

The Concurrently Companion



Episode 64: Andy Crouch on technology and formation

Topic introduction

We're talking with writer, speaker, and entrepreneur Andy Crouch about technology, culture-making, redemptive entrepreneurship, family, and community.

Key terms: *formation, technology, device, instrument, tool, entrepreneurship, redemption, consumerism, creator/culture maker, algorithm, families and households, oikos, oikonomia*

Questions

What are the biggest changes we can make in the home regarding technology?

What does Crouch mean by “easy everywhere”?

What is the purpose of the home? Explain the idea of “formation” and why technology isn’t “formative” by Crouch’s standard for positive, human formation.

What are the three great formative environments? How are you intentionally engaging in each of these environments towards human formation?

What characterizes beneficially formative environments? What impedes formation?

What is the difference in technology between tools, devices, and instruments? How and why does Crouch make those distinctions?

Crouch makes a comparison of devices with the dream of magic. What is at the heart of the human desire for magic? What does it seek to avoid?

What other key words help us evaluate whether technology has formative benefit?

How does development, possession, and application of skill come into play with technology?

For those who have listened to our discussions with Dr. Michael Finch, what do you notice that compares with Andy Crouch’s analysis? What, if anything, contrasts?

What are algorithms and apps designed to do? How do they “form” us?

How do we shape disciples who in turn shape culture rather than become shaped by it, disciples who bear God’s image into culture instead of becoming images of the surrounding culture?

What are we doing when we make culture, and why is conversation a vital part of that process?

What makes music unique as a formative, communal experience? Why is it a “lynchpin” cultural activity?

How does “power” factor into disciple making and culture shaping/culture making? What is our duty here as parents, educators, pastors?

How does redemption factor into entrepreneurial endeavors? (See the show notes for the link to Praxis and a look at the “rule of life” for entrepreneurs.)

Consider writing a rule-of-life for your family or classroom.

Why does Crouch argue for “slowing down our intake” (consumption) of the news? What consumption do you need to rein in in order to increase formative, creative, and redemptive economic/entrepreneurial endeavors in the world?

How does the past inform our present actions in the world? What beneficial elements from classical Greco-Roman and New Testament church models could households incorporate into their practice for the glory of God in today’s world?

Who has a key to your house? Aside from your own kin, are there others who can let themselves into your house whenever it’s appropriate?

What next steps can we take as a family, a school, a church to grow in our love of God and of neighbor in words, attitudes, and actions in the world?

Scriptural anchors/provision

And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God. Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. — Deuteronomy 28:1-6

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