

A spot-on answer to an eternal question, from a scientist no less...

## PROOF

“Hey Doc, can I ask you something?”

“Sure, Tommy. What’s on your mind?”

“You go to church; you believe in God, right?”

“True.”

“Why?”

Surprise registers on the surgeon’s face. I don’t think it’s a question he was expecting.

“Why do you ask?”

“Well, there are those who say God is a delusion, a form of escapism for those who can’t handle reality. Face it; no one’s ever proved God’s existence, at least scientifically. And yet you, the Rabbi, Father Bob, Pastor Swanson, Joey, Vince, Mike, Ace, and all the gang seem so ... I don’t know ... firm in your beliefs.”

Smiling, Doc restates Tommy’s question.

“Why do I believe in God? Well, probably because I remember how to tie my shoes.”

Heh, heh ... the look on Tommy’s face is priceless. You’d think he’s just seen a dozen aliens get off the cosmic bus.

**...Hi, I’m Tony Baggz. It’s an early winter Saturday afternoon here at Fire Company # 5. "Doc" Rogers just stopped by, probably because today’s Saturday and that means hot dogs and chili. "Crazy Pat" is famous for his chili and on Saturdays there’s always a big pot on simmer. Drop-ins are always welcome and some of the gang are already here. Of course, the fact there’s a**

**good hockey game on the big screen later doesn't hurt either. I sense an impromptu party brewing.**

**Tommy McMichael, one of the firemen at #5, is, by his own admission, lukewarm when it comes to matters of faith. Being in medical school, I imagine many of the people he sees every day believe only in what can be proved; it's the nature of the scientist, and often, the concept of God doesn't fit. And it sounds like Doc just threw him a curveball.**

**Let's listen in ...**

**"How to tie your shoes? ... No offense, Doc, but you gotta explain that one. I figured you for a Bible verse or something," Tommy says, shaking his head.**

**"Well, I have faith in Scripture," Doc says. "However, the unbeliever claims it's just a fanciful tale, and scientifically, I can't refute that. After all, the Bible isn't self-attesting; it doesn't prove itself to be true anymore than 'The Night Before Christmas' proves the existence of Santa Claus."**

**"Okay. But ... how to tie your shoes?"**

**Chuckling at the look on Tommy's face, Doc sips his coffee. "Okay, answer me this. You've studied anatomy; where's the memory located?"**

**"The brain. The limbic system, the hippocampus, and possibly some peripheral areas."**

**"Prove it."**

**"Well, damage to those areas affects memory. Surgeons have proven that."**

**"Have they? Or have they simply demonstrated a cause and effect relationship?"**

**"They've ... proved it," Tommy says, hesitation creeping into his voice.**

**"They have? So, if you tie a tourniquet around your upper arm and leave it there, sooner or later, your hand dies from lack of blood flow, right?"**

**"Right."**

“And every time you did, the same thing would happen, right?”

“Yea.”

“So, you’ve proved your hand is located between your shoulder and elbow, right?”

“Well, no.”

“Exactly. The same is true about the memory. Just because a certain area of the brain is damaged doesn’t prove the memory resides there. It only proves a cause and an effect relationship. Memory is affected by trauma to that area, right?”

“I guess so.”

“Now, you said other regions of the brain can affect memory, right?”

“Yes.”

“And if I said the central locus of the human memory is located in, let's say, the brain stem, could you prove me wrong?”

“No.”

“Why?”

“Because ... damage the brain stem and the body dies.”

“Exactly. You can't test my hypothesis. You can't cut into the brain stem. You can't eliminate all possibilities. Scientifically you can't prove exactly where the memory is.”

“I guess.”

“But you know you have one, right?”

“Yea.”

“Again, why?”

Laughing softly to himself, Tommy shakes his head. “Because I remember how to tie my shoes.”

**“Right. You know something exists, not because you can prove it; beyond a reasonable shadow of a doubt as a lawyer might say, but because you experience its effects.”**

The look on Tommy’s face intensifies as Doc continues.

