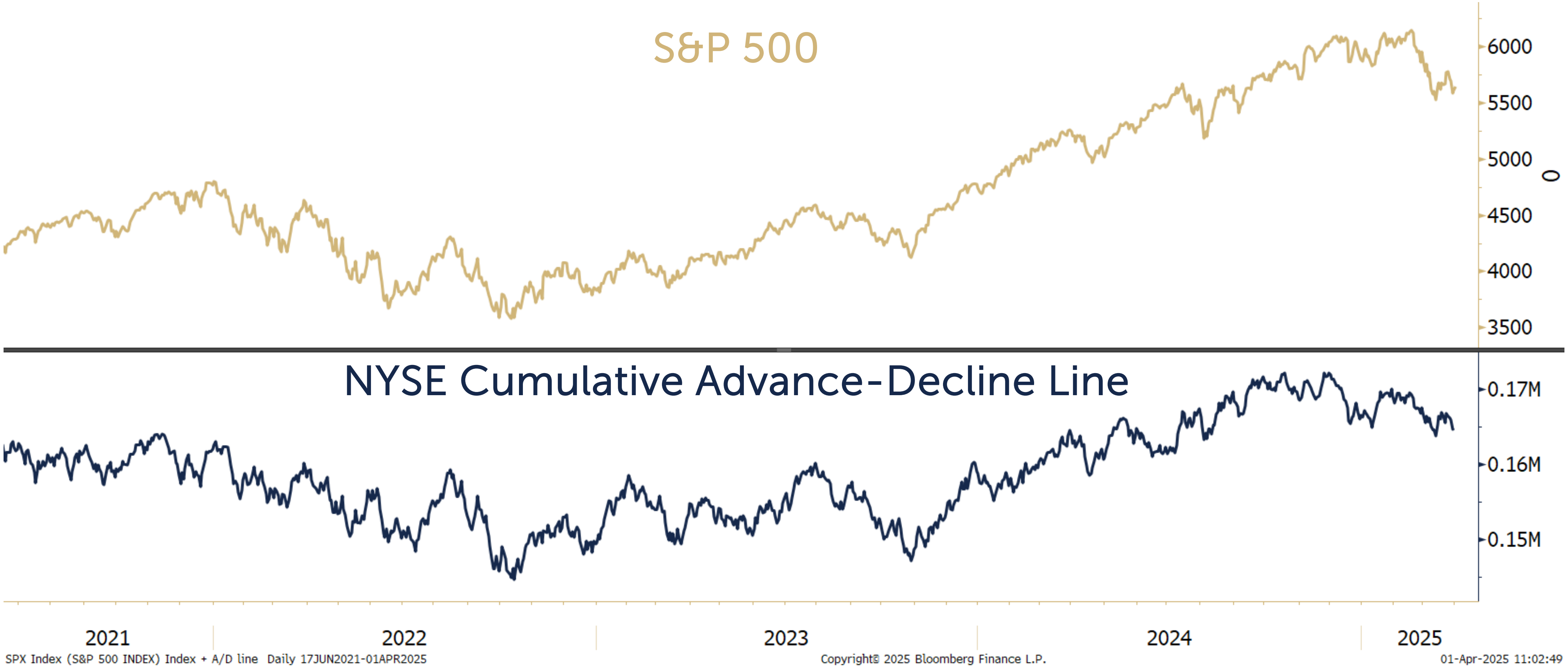
Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Association of Purchasing Managers

Technology returns declined in Q1 after two years of outperformance



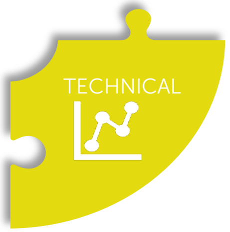
Source: Bloomberg

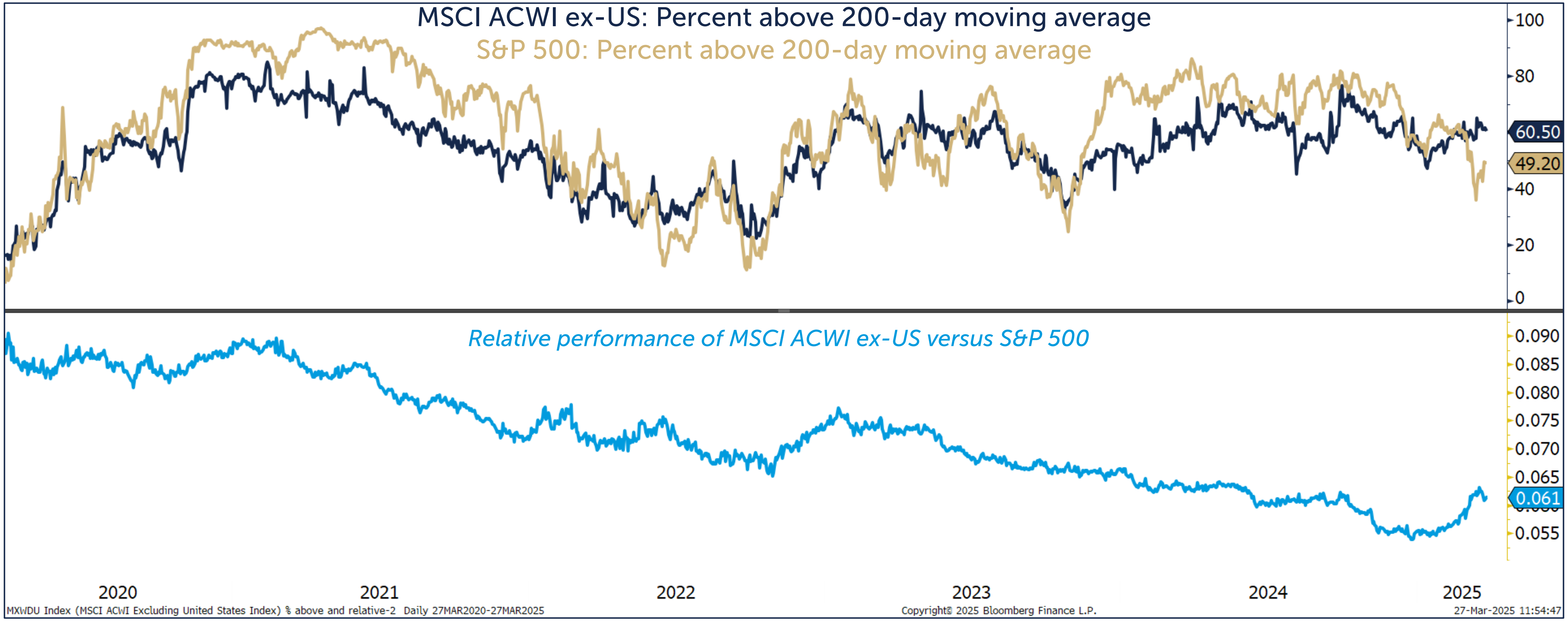
Market Breadth is not yet giving a strong bottoming signal



