

***The Quiet Ambition****Scripture's Surprising Antidote to Our Restless Lives*

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Ryan P. Tinetti is a pastor who now serves as a professor of practical theology at Concordia Seminary (St. Louis). He is the author of *Preaching by Heart* and writes the regular column “The Preacher’s Toolbox” on 1517.org. Prior to his call to Concordia Seminary, Ryan served for fourteen years in parish ministry. Ryan lives with his wife, Anne, and their four children in St. Louis on the campus of the seminary.

Pastor Illuminates Eternal Worth in Little Labors

Where did the idea for *The Quiet Ambition* come from?

Ryan P. Tinetti: I have long been struck by that verse from 1 Thessalonians: “Make it your ambition to live quietly, tend your own business, and work with your hands. . .” I don’t recall a particular moment when the idea for the book came to be, but I do know that the years serving my parish in northern Michigan were a great inspiration. Not only the peaceful rural setting, but the faithful, humble lives of God’s people brought deeper meaning to those words from the apostle Paul—and after germinating in my soul for some time, this book was brought forth.

What does it mean to “live quietly”?

Ryan: So much of our world today trumpets self-sufficiency and self-promotion. To live quietly is to let Jesus’ life speak for our own; to lean on his sufficiency rather than our own. The way of “quiet saints” is a way of humility, simplicity, and grateful faith.

Why is this book needed right now?

Ryan: We all want to know that our lives matter, that they make a difference. I believe that this deep-seated desire propels the noisy, restless ambition of our age—and conversely, the anguished sighs of quiet desperation. *The Quiet Ambition* is a summons to find our identity and value not in our ceaseless striving but in Jesus’ finished work for us, and to trust that in him even our little labors have eternal worth.



Eva Pankratz, book reviews, excerpts, and original articles
epankratz@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



TALKING POINTS



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Living Quiet Lives in a Noisy World

Does your life feel small, filled with endless demands, seemingly insignificant work, mundane responsibilities, or challenging relationships? If your desire to make an impact for God's kingdom collides with the limits and disappointments of everyday life, it's easy to feel restless, resigned, and discouraged.

Scripture offers a better way. In one of Paul's letters, there's an unexpected, paradoxical call: "Make it your ambition to live quietly . . ." This call to quiet ambition frees you to embrace God's presence in the small, ordinary moments of your life.

- Is it possible to live quietly in the modern world?
- How do we let go of the pressures of spiritual achievement?
- What does it look like to lead humble and fulfilling lives?
- How can we slow down and make space for unhurried living?
- Why do we strive to make our lives matter? What is a meaningful life?
- How do we avoid "quiet desperation"?
- Where do we find hope when our own aspirations fail us?
- What do we do with our longings to make our lives count?
- How do we find contentment in work that might never receive praise or recognition?
- What kind of life do we need to live to hear "Well done, good and faithful servant"?
- How do we avoid the trap of "making a name for ourselves"?
- How can we look to the life of Jesus to see what unambitious ambition means?

"What a wise, practical, so very helpful book Ryan P. Tinetti has given us in The Quiet Ambition. He moves so gracefully from the words of Saint Paul to the stresses and strains of contemporary life, giving us practical ways in which each of us can be faithful to the use of the gifts God has given us without allowing our ambition and drive to get the best of us. In reading, I constantly said, 'This book was written for me.' I bet that you will find it was written for you too."

—**Will Willimon**, professor of the practice of Christian ministry at Duke Divinity School and author of *Accidental Preacher: A Memoir*



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