

Sure, He Created the Universe, But Would He Get Tenure?
by
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LIST OF CHARACTERS

All of the characters are professors at a university.

CHRIS: He will be arguing in favor of granting God tenure.

CARL: He will be arguing against granting God tenure.

LINDA: She will also be arguing against granting God tenure, but not as much as Carl.

CHAIRPERSON: She is chairing the meeting.

PLACE: A department meeting of a faculty at a university.

TIME: The present.

[As the scene begins, Chris, Chairperson, Linda, and Carl are sitting in chairs, in that order, with one long table in front of them. The chairs are angled so that Chris and Carl can see each other. Throughout the play the characters can move around, get up to get coffee, etc.]

CHAIRPERSON

I am calling this meeting to discuss whether or not to give God tenure in our department. As you know, tenure means that He cannot be fired except for immoral behavior, which in this case seems unlikely. Here are copies of God's resume and letters of recommendation. (The Chairperson passes out folders.) Before we get started, I want to remind everyone that God is not allowed to know any of the details of this discussion. Not a single word uttered here should leave the room.

CHRIS

Uh, excuse me, the candidate is all-knowing...

CARL

In that case, why not just ask the Almighty how this meeting will turn out, and then we don't have to have it.

CHAIRPERSON

We'll do our best to make sure that what's said in this room stays in this room. If the candidate is all-knowing, that's not our fault. Now, as usual, the items to consider are research, education, and service. Let's start with research.

CHRIS

He started one of the most important fields of study!

CARL

All He did was create the world.

CHRIS

But He did it with speed and elegance.

LINDA

But that was a long time ago. Whats He done lately?

CHRIS

He wrote the entire Bible!

LINDA

That's still many years ago.

CHRIS

Hey, the Bible may be old, but it's certainly original. In fact, everyone else's work is based on it. Look at God's citation index; He has more citations than Shakespeare!

CARL

Yeah, but many of the citations are negative. A citation saying 'God doesn't exist' is not good for his tenure case.

CHRIS

But those citations are false!

LINDA

Whether or not they are true or false is irrelevant. They work against his case.

CARL

While I admit the Bible is one helluva book, it is just one book. And it had no references.

CHRIS

But there was nothing for God to reference!

CARL

It wasn't published in a refereed journal or even submitted for peer review.

CHRIS

But God has no peers! Who would you get to referee God's work?

LINDA

Jesus?

CARL

Nepotism!

CHRIS

Abraham? Mohammed? Joseph Smith? Guru Nanak? L. Ron Hubbard?

CARL

No, those are His graduate students. And if you recall, L. Ron Hubbard flunked out.

LINDA

Oh, yes, quite a scandal.

CHAIRPERSON

Enough of this! Let's talk about the letters of recommendation.

LINDA

I'm not that impressed with the letters.

CHRIS

Why not? This one says that He walks on water!

LINDA

Yeah, yeah, but all letters say stuff like that. Besides, it said He helped someone else walk on water. Its not clear who deserves the credit.

CARL

And speaking of credit, there are rumors that His grad students, Moses and Paul, wrote the Bible, and He took all the credit.

CHRIS

God generated the text; they just did the word processing. He certainly created the world by Himself.

CARL

We don't know that. There was nobody around to check if He plagiarized.

CHRIS

By the same token, there was nobody He could have plagiarized.

LINDA

Hmm, good point.

CHRIS

Think of what prestige it would add to our department to have someone as well known as God as a Tenured faculty.

CARL

Being well known is not necessarily a virtue. Satan is well known, and we're not considering him for tenure.

CHAIRPERSON

Actually, that's next week's meeting.

CHRIS

I will fight any attempt to give Satan tenure with every ounce of strength I have. If we give Satan tenure, I will (cut off)

CHAIRPERSON

Stop! We can wait until next week to have next week's meeting. Let's move on to the next topic of this week's meeting: How is God's grant support?

LINDA

He hasn't brought in the really big grants.

CHRIS

Actually, all our grants are God's grants! All those dollars already have God's name printed on them.

CHAIRPERSON

Let's discuss how well rounded He is.

CHRIS

He's done fine interdisciplinary work.

CARL

Gee, people who can't concentrate on any one thing often use the excuse, "Well, I'm interdisciplinary."