Source: Bloomberg

International: technically stronger

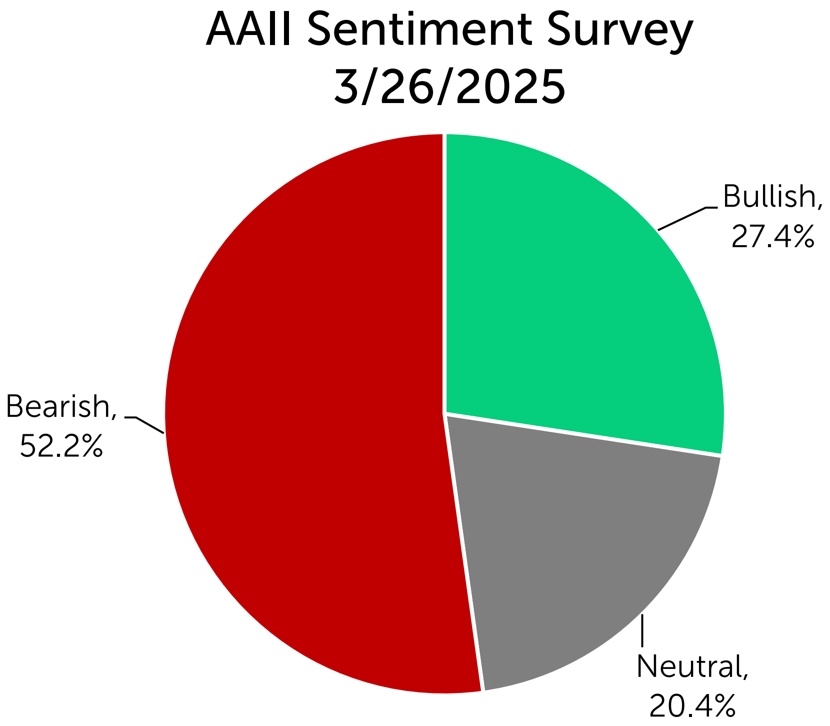


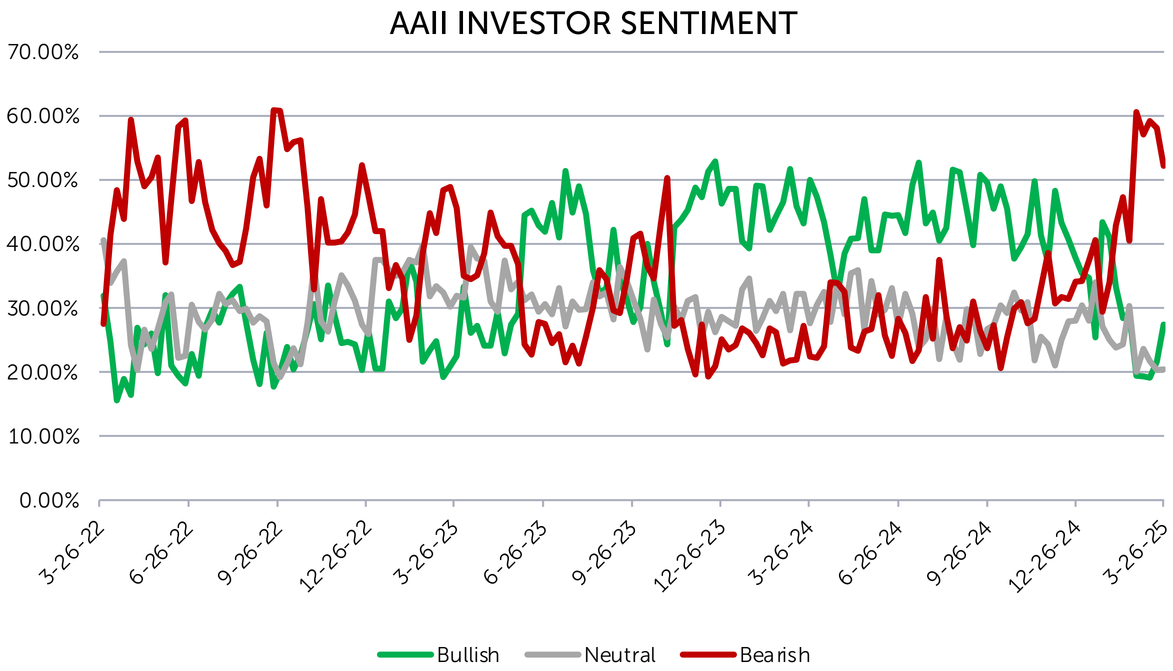


Source: Bloomberg

Investor sentiment remained negative during March

SENTIMENT



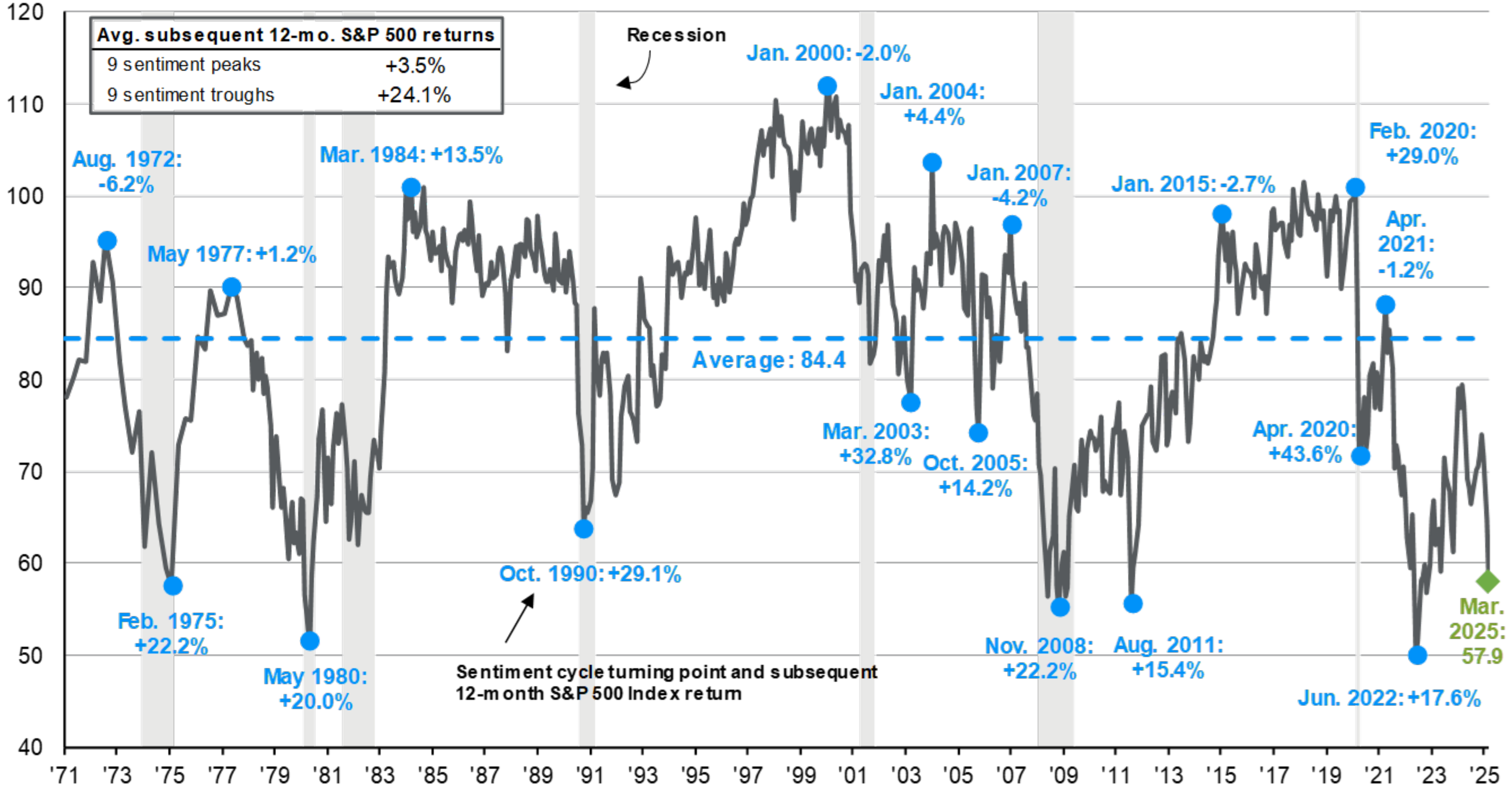


Source: AAII Sentiment Survey

Consumer Confidence is extremely low

SENTIMENT

Consumer Sentiment Index and subsequent 12-month S&P 500 returns



Source: FactSet, Standard & Poor's, University of Michigan, J.P. Morgan Asset Management. Peak is defined as the highest index value before a series of lower lows, while a trough is defined as the lowest index value before a series of higher highs. Subsequent 12-month S&P 500 returns are price returns only starting from the end of the month and excluding dividends. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of current and future results.
Guide to the Markets – U.S. Data are as of March 27, 2025.

