

GOD, JESUS, AND HOLY G

HOLY GHOST

(sneaks up behind God and Jesus)

Boo!

(God and Jesus both startle, look
annoyed)

Man I love doing that.

JESUS

Get outta here, Casper. Hey, did you bring the snacks?

HOLY G

You bet!

JESUS

Oh, not again.

HOLY G

I love manna, all right?

JESUS

But why do you always get plain? Why not garlic or
something?

HOLY G

Because plain's good for dipping.

JESUS

So did you bring the hummus?

HOLY G

Damn it! Uh, God, would you mind?

GOD

I'm the creator of the universe, not a kitchen
appliance.

HOLY G

Couldn't you just think some hummus into existence?

GOD

Why? You're a ghost. You don't even need to eat.

HOLY G

It's a flavour thing, all right?

GOD

If you don't mind, I'm kind of busy at the moment.

HOLY G

What are you doing?

GOD

I'm listening to people's prayers.

HOLY G

How many people are praying to you right now?

GOD

3,995,411,878.

HOLY G

Whoa!

GOD

Wait a minute. I'm getting a prayer from . . . Carol.

JESUS

Which one?

GOD

Carol F.

JESUS AND HOLY G

Oh.

GOD

Yeah, that frumpy, middle-aged woman of average intelligence is pretty special to me, gosh darn it. And what's this? She's praying for her friend Pedro.

JESUS

What's up with Pedro?

GOD

Oh, cancer.

JESUS

That's rough.

HOLY G

Poor son of a bitch.

JESUS

So what does she want you to do?

GOD

It sounds like ... it sounds like she wants me to heal him.

JESUS

Heal him, huh?

GOD

Yeah, and she's asking all her friends to ask me for the same thing. Heal Pedro, heal Pedro.

HOLY G

Anybody want you to make Pedro worse?

GOD

Hmm, let's see. We've got eleven prayers *for* Pedro and ... none against. No, nobody wants me to make Pedro worse.

JESUS

Aw, that's nice.

GOD

You know it's funny but, whenever somebody's got a terrible disease, nobody ever prays for me to make him worse.

JESUS

Yeah?

GOD

Yeah. Nobody ever says, "Dear God, please increase this guy's pain by 75%." Never happens.

HOLY G

What about enemies? Don't people pray for you to smite their enemies?

GOD

Hardly ever anymore.

HOLY G

Really?

GOD

Really. People seem to have gotten nicer or something. I mean, in Old Testament times a guy wouldn't think twice about asking me to strike his enemies dead so he could steal their stuff. Which I would do, of course, if the spirit moved.

HOLY G

And I sure moved, didn't I.

GOD

I'll say. Those were the days. There's just not as much scope for me to do my work anymore.

JESUS

So, basically, nowadays it's a lot of begging - begging you to make things better.

GOD

Exactly. And then telling me how great I am when I do what they want.

HOLY G

What if you don't do what they want?

JESUS

Yeah, what if grandma dies?

GOD

Then it's all about how I just couldn't wait to get grandma into heaven. They call it "accepting my will" even if I didn't "will" anything.

HOLY G

So either way you win.

GOD

Exactly. I heal grandma, I get praised. I make grandma succumb to flesh eating disease, they let me off the hook. Not my fault. It's all for the best. My ways are higher than their ways, blah blah blah.

JESUS

No wonder you're such a megalomaniac.

GOD

I can do no wrong.

JESUS

It's kind of ironic though, isn't it?

GOD

How so?

JESUS

I mean, you're the eternally existing creator of the universe, all-seeing, all-knowing...

GOD

True.

JESUS

And yet this ordinary, middle-aged woman wants you to take her opinion into consideration. It's like she thinks you should consult her on the Pedro problem. Like maybe she's had an idea you haven't had.

GOD

That *is* ironic.