**“Empirical or scientific knowledge is vital; it enables us to progress as a species. And that's where the unbeliever bases his argument; since God can't be scientifically observed and proven, He doesn't exist. Tommy, if empirical knowledge were the only knowledge available, I'd also say there's no God.”**

**“So, you're saying you'd agree?”**

**“On an empirical level I'd have to. But on another equally important level, no, I don't agree. If there is one thing scientific logic demands, it's consistency; scientists hate anomalies. And for me, that's where the nonbeliever's position breaks down. In his own basic premise, he contradicts himself.”**

**“How so?”**

**“He contends God doesn't exist because His existence isn't proven, yet in the next breath says he believes life exists on other planets, trusts someone to repay a debt, hopes his sick little girl gets well; respects a colleague or loves his wife. Belief, trust, hope, respect, love, all realities; all things we know exist, yet none can be proved scientifically. He bases his concepts of those realities on a premise he refuses to recognize on the other.”**

**“And that premise is?”**

**“Intuitive knowledge; belief in the existence of something even though we only experience its effects. I can't see the wind, but I know it exists because I feel the breeze and see leaves on trees moving. I can't see electricity, but I know it exists when I flip a light switch. I can't see love or hope or trust; I can't prove them but I know they exist. And by extension, I believe in God, not because I can see him, but because I see the effects of His existence.”**

**“How ... where?”**

**“In man himself. Scripture tells us we're made God's image and likeness. In our higher attributes; intelligence, wisdom, creativity, compassion, mercy, justice, and love I see the reflection of a being greater than anything in existence as we know it.”**

Sipping his drink, Doc continues.

**“Tommy, life is an either/or proposition. Either everything came from nothing, or this perfectly ordered universe is the product of an intelligence, a Creator, outside our human understanding. Myself, I can't believe you can add an eternal void to an infinite vacuum and get existence as we know it. Zero plus zero equals zero. Any seven-year-old will tell you that. And I can't believe that somehow, from nothing, and by spontaneous generation and/or random chance, devoid of cause, plan, or design, you can get daisies, ducks, dolphins, and the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders.”**

**“Then what about evolution, the big bang, things scientists have proved?”**

**“Proved? Really? Come on, Tom, you're a better scientist than that. You know a theory isn't a fact, even when repeated over and over. Evolution, the big bang, they're good theories, but they've got a long way to go before they're facts. Facts that 'prove' there is no God. In fact, scientists who have a death grip on a half-truth, and trumpet they have the final answer, do the advancement of science no favors.”**

Chuckling softly, Tommy shakes his head. **“Gotta hand it to you Doc; Father John, Pastor Williams, and the Rabbi would be proud.”**

Doc smiles at his protégé. Tommy winks and, looking down, says ...

**“ ... oh, and by the way, Doc, you're wearing loafers.”**

**A learned man once said, “the probability of the universe being created without the involvement of God is as likely as the unabridged dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing shop.” Interesting thought.**

**“Unless you become like one of these little children, you shall not see the kingdom of God.” Words of the Carpenter. Why a small child? Why not a philosopher, a scientist, or maybe a sage, rich with the wisdom of time and experience? Because small children possess a humility and a simple, yet ironclad faith born of an absolute trust in the wisdom of their elders and a joy in being alive in a world they cannot, in any way, conceive of coming into existence either from nothing, or from their own abilities.**

**I like the term, ‘open to the possibility.’ It’s an excellent approach where clear-cut answers don’t exist. I am open to the possibility the Creator brought Adam and Eve directly into existence in the Garden of Eden many years ago. Like Scripture says. And to the possibility God used, and continues to use, tools such as big bangs and evolution. Or that mankind was “seeded” on Earth by aliens from another galaxy. What do I actually believe? Well, I’ve made my choice; you must make yours.**

**But I do believe one day, that Supreme Being, in Whose image you and I are incredibly made, will provide those answers.**

**Open to the possibility ... are you?**

**Thinkaboutit ... I’m Tony Baggz.**