Tariffs are taking a bite out of Corporate America Confidence

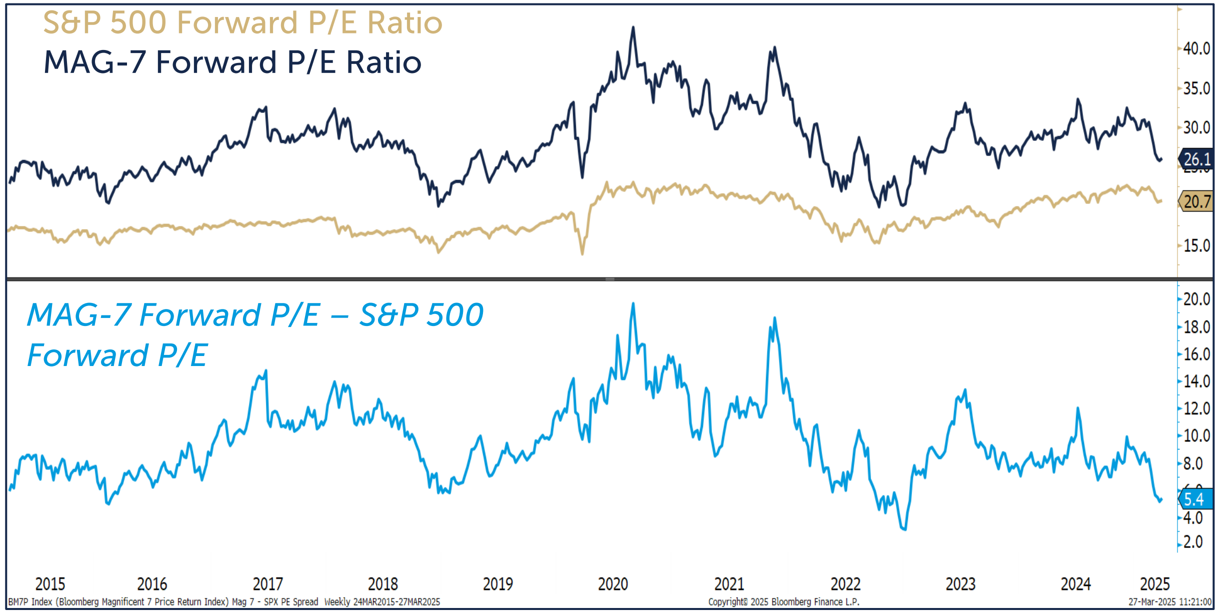
SENTIMENT

Source: Apollo, Chief Executive Magazine, Bloomberg, Macrobond

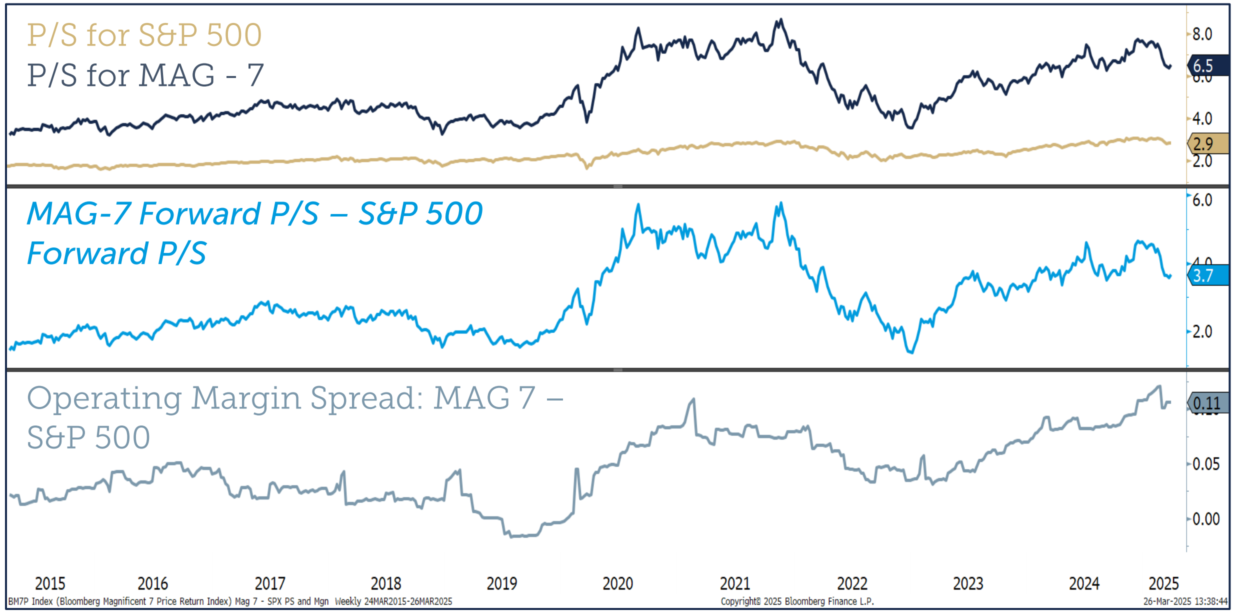
Valuation spreads for MAG-7 vs. S&P 500 have compressed

VALUATION

P/E spread for MAG-7 stocks at low end of last decade.



Price to Sales tells a different story.



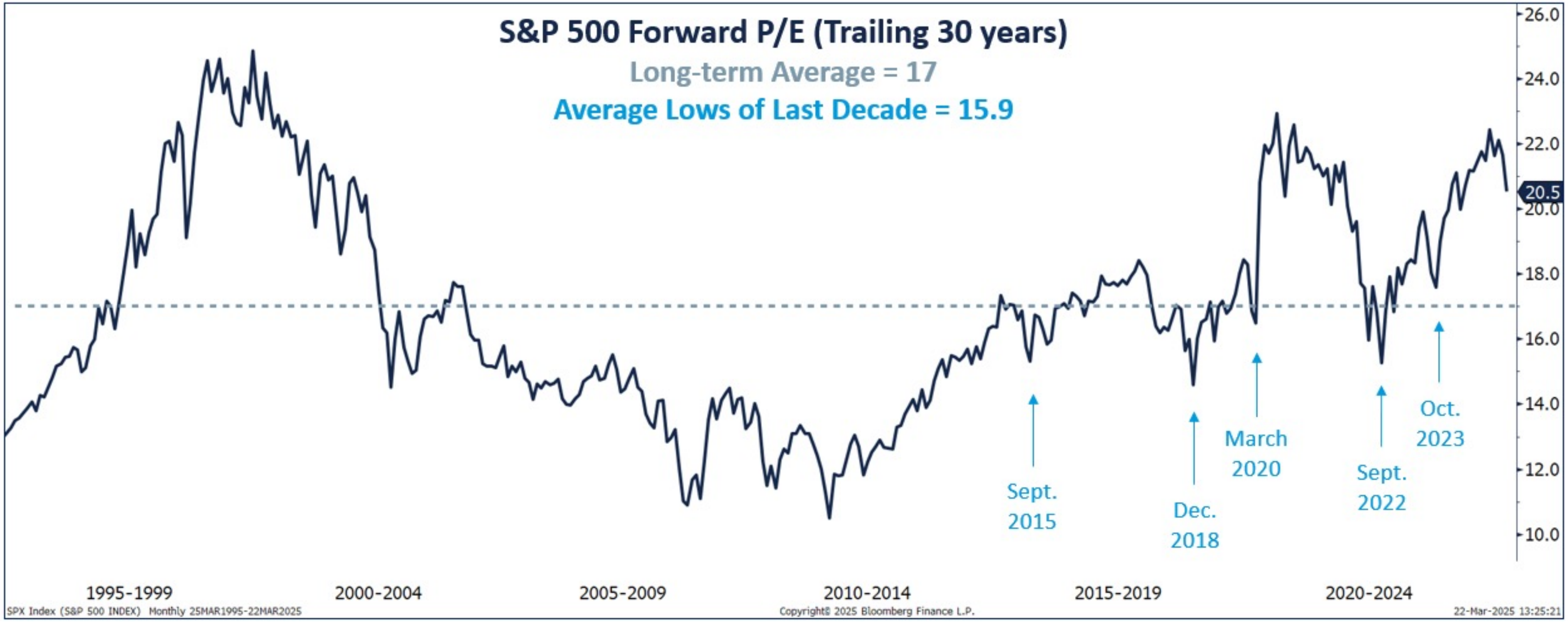
Source: Bloomberg.

