



*Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power*

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## Pursuing Power

Christians have always had a complicated relationship with power. Is it better to divest ourselves of all power, that we might not be tempted to lord it over others? Is such divestment possible or even beneficial? Don't we need to exercise power on behalf of others to ensure their flourishing? Isn't power necessary to live as culture creators and cultivators?

In the midst of such confusion, Andy Crouch provides much-needed clarity in *Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power*. Building on landmark insights from *Culture Making*, Crouch reveals the nature of true power in a world of idolatry and injustice. He elucidates the key biblical themes of worship and justice to reveal a power worth seeking and stewarding well: power that displays the image of God and leads to the human flourishing God intended.

Crouch will address such issues as:

- What do you mean by “playing God”? Is that different than “playing god”?
- What is your definition of power? How does it differ from, say, Nietzsche's?
- Isn't power a zero-sum game? In other words, when someone takes power, doesn't someone else always lose power?
- Shouldn't Christians try to divest themselves of power, lest they be corrupted?
- What is the purpose of true power?
- What are the characteristics of creative power?
- What conditions are required for human flourishing?
- How might our desire for power lead to idolatry?
- What are some indicators of idolatry?
- How are idolatry and injustice related?
- Why do you contend that justice and evangelism must go hand in hand?
- How does privilege compare to power? What should we do with privilege if we possess it?
- How might we gauge our sense of our own power and privilege more accurately?
- If power is a gift, what does good stewardship look like?
- How do you distinguish between power and authority?
- Is there a legitimate place for coercive power?
- Why do you cite Genesis 1–2 and Revelation 21–22 as especially critical for our time?
- In an age where distrust of institutions runs rampant, why do you argue for their preservation?
- What are some disciplines that can help us handle power better?
- How is Christian worship the ultimate safeguard for power?
- How is the resurrection “the beginning and end of all power”?

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**Andy Crouch**, author of *Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power*

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## Culture Creator and Cultivator

**Andy Crouch** (M.Div., Boston University School of Theology) is executive editor of *Christianity Today*, where he is also executive producer of *This Is Our City*, a multi-year project featuring documentary video, reporting and essays about Christians seeking the flourishing of their cities. Crouch sits on the editorial board for *Books & Culture* and has been a columnist for *Christianity Today*. He also served as executive producer for the documentary films *Where Faith and Culture Meet* and *Round Trip*.

Crouch is the author of *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*, winner of *Christianity Today's* 2009 Book Award for Christianity and Culture and named one of the best books of 2008 by *Publishers Weekly*, *Relevant*, *Outreach* and *Leadership*. Crouch's articles have appeared in numerous publications, including *The Wall Street Journal*, and in several editions of *Best Christian Writing* and *Best Spiritual Writing*.

Crouch serves on the governing boards of Fuller Theological Seminary and Equitas Group, a philanthropic organization focused on ending child exploitation in Haiti and Southeast Asia. He is also a senior fellow of the International Justice Mission's IJM Institute and a member of the Board of Advisors for the John Templeton Foundation.

From 1998 to 2003, Crouch was the editor-in-chief of *re:generation quarterly*, a magazine for an emerging generation of culturally creative Christians. For ten years he was a campus minister with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship at Harvard University. He studied classics at Cornell University and received an M.Div. *summa cum laude* from Boston University School of Theology. A classically trained musician who draws on pop, folk, rock, jazz and gospel, he has led musical worship for congregations of five to twenty thousand. Crouch lives with his family in Swarthmore, PA.