

Wired for God: How Our Brains Predispose Us to Spiritual Awareness – A Problem or an Opportunity for Christian Apologetics

There is growing evidence that our brains develop in ways that prime us to seek out patterns, connections, and meaning. Some theorists interpret this solely in terms of its survival value and view religious and spiritual beliefs as simply a side effect or irrational aberration. But could this disposition also reflect the truth of Augustine’s teaching about the intrinsic ‘restlessness’ of the human heart? What are the challenges, and opportunities, for Christian apologetics in this new area of neuropsychological discovery?

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I. Human beings are innately disposed to ‘non-rational’ belief

A. The world of non-rational belief

B. Patternicity in human perception and cognition

C. Right-left brain differences in the construction of reality

II. The ‘thin’ explanatory models of secularism

A. An artifact of evolutionary development

B. Religious belief strengthens group loyalties and social cohesion

III. The 'thick' Christian doctrine of human made in the image of God

A. Primed for relationship and meaning

B. Equipped for wonder, appreciation of beauty, pursuit of creativity

C. Made for flourishing: by their fruits you shall know them

Suggested Readings:

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. Barrett, J (2012) *Born Believers: the science of children's belief*