Point 1 – with P/E spreads contracting this much it is natural to ask whether investors should increase exposure to large cap technology
Point 2 – using P/S as a valuation measure indicates more potential downside risk
Point 3 – this is because profitability (as measured by operating margin) is near record highs and any compression in margins would lead to dramatically lower profitability and a much lower P/S multiple (notice steep drop-off in 2022)

Equity valuations high versus history

VALUATION

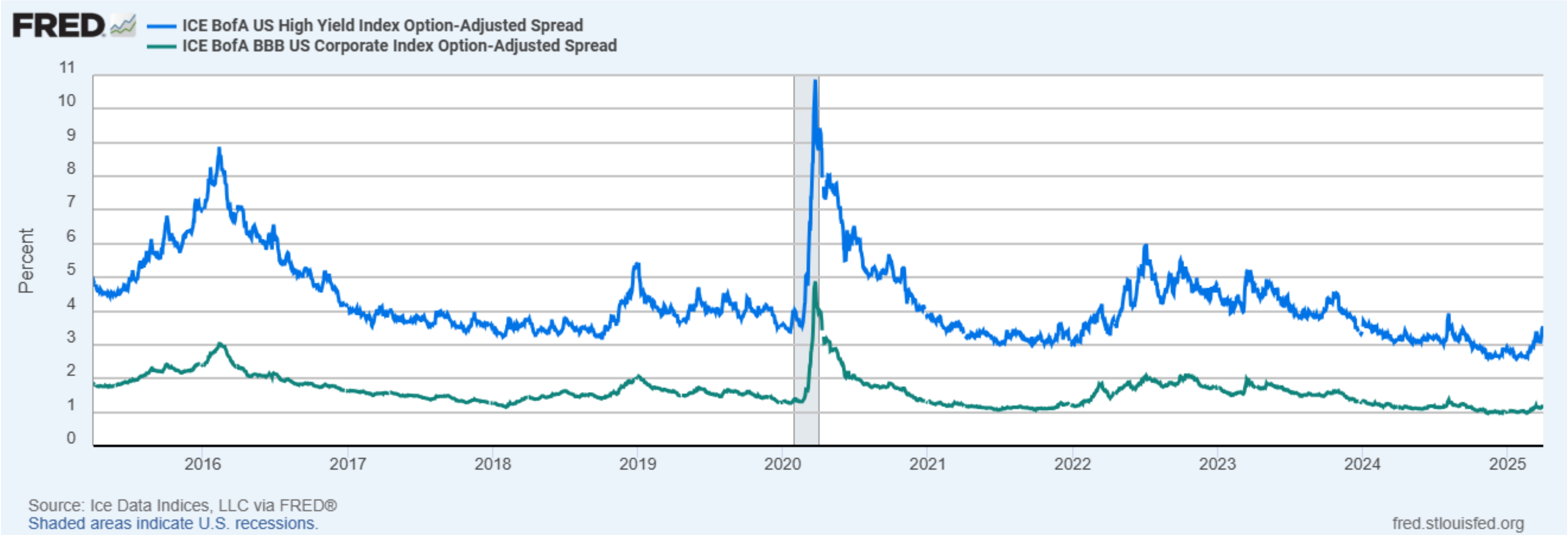
Point 1: Starting valuation (the price you pay today = 20.5x forward earnings) remains rather elevated.
Point 2: Tactical opportunities present in some asset classes, but a change to strategic allocation is not warranted.



Source: Bloomberg.

Corporate and High Yield Bond spreads widened in March

VALUATION

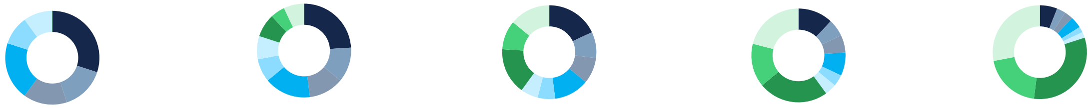


Asset Allocation – Strategic

Equity	100%	80%	60%	40%	20%
US Large Cap	40.0%	32.0%	24.0%	16.0%	5.0%
US SMID	28.0%	22.4%	16.8%	11.2%	7.0%
Developed	26.0%	20.8%	15.6%	10.4%	8.0%
Emerging Markets	6.0%	4.8%	3.6%	2.4%	-
Fixed Income	**-**	**20%**	**40%**	**60%**	**80%**
Core Bonds	-	15.0%	30.0%	45.0%	60.0%
Government Bonds	-	2.0%	4.0%	6.0%	8.0%
Securitized Bond	-	2.0%	4.0%	6.0%	8.0%
Corporate Bonds	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
High Yield Bonds	-	1.0%	2.0%	3.0%	4.0%

Source: OneAscent Investment Solutions. Represents target allocations as of 3/31/2025 and may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Asset Allocation – Peak



Equity	95%	80%	60%	40%	20%
US Large Cap	37.5%	31.0%	23.0%	15.3%	5.3%
US SMID	27.2%	23.6%	18.0%	12.1%	7.3%
Developed	24.9%	21.2%	16.0%	10.7%	7.5%
Emerging Markets	5.4%	4.2%	3.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Fixed Income	**5%**	**20%**	**40%**	**60%**	**80%**
Core Bonds	0.0%	7.5%	22.5%	39.4%	56.3%
Government Bonds	0.0%	1.0%	5.5%	5.3%	7.5%
Securitized Bonds	1.5%	4.0%	3.0%	7.5%	9.0%
Corporate Bonds	2.0%	4.0%	4.0%	3.0%	2.0%
High Yield Bonds	1.5%	3.5%	4.5%	4.9%	5.3%
Strategic†	90.0%	85.0%	80.0%	80.0%	90.0%
Tactical‡	10.0%	15.0%	20.0%	20.0%	10.0%

Source: OneAscent Investment Solutions. Represents target allocations as of 3/31/2025 and may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
†Strategic allocations represent a majority of the portfolio and are updated annually based on capital market assumptions. The strategic component of a portfolio is intended to provide the appropriate level of market exposure to stocks and bonds based on the intended risk-tolerance.
‡Tactical allocations represent a smaller portion of the portfolio and are updated quarterly based on an assessment of relative strength. The tactical component of a portfolio is intended to capitalize on near-term opportunities as the market environment changes.

Asset Allocation – Peak w/ Alts

Equity	**75%**	**60%**	**50%**	**32%**	**-**
US Large Cap	29.5%	23.0%	18.6%	12.0%	-
US SMID	21.6%	18.0%	15.2%	10.0%	-
Developed	19.7%	16.0%	13.4%	8.8%	-
Emerging Markets	4.2%	3.0%	2.4%	1.5%	-
Fixed Income	**5%**	**20%**	**30%**	**53%**	**-**
Core Bonds	0.0%	7.5%	15.0%	33.8%	-
Government Bonds	0.0%	1.0%	2.0%	4.5%	-
Securitized Bonds	1.5%	4.0%	5.0%	4.5%	-
Corporate Bonds	2.0%	4.0%	4.0%	5.3%	-
High Yield Bonds	1.5%	3.5%	4.0%	4.5%	-
Alternatives	**20%**	**20%**	**20%**	**15%**	**-**
Gold	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	2.3%	-
Broad Commodities	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	1.5%	-
Managed Futures	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	3.8%	-
Hedged Equity	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	3.8%	-
Event Driven	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	3.8%	-
Strategic†	-	85.0%	80.0%	80.0%	90.0%
Tactical‡	-	15.0%	20.0%	20.0%	10.0%

