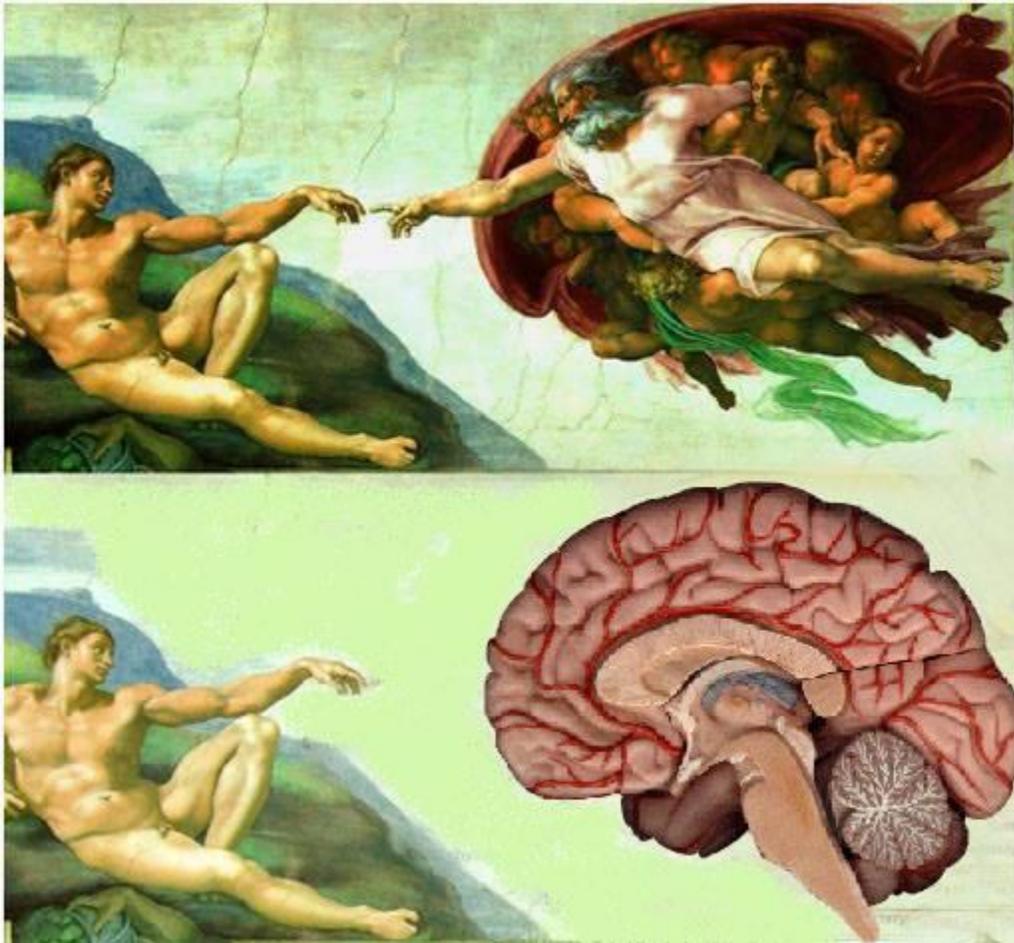


**Daily Life with Christ-65. Understanding brain addictions (5)—God does not have a brain-2 (no "present" consciousness).**



Our studies of brain addictions have included five areas. The first two are invisible/immaterial while the latter three are visible/material: (1) the cognitive unconscious, (2) the conscious, (3) the prefrontal cortex (thinking center), (4) the nucleus accumbens (pleasure center), and (5) the ventral tegmental area (craving center). For an illustration of the latter three areas of the brain, see photo on Daily Life with Christ-59.

Given the unfortunate loss of the classical view of God demonstrated by the widespread remaking of God into the image of man in much of contemporary evangelicalism (due in no small part to failure to recognize language of accommodations as per anthropomorphisms and anthropathism), I have decided to expand the study of brain addictions to include reflection on

the uniqueness, and thus majesty of God and His “thinking.” God is not beset with the many vulnerabilities and problems that are inherent in human material brains or even human immaterial minds that operate within brain matter.

