

# “Can we “Prove” our Faith?”

By Rabbi David Wolpe

There exists thoughtful and probing doubt about God. But in the sneering and often uncomprehending atheism that seems fashionable today, we are told — as though it were a revelatory statement — that religious belief, unlike science, cannot be proved.

So true. None of our fundamental beliefs can be proved the way we can prove the molecular composition of water. Can we prove that we love one another? Can we prove that it is worthwhile to get out of bed in the morning? Can we prove the existence of justice or wonder? Our days and years are built on certainties that cannot be spun in a centrifuge.

The laboratory of Judaism is life. The “proof,” if one can call it that, of our tradition is its longevity, its loftiness, its passion for life. Judaism teaches that the commandments are about life: “And you shall live by them” (Lev. 18:5) in the face of the culture of death. Our tradition presages the wise and beautiful words of William James: “These then are my last words to you: Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact.”

There is no proof of that, just as there is no proof of my experience of God. But it is a peculiarly modern folly to believe that only the tangible is real.