Source: OneAscent Investment Solutions. Represents target allocations as of 3/31/2025 and may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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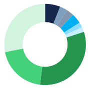
Asset Allocation – ETF Only Models







Equity	100%	80%	60%	40%	0%
US Large Cap	48.0%	38.4%	28.8%	19.2%	-
US SMID	20.0%	16.0%	12.0%	8.0%	-
Developed	25.0%	20.0%	15.0%	10.0%	-
Emerging Markets	7.0%	5.6%	4.2%	2.8%	-
Fixed Income	**0%**	**20%**	**40%**	**60%**	**100%**
Core Bonds	-	12.0%	24.0%	36.0%	60.0%
Government Bonds	-	5.0%	10.0%	15.0%	25.0%
Securitized Bonds	-	3.0%	6.0%	9.0%	15.0%

Source: OneAscent Investment Solutions. Represents target allocations as of 3/31/2025 and may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Long-Term Investing Principles

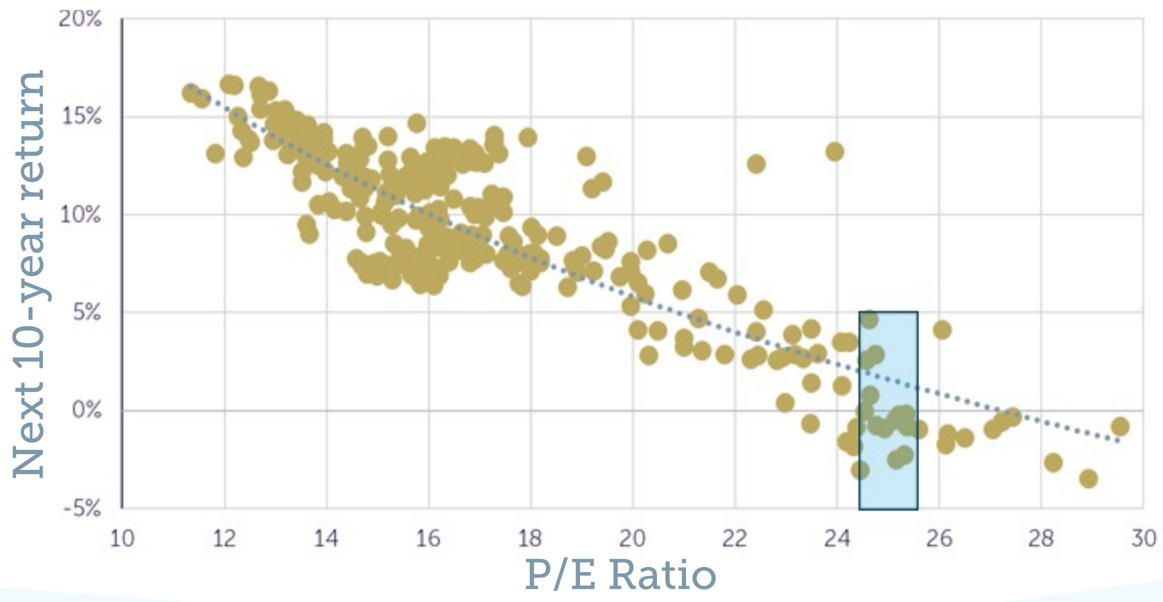
Common behavior pitfalls of investing

Behavioral pitfalls	A potential antidote
Investing subjectively	In a digitally connected world, we face an endless barrage of headlines, notifications, and opinions when it comes to investments. Without proper context, the numbers and charts can create whatever narrative we want to hear. A **sober assessment** of data, as well as our own natural behavioral biases, can **reduce subjectivity** in our investment decisions.
Acting on gut feelings	Emotional decision making is an investor's worst enemy because it often contradicts sound judgement. When it comes to investing, we must vigilantly guard ourselves from motivations of fear and greed. **Having a system in place** that eliminates these all too common tendencies provides a better opportunity to **achieve our financial goals**.
Panic selling	Investor sentiment is a primary indicator of short-term market performance and it's no secret that our "feelings" towards portfolios can change daily. This behavioral aspect of investing creates opportunities for **rational investors** to **capitalize when inefficiencies exist** within the market.
Underestimating the risks	The financial world defines risk in terms of volatility, but its most common metric (standard deviation) treats upside and downside movements equally. The ultimate risk to an investor is loss of principal, and our aim as investors should be to **identify and limit the downside elements of volatility** when possible.
Trading impulsively	Investors with a plan and the ability to stick to it have a higher probability of achieving their goals than those who respond emotionally to the events of the day. Sticking to a plan requires a **longer-term perspective** and a **process for executing** regardless of the circumstances or market environment.

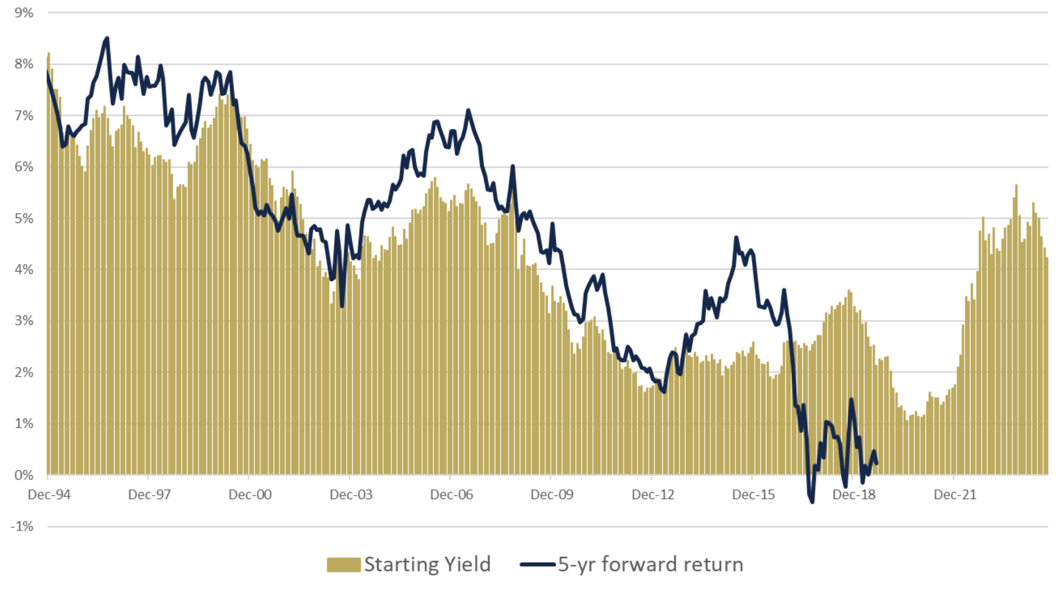
Valuations and long-term returns

Studies show that purchase valuation is an important driver of portfolio returns. High stock market valuations tend to correlate to lower forward stock returns. Another way to say this is that higher earnings yields – the inverse of the price/earnings ratio - tend to correlate to higher stock returns. Higher bond yields also correlate to higher forward returns. Another important aspect to returns is the change in valuation, or yield, over the investor horizon. In the chart on the right, 5-year forward returns starting in 2017 and 2018 are poor in part because ending yields – in 2022 and 2023, were so much higher than starting yields.

Starting valuations matter. The OneAscent investment process is anchored on this principal.



High trailing PE implies below average S&P 500 returns



Higher bond yields suggest strong forward returns

Source: Bloomberg, OneAscent Investment Solutions, Wikipedia

Diversification between asset classes

The chart below demonstrates how drastically different asset classes can perform over time. This volatility is due to a wide array of factors that affect market pressures. Geopolitical relations, central banking decisions, consuming patterns and intensity, supply chain logistics, social influences, earnings reports, real estate values, technological revolutions, and more play a part in how stocks and bonds rise or fall. Diversifying between multiple asset classes within equity and fixed income allocations may help prevent volatility and keep you on track in the long-run.

