

Highland

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Were you hurt by believers to cause you to turn away from God? I've certainly been disappointed by some believers over the years and that discouragement was a factor in my slowly disintegrating faith. But I chose to leave faith for good, honest reasons. I didn't walk out the door of the Church carrying a bagful of bitterness.

If there is no Creator, where did the universe come from? Good question. Let's discuss it. Scientists have some interesting theories to consider. None of us was there, including the writers of Genesis, so maybe this will always be an open question.

Can you prove there is no God? Obviously not. Re-framing the question: "Can you prove there is no Santa Claus,

Bigfoot, Tooth Fairy, Nessie, Unicorn or Alien in a UFO?" We can't prove a negative, so it's left to the devoted believers in any of these to present their own "proofs."

How can you be a moral person without God? Look around. There are countless people in our communities who are non-religious, who are living good, ethical lives. It's difficult to see that people of faith, or of one particular faith, are more ethical or moral just because they believe.

Isn't life meaningless without God, with no purpose? If this life is all we have, I think it's precious. We bring meaning or purpose through our personal choices and actions.

What about miracles? Amazing, extraordinary things happen. Most of what I've heard or seen that people call "miraculous" is strange or wonderful, inviting investigation and rational explanation. Yet, I've never seen any evi-

dence for a supernatural miracle. And I wonder why some believers appear to need miracles (proofs?). I'm more with "Doubting Thomas," who needed to see in order to believe.

What about Jesus? He was a wandering teacher in a far away place a very long time ago. He taught many good things such as love your neighbor and show compassion. He got in regular arguments with self-righteous religious leaders. If the story is not a legend, he was a human being who was made a god—his simple instructions and way of life were transformed into a powerful religious institution.

You don't have any hope after death? Not really. I hope I'm remembered, that I've made some difference. I value life here, now, because this may be all we get.

What would make you believe in God? I'm not sure anything would "make" me believe in one god or another.

Maybe a voice from the sky, a message across the internet, an amputee have an arm or leg grow back. An invisible person becoming visible might do it. Then again, is that "God" and if so, which one?

Don't you simply replace God with Nature? In some ways, I think so. Yet, in my way of thinking, Nature (the Universe) is everything and has no personality—Nature is not a "Being" or a divinity to worship.

I appreciate when someone is genuinely interested in my thoughts and opinions. Whether we believe or not, there's no need to fear asking questions, of others or ourselves.

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