

A conversation about theology and psychology

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Pastors know that religion and psychology are intimately connected: one's own mental health has everything to do with pastoral care, while parishioners' psychological make-up determine how committees get run. More and more behavioral psychology studies focus on how and why we worship, pray, or express our beliefs—and what happens in our brains when we do.

But what about *theology* and psychology? Can these two very different fields of study talk to each other? What do theologians have to say to psychologists and vice versa?

**On May 14 at 8 p.m. EST, the *Century* is cosponsoring an event with [the Center of Theological Inquiry](#) to explore these questions.**

The event is a phone-in: I will host a conversation between a theologian ([Stephen Pope](#) from Boston College), a biblical scholar ([Colleen Shantz](#) from the University of Toronto), and a psychologist ([Michael Spezio](#) from Scripps College) about the year-long conversation they've been having on "religious experience and moral identity."

I plan to ask them about how religious experience helps or hinders moral development and about what we know about the psychology of worship. I am also curious to know what the most difficult aspects have been in this conversation among theologians, biblical scholars, and psychologists. What presuppositions inhibit conversation?

As part of the conversation, listeners will also be invited to ask questions. This is a free event, but **advance registration is required: [register here](#) by Monday, May 12 at 12 p.m. EST.**