In the last essay, I underscored that God does not have (1) above. Let us now move to (2). The second aspect of the mental life that we have studied is the conscious life. This is the rational part of us (immaterial) that takes place in the prefrontal cortex (material). This is where we do our rational and sequential thinking. This is where we do our logic; for example: “Socrates is a man, all men are mortal, therefore Socrates is mortal.” This is where we plan and order our lives; for example, what time we get up, go to work, spend time with the Word of God and the Lord, when we plan on going to bed, etc. While this thinking takes place in the physical prefrontal cortex, the thinking itself is immaterial in that it goes beyond materiality and physical images. This fact alone proves its immaterial ontology. This area of rational thinking is the area in which we most resemble God. However, there are some very important differences.

God is not limited to the conscious processing of 40 bits of information per second like we are, and God does not think sequentially. The fact that God is timeless precludes God from thinking in temporal sequence—in time. He is omniscient and timeless. He is never surprised. He knows the beginning and the end, and He knows it all-at-once. Again, we see just how unique the Lord is. He really is the Wholly Other, radically different in kind from creatures.

Again, because God is not in time, His conscious thinking cannot be sequential—God’s entire life is all at once. This demands that God’s mind must be different in important ways from the temporal, human mind. Considered as a temporal mind, God cannot deliberate, anticipate, remember, or plan ahead, for instance, since all of these mental activities essentially involve time, either in taking time to be performed (like deliberation) or in requiring a temporal viewpoint as a prerequisite to performance (like remembering). But it is clear that there are other mental activities that do not require a temporal interval or viewpoint. While learning, reasoning, and inferring take time, knowing does not. Learning is a process, but knowing is not. Ergo, God being timeless does not pose any problems for His omniscience as it would if He was ever in the process of learning, reasoning, or inferring.

Another mental aspect of God that is not undermined by His timelessness is willing. Willing does not require a temporal sequence, unlike wishing or desiring that do suggest temporality. Given that God is outside of time, He does not sit with bated breath hoping or wishing something would take place. His will does not change, and it is not sequential in any way. His will is perfect, complete, atemporal, and eternal.

Given that nothing that is atemporal can be material, the mind of God cannot be material. He is the Author of our immaterial minds. However, the crucial distinction is that our immaterial minds do require material parts, like the prefrontal cortex, to function properly on a conscious level. Our minds use our prefrontal cortex of our physical brain. Moreover, the prefrontal cortex also depends upon the cognitive unconscious urges from other parts of the brain. Cases in which the prefrontal cortex was separated from the rest of the brain, the person suffers from dysfunction in executive function of thinking: they have a very difficult time making decisions. That is understandable given what we have learned about our cognitive unconscious mind. Also, because God does not have a physical brain, He does not suffer from dopamine inhibiting a prefrontal cortex and thus inhibiting His thinking as we see in human brain addictions. God as Pure Spirit and has no such vulnerabilities.

The atemporality of God also means that God does not perceive. If one is outside of time, then it is impossible for him to perceive events as they unfold. In other words, God is not an onlooker of events as they take place. However, atemporality does not mean that God is not aware since awareness is not a temporal activity. God “sees” all things at once as He lives all of His life at once with omniscient awareness.

One might be tempted to think that an atemporal, timeless, eternal God, a God who is not captured by our now, is less personal or intimate since that would mean that He does not have a mind involved in our temporal sequences. However, just the opposite is true. Because God is timeless, He can have a more intimate relationship with us at every moment of our lives all at once. For example, God’s relationship with me is at every moment of my life simultaneously. He enjoys a relationship with me every instant of time. He is not limited to the present moment. He has as much fellowship with me the instant I believed in Jesus Christ as every other point in my life. This is far superior to any fellowship I can have with my beloved. I can only enjoy a fellowship in the now. For example, I can no longer enjoy fellowship with my son or daughter as children since they are now young adults. My fellowship with them is always changing with time. I can no longer have fellowship with my children as children. This is not the case with an eternal, timeless Being. He enjoys fellowship at every stage of life fully and completely and He does it all at once. What an incredible God to love and worship. Can’t wait to “see” Him.

In Him,

Pastor Don