

Below is an actual email inquiry from a visitor to our website. For privacy reasons, the individual's identity is not revealed. However, skeptics may identify with the concerns expressed by this atheist and hopefully find my response helpful.

*"I am an atheist and I think one of the best things about the USA is our Constitution and the freedom of religion which it allows. It may explain why we don't have such terrible religious fighting within our borders as so many other countries do. I have seen no proof of the existence of any God or Gods, but if evidence were presented I would be open to changing my mind. "It's in an old book" is not evidence.*

*My main purpose of writing is to ask about, and comment on, your faith and how it informs your, and your company's, ethical outlook. Everyone would like to do business with honest people. However, one does not have to be a Christian (or believer in any other faith) to be an ethical and moral person. I'm not saying that you're implying that you need to be a Christian to behave in an ethical and moral way, and I hope you realize that you don't need to be.*

*One thing I do know about people of many different faiths is that there seems to be a high level of hypocrisy in what they say versus what they do. So, can I ask you a personal question? Do you support President Trump? If so, I call hypocrisy."*

Jonathan Sisk's response:

Thank you for visiting our website and learning more about our company. I am curious, are you an Audio Authority customer? What brought you to our website?

It would seem we have some things in common. We both revere the US Constitution and its protection of basic human rights. We also share faith in our beliefs, though they are obviously different. Your faith is that there is no creator, no life after physical death, and that what we know of our world and our own existence is the result of random events over time. My faith is that there is a creator, compelling evidence of design and order to the universe, and that life transcends physical death. Neither worldview can be proven scientifically and therefore each requires faith.

I do not agree that there is no evidence for a creator outside the Bible and I would never presume to base a discussion with a non-believer on the authority of scriptures. That would make no sense and go nowhere. For me, the evidence found in the design complexity of the natural world is not only sufficient, it is overwhelming. Attributing it to unguided random events defies everything I can observe and for me would require infinitely more faith than belief in God.

I also agree with you that moral, ethical behavior is not limited to folks with religious beliefs. And I agree with you that human nature is such that there is often a discrepancy between what we say we believe and our behavior. That is a human failing that is not limited to religious issues.

For Christians, our model for behavior is Jesus. His standard for behavior is perfection, not good deeds outweighing bad ones. When questioned about the greatest commandment, his response distilled historic Jewish laws down to two broad concepts. Love the Lord your God with all your heart (summarizing the first 4 commandments about our relationship to God) and love your neighbor as yourself (summarizing the last 6 commandments about our relationships with other people). God's standard for behavior is perfection, which is to be without sin. (I realize sin is a relevant concept only in the context of God's existence. Without God right/wrong is defined by power or consensus.) Regardless one's level of devotion to God, a sinless life is not possible and therefore the need for redemption to restore fellowship with a Holy creator God.

So how does all this relate to business? God's standards for how we treat and deal with others has its foundations in his commandments. They are the bedrock on which all ethical behavior is built – they are

true for all people, all places, for all time. So, obviously dealing with others in an honest manner and providing the best goods and services possible is consistent with these beliefs. Treating our associates fairly, as valued by God is another aspect. Of course, one can intellectually assent to these principals of behavior without professing Christian beliefs or seeking relationship with God, as many have for centuries. Another aspect to Christian principals in business is that we believe that we are called by God to meaningful work as a means to bless others. The value that we bring to the market is testimony to our beliefs, the nobility of fruitful work, the respect we show others, and the value of all people imputed to them by God as part of his creation. As an intellectual proposition, life is either created by God and therefore sacred, or it is not and therefore has only the value others assign to it.

I hope this answers your questions about my faith. If you are truly seeking evidence of God, you will find it as many atheists before you have. (Check out Lee Strobel's search for evidence) Our time on earth is very short. In the end what you or I think about these things has no impact on what is actually true. Reality is not swayed by our opinions about it. Truth is exclusive and separate from what I think or feel about it. So, continue to seek the truth with an open heart and mind.

Regarding you last question about my political leanings, politicians come and go. They are not relevant to my relationship to Jesus and how I run my business. I generally find politics discouraging and try to focus on those things that God has actually entrusted to my stewardship, where I can make a difference. Those are the things for which I will have to ultimately give an account one day.