

Atheist Bus Ads Meet With Christian Resistance

Call it a battle of the buses. Fort Worth, Texas, is the scene of a showdown between a group of atheists and a God-loving businessman on wheels.

Metroplex Atheists, part of the Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition for Reason, paid for ads on city buses that read, "Millions of people are good without God."

Each ad features the words displayed over an image of an American flag made up of the faces of real atheist and agnostic people. Metroplex Atheists' goal with the campaign is to comfort nonbelievers who feel alone during the Christmas season.

"We want to tell people they are not alone," Terry McDonald, chairman of the Metroplex Atheists, told the *New York Times*. "People don't realize there are other atheists. All you hear around here is, "Where do you go to church?"

But Heath Hill, a local businessman, has arranged for one of his media trucks to follow the bus wherever it goes. The media truck offers a message that reads, "2.1 Million People Are Good With God" across the top of the truck. A message underneath shows a globe in a man's hands and the message "I still love you, God."

Though McDonald's effort to comfort his fellow atheists is sincere enough, the reaction he's getting from religious groups is vehement, including boycotting buses and lobbying the Fort Worth Transportation Authority to ban religious ads on city transportation. Supported by fellow businessmen, Hill decided to take a different approach: Sharing the love of God.

"We just wanted to reach out to them and let them know about

God's love," Hill told the *New York Times*. "We have gotten some pretty nasty e-mails and phone calls from atheists. But it's really just about the love of God."

The United Coalition for Reason isn't stopping in Fort Worth. The group has placed similar transit ads this year in Detroit, Northwest Arkansas, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., as well as billboards in Austin, Texas; Des Moines, Iowa; Louisville, Ky.; New Orleans; Oklahoma City; Jacksonville, Fla.; St. Augustine; Fla.; St. Petersburg, Fla.; Tampa, Fla.; Tucson, Ariz.; Sacramento, Calif.; St. Louis; and Seattle.

Read the rest of the story and see pictures of the buses in the *New York Times* article.

(your take? Should Christians go on the attack through local government to ban the atheist buses or take Hill's approach with messages about the love of God? Let me know in the comment box below.