

## **The God Spot: Does Brain Science Undermine Faith and Religious Belief?**

This will be an accessible seminar for non-specialists. It seeks to provide simple apologetic tools to help understand the challenges to faith posed by neuroscience. We will assess arguments that deploy brain science to undermine faith and belief, and in particular claims about a ‘god-spot’ or ‘god-centre’ in the brain. As well as rebutting such claims as simplistic and naïve, we will explore how recent understandings of unconscious and precognitive processes resonate with biblical understandings of the heart. We will show how these insights underscore, rather than undermine, the big questions of human love, desire and meaning.

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- I. The localisation of religious experience
  - A. An idea with a long pedigree
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - B. Findings from modern brain-imaging techniques
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - C. Meaning
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- II. ‘Non-rational’ beliefs
  - A. Prevalence

B. Cognitive

C. Neuroscience models

D. Evolutionary models

III. 'Non-rational' experience and belief within a Biblical World View

***Suggested Readings:***

SLIDES FOR THIS LECTURE AVAILABLE FROM [glynnharrison.com](http://glynnharrison.com)

1. Foster, C (2009) *Wired for God? The biology of spiritual experience*. Hodder and Stoughton
2. McGilchrist, I (2012) *The Master and His Emissary: the divided brain the making of the modern world*
3. Grudem W (1988) *The gift of prophecy*. Kingsway Publications
4. Bolt, P (2012) *Touching the Emotions: preaching the Gospels for Divine Effects* In: Jensen (2012) *True Emotions*. APOLLOS