JESUS

I mean, seriously. You created eyeballs, I think you should be the one in charge. I mean, what if you actually listen to this Carol person and go with *her* plan instead of *your* plan. Who's probably got the better plan?

GOD

That would be me.

JESUS

Exactly. It's like she doesn't trust you to do the right thing, or even to know what the right thing is. So she has to point the right thing out and then beg you to do it.

GOD

When you say it like that it sounds a bit insulting. It makes me want to smite something actually.

JESUS

Oh I don't know. Her lack of perspective is kind of cute. It's like she thinks she knows what's best and she's going to tell the Almighty what that is and then grovel.

HOLY G

But you're a mind-reader -

JESUS

- *literally* -

HOLY G

- and yet it's like this Carol thinks you don't know her thoughts already - better than she does - or that even if you didn't know her thoughts, you couldn't possibly guess what she'd want.

GOD

I guess she wants to show that she really cares.

JESUS

But you already know she cares. She doesn't have to say anything and you know *exactly* how much.

HOLY G

Or how little.

JESUS

Right. It's not like God can't tell she's actually thinking "Better him than me."

HOLY G

Yeah, it's not like you hear her praying, "Give me Pedro's cancer, I'll take it."

GOD

I suppose she feels powerless - which she is...

JESUS

Exactly. But if she can get in cahoots with the Big Guy, then, bingo.

GOD

Well - prayer does lower blood pressure.

HOLY G

So do cats.

JESUS

So basically prayer -

HOLY G

And cats!

JESUS

- improve the health of the praying person, but not the sick guy.

HOLY G

Unless God decides to heal him.

JESUS

So ... can you heal Pedro?

GOD

Of course I can heal Pedro you douchebag.

JESUS

Are you going to?

HOLY G

Of course he's not. I mean, how fair would that be? You've got Pedro suffering with cancer and he has lots of people praying for him, versus another guy - Lenny - who has cancer with nobody praying for him - and you think God should heal the guy with the most friends? You think God should heal the most socially successful guy and punish the introvert?

JESUS

But God is merciful.

HOLY G

No, God is just.

GOD

I'm both!

JESUS AND HOLY G

You *can't* be both!

JESUS

If you show mercy to Pedro but not to Lenny you're not just.

HOLY G

And if you're just and treat them both the same, you're not merciful.

GOD

Sounds like my hands are tied.

JESUS

They can't be tied. You're omnipotent. You can do anything.

GOD

I can't defy logic. I can't make 2 plus 2 equal a bag of potatoes.

HOLY G

Could you make it equal a tub of hummus?

JESUS

Yeah, I'm starving. The last supper was 2,000 years ago you know.

HOLY G

And that was just bread and wine.

JESUS

I wouldn't even call it supper. I'd call it a snack.

HOLY G

The last snack.

JESUS

The terminal tea.

HOLY G

The omega munchies.

JESUS

Near-death nibbles is what Luke wanted to call it.

HOLY G

Pfft, that's terrible. You know, I don't think that guy was really a doctor. Not a PhD.

JESUS

I think he was just a guy with a black bag and a knife.

HOLY G

He had a white robe.

JESUS

We *all* had white robes, buddy.

GOD

Anyhoo, I've decided not to heal Pedro.

JESUS

Oh come on, have a heart.

GOD

No, I've decided I need to teach everyone involved a few lessons.

HOLY G

Like what?

GOD

The usuals. Patience, courage, forbearance - that sort of thing.

JESUS

Why bother?

GOD

What do you mean why bother?

JESUS

Because it's pointless. How long are any of these people going to live? 80, 90 years.

GOD

So?

JESUS

And how long is the afterlife? Forever.

GOD

So?

JESUS

So ... in the afterlife, qualities like patience and courage and forbearance -

HOLY G

- and resilience and restraint -

JESUS

- right - and, caution, prudence, fortitude -

HOLY G

- faith -

JESUS

- foresight -

HOLY G

- moderation -

JESUS

- wisdom - all that stuff is useless.

