

Created to Play: How Taking Hobbies Seriously Grows Us Spiritually

Brianna Lambert

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Brianna Lambert's holistic spiritual guidebook *Created to Play* is about spiritual formation via playfulness.

Rooted in Christian scripture, Lambert's book leads overworked, overwhelmed believers to discover how their lives might look if, instead of feeling guilty for taking time to play, making light of their creative passions, or calling them a "side hustle," they could see play as a form of worship and as a training ground for growing into the image of God.

Ten different types of hobbies and play are named, with a chapter describing each and the characteristics—positive, negative, and often overlapping—of those who revel in them. Examples include makers, who use their passion and skills to create, and nourishers, who delight in feeding and comforting others. How people express these types through their hobbies and passions is illustrated to speak to the innate gifts of the soul. Brief stories enliven the text and illuminate the ways in which people's gifts are shared, motivated for pure love of an art, craft, service, or sport.

The book ably supports its argument that playful, joyful steps to mastery of a hobby or sport can be likened to the steps in spiritual formation. Passages of scripture highlight God's own joy in creation, and the chapters end with suggestions and exercises to awaken awareness of God's love for creation as reflected in hobbies and play. Bible stories are included to underscore and validate the book's message that celebrating God's gifts with gratitude and taking time to enjoy those gifts, even when life is hectic, is akin to worship.

Created to Play is an insightful self-help guide to play and leisure as methods for building character and restoring the body, mind, and spirit.

KRISTINE MORRIS (May / June 2026)

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