

Ordinary, by Michael Horton, in 10 Questions

1. Would you Recommend this Book?

I would recommend this book as strongly as I can recommend any book; I believe this is the only book that I have read 4 times. This book has had a major impact on my life.

2. What is the Main Point?

If you look at the cover, you may notice it looks a lot like David Platt's book "Radical;" this was intentional. "Radical" had an outsized impact on college age Rene. Much of that book is wonderful and I would recommend it for a more mature Christian; however, for 20 year old Rene, it convinced him in his immature foolishness that anyone that wasn't a full time missionary to unreached people groups was a fake Christian. Ordinary was Horton's response, emphasizing that spiritual health and truly following Christ is not normally found in extraordinary experiences or spectacular mission trips, but in the ordinary, day to day, unacclaimed faithfulness of God's children. The primary way that God has and does work in and through his children are through the ordinary means of grace and ordinary means of sanctification. In truth, it would have been much easier in many ways for young Rene to travel overseas for missions than it was to sacrifice for my wife and children daily in ordinary ways and to work hard for the Lord at a job I wasn't sure I liked. College Rene graduated ready to die in tribal Africa, but God instead handed him two five year old's to love and raise; so my following Christ looked much less like new languages and dangerous traveling, and more like doing laundry and carpooling to tee-ball. God led me to this book and changed my life.

3. Which Parts should I read if I'm short on Time?

Read it all. It's short. BUT, if I had to choose, which my question here forces me to, I would say read the first 3 chapters and the summary chapter at the end.

4. Why does this book Matter?

In a world that demands instant results and glorifies the extraordinary, we have a God that loves to move slowly and through the ordinary. It is easy to think that I'm not doing enough for the Lord because I haven't been on a mission trip in years and all I do is try to love my wife well, try to raise my children in the Lord, try to work in a way that honors God, try to serve my church with the gifts God has given me, etc. etc. etc. This book reminds us of the GREAT GLORY of that ordinary Christian life.

5. Is this Book an "Easy-Read?" (Include Length)

Yes, very much so.

6. Who is this Author and what did you think of their writing?

Michael Horton is perhaps best known for his hosting the White Horse Inn podcast, but he is a distinguished theologian and scholar and a thinker of the highest order. He is a professor at Westminster Seminary and incredibly smart; however, he is extremely gifted at making complex ideas simple and fills the book with illustrations and humor that make the ideas sink in.

7. What is One Key Take-Away or Application for my life?

This book will greatly help you glorify and rejoice in the ordinary and even mundane aspects of your life, seeing them as eternal and weighty callings.

8. What was One point of Disagreement?

I hate saying nothing, so here's this: I wouldn't recommend Horton's other writings without reservation only because he is presbyterian, so his view on baptism and understanding of covenantal theology are a bit different than ours; however, I don't remember any moment in this book where either of those come up.

9. What are any other things that stood out to You?

One of my favorite parts of the book is when Horton quotes at length an article from the satirical publication, "The Onion," entitled, "Unambitious Loser with Happy, Fulfilling Life Still Lives in Hometown." You can still find this article with an easy search; it hilariously and pretty accurately describes me.

10. Have you read any books similar to this one that you would recommend one to read first to help with this one?

No, this book is simple and easy to read, and you will identify with it and understand immediately.