

Let's Pretend

By Father John Catoir JCD – 3/4/18

Many of us have been tempted to doubt our faith in times of stress. Does God really love me? Does God even exist? Is there an afterlife? Will I meet God face to face? Will I meet my deceased relatives again? How can I be sure?

The same kind of doubts plague the skeptics, only in reverse. They won't admit it, but I've counselled many of them who worry a lot about getting it wrong. Their habitual cynicism, suspicion, and skepticism isolates them from knowledge that comes so simply from faith or intuition.

Let's pretend you're in their shoes for a minute. Pretend you're an atheist and you've just had your second heart attack. You're in the hospital, weak and your brooding. The same thought keeps coming into your mind and it won't let go: "I'm going to die, what if it's all true!" When a die-hard skeptic has a weak moment a flood of thoughts come to mind

"What if there really is an after-life? But that's absurd. It's silly! But what if it's true? How could it be? How can anyone imagine a god in the sky running a resort for the good people, and a hell for the bad people.

The whole idea is stupid. Laughable! But why have billions of people believed it for so long? All this stuff about an after-life? And yet, didn't pre-historic man place tools and food in the tombs of dead ancestors to help them in the next world? Where did that instinct come

from? Long before organized religion came into existence human beings worshipped God out of fear. We're too smart for that today?

But I'm still going to die! What if it's true? No way! Get a grip! The idea of Adam and Eve is ridiculous. Which came first, the chicken or the egg? But it is a real question. Where did the idea of God come from anyway?

Einstein claimed there must be a Supreme Intelligence behind the universe, but he was a Jew who never practiced any religion. He was mathematically brilliant, but what has mathematics to do with religion? Einstein depended on his intuition to discover his theory of relativity. The entire world of modern science and electronics came from one's man's reliance on intuition. Could it be that the human instinct to rely on truths based on intuition is valid?

Knowledge that comes from intuition has been a valid guide to greater truths for centuries. I'm going to die soon, and I really don't know the answer to my own question. Will my death be the final act? Or is there more to come.

I've always rejected the idea that an invisible spirit called God once created billions of galaxies, with countless suns and planets all running with the precision of a Swiss watch. But where did it come from? The whole thing seems unimaginable!

Just because I can't imagine something doesn't necessarily mean it's irrational or untrue. They once thought the world was flat; then Columbus came along and proved them wrong.

What if there are complex mysteries still to be discovered? There has to be an uncaused cause. I'm confused! Will I face God's judgment one day soon? Oh my God, if you exist, help me to save my soul, if I have one."

May the Lord be your strength and your joy.