

## SMALL AND STEADY APPROACH LEADS TO BIG THINGS

By Rick Boxx

Are you familiar with “The Tortoise and the Hare,” the fable by the ancient Greek storyteller Aesop? It is about a fast-running hare (a relative of the rabbit) that ridicules a slow-moving tortoise. Wearing by the hare’s arrogant behavior, the tortoise decides to challenge it to a race.

The race starts and the hare quickly leaves the tortoise far behind. Confident of victory, the hare decides to take a nap midway through the race. However, when the hare awakens to resume the race, it finds the tortoise – taking slow but steady steps – has arrived at the finish line before him and is declared the winner. The moral of this story is simple: ‘Slow and steady wins the race.’

Experience in my own life has taught me how true that statement is. As a young, impatient professional, at times I strived to get rich quickly. Sometimes I took what I regarded as shortcuts to making a lot of money. However, this approach led to foolish decisions that set me back rather than forward. The ‘can’t miss, quick return’ investment strategies I utilized failed miserably.

However, one activity far exceeded my expectations. It started when I was still a youth. A stockbroker persuaded me to invest \$25 per month into a mutual fund, a slow-yield investment strategy. This was painful for me at times, especially during college. There were many ways I could have used the \$25 I set aside monthly. But I determined to faithfully stay with the plan, saving that small amount each month.

Years later this small and steady investment approach paid off with a substantial reward. By the time I was ready to buy my first house, I had accumulated thousands of dollars for a down payment. You can imagine how grateful I was for those small, monthly investments I had made over the preceding years.

After I became a follower of Christ and began studying the Bible, I discovered this principle affirmed in the Scriptures. Proverbs 13:11 teaches, “Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.” There is that principle again – small and steady.

Yes, we can find some examples of people who have succeeded in “getting rich quick.” Maybe they have won the lottery, received a huge inheritance from a wealthy relative, or stumbled upon a novel idea for a product that became a huge success. But for every example like that there are literally thousands of people who failed as they tried countless get-rich-quick schemes.

Admittedly, the small and steady approach requires patience – a virtue many of us lack. ‘I want it! And I want it how!’ is a mantra we often hear. You might have said it to yourself. But the book of Proverbs offers other insights that affirm the patient, slow and steady approach to life – and our finances.

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香港工商基督徒協會 (CBMC Hong Kong Ltd)

地址：香港上環禧利街2號東寧大廈11樓1102室 Tel: (852) 2805-1923

Email: [enquiry@cbmc.org.hk](mailto:enquiry@cbmc.org.hk) Web: [www.cbmc.org.hk](http://www.cbmc.org.hk)

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For instance, Proverbs 21:5 tells us, “The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.” In my early years I learned this the hard way. And Proverbs 28:19-20 offer this assurance: “Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies will have their fill of poverty. A faithful person will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.”

If you are considering starting a business someday, you would be wise to avoid chasing get-rich-quick schemes. Instead, prayerfully consider investing monthly. You will find it more fruitful.

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever been approached with a get-rich-quick scheme? If so, how did you respond?
2. Do you think it is inherently wrong to strive to make as much money as possible, as soon as possible? Why or why not?
3. If you are familiar with the tortoise and the hare fable, what are your thoughts about what it teaches? Especially if we apply the story to what we do in the contemporary marketplace?
4. Can you think of a good example of someone who has taken the small and steady approach to finances, or starting and developing a business? How would you describe that person and the results he or she has experienced?

### Challenge for This Week

Over the coming days evaluate your own approach to life, your business or professional life, and your finances. Have you taken more of a small and steady strategy, or have you been seeking to realize more rapid progress?

It has been said, “If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is...too good to be true.” Meet with someone, or a small group of friends, and pray about how God would want you to respond to seemingly lucrative proposals. Rely on trusted advisors to offer their wisdom and perspectives for your decision-making in such areas.

### NOTE:

For more about what the Bible says, consider the following passages:  
Luke 16:10-12; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:9; 1 Timothy 6:9-10; James 1:12

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