

## Genes Contribute To Religious Inclination?

A report last month in *The New Scientist* suggested that genes may help determine how religious a person is, based on a new study of American twins. Until about 25 years ago, scientists assumed that religious behavior was simply the product of a person's socialization, or "nurture." But more recent studies, including those on adult twins who were raised apart, suggest genes contribute about 40% of the variability in a person's religiousness.

Researchers led by Laura Koenig, a psychology graduate student at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, have tried to decipher how the effects of nature and nurture vary with time. Their study suggests that as adolescents grow into adults, genetic factors become more important in determining how religious a person is, while environmental factors wane.

The God who made us declares in His word that it is belief that leads to "religious inclination." Some people believe the gospel when they hear it, and some people disbelieve it (Acts 17:32-34). When people obeyed the gospel in the New Testament, they did so because that word was "*nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart*" (Romans 10:8).

I fear that too many people want to do everything they can to explain away the deep, abiding desire of humans to be righteous in God's sight. "Religious inclination" is not genetic, it is an appetite for the higher and holier matters of our existence.

Kyle Campbell