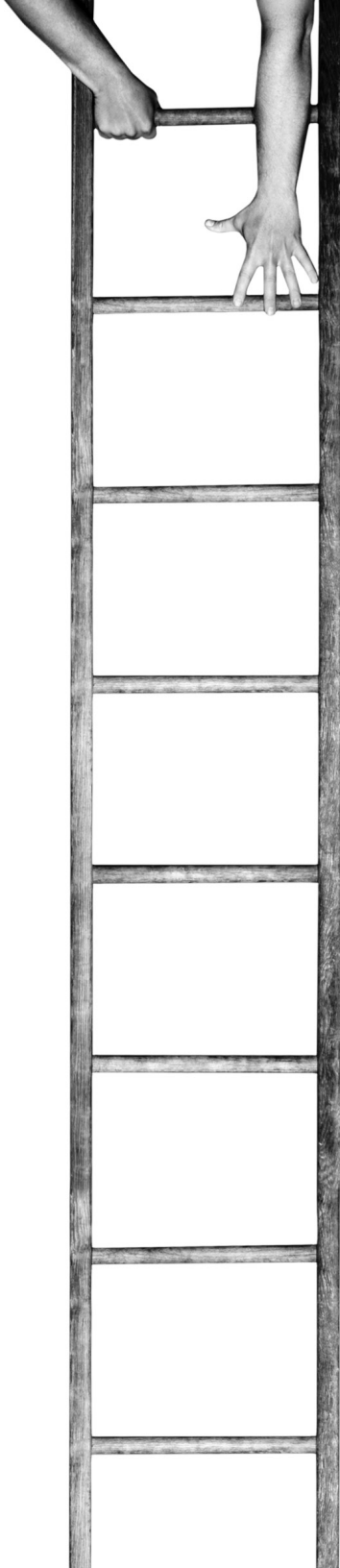


# Rescuing Ambition

Dave Harvey

FOREWORD BY C. J. MAHANEY

 **CROSSWAY**  
WHEATON, ILLINOIS



*Rescuing Ambition*

Copyright © 2010 by Sovereign Grace Ministries

Published by Crossway

1300 Crescent Street  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided for by USA copyright law.

Cover design: Josh Dennis

Cover photo: David Sacks

First printing 2010

Printed in the United States of America

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (*The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Scripture references marked NIV are from *The Holy Bible: New International Version*®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. The “NIV” and “New International Version” trademarks are registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by International Bible Society. Use of either trademark requires the permission of International Bible Society.

All emphases in Scripture quotations have been added by the author.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4335-1491-3

ISBN-10: 1-4335-1491-5

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-1492-0

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-0493-7

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-2356-4

---

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Harvey David T. (David Thomas), 1960–

Rescuing ambition / Dave Harvey ; foreword by C. J. Mahaney.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 13: 978-1-4335-1491-2 (tpb)

ISBN 10: 1-4335-1491-5 (tpb)

ISBN 13: 978-1-4335-1492-0 (hbk)

ISBN 13: (invalid) 978-1-4335-0493-7 (mobipocket)

1. Success—Religious aspects—Christianity. 2. Ambition. I. Title.

BV4598.3.H38

2010

248.4—dc22

2009047369

---

Crossway is a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10  
14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Foreword

Humble ambition. Is such a thing even possible?

If you'd asked me twenty years ago, I would have said, "I don't think so."

My friend Dave Harvey is one of the men who have helped me see otherwise. Humility doesn't have to quench ambition. And ambition—the right kind—doesn't have to trample humility. In fact, we honor the Savior by cultivating both.

If that surprises you, then you need to meet Dave.

I vividly remember a conversation Dave and I had years ago. We were sitting outside during an afternoon break in a conference we were attending in Coventry, England. For once it wasn't raining, but that's not why my memory of it is so vivid.

Dave and I had no agenda for our time together. We were just good friends talking and laughing, following the conversation wherever it went. But the relaxed scene was quickly infused with passionate vision when we began to talk about the future. We talked about starting new churches and about whether it was appropriate for us to be ambitious in serving the Savior.

I'm sure Dave brought up the topic of ambition because it wasn't something I'd given much thought to, if any. For myself, I was immediately suspicious of ambition in my life in whatever form it appeared.

But it was obvious to me that Dave had given much careful thought to the subject. He was wary of the temptation to have selfish ambition, but he also had big dreams. He had a holy drive to advance the gospel through church planting. And as we talked, it was obvious I needed to reconsider my assessment of ambition.

Since that afternoon I've had many conversations with Dave about ambition. And today I can heartily commend this book to you.

Now, Dave hasn't been on a personal campaign to write this book. It was only recently that he wondered about writing on ambition, and all his friends encouraged him to do it. We think he's qualified for a number of reasons. Let me give you just a few.

## FOREWORD

We think Dave is uniquely qualified to write this book because theology shapes his thinking. He's been studying this for years. Gospel-centered, sound doctrine informs his understanding of this topic.

And he hasn't simply studied it with detached, academic interest. Dave is uniquely qualified to write this book because he has also studied his own heart. He pays very careful attention to his own soul, alert for the slightest presence of selfish ambition. In this book he's going to tell you what he's discovered about his heart. It's not flattering stuff. Dave is a humble man, and he'll help you get to know your own heart.

Maybe you're like I was before my conversion, with no discernible ambition at all. Maybe you keep your dreams manageable and tame because it's just easier that way. Or maybe you're more like Dave—full of boundless energy, always looking for the next challenge. And maybe you've seen your own ambitions turn ugly, as dreams morph into demands and life becomes a quest for personal glory.

Either way, this book is for you. You see, this book is about much more than selfish ambition. This book is about grace. It's about ambition for the glory of Another. It's about seeing ambition rescued and sanctified for the advance of the gospel and the service of your local church, your family, your office, your school. It's about igniting ambition for the glory of God.

Every one of us is ambitious for something or someone. (Yep, that includes you.) But too few of us have thought biblically about ambition. We don't like to talk about it. We assume that if we avoid the topic, we'll avoid temptation. We need someone to talk with, someone to teach us, about our aspirations. This book will help you cultivate holy ambition.

So if you think, like I once did, that humility and ambition can't coexist, turn the page. I think years from now you'll remember where you were when you first read this book and what a difference it made in your life.

C. J. Mahaney  
Sovereign Grace Ministries