

HOST

What makes us human? Is it our opposable thumbs? Our eyes? Or is it the way we think, feel, and believe? So much of what and who we are has to do with the processes that happen in our brains, but how do chemical signals and electrical sparks add up to the marvelous minds that make us people? What is the DNA coding for a soul? If the devil is in the details, than God is found in the grand picture. The billions of connections found in the human brain are barely enough for us to begin to understand ourselves, What hope can they give us of getting a clear glimpse of the divine? Today we meet a scientist who has faced these questions in his own life and work, the neuropsychologist John Teske.

VOICE OVER

John Teske is a man who uses science to appreciate miracles. He believes that investigation, instead of destroying the unique beauty of humanity by reducing it to elements and reactions, elevates it by making the unimaginable real. This point of view, however, is one that took time to develop. Many children rebel against their parents. Sober well meaning parents end up with drunken defiant daughters. But not all rebellion is so destructive. John Teske's adolescent rebellion against the devout religion of his father led him to a scientific career where he would begin to help explain it.

INTERVIEW (TRANSCRIPTION)

Ok, I probably became a scientist in opposition to my father who was a Lutheran minister. And with whom I had many discussions about the sort of theology and science and the relationship.

(MORE)

INTERVIEW (TRANSCRIPTION) (CONT'D)

And he was also interested in the relationship but I think my interests was... I was always in the era of the space race and you know science was really very much top drawer. So that became my interest. That's what a smart kid did. That's what you wanted to do.

VOICE OVER

And that's what he succeeded at. John Teske is a neuropsychologist - a scientist who uses his understanding of the biology of the brain to explore its observable workings. Neuropsychologists ask questions such as "how does the structure of the brain relate to the formation of personality?" and, in Dr. Teske's case "how does the biology of the mind allow a person to form spiritual beliefs?"