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Avg Annual Return Rank - 20 years ended 2024	Avg Annual Return - 20 - years ended 2024
Emerging Markets 34.3%	REITs 34.2%	Emerging Markets 39.7%	Fixed Income 5.2%	Emerging Markets 78.5%	REITs 27.9%	REITs 8.0%	Emerging Markets 18.6%	Small Cap 38.8%	REITs 30.1%	REITs 3.2%	Small Cap 21.3%	Emerging Markets 37.8%	Cash 1.8%	Large Cap 31.5%	Small Cap 19.9%	REITs 43.2%	Commodity 13.8%	Large Cap 26.3%	Large Cap 25.0%	1	10.3%
Commodity 17.5%	Emerging Markets 32.5%	Developed Equity 11.7%	Cash 1.8%	High Yield 58.2%	Small Cap 26.8%	Fixed Income 7.8%	REITs 18.1%	Large Cap 32.4%	Large Cap 13.7%	Large Cap 1.4%	High Yield 17.1%	Developed Equity 25.7%	Fixed Income 0.0%	REITs 26.0%	Emerging Markets 18.8%	Large Cap 28.7%	Cash 1.5%	Developed Equity 18.9%	Asset Allocation 14.6%	3	7.6%
Developed Equity 14.1%	Developed Equity 27.0%	Commodity 11.1%	Asset Allocation -22.1%	Developed Equity 32.6%	Emerging Markets 19.2%	High Yield 5.0%	Developed Equity 18.0%	Developed Equity 23.4%	Asset Allocation 10.0%	Fixed Income 0.5%	Large Cap 11.9%	Large Cap 21.8%	High Yield -2.1%	Small Cap 25.5%	Large Cap 18.4%	Commodity 27.1%	High Yield -11.2%	Asset Allocation 17.6%	Small Cap 11.5%	2	7.8%
REITs 6.7%	Small Cap 18.3%	Fixed Income 7.0%	High Yield -26.2%	REITs 28.0%	Commodity 16.7%	Asset Allocation 4.3%	Small Cap 16.4%	Asset Allocation 18.1%	Fixed Income 6.0%	Asset Allocation 0.5%	Emerging Markets 11.7%	Small Cap 14.6%	Asset Allocation -2.8%	Developed Equity 22.8%	Asset Allocation 16.4%	Small Cap 14.8%	Fixed Income -13.0%	Small Cap 16.9%	REITs 8.7%	4	6.7%
Large Cap 4.9%	Large Cap 15.8%	Asset Allocation 6.3%	Small Cap -33.8%	Small Cap 27.1%	High Yield 15.1%	Large Cap 2.1%	Large Cap 16.0%	High Yield 7.4%	Small Cap 4.9%	Cash 0.0%	Commodity 11.4%	Asset Allocation 13.9%	Large Cap -4.4%	Asset Allocation 21.8%	Developed Equity 8.4%	Asset Allocation 14.2%	Developed Equity -13.9%	REITs 13.7%	High Yield 8.2%	5	6.4%
Asset Allocation 4.8%	High Yield 11.8%	Large Cap 5.6%	Commodity -36.6%	Large Cap 26.4%	Large Cap 15.1%	Cash 0.1%	High Yield 15.8%	REITs 2.4%	High Yield 2.5%	Developed Equity -0.3%	Asset Allocation 8.8%	High Yield 7.5%	REITs -4.6%	Emerging Markets 18.8%	Fixed Income 7.5%	Developed Equity 11.9%	Asset Allocation -16.9%	High Yield 13.4%	Emerging Markets 7.9%	6	6.3%
Small Cap 4.5%	Asset Allocation 11.1%	Cash 4.8%	Large Cap -37.0%	Asset Allocation 20.2%	Asset Allocation 13.3%	Small Cap -4.2%	Asset Allocation 11.5%	Cash 0.0%	Cash 0.0%	Small Cap -4.4%	REITs 8.8%	REITs 5.2%	Small Cap -11.0%	High Yield 14.3%	High Yield 7.1%	High Yield 5.3%	Large Cap -18.1%	Emerging Markets 10.2%	Cash 5.3%	9	1.6%
Cash 3.0%	Cash 4.8%	High Yield 1.9%	REITs -37.7%	Commodity 18.7%	Developed Equity 8.3%	Developed Equity -11.7%	Fixed Income 4.2%	Fixed Income -2.0%	Emerging Markets -2.0%	High Yield -4.5%	Fixed Income 2.6%	Fixed Income 3.5%	Commodity -13.0%	Fixed Income 8.7%	Cash 0.5%	Cash 0.0%	Emerging Markets -19.8%	Fixed Income 5.5%	Developed Equity 4.4%	7	5.5%
High Yield 2.7%	Fixed Income 4.3%	Small Cap -1.6%	Developed Equity -43.0%	Fixed Income 5.9%	Fixed Income 6.5%	Commodity -13.4%	Cash 0.1%	Emerging Markets -2.3%	Developed Equity -4.3%	Emerging Markets -14.6%	Developed Equity 1.6%	Cash 0.8%	Developed Equity -13.3%	Commodity 5.4%	Commodity -3.5%	Fixed Income -1.5%	Small Cap -20.5%	Cash 5.1%	Fixed Income 1.3%	8	3.0%
Fixed Income 2.4%	Commodity -2.7%	REITs -15.7%	Emerging Markets -53.2%	Cash 0.1%	Cash 0.1%	Emerging Markets -18.2%	Commodity -1.1%	Commodity -9.6%	Commodity -17.0%	Commodity -24.7%	Cash 0.3%	Commodity 0.7%	Emerging Markets -14.2%	Cash 2.2%	REITs -8.0%	Emerging Markets -2.4%	REITs -24.3%	Commodity -12.6%	Commodity 0.1%	10	-0.5%

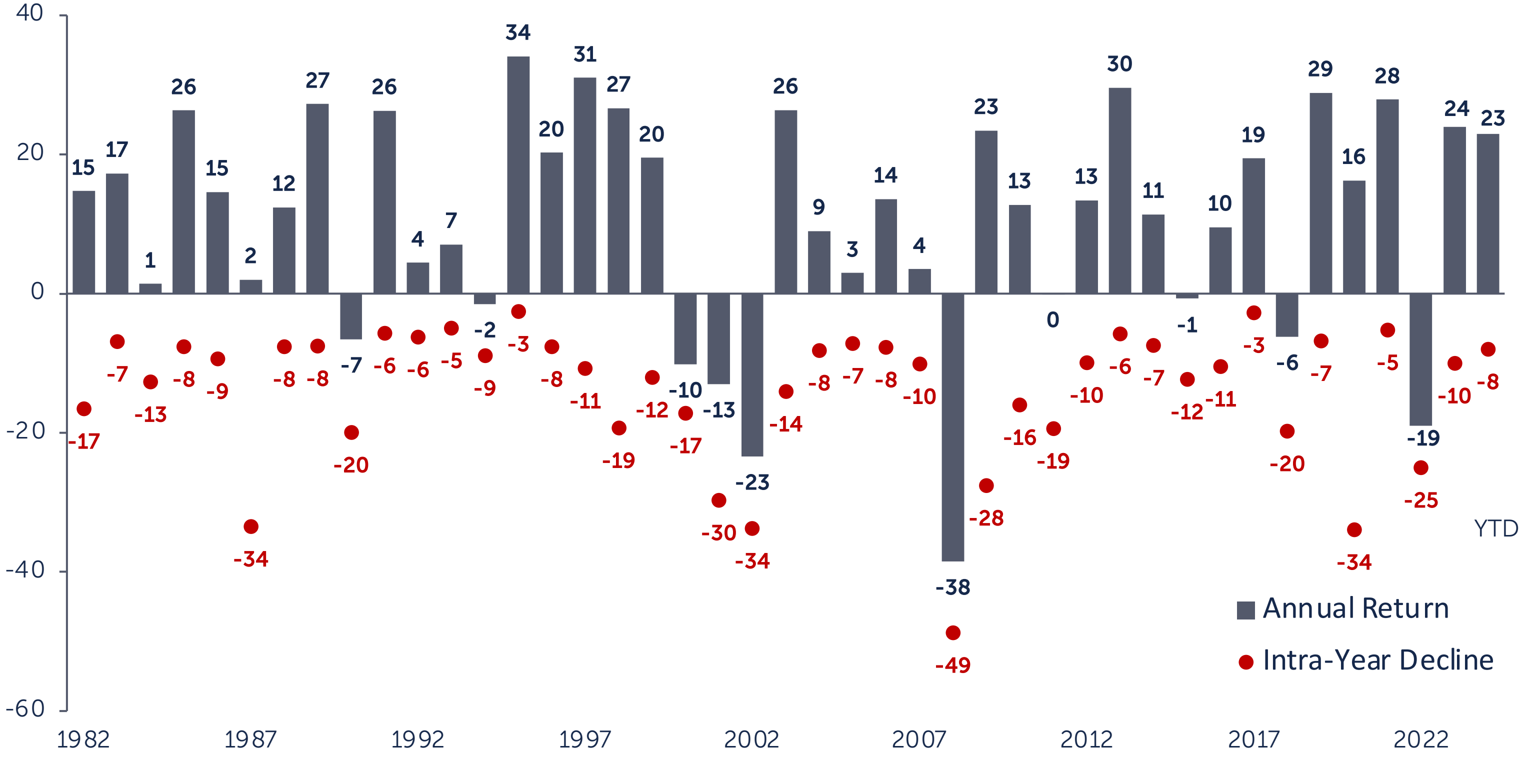
Source: Bloomberg.
Market Returns reference the following indices: Large Cap – S&P 500, Asset Allocation – Vanguard Balanced Index Fund, Small Cap – Russell 2000, REITS – FTSE NAREIT Index, High Yield – Bloomberg High Yield, Emerging Markets – MSCI Emerging Markets, Cash – Bloomberg 1-3 Month Treasury Index, Developed Equity MSCI EAFE, Fixed Income – Bloomberg US Aggregate, Commodities – Bloomberg Commodity Index