GOD

What do you mean it's useless?

JESUS

It's useless because nothing bad can happen in heaven.
It's a danger-free zone.

HOLY G

Why would you need courage if nothing bad can happen?

JESUS

Or foresight?

HOLY G

Or any of that stuff?

GOD

Moderation might be good. I don't want people pigging
out at the marriage supper of the lamb.

HOLY G

But what if they do? What are the consequences?

JESUS

Yeah, can you get fat in heaven?

GOD

Well it wouldn't exactly be heaven if you could get
fat, now, would it?

JESUS

That's my point. All that stuff you're supposedly
trying to teach people is useless in the afterlife.

HOLY G

Plus it often backfires.

JESUS

Yeah, you don't always teach people courage through
intolerable suffering.

HOLY G

You teach them to be scared shitless of intolerable suffering for the rest of their lives.

JESUS

You turn them into cowering wrecks.

HOLY G

That's because suffering's like torture that way.

JESUS

Unexpected, random torture.

HOLY G

Exactly.

GOD

So if I *did* heal Pedro, I could actually make him more afraid and less courageous than he was before.

JESUS

Right.

GOD

So that's another reason to let Pedro bugger off this mortal coil.

HOLY G

Good point.

JESUS

Can't you just kill him now and end his suffering?

GOD

Hmm. I guess I could have him crucified.

JESUS

Nobody gets crucified anymore.

GOD

Why not? It's a lot quicker than cancer.

HOLY G

How long were you on that cross anyway?

JESUS

Duh, I didn't have a watch.

GOD

Six hours.

HOLY G

Holy F!

JESUS

I know, right?

HOLY G

What actually killed you anyway? I mean, how does crucifixion actually kill a person?

GOD

It's what they call suspension trauma. Generally you asphyxiate or your heart gives out.

HOLY G

Yikes. Makes me glad I'm a ghost.

GOD

But, weirdly, in Jesus' case, that's not what happened.

HOLY G

Yeah? What happened to him?

GOD

Well, he hadn't been flossing -

HOLY G

- ooh, big mistake -

GOD

- and he had one hell of an abscess.

HOLY G

So an *infection* killed him.

GOD

It was pus. *Again*. Almost makes me wish I hadn't invented pus.

JESUS

Well crucifixion didn't exactly help!

GOD

But you would've died that afternoon anyway.

HOLY G

Ha! "And he had a gumboil for us under Pontius Pilate,
and suffered, and was buried ..."

JESUS

Listen, Beetlejuice -

HOLY G

Hey!

JESUS

No matter how it happened I still died for everyone's
sins, all right?

HOLY G

It's not the same.

JESUS

It's the same for me! I still end up in the tomb!

HOLY G

"I am the way, the tooth, and the life" - get it?

JESUS

Father! Tell him to stop it!

HOLY G

The tooth really did set you free!

JESUS

Father!

HOLY G

Abide in my tooth -

GOD

Christ almighty, that's enough. Now if you don't mind
I'd like to get back to work on the Pedro problem.

JESUS

I thought you weren't going to do anything about Pedro.

GOD

I've changed my mind.

JESUS

But you never change!

GOD

I *never* said that. Jesus! Who makes this stuff up anyway?

JESUS

Some guy who had a revelation from you.

GOD

Some guy who *said* he had a revelation from me.

JESUS

Wasn't that still small voice you?

GOD

How are you going to tell the difference? How does a guy know it's me talking and not just his own imagination? Hmm? It's not like I showed up at this guy's house -

HOLY G

- tent -

GOD

- tent - and said, "Oh, by the way, I never change. You might want to write that down."

JESUS

So how does revelation work then?