CHRIS

Are you accusing the One who designed the universe of not being able to concentrate?

CARL

I'm just saying that it's easier to do three things badly than one thing well.

CHRIS

But God does all things well!

CARL

Not quite. Do you remember the trouble awhile back when He tried to get an assistant professorship in the Life Sciences Department?

LINDA

Oh, yes. Those evolutionists certainly made a monkey out of Him.

CHRIS

No, that's backwards.

LINDA

He made a monkey out of them?

CHRIS

No, He made them out of a monkey.

CARL

Anyway, is this the kind of controversy that we really want our department associated with?

CHAIRPERSON

Are there any serious objections to God's work in the sciences?

LINDA

I have some concerns about the scientific quality and ethics of His work.

CHRIS

But He defined science and ethics! How can you have a problem with it? Besides, His work paid off!

CARL

The scientific community has had a very rough time trying to replicate His results.

CHRIS

(sarcastic) Gee, I wonder why...

LINDA

And He never applied to the Ethics Board for permission to use human subjects!

CHRIS

But He is the Ethics Board!

CARL

When one experiment screwed up, He tried to cover it up by drowning the subjects. When subjects didn't behave as predicted, He often punished them, or just deleted them from the sample.

CHRIS

It's not His fault that the subjects didn't read the instructions!

CHAIRPERSON

Ok, ok, that's enough. Let's discuss God's teaching.

CHRIS

Many students swear by Him.

CARL

He expelled His first two students for experimenting and learning something. That's a rather rough grading policy.

CHRIS

Ah! Recall that academic dishonesty was involved. The students cheated from the tree of knowledge, which was strictly forbidden.

LINDA

But God didn't give the students a fair hearing. God wouldn't even let them back in the classroom to appeal the grade.

CARL

Other students complain that God's hard to find. One of them said that God's office hours were infrequent and usually held on a mountain top. Some say that God's just too busy.

CHRIS

Students are always complaining. I bet they didn't even try looking for Him. God's got plenty of time to meet students—after all, He's eternal!

CHAIRPERSON

Enough on education. Let's look at His service.

CHRIS

He keeps the world up and running.

CARL

But what's He done for us?

CHRIS

Just last week God sent out a memo to the effect that we should use paper cups instead of styrofoam to help the environment.

LINDA

The memo might have been more effective if it hadn't been written in ancient Hebrew.

CHRIS

He also provided copies in Latin and ancient Greek.

CHAIRPERSON

Chris, have you looked into the possibility of getting additional funding from the affirmative action people if we give God tenure?

CARL

That's a laugh! God is the ultimate dead white male.

CHRIS

Wrong on all three counts! He's not dead, He's not white, and He's not male. He's universal, beyond gender or race.

LINDA

Then why do you keep calling God "He"?

CHRIS

Because English has no genderless pronoun.

CHAIRPERSON

Chris, you still haven't answered my question.

CHRIS

Oh. We get no extra funds for hiring God.

CARL

Ah, so I was right.

CHRIS

Not quite. The higher-ups agreed with me that God was beyond gender or race; however, that also means He's not Black, Hispanic, or female. I tried telling them He had a Spanish first name, 'Jesus' (pronounce in spanish, phonetically Hazus), but that didn't fly.

CHAIRPERSON

Let's end this discussion and take a vote. I've got email to read.

CHRIS

But we're not done discussing the case!

CHAIRPERSON

In that case, someone has to make a motion to end the discussion. Then it has to be seconded and voted on.

CARL

I make a motion to end the discussion and then take a vote on whether to grant tenure to God.

LINDA

Second.

CHAIRPERSON

All in favor of ending the discussion and then taking a vote, raise your hands. (Linda and Carl raise their hands.)

CHAIRPERSON

All who want to continue the discussion, raise your hands. (Chris raises his hand.)

CHAIRPERSON

Okay, the discussion is ended, and we'll take a vote. This is, of course, a secret ballot.

(They all write down on a small piece of paper a Y or an N and put it into a box. After the ballots are handed in, some special effect happens to indicate God's presence (e.g., lights flash). Something happens to the box containing the ballots to indicate that it is being changed.)

CHAIRPERSON

The vote is three Yes's and zero No's. Looks like God gets tenure.

CARL

It helps having friends in high places (looks up).