

## **I've Never Met a Successful Believer**

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<http://kalinbooks.com/2010/never-met-successful-believer/>

I've come to the realization that never once have I met a person who truly believed in God or spirits AND had quality life-management skills. I've been trying for a while now and I can't think of a single person. I may be overlooking someone, but no matter how hard I try I can't think of who that might be.

That seems like a wild statement, and potentially offensive, and it does come with a couple caveats and definitions, but yes, I've never met a single successful person who truly believed in God, spirits or magic. I'm sure they're out there. I've seen a few on TV (Sarah Palin and George W. Bush come to mind) but personally I have never actually met one. However, I have met many people who truly believe in God or spirits.

I define life-management skills as: 1. You're not in prison. 2. You're able to survive without the assistance of welfare, homeless shelters or other handouts. 3. you don't have any current debilitating mental issues such as chronic depression, extreme anger, unmanageable stress, or thoughts of suicide. 4. If you have children you see them more than once a month and they are not in prison or on their way to prison. That's it. That's really all I expect from a normal, functional human being. It doesn't seem like much to ask, but somehow for most of the true spiritual believers I've met, these things are major hurdles.

I have met a few religious people who had decent life management skills and while weren't necessarily successful, at least they could get a job and pay their own way in the world. I've even met a couple (though they are pretty few and far between) successful religious individuals. However, these were not true believers because they kept their religious beliefs carefully segregated from their real-world decision making processes and never actually applied their faith to real-world situations.

For example, I had a Muslim friend that I worked with a couple years ago. We would carpool an hour and a half to work so he had a chance to go into detail about his beliefs. He would talk and talk about the Quran and Allah and traditions and whatnot. He stopped five times a day to pray in the middle of work, he only ate halal (which basically meant vegetarian or raw fish) and would practically starve himself during Ramadan, but when it came time to actually sit down and work on code architecture and get our job done, his religion was absolutely gone, as though it had never existed. I worked with him for years and he was probably the most devoted religious individual I've ever met, but never once did he propose a coding architecture based on something Allah had told him. Not once did he refer to the Quran as evidence that we should pick one technology over another. Not once did he suggest hiring or not hiring someone based on their spirituality. Not once did he suggest praying before meetings or development sessions as though it would improve our chance of success. Not once did he suggest a program feature based on something he'd felt in prayer. When his wife wanted to become a doctor he supported her, saying that it just made logical sense that women should have equal rights. When I asked him if I would burn in hell for not being a Muslim, he said no, as long as I'm a good person. In essence, he was an atheist in all practical respects and was only a Muslim on an emotional level when it didn't conflict with logic, reason or compassion. He went through all the motions of being a Muslim, but essentially, deep down

inside, he was an atheist because he rarely applied his religion to the real world.

I think the majority of religious individuals are like this and don't recognize the fact that they are not being true to their religion and that they can't call themselves true believers. They choose to manipulate their religion to fit their logic instead of the other way around. These people do okay for themselves, but at the same time, they are showing their direct support to the *actual* believers who, as an example, make career choices based on what God tells them in prayer, then can't figure out why they hate their job, or, as another example, go on killing sprees or jump off bridges in the name of Jesus.

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In [tomorrow's post](#) I'm gonna start going through some quick examples of the true believers I've met.

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