GOD

It doesn't work! Listen, all you've got is a bunch of alpha males who want to control everybody else, so they dream shit up, tell everyone I said it, hope lots of other people believe it which they always do because there's one born every minute, and then they set themselves up as authorities on all the shit they dreamed up. This gets passed on through generations of guys who love the sound of their own voice -

HOLY G

- they're called ministers -

JESUS

- ouch! -

GOD

- until you get people who are so credulous they'll believe just about any crazy idea that comes their way.

HOLY G

That's how we got Mormons.

JESUS

Good one! Anyway, what are you going to do? About Pedro I mean?

GOD

Well, your death's given me an idea.

JESUS

How so?

GOD

Pedro could die of something other than the thing that's supposed to kill him.

JESUS

Like what?

HOLY G

He could die after a courageous battle with a bus.

GOD

Actually, I'm thinking of giving him Falling Disease.

JESUS

What's Falling Disease?

GOD

That's when a guy feels perfectly fine when he steps off his 35th floor balcony -

HOLY G

- but then he feels increasingly unwell -

GOD

- and there's no time to call an ambulance.

JESUS

Sounds messy.

GOD

It's messier than crucifixion for sure.

HOLY G

But kinder than cancer!

JESUS

But what will Carol think?

GOD

Excuse me? Did Carol make the Horse Head Nebula?

JESUS

No.

HOLY G

Carol can barely make a decent piecrust.

GOD

Right. I think the guy who made the Horse Head Nebula can handle the Pedro problem, all right?

JESUS

But how are you going to make Pedro fall off his balcony?

GOD

Does he sleep walk?

HOLY G

Nah.

GOD

Does he have any enemies? Anybody want to rub out Pedro?

HOLY G

Nope.

JESUS

Does he like hummus?

GOD

What?

JESUS

I'm just thinking, you put a tub of hummus on the balcony railing, it starts to fall, Pedro goes after it and - wham.

HOLY G

What about the hummus?

JESUS

That's where you come in. You can fly, right?

HOLY G

You know I can.

JESUS

So you swoop in and grab the hummus.

HOLY G

Ah, I see what you're getting at.

JESUS

See? Clever, no?

GOD

Are you two plotting Pedro's death just so you can get some hummus?

JESUS

You make it sound like a bad thing.

GOD

It is a bad thing!

HOLY G

Oh come on! Remember Job? Remember how you destroyed a man over a bet with Satan?

GOD

Ha! OMG, that was hilarious. Okay, you got me.

JESUS

Could it be roasted red pepper?

HOLY G

Olives on the side?

JESUS

Could the oil be just like my mother?

GOD AND HOLY G

What?

Extra virgin. JESUS

Oh all right. GOD

Verily! Pwnd! JESUS

Okay, so - the hummus is on the railing. GOD

What?! HOLY G

Pedro's dragging his IV out the sliding door ... GOD

For Christ's sake, go! Go! JESUS

Oh, and could you drop this off at Carol's? GOD

What is it? HOLY G

It's a Mormon pamphlet. I'm thinking she should probably convert. GOD

Why? HOLY G

Better afterlife. Instead of just a mansion, Pedro gets a whole planet. JESUS

Carol would like that. GOD

(smiling, pats God on back) HOLY G

You're an old softie, you know that? Always thinking of others.

Urg, just go, would you? Go and grin no more! JESUS

HOLY G

I'm thinking of not going at all now.

GOD

The hummus is going, going...

HOLY G

All right, all right!

(Holy G vanishes in puff of smoke)

(God and Jesus sit back in a leisurely way. Pause)

GOD

So ... do you want some hummus?

(pulls tub out from behind back)

JESUS

(laughs, claps hands)

Roasted red pepper! My favourite!

GOD

(spoken with authority)

I know.

(pulls out pita)

JESUS

(dipping, taking a bite)

You know, besides you letting me get crucified, I love being your only begotten son.

(chewing)

I've never asked you this but

(swallows)

who is Holy G anyway?

GOD

You know ... that's the one thing I don't know. I have no idea.

(Jesus and God laugh together, eat hummus)