



- Home
- NEWS SECTIONS
- Breaking news
- State
- National
- World
- Sport
- Rugby World Cup
- Football
- Business
- The Eye
- Entertainment
- Technology
- Health/Science
- Multimedia
- Learn
- OPINION
- Editorial
- Andrew Bolt
- COFFEE BREAK
- Daily horoscopes
- That's Life
- Trivia Quiz
- CLASSIFIEDS
- General
- CareerOne
- Announcements
- Cars Guide
- Personals
- Land estates
- New homes
- Travel
- Place an ad
- Casual advertising



## FAITHWORKS

[back](#)

[▶ PRINT-FRIENDLY VERSION](#)

[▶ EMAIL THIS STORY](#)

### Add it up, and the odds for God look good

By Bryan Patterson  
23nov03

"We are all in this alone" - Lily Tomlin on life.

GOD was once in the running for a \$17 million sweepstakes prize.

A lottery company in Florida, which used a suspect computer system, sent a letter addressed to God, c/o the Bushnell Assembly of God church, informing that He was a finalist for the top prize.

"God, we're searching for you," the company wrote.

The minister of the church sent back the note: "I always thought He lived here."

People are always trying to find God in the strangest places. Now, scientists are trying to track Him through mathematics.

Physicist Stephen Unwin, once technical attache to the US Energy Department and risk analyst for nuclear power plants, believes everything -- even the existence of a Creator -- involves probability.

"There is even some probability that before you finish this sentence you will be hoofed insensible by a wayward, miniature Mediterranean ass," he writes in the opening sentence to his book *The Probability of God: A Simple Calculation That Proves The Ultimate Truth*.

Unwin did not set out to prove one way or another the existence of God. He just wanted to figure the odds.

Based on the evidence that some people are 100 per cent certain there is a God and others are 100 per cent sure there is not, Unwin began with the assumption that the probability starts with a simple coin toss -- a 50-50 chance. Then he applied mathematical formulas that perhaps only mathematicians can fully understand.

In the end, he has come up with a 67 per cent probability that God exists.

In Britain, philosopher Richard Swinburne used maths to examine the attributes of a real Messiah and concluded the probability of Jesus' resurrection being true was "a whopping 97 per cent".

### SEARCH

Archive Search: [Newstext](#) is our online newspaper library -- with more than 150 papers archived. You need to register to search.

### BUY A PHOTO

Seen a picture in the paper or on the website you'd like to buy? If we took it, you can buy a copy. [Click for our pic order form](#).

Pick a pic from our extensive archives at [Newsphotos](#).

Keyword(s):

 

### MOTORING

Buy or sell your car, find spare parts and read the best motoring news in our [Cars Guide](#) section.

### JOBS



<b>Industry</b>
Accounting
Admin
Advertising
Agriculture
Architecture
<b>Location</b>
All Locations
NSW-Sydney
NSW-C Coast
NSW-Newcastle
NSW-W'gong
<input type="button" value="Go"/>
powered by

### REAL ESTATE



Find a home anywhere.

Suburb or postcode

Advertise with us

SERVICES / HELP

About us

Contact us

Link to us

Herald Sun Shop

Letter to the editor

Post your feedback

Best of feedback

Our other websites

Home delivery

SUNDAY  
FEATURES

Sunday Gossip

body+soul

Faithworks

Weddings

Swinburne has argued for several decades that while the existence of God might seem improbable, the non-existence of God was far more improbable.

It's an interesting game, but it hardly offers conclusive proof either way.

Perhaps more interesting is research by medicos Eugene d'Aquila and Vince Rause that suggests humans seek God because our brains are biologically programmed to do so.

Using hi-tech imaging, they probed the brains of meditating Buddhists and Franciscan nuns and found solid evidence that the mystical experiences of the subjects were not the result of wishful thinking or fabrication. They were instead associated with a series of observable neurological events.

The researchers' inescapable conclusion was that God is hard-wired into the human brain.

Of course, there is another question arising from the conclusion. Is belief in God a product of biology, or has the brain been mysteriously and gloriously endowed with the capacity to reach and know God?

Answering that thorny question, one way or another, is always going to be a matter of faith.

But, as Albert Einstein said, the most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious.

An Australian priest, who works in an inner-city mission that deals with street kids, recently said he found God "in the gutter".

"I'd been taught that God was in the dogma; somewhere off in the distance. Now I realise God is down here in the streets, not up there where I'd been told to look," he said.

The philosopher Krishnamurti said the channel to God was open to everyone.

"Follow your own path," he said, "because it should lead you to the realisation that we are all part of the same creation.

"Put away the book, the description, the tradition, the authority and take the journey of self-discovery."

Catholic priest Father William McNamara, author of *The Art Of Being Human*, maintains that God cannot be categorised by dogma.

"God always takes us by surprise," he says.

"God is not a mascot, God is not an uncle. God is an earthquake and if we are going to enter His cave, we're entering into the presence of a lion. We can not afford to reduce God to our own measure and our own management."

Comedian Dick Gregory also looked for God within human realities.

"I'm not into -isms and -asms," he said. "There isn't a Catholic moon and a Baptist sun. I know the universal God is universal.

SEARCH BY POSTCODE:  
  
State:

"I feel the same God-force that is the mother and father of the Pope is also the mother and father of the loneliest wino on the planet."

#### STORIES IN THIS SECTION

- ▶ [Add it up, and the odds for God look good](#)
- ▶ [Odd and alien, that's the Christian way](#)
- ▶ [Doesn't matter who killed King of Kings](#)
- ▶ [Unique joy in marriage of faith and mind](#)
- ▶ [Don't blame religion for a violent world](#)
- ▶ [Challenging traditional views of God](#)
- ▶ [Our attitude to life makes the difference](#)
- ▶ [Love can only thrive through true friendship](#)
- ▶ [Whatever you do, don't talk about divinity](#)
- ▶ [This really is a mad, mad, mad world](#)
- ▶ [Who will put their faith in the stars?](#)
- ▶ [Regardless of a dream, King dealt in reality](#)
- ▶ [Compelled by 'madness for the truth'](#)
- ▶ [Galileo legacy helps ease science fear](#)
- ▶ [Destined to become heavenly creatures](#)

#### HAVE YOUR SAY

We welcome your comments on this story. Comments are submitted for possible publication on the condition that they may be edited. Please provide your full name and suburb/location. We also require a working e-mail address – not for publication, but for verification. The telephone field is optional.

Fill in the form below and click on the submit button.

Full name:	Location:
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E-mail address:	Telephone (optional):
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Your comment:	
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="submit" value="Submit"/>	

[back](#)

