

Physics and faith

By [Nancy Janisch](#)
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One of the things people say about Christianity is that Christians believe odd, impossible things. And well, they're right. We do.

Virgin birth.

A being who is both God and human.

The existence of miracles.

The resurrection.

That's just off the top of my head.

If we thought more about it, I'm sure we could add to this list. We Christians believe some odd, impossible things.

And that's why I find [quantum mechanics](#) so comforting. Yes, comforting. Because it is odd and full of impossible things. Now, quantum mechanics doesn't prove any of what Christians believe. What quantum physics does is show us the oddness of the world. It is proof that rational, logical thought doesn't completely explain the universe.

Now some of you are thinking, "Wait a minute, quantum mechanics is based on math which is rational and logical." And you are right (At least I think you are. The math required to understand quantum mechanics is well beyond my abilities. I believe have to believe physicists when they tell me that quantum mechanics is based and supported by math.)

What I am talking about is the sort of rational, logical processes that allow us to think our way into a subject and understand it. You can't think your way into quantum mechanics. It is simply too much at odds with the way the world that we know works.

I'm no physicist. but I find quantum physics fascinating.

Light can be both a wave and a particle.

A particle doesn't exist in a particular location in space and time until it is observed.

We cannot know precisely both the location of a particle and its direction of motion at the same time.

The physical properties of a "thing" don't exist until they are measured.

In the quantum world, milk can unspill and eggs unbreak.

And of course [Schrodinger's Cat](#).

That is just odd. Impossible. Not logical. Not rational. And yet it's true.

To quote British scientist [J.B.S.Haldane](#), "Now my own suspicion is that the Universe is not only queerer than we suppose, but queerer than we *can* suppose." #

None of this proves Christianity, but it does undercut the argument that science is rational and Christianity isn't.

We don't "think" our way into quantum mechanics and we don't "think" our way into faith. To be sure, we have to think and think hard about both. But thinking alone won't do the job. At some point we have to do the work required to experience and understand both faith and physics. To truly understand, either quantum mechanics or Christianity, we have to enter into the practices, learn the disciplines of both.

The oddness of the universe makes the oddness of Christianity more believable. Physics doesn't prove Christianity. But what quantum mechanics and Christianity both want to tell us is that the world isn't exactly as it seems. It's much, much more peculiar and much, much more wonderful than it seems.

When Haldane lived the word "queer" meant odd or peculiar and was not a reference to one's sexual orientation. Sometimes [this quote](#) is attributed to [Arthur Eddington](#).

Here is a [link to a video](#) of a conversation between Stephen Colbert (out of character) and Neil DeGrasse Tyson. It's a bit long, 84 minutes, but well worth your time. It's funny, smart and informative.

Originally posted at [Conversation in Faith](#).