

The Logic of Love **Chapter 17: It's a Matter of Proof**

The mystery of life isn't a problem to solve but a reality to experience.

-Frank Herbert

If we had proof of God's existence, it would do our lives more harm than good because of the Freewill Love Factor. Objective proof would undermine our ability to know that love is real. How the proof is offered is not the issue. Proof undermines freewill whether it comes through a compelling line of logic or a revelatory experience such as Selfish Sam had. Even if one person's experience of God could somehow be satisfactorily offered to another, the principle of the Freewill Love Factor is violated just the same.

Proving the existence of God to one's self, however, is an entirely different matter. As we travel down the road of faith, progressive revelations of the reality of God do not undermine our freewill. Though a proof of God based on logic would undermine freewill, personal experience of God through faith does not necessarily undermine freewill or our ability to know that our love is real.

Experience, as well as logic, can provide us with a sense of security about what is real. By recognizing when to turn to experience, rather than logic, for our understanding of life, we can make a graceful transition from belief in God to knowledge of God without disrespecting the Freewill Love Factor. Just as the reality of love can be appreciated through personal experience (notwithstanding the fact that the definition of love is alogical), so also can experience provide a personal knowledge of God, even though such knowledge is not transferable. Logic is of limited value when pondering the existence of God because logic can be shared. Personal experience, on the other hand, is not transferable. If experience provides knowledge of God for one person, this does not mean it has provided knowledge of God for anyone else.

The question "What if we are just brains in a vat?" was used earlier to demonstrate the philosophic difficulty of making any claim to knowledge. The distinction between the methodology used for attaining secular knowledge as compared with spiritual knowledge was explored, as well. These concepts are useful for appreciating how a transition from *belief* in God to *knowledge* of God can be a gradual and evolving process. When we remember that knowledge is not an absolute and when we are self-reliant in our quest for spiritual knowledge, then a gradual and increasingly compelling experience of God becomes a *possibility*. By looking to the blossoming of our individual spiritual experience for the validation of faith, we hold the key that opens the door to transcending the limitations of the Freewill Love Factor.

People of faith often speak of feeling the presence of God or believing that God protected them in an emergency. Some people report being healed; others speak of an indescribable inner knowing. Of course, this does nothing to prove the existence of God, but if such occurrences were not reported, they would be conspicuous for their absence. If our love is real and if faith opens the door to having experiences with God, then it should be progressively safer for us to experience God without such experience undermining freewill. If God is distant only out of respect for our freewill, then as love liberates us from the Freewill Love Factor, more experiences of God should develop.

How such experiences emerge in the course of any one individual's faith-journey is an extremely personal matter, and not surprisingly, often such experience is described as too deep for words. But how experience with God has been described throughout time and across religious cultures is

consistent with what should happen if there is a God. I am not suggesting that this does anything to prove the existence of God. Nonetheless, noting how human experience complements theism is important because if it did not, this would legitimately call into question whether reality is inconsistent with the speculation that God exists. The internal consistency of theism is complemented by human experience. And at this point, the internal consistency of theism is all that is being suggested.

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