GOD 1. There is a God. There is no God. True. And also true. But this is my personal favourite - there are four kinds of God. The first is straightforward, it created the world - but only the Big Bang. This God is simply a physical law, as well as nature; at most it also provides us with the concept of a universal consciousness. I like that idea. Then there is the second God - the (external) God of religions, which - as a matter of fact - is neither real nor true. I can't follow a religion; religious beliefs are mind-construed, delusional, manipulative and - as they become the devil's domain - evil. It is this God in whose name atrocities are perpetrated. The third kind of God (also a product of the mind) is at the heart of institutional beliefs which result in religious institutions that may form the civic bedrock of a society*; in regard to the number two and three kinds of Gods, I'm an atheist. The fourth type of God I can believe in: It is the seat in us of compassion, goodness & integrity - a belief that guides & comforts us and gives us strength.

God (non-religious, scientific)
1. the energy or physical law that underlies the universe

God (religious)
2. the kind - external - being, believed in monotheistic religions to be our all-powerful, all-knowing creator

God (civic, social, communal)
3. the concept humans develop to provide moral laws as well as religion-based altruism for their communities

God (spiritual)
4. the device used by believers to find comfort and peace within - with prayer, contemplation and meditation

dev·il
1. the being believed to be the enemy of God, who rules hell and as Satan personifies evil, sin and depravity
2. the concept that epitomises irrationality and delusion, where the fundamentalist mind does evil in God's name
3. the device used by humans to externalise evil, in order to avoid having to take responsibility for their actions

re·li·gion
people's devotional beliefs about the existence of God and his divine involvement in creation and human life

a·the·ists - don't believe in the almighty God of religions
ag·nos·tics - believe it will never be known if God exists

All religions and concepts of God are mind-constructs. When mind is at its best they are benevolent, where they provide us with worthy, ethical ideals (… all of which, incidentally, are also available outside of religions).

But when mind is at its worst, religions are a cesspool of ignorance and God turns into the devil. The results are fanaticism and war (… which, when perpetrated by atheists like Hitler, stem from religion-like fervour too**).

Is it possible, then, to prove or disprove the existence of God? For the believer this is a rhetorical question - and seeing they derive so much comfort from their belief, clearly some sort of inner, personal God indeed is real.***

But there is no evidence that an outer God - one who is on hand to have prayers heard and acted upon - exists. On the contrary, ample evidence of the non-existence of God are the daily killings of innocents in war zones.

Every time a believer's plea for help goes un-answered, the existence of a caring God is in doubt. The most shocking examples are people who seek refuge from violence in a 'house of God', only to still get massacred.

Furthermore, I do suspect that if an outer God existed, we would live in a radically different world. Why would such a God give no evidence of his existence? To me non-existing evidence of God proves his non-existence.

*Regarding religion, there is its cultural aspect of wonderful architecture, art and supportive communities; I like all of that.

**One favourite slogan of the Nazis was 'Gott ist mit uns' (God is with us). Probably most wars are excused that way.

***The ontological proof: If we can conceive of God, then God exists; I think this proof is valid as regards our inner God.

When asked, 'do you believe in God?' the only reasonable reply is another question: 'What do you mean by God?'

Once we have established that God has different meaning for everyone, we are on the way to a good answer.