

## **A Proof That Keith (Your Humble Professor) Is God By God**

1. A conditional statement is false if and only if its antecedent is true and its consequent is false.
2.  $Z =$  If  $Z$  is true, then Keith is God. (That is, let “ $Z$ ” be the statement “If  $Z$  is true, then Keith is God.”)
3.  $Z$  is a conditional statement.

Therefore,

4. If  $Z$  is true, then either (a) “ $Z$  is true” is true and “Keith is God” is true, (b) “ $Z$  is true” is false and “Keith is God” is true”, or (c) “ $Z$  is true” is false and “Keith is God” is false (from 1, 2, and 3).
5. It is not the case that (if  $Z$  is true, then “ $Z$  is true” is false and “Keith is God” is true).
6. It is not the case that (if  $Z$  is true, then “ $Z$  is true” is false and “Keith is God” is false).

Therefore,

7. If  $Z$  is true, then “ $Z$  is true” is true and “Keith is God” is true (from 4, 5, and 6, Impl, Assoc, Com, Impl, DeM, DN, Com, Simp, Impl, DeM, DN, Com, Simp, Conj, DeM, DS, Impl).

Therefore,

8. If  $Z$  is true, then “Keith is God” is true (from 7, Impl, Dist, Com, Simp, Impl).

Therefore,

9. If  $Z$  is false, then “ $Z$  is true” is true and “Keith is God” is false (from 1, 2, and 3).

Therefore,

10. If Z is false, then “Z is true” is true (from 9, Impl, Dist, Simp, Impl).

Therefore,

11. If Z is false, then Z is true (from 10).

Therefore,

12. Z is true (from 11, Impl, DN, Taut).

Therefore,

13. “Keith is God” is true (from 8 and 12, MP).

Therefore,

14. Keith is God (from 13). Q.E.D.

As far as I know, this argument originated with Jonathan Kandell, who, at the time (April 1987), was a graduate student in philosophy at the University of Arizona. My contribution is to reconstruct and formalize his argument.

On the assumption that you reject the conclusion (proposition 14) and accept the validity of the argument, which premise—1, 2, 3, 5, or 6—is false? Premise 2 is a stipulation; it tells us what “Z” represents. Premises 3, 5, and 6 seem beyond question. That leaves premise 1, which, horror of horrors, every logic textbook sets forth as a truth. (See, e.g., Irving M. Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic*, 12th ed. [Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2005], 325.) So either the textbooks are wrong or—gasp!—Keith is God. But *surely* the textbooks aren’t wrong; therefore, Keith is God.

Here’s a meta-argument with the same conclusion:

1. Either Keith is God or the argument is invalid or at least

one of the premises is false.

2. The argument is valid (i.e., it's not the case that the argument is invalid).

3. All of the premises are true (i.e., it's not the case that at least one of the premises is false).

Therefore,

4. Keith is God (from 1, 2, and 3).

This meta-argument is valid and all of its premises are true; therefore, its conclusion is true; therefore, Keith is God. We keep coming back to the same profound (and, I must admit, profoundly *satisfying*) truth. Incidentally, since Keith is God and Keith exists, God exists. This result will please theists, who have long sought a proof of God's existence.