

**Created to Play***How Taking Hobbies Seriously Grows Us Spiritually*

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Brianna Lambert is a writer and author from a rural community outside Indianapolis. Her articles and essays have appeared in Christianity Today, The Gospel Coalition, Common Good, Mere Orthodoxy, and elsewhere. Brianna also serves on staff at Gospel-Centered Discipleship and in the women's ministry at her local church. You might find her backpacking, camping, waterskiing, or starting a brand-new hobby with her husband and three children.

Formed Through Play

What inspired you to write *Created to Play*?

Brianna Lambert: As a young Christian, leisure and recreation often stoked a sense of fear within me. I worried I might enjoy activities too much; however, as I grew in my knowledge of God, I saw that he uses every piece of his creation to point to him. Unfortunately, many of us have lost this knowledge. Instead, hobbies stay guilty pleasures, or even worse—just another metric to prop up our identity. We strive after the money they can give us in a side hustle, the platform on social media, or the way they'll make us healthier and more attractive. In the process, we've lost the way that the Lord forms us through the simple act of play. We miss the ways he specifically made us to love the feel of dough beneath our fingers or the weight of the piano keys. We've thrown away a beautiful chance to worship our Lord—not because we are laboring and working for a certain goal, but because we are simply playing the way he made us to. I want to bring readers away from the hustles and metrics of our current world. I want to show them how God does not divide his world into the “secular” and “spiritual,” and I want to teach readers once again how to play.

What is the main idea of your book and what makes it distinctive?

Brianna: *Created to Play* will show the value of play by walking the reader through ten different people we become within our hobbies. In our various hobbies we might become a Beholder of beauty, a Collector, a Restorer, a Herald of truth and beauty, or a Craftsman. We might play as a Nourisher, a Mover of our bodies, a Connector across a game table, a Historian, or a Caretaker of God's earth and creatures. Through each person we'll discover the ways these activities fulfill the roles God has given us since the beginning, and how by just playing we are living out our calling. As we work through each chapter, we will also see how playing within community enforces our worship, and we'll note the ways these great virtues of play can quickly become vices.

What are five things you would like readers to take away from your book?

Brianna:

- Participating in our hobbies can be a beautiful form of worship.
- We can create and enjoy activities absent of efficiency or any particular need.
- In God's world, there is no separation between “spiritual” and “secular.”
- God has created each of us with specific ways we love to play, and this is a gift.
- Abundant instruction awaits for us in the playground.

Is there anything else you want us to know?

Brianna: I believe readers will be surprised at where they find themselves within the pages of the book. As I was writing, I found so many connections between chapters, and it was an encouraging truth to see all the different ways we fulfill our purpose and worship our God through our play.



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