ARE HUMAN BEINGS MORE THAN JUST THEIR BRAINS?

Dr. Bradley L. Sickler Offers a Timely Assessment of the Human Brain and Cognitive Science from a Distinctly Christian Perspective

WHEATON, Ill.—Advances in the understanding of the brain have dramatically increased over the last few decades. This progress has been especially helpful in treating illnesses and alleviating suffering, but it has also raised many philosophical and theological issues. One example is that researchers increasingly present the brain as the totality of a person. But is this a fair assessment? Are human beings more than just their brains?

Bradley L. Sickler’s new book, God on the Brain: What Cognitive Science Does and Does Not Tell Us about Faith, Human Nature, and the Divine (Crossway, July 2020) reveals that the discussion about the brain is more complex than what can be explained by science alone. “The message from many quarters is that you are just your brain. Programs on public television, radio shows on science topics, magazine articles like those just mentioned, books upon books—all declare a decidedly reductionist, materialist, anti-spiritual, anti-supernatural perspective that depicts humans as nothing but complicated machines,” writes Sickler. “[They say] you are not made in the image of God but are a walking, talking, conscious bag of dirt.”

God on the Brain argues instead that the Christian worldview offers the most compelling vision of the true nature of humanity. Sickler examines a wide range of topics in the book, all “contemporary alternatives to traditional Christian anthropology, mostly driven by work being done in cognitive science,” including:

- The relationship between science and Christianity and how to understand the current tension between the two
- How modern brain science tries to describe and quantify religious experiences
- Challenges to belief in the soul
- Implications for human freedom, reason, and morality

Through its exploration of these ideas, God on the Brain will help readers navigate questions about the brain, religion, and science, to “confidently maintain an orthodox, biblical view of human nature and the trustworthiness of Christian belief.”
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bradley L. Sickler (PhD, Purdue University) is associate professor of philosophy and the program director for the master of arts in theological studies program at the University of Northwestern St. Paul in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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