Annual returns and intra-year declines

Consistently predicting when stock market declines or rallies will happen, or how long they are going to last, is impossible. Over the past 43 years, the S&P 500 has experienced an average intra-year decline of 13.9% – and still finished in positive territory in 33 of those 43 years.

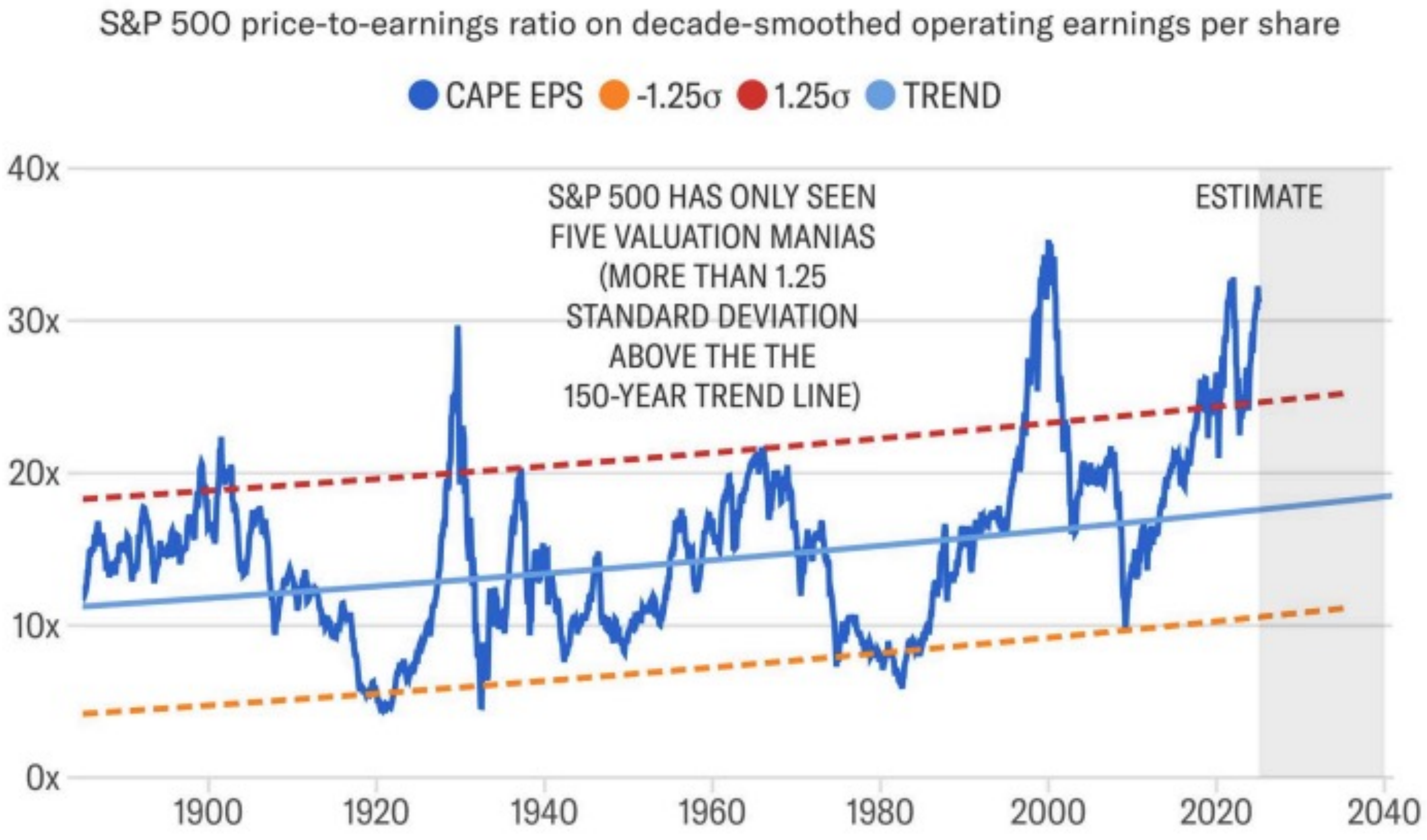
While no one looks forward to market volatility, intra-year declines are normal and a historical perspective on the frequency and severity of past drops can provide a valuable perspective.

