

Lay Academy Begins Spring Series

By Bob Newman

Put Sunday February 2, 4:00pm on your calendar and plan to join us in the Activities Bldg, Room 201, when we will continue to study “Religion and Science.” We shall look again at the book **PROOF OF HEAVEN** and the Near Death Experience of Eben Alexander, MD, and learn from his discoveries how to make progress in our study of both Science and Religion, arguably the two most important and problematic dimensions of our human lives in our world today and tomorrow.

We shall continue to study how scripture and theology encourage and promote our serious involvement in Scientific Method. At the same time, Science, based upon rational thinking, draws us into serious examination of our faith which is never irrational, but which does promote compassion, love, devotion, and ethical responsibility, all of which transcend or compliment our reason. This is what I call a “delicious dilemma,” when we are called to face a serious challenge and discover how our exploration both puzzles us sometimes, and rewards us often with insights, realization, and vision that excites us with optimism and promised fulfillment.

In other words, our opportunities to study, learn, and grow, point to Jesus’ reminder, “I have come into this world so that you may have life, and have your life abundantly.” We believe God gives us life freely and includes all of the hidden talents and resources we need, so that when we invest our resources, not bury them under a bushel basket, but when we welcome this challenge and wrestle with our problems and apply our gifts, our Lord promises great blessings. This is what Jesus means when he promises his disciples that when he leaves them, only to return to them in his Spirit, “greater works than these you will do.”

And God never slumbers, but is very much at work today. I have discovered a powerful learning resource. This is “Conversations with Eben Alexander” (Recorded on DVD) in which the author of **PROOF OF HEAVEN** develops in great detail his Near Death Experience, examines his personal struggle to recognize and accept what he learns about himself, about human faith in general, and articulates how Science, which he knows well, and Religion are positively intertwined. Best of all, he explains how the Spirit world he discovers opens up for him and potentially for everyone, the reality and meaning of the love of God, that love God promises will never, ever, let us go.

Many of you have already read **PROOF OF HEAVEN**. How about if you loan your copy to someone who wants to read this book? And then, invite your friends to join us for our Spring Series of studies of Religion and Science. Sundays, 4:00pm, Activities Bldg. Free and open to everyone. Please contact me if you have questions or suggestions.

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