

New Testament

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Extra credit

The first presentation is given by Dr. Rebecca Heiss, a speaker, author, and expert on human behavior and motivation. In her talk titled "The Elephant in the Brain: Hidden Motives in Everyday Life," Dr. Heiss explores the idea that humans are social animals who are highly motivated to gain social status. She argues that this drive for status often leads us to engage in behaviors that are not in our best interest, but that help us increase our social standing. Dr. Heiss gives several examples of this, such as people who exercise to show off their fitness, or those who purchase luxury goods to signal their wealth. She also highlights how social media has amplified these behaviors, as people constantly seek validation from their online communities.

Dr. Heiss encourages us to become more aware of these hidden motives and to focus on our true values and goals rather than just trying to impress others. She suggests that we should ask ourselves why we do the things we do and whether they align with our values. By becoming more aware of our own motivations, we can make better decisions and live more authentic lives.

The second presentation is given by Dr. Lisa Feldman Barrett, a psychologist and neuroscientist who specializes in the study of emotions. In her talk titled "How Emotions are Made," Dr. Barrett challenges the traditional view that emotions are hard-wired into our brains and are universal across cultures. Instead, she argues that emotions are constructed by our brains in response to our environment and experiences. Dr. Barrett gives examples of how different cultures interpret emotions differently, such as how the Japanese concept of "amae" does not have a direct translation in English, and how different languages have different words for emotions like "anger" and "fear."

Dr. Barrett also explains that emotions are not discrete categories, but rather are constructed by our brains based on the context of the situation. She argues that our brains use past experiences to predict how we should feel in a given situation, and that emotions are constantly being updated based on new information. Dr. Barrett encourages us to become more aware of how our brains construct emotions and to use this knowledge to better understand ourselves and others.

To conclude, both presentations encourage us to become more aware of our own motivations and emotions and to question our assumptions about why we do the things we do. They also highlight the importance of understanding how our brains work and how our experiences shape our perceptions of the world. By becoming more conscious

of our own behavior and emotional responses, we can lead more fulfilling and meaningful lives.