



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 29, 2010

## American Atheists Target Christmas in Billboard

The American Atheists have targeted the Christmas holiday in a billboard they purchased on Route 495 outside the Lincoln Tunnel in North Bergen, New Jersey. The \$20,000 billboard depicts the Nativity scene, and reads, "You KNOW it's a Myth. This season, celebrate reason."



The [website](#) for the American Atheists describes the group's mission:

Statistics show that nearly 50 million Americans are atheists. Some use names like freethinker, agnostic or humanist to describe or modify their position, but atheism (the absence of a belief in a deity) is broad, and encompasses all those terms. If you don't have an active belief in a god, you're an atheist. It's a very good thing!

Millions of atheists are *closeted*, choosing to go along to get along, and feigning religion to their friends, family, and coworkers. American Atheists understands the pressure to fit in, but we maintain that for people to love you, they must know the real you.

We also assure you that, like every other person in this country, *you know FAR more atheists than you think.*

American Atheists has been fighting for atheist civil liberties since 1963. Our goal is equality for atheists. We want laws to be applied evenly (which mandates a total separation of church and state), and the elimination of the societal and political stigmas of being, loving, or representing an atheist.

According to *The Blaze*, "The group says the billboard is not designed to convert Christians to atheism. Rather, Dave Silverman, a spokesman for the American Atheists, says the sign is designed to encourage existing atheists who are going through the motions of celebrating Christmas to stop."

In his appearance on [Fox News](#), Silverman explained that the billboard has two aims. The first is to target "closet atheists" — those who participate in Christian activities while remaining unconvinced in their faith.

He continues, "The other part of the billboard is to call Christians out on their own history. Christmas is not the first nor the fifth nor the tenth holiday that places a god in the winter solstice. Many religions have placed their gods to be born on the winter solstice. Christianity is not unique in this subject and people need to understand that while Christmas is a Christian holiday, the season belongs to everyone." Silverman indicates that Christians were specifically targeted in this advertisement because Christians



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are the primary “offenders” in this case, as they insist upon saying “Merry Christmas” as opposed to “Happy Holidays” or other innocuous, non-Christian expressions.

While Silverman attempted to present the billboard as a defense of winter solstice and not an attack on Christianity, Fox News host David Briggs recited back to Silverman his own less subtle statements found at [NorthJersey.com](#): “If the religious right wants a war on Christmas, we’re going to make sure they know what one looks like.”

To this, Silverman defensively remarked, “We haven’t started this war. We’ve been fighting this war for decades.”

He continued, “Every decade, we say, ‘You can’t break the law.’ Christians have been breaking the law for decades. They try to put their Christ on public land and we say, ‘No, that’s illegal,’ and then we’re the aggressors. We’re the bad guys. They break the law, and we say ‘you can’t break the law’ and all of a sudden, we’re the bad guys, and we’re immoral.”

The American Atheists are now under fire for the controversial billboard from local religious communities.

The anti-Christmas billboard is just one of many erected to promote atheism. Earlier this year, the [United Coalition of Reason](#) spent \$100,000 on billboards that read, “Are you good without God? Millions are,” which were posted nationwide. According to the group, the purpose of the billboards was to unite nonbelievers and increase the visibility of atheists in the community. The Coalition also asserted that they simply wanted to emphasize that one could be moral without believing in God.

Similar billboards were found throughout the country. In [Oklahoma](#), for example, the local atheist group called “Coalition of Reason” posted billboards that read, “Don’t believe in God? Join the club.” The group’s coordinator Nick Singer admitted, “The billboard was designed to get a little bit of a response, but it’s not meant to be directly insulting. It’s just a sign to like-minded people that we are here.”

In 2009, enormous signs plastered on the side of New York City buses indicated, “You don’t have to believe in God to be a moral or ethical person.”

Overall, the messages have been fairly innocuous as they encourage morality amongst those who do not attribute their moral conscience to God. However, the Christmas billboards posted by American Atheists directly attack a vital tenet of the Christian faith, therefore setting them apart from the other billboards posted by atheist organizations.

Perhaps what is most ironic is the American Atheists’ assertion that the birth of Jesus Christ is a myth. 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* writes, “Though the New Testament has many historical errors, the fact is that many of its 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, 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 spirituality of Christmas is chipped away, revealing a celebration that’s about nothing more than commercialism.



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