

## Can Christians have non-Christian business partners?

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One question Christian business professionals regularly wrestle with is whether a Christian should enter into a business partnership with a non-believer. This Christian business partnership mystery is one full of opinions and experiences, so we decided to tap into some of our favourite Christian business bloggers to see what they had to say about the topic. What do *you* think; can Christians have a business partnership with non-Christians?



**Bradley J. Moore, [Shrinking the Camel](#) | Yes**

Some Christians tend to look for black and white dogmatic answers to every question, whether in business, family, or life, believing that the bible (or some Christian mega-author interpreting the bible), has the answer for every dynamic situation. Christians = Good. Non-Christians = Bad.

This is not realistic. In fact, I believe this is limiting. Life is more complex and subtle than that. Business is filled with gray areas that don't provide a flat biblical yes-no framework. What is required is experience, integrity, character, and thoughtful wisdom.

The marketplace is filled with "partnering" opportunities – with vendors, suppliers, customers, strategic partners, etc. If you take a "Never" answer to this question, then you would close off doing business with just about everyone who wasn't a professed Evangelical Christian. Which is a ridiculous way to do business.

When considering partnership in the sense of shared ownership in a business venture, then I would say it is equally important to look to the character, integrity, ethics, values, etc. of the prospective partner, as well as their shared vision of how you will "do" business. That will be a greater indication of the potential match. And – news flash! – Evangelical Christians aren't the only ones in America that possess values, integrity and character when doing business. I have great admiration for many business folks who, well, I don't have any idea if they are Christian, or Agnostic, Jewish or Hindu or whatever. And I don't really care. I know them by their fruit, and they are men and women of integrity and character. This is the type of person who I want to do business with, and can only be determined by watching their behaviour, their track record over time in responding to all sorts of situations.

One would be naïve to think that just because a business partner is Christian means they will therefore avoid all potential trouble. I have witnessed plenty of Christian partnerships go down the toilet and make a mess of things – embezzlement, laziness, sexual indiscretions, sharp disagreements, lawsuits, divorce. Soured relationships and sin are not exclusive domain to non-Christians. Come on.

Life and business are far more complex than drawing a line and putting “Christian is good” on one side, and “Non-Christian is bad” on the other. Character and integrity are more practical issues to consider in business situations. If someone is reducing every decision to a mindless reference to over-simplified interpretations of biblical “rules,” then I would say they are not thinking.



David Rupert, Red Letter Believers | Never

No. More than a moral code book, the Bible is actually a practical guidebook for successful living. For those of us who have lived by its teachings, we find that we reap everyday blessings. Things just work better when you do it by the book. Go figure.

So when I first read the words, “don’t be unequally yoked with unbelievers,” I dutifully added them to the long list of commands for my life. But these words are meant not to just keep me “clean,” they are meant to help us be successful in life. — they are there for my own good. You see, when I sign my name on the dotted line next to another name, it means that as a partner, I am sharing the consequences of that venture. Through the good, the bad and the ugly — we’re a team.

The problem is that when the other person doesn’t share the same worldview. On the surface, our outlook on profit, the competition, employees and a host of other principles might seem to be the same, but are drawn from different wells. Why we work, who we work for and how we treat the world around us define us. These ventures often start good, but almost always end up badly. That’s when the command becomes just good sense. And while I can be friends with a non-Christian, I would never partner.



Mike St. Pierre, The Daily Saint | It Depends

A lot depends on your level of partnership. For example, if a Church wants to rent out its basement to an AA group, while AA isn't strictly a Christian group, their commitment to values is clearly evident. Being "in partnership" on that level would be a reasonable commitment for both sides. If on the other hand two persons wanted to start a business and only one was overtly Christian, it would be helpful if the other had a principled world view, etc. A person can be honest and not be a Christian.



Sue Miley, [Christian Business Crossroads](#) | It Depends

The question better stated would read "Should Christians have non-Christian business partners"? God uses us in all ways. Our primary purpose as Christians is to make disciples of all nations. God can use us to this purpose through all of life, including our business. Fundamentally, I believe it is important for businesses to be built on a foundation of Christian values. If the partner we choose, Christian or non-Christian, will lead us away from, or fight against, a business foundation that is built on Christian values than this is not the partner for a Christian in business. However, If a partner has like values and you have a chance to set an example for how to follow God in all areas of your life, then God may work through you with a non-Christian partner

Financial success is not the only goal of a business. Bringing others to Christ would certainly be a worthier Kingdom metric, as I have called measurements of a Christian in business. Scripture tells us we should be equally yoked in marriage as this is necessary I believe to become "one" with your spouse. And although there is significant wisdom in being equally yoked in all forms of partnership, I believe it depends on the goal of the partnership. In the end, a Christian can have a non-Christian partner if they are steadfast in their faith and it will not subvert from the end goal; that being following God in the partnership.

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