S&P 500 calendar year returns vs. intra-year declines



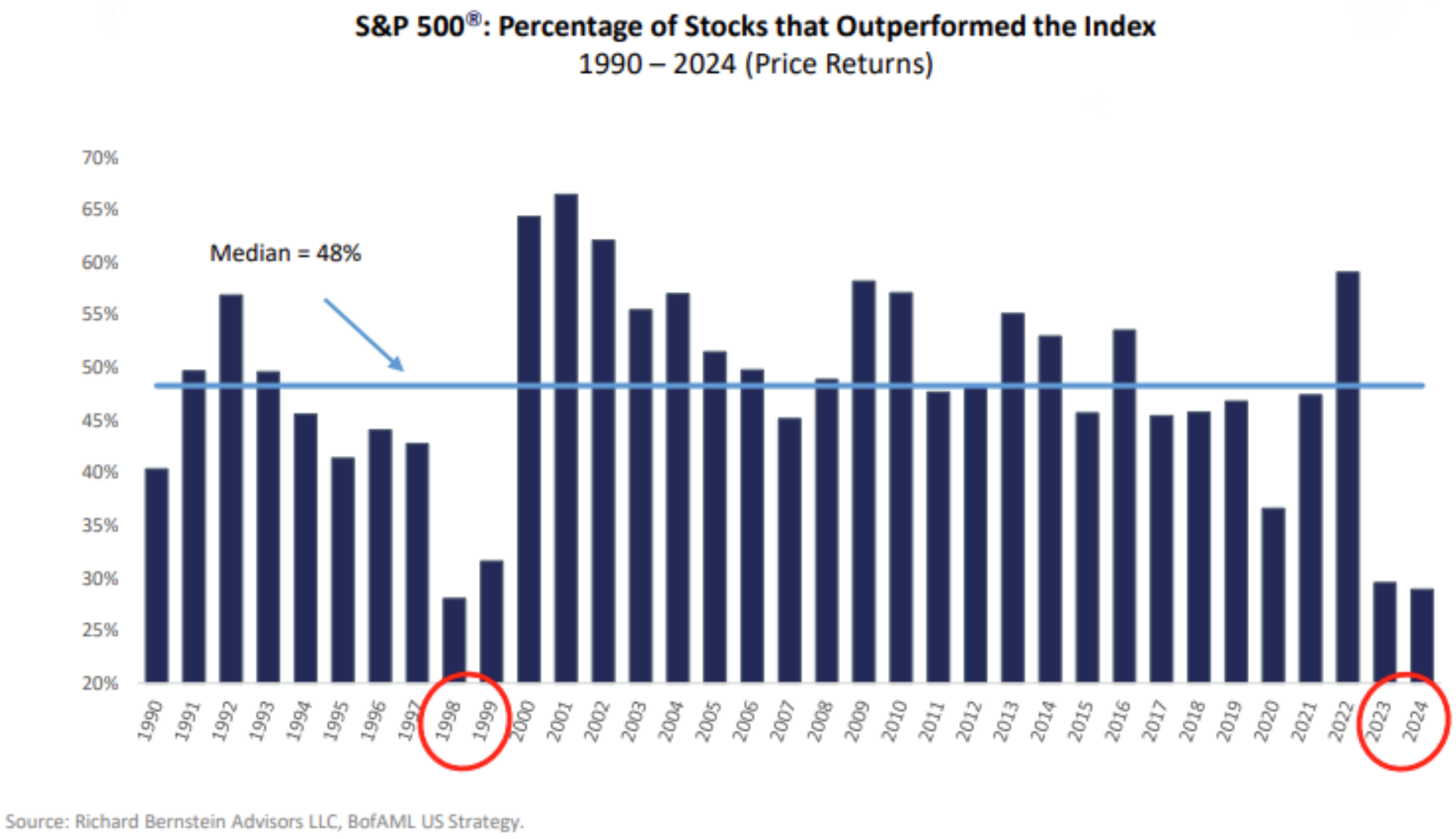
Sources: JP Morgan Asset Management, One Ascent Investment Solutions.
Returns are based on price index only and do not include dividends. Intra-year drops refer to the largest market drops from a peak to a trough during the year. For illustrative purposes only. Returns shown are calendar year returns from 1982 through 2024, over which time period the average annual return was 10.7%. Data as of 12/31/2024.

S&P 500 valuation is well above trend



Sources: Bloomberg; Stifel via Barry Bannister; Yahoo! Finance.
Note: CAPE is the Cyclically Adjusted Price to Earnings ratio adopted from Robert Shiller.

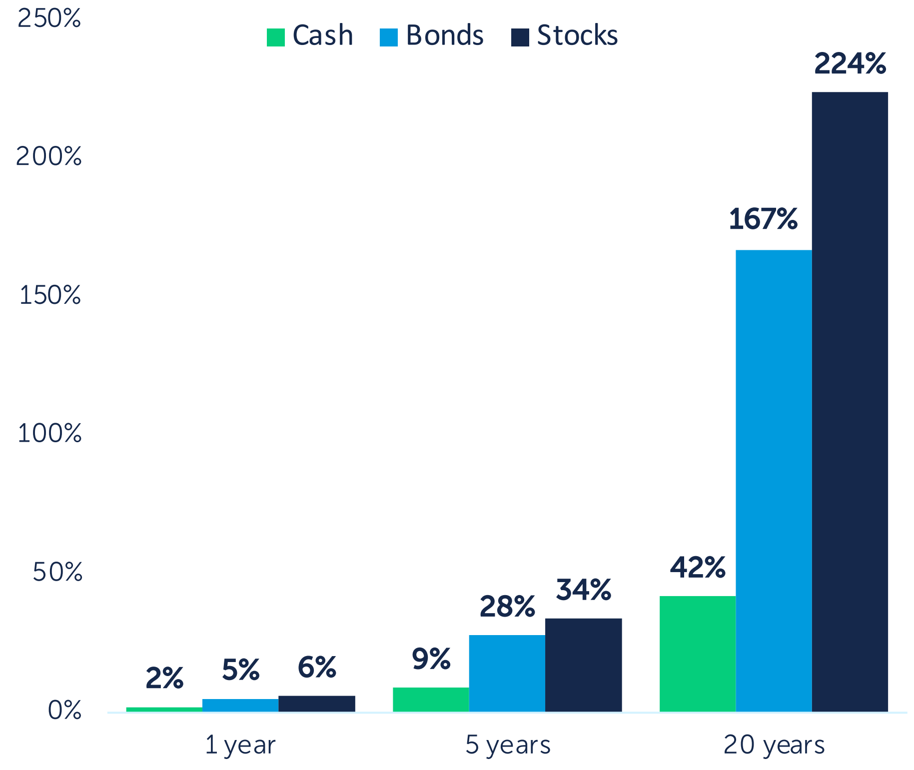
Concentrated performance is not normal - in fact, it is quite infrequent



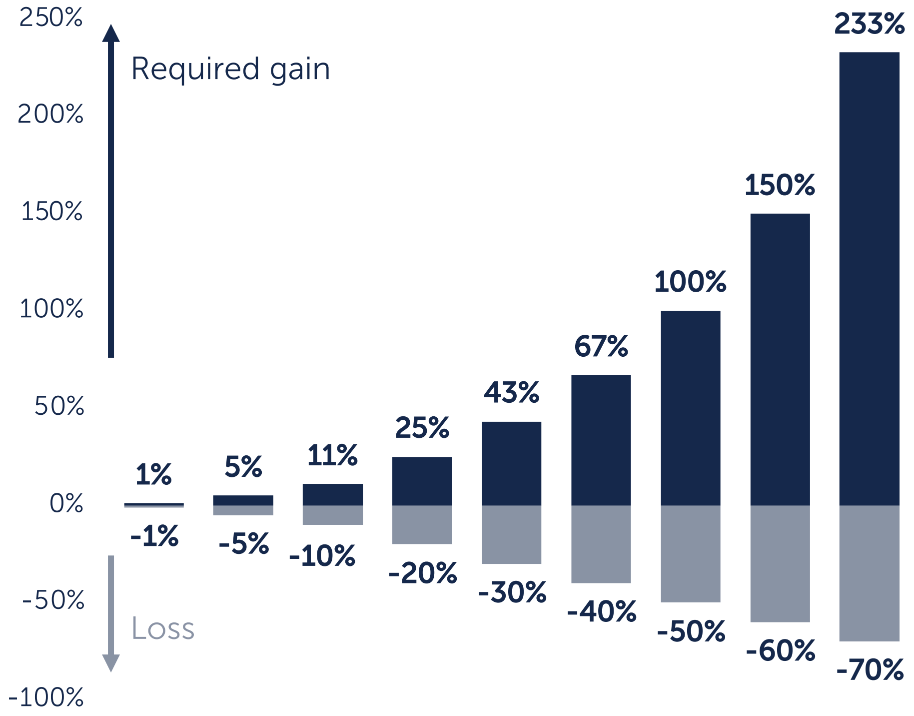
Source: Richard Bernstein Advisors January 28, 2025, Webinar presentation entitled “2025: A Two Act Play”.

Staying invested and limiting losses

The power of compounding
Cumulative return by holding period



Gain required to fully recover from a loss
Loss and subsequent gain necessary for full recovery of value



Sources: J.P. Morgan Asset Management – *Guide to the Markets,* BLS, FactSet, Standard & Poor's.
Cumulative returns are calculated using historical data. Stock returns are based on the S&P 500, bond returns are based on the Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Aggregate Index and cash returns are based on 3-month U.S. Treasury bills. 1-year returns are 20-year average annualized return from 12/31/99 – 12/31/19 for each asset class. 5- and 20-year returns are cumulative over that time period based on the annualized return. Past performance is not indicative of future returns.

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