



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 6, 2016

## Atheists' Billboard War on Christmas Rages On

Like clockwork, the atheists are right on schedule, targeting Christmas with yet another billboard campaign, this time with a message encouraging people to skip church this holiday season.

In a press release from the American Atheists, the organization behind the billboard campaign, the group explains that its goal is to celebrate an “atheist Christmas” and remove the alleged stigma that atheists in the United States experience.



“It is important for people to know religion has nothing to do with being a good person, and that being open and honest about what you believe — and don’t believe — is the best gift you can give this holiday season,” said David Silverman, president of American Atheists. “More and more Americans are leaving religion, but we still have work to do when it comes to fighting the stigma many atheists face.”

According to the press release, billboards with two different messages have been launched nationwide. One parodies President-elect Donald Trump’s “Make America Great Again” slogan with the message, “Make Christmas Great Again. Skip Church.” Another billboard shows a text exchange between two young women, in which one tells the other that she will be skipping church this Christmas and that her parents will “get over it.” The billboard reads, “Atheist Christmas. The more the merrier,” and includes an image of the girl’s horrified mother.

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Ironically, the mother and daughter Colorado Springs residents featured in the text message billboard are devout Christians who were devastated to learn that their images were used to spread an atheistic message, reports the *Colorado Springs Gazette*. Candy Burns and her daughter Cheyenne didn’t know what the stock photos would be licensed for when they took them four years ago. When Burns discovered that she and her daughter were featured on the billboard, she was outraged. “Normally, I could care less, but this hits a little under the belt for me,” Burns said Monday. “I’m not an atheist. I love the Lord. My daughter is not an atheist. I have a life in Christ.”

Unfortunately, because she signed the release, there’s likely nothing she can do legally, but she hopes that the billboard will be taken down. “If they want to sit there and not believe in God, that’s on them,” Burns said. “But for them to take a Christian mother and daughter and put them on a billboard, I think that’s low. Why don’t they use their own people?”

Young people in particular are the intended targets of this year’s campaign, as underscored by the text message billboard. The press release states, “A recent survey from the Public Religion Research Institute shows that a quarter of Americans and almost 40 percent of young people are atheist or non-religious. This billboard campaign is specifically aimed at that growing population, especially those who no longer believe but still occasionally attend religious services or call themselves religious despite their lack of belief.”



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The group contends that the billboards should encourage closet atheists to come out to their families and prove to them that you do not need religion or faith to be moral. “The only way to remove the stigma is to show our friends and family that we are the same kind, loving and compassionate people they’ve always known us to be,” said Nick Fish, national program director for American Atheists. “This billboard campaign will be a starting point for that conversation in communities where atheists don’t always have a voice.”

This year’s campaign targets Colorado Springs, Colorado; Lynchburg, Virginia; Augusta, Georgia; Shreveport, Louisiana; and Georgetown, South Carolina for the entire month of December.

Just why the atheists think it’s so important to make their disbelief so vocal is unclear. Blogster Ben Witherington addressed the absurdity of this need to proclaim their absence of faith in 2007 when he wrote, “I mean when is the last time you found people ranting and raving for so long about something or someone who, according to them, doesn’t even exist? I don’t see people writing angry diatribes shouting ‘Unicorns aren’t real — get over it!’ In fact I don’t even see many Grinches writing best sellers entitled ‘Santa Claus is a myth.’”

And yet the Christmas billboard campaign is nothing new and has become what the group calls “an annual holiday tradition.”

In 2010, for example, the campaign included a highly visible \$20,000 billboard just outside the Lincoln Tunnel in Weehawken, New Jersey, that depicted the Nativity scene and read, “You KNOW it’s a Myth. This season, celebrate reason.” The group claimed that the sign was designed “to encourage existing atheists who are going through the motions of celebrating Christmas to stop.”

In 2011, the American Atheists posted a similar billboard, costing approximately \$25,000, depicting a variety of images, including that of Jesus, Santa Claus, and the Devil. The sign read, “37 million Americans know MYTHS when they see them. What do you see?” Again, the group claimed the billboard’s purpose was to “call out” closet atheists.

The 2012 billboard campaign included a billboard in New York City’s Times Square that read, “Keep the Merry! Dump the Myth!” with the word “merry” accompanied by a photo of Santa and the word “myth” below a picture of a Jesus statue.

The 2013 campaign asked “Who needs Christ during Christmas?” while the 2014 and 2015 campaigns encouraged people to skip church similar to this year’s billboards.

Meanwhile, the American Atheists’ charges that Jesus is a myth undermine any claim to reason the group attempts to advance. Even among groups that do not accept Jesus Christ as the Messiah, such as Jews and Muslims, as well as among historians, Jesus Christ has been accepted as a living human being. Harry Martin of the *North American Investigative Journal* wrote, “The fact is that many of [the Bible’s] points have been proven historically correct. Roman historians, Jewish historians, the finding of the Gnostic materials at Nag Hammadi and now the finding of Caiaphas’ burial cave establishes an historical fact that Jesus lived and died in a time and a place described in the New Testament.”

As the existence of Jesus Christ is incontrovertible, one would think that atheists should at the very least view the celebration of His birthday in the same vein as celebrating the birth of Martin Luther King or Abraham Lincoln.

Unfortunately for Christians, they do not, and each year, the Christmas season is tainted by the presence of these billboards.



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What's more ironic is that atheism has become its own religion in and of itself, with its own rituals. Groups such as the American Atheists organize like-minded individuals who share similar belief systems, erect foundations, stage marches, and plan retreats, and yet pretend they are somehow different from a church.

Moreover, atheists' claims that their efforts are really attempts to have "reason" rule the season come off *unreasonably* — more an effort to befuddle than illuminate. For instance, they claim that people can be moral without God, yet without God there can be no absolute right and wrong, meaning their "morality" is merely based on accepted social conventions, nothing more. And those conventions have room for change, change that could allow or even laud any behavior. In looking at the not-too-distant past, many American Indian tribes celebrated exceptional thieves, as do many gypsies today. That could happen again under atheist moral codes. Consider also that even in our enlightened day and age, many Americans claim that determinations about which humans get to live or die should be a matter for government to decide, and if the sanctity of human life is a judgment call, nothing is off the table.

Lastly, the entire premise of their billboards is somewhat specious because the *best scientific evidence suggests the likelihood of the presence of God*, not the [absence of God](#).

And while the group takes such issue with Christianity, its members see nothing wrong with celebrating Christmas, or at least, a bastardized version of it. "We celebrate Christmas in pretty much the same way everyone else does," Fish told KSLA. "We have a tree. We give gifts. We have a big meal. We hang out with the people that we love. Those things have nothing to do with religion. Christianity and religion do not have a monopoly on having a great meal and spending time with people you love."

A Christmas without Christ? Surely a group that claims to espouse reason recognizes there's no logic in that.



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