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***Trendlines* – Jim Butler, CFP®, AIF®**  
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1. There is a good chance you heard these words before – but they are worth repeating. *A Picture Tells a Thousand Words* and this [graphic](#) is no exception. Even if you are not a ‘student’ of investing principles, the pictures are quite telling. One intriguing observation is the amount of money that has gone into money market funds in the recent past. With money market funds yielding above 2% the attraction is rather obvious. However, CPI in 2018 was a hair under 2% (1.9% to be exact) so one could argue that the return was breakeven at best. Here is the **game-show question**: what asset class has consistently outpaced inflation and most bond asset classes? (If you said - the exact one most investors were fleeing – you win and the next coffee is on me.) (you can run an internet search for “where investors put their money in 2018” and click on the story from Visual Capitalist for this graphic.)
2. How often do we hear from an “expert” on the looming debt problem we are facing in the US? Often enough. Economist Brian Wesbury provides a glimpse into how to keep this in perspective [here](#). You should then click on “Wesbury 101” for his straightforward talk on the subject. (If you prefer to search this on your own, type in “Wesbury 101 Feb 22 2019” and this piece is titled **Debt, The Economy and Stocks.**)
3. Since Apple introduced the iPhone in 2007, there have been about 10 billion shipments of smartphones. In 2018 alone, it is estimated that 1.5 billion smartphones were shipped. But with something like 3 billion smartphone subscribers worldwide, growth estimates for 2019 is a paltry 1.2%. Alas – the tech geeks have been hard a work for longer than we could imagine. The next phase of smartphone technology is 5G. The bottom line for 5G is it appears to be faster than 4G – *a lot faster*. Click [this space](#) for a YouTube clip to see what’s coming. (Searching the internet for “hands on with the first 5g smartphone” will bring you to the same 6 min video.) The data above is from Barron’s Feb 25, 2019.