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## God, Brain, and Mind: Christianity and Neuroscience

A free lecture sponsored by The Central Pennsylvania Forum for Religion and Science

**Featured speaker: Dr. Bill Newsome, Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Professor,  
Department of Neurobiology, Stanford University**



Increasingly, neuroscience is establishing firm links between the brain physiology and all aspects of mental life, raising substantive questions about what it means to be human. Are we just the sum of our neurons? Does my brain shape me, or do I shape my brain? Is freedom of choice an illusion? These issues are chronically vexing because they hinge on answers to fundamental philosophical problems such as the nature of causality and scientific explanation. I argue for an understanding of causality that is intrinsically multi-level. A multi-level view of causality recognizes that higher-level control and personal responsibility are facts of our behavior while also acknowledging that our behavior is frequently influenced by bottom-up forces of which we are not even aware. Such a view is congenial to traditional religious interpretations of personhood, and also to humanistic traditions that emphasize the importance of personal ethical choices.

**Tuesday, 15 November 2011, at 7:00 pm.**

**Location: Frey Hall 110, Messiah College, Grantham, PA. Directions and a campus map are at <http://www.messiah.edu/visitors/direction.html>.**

Bill Newsome is an Investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Professor of Neurobiology at the Stanford University School of Medicine. He received a B.S. degree, *summa cum laude*, in physics from Stetson University and a Ph.D. in biology from the California Institute of Technology. Dr. Newsome taught at SUNY Stony Brook before moving to

Stanford in 1988. A leading investigator in the fields of visual and cognitive neuroscience, Dr. Newsome has made fundamental contributions to our understanding of the neural mechanisms underlying visual perception and simple forms of decision making. Among his honors are the Rank Prize in Optoelectronics, the Spencer Award for highly original contributions to research in neurobiology, the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award of the American Psychological Association, the Dan David Prize of Tel Aviv University, the Karl Spencer Lashley Award of the American Philosophical Society, and the Champalimaud Vision Award. He has given numerous distinguished lectureships, including the 13th Annual Marr Lecture at the University of Cambridge, the 9th Annual Brenda Milner Lecture at McGill University, and the Evin Lecture at Princeton University. He was elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences in 2000 and to the American Philosophical Society in 2011.

**The Central Pennsylvania Forum for Religion and Science is based at Messiah College. For details about all Forum events, please visit <http://www.messiah.edu/godandscience/> or contact Dr. Ted Davis ([tdavis@messiah.edu](mailto:tdavis@messiah.edu)), 717-766-2511, ext 6840.**

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Messiah College | One College Avenue | Mechanicsburg PA 17055 | 717-766-2511  
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