



already gone

*Why your kids will quit church
and what you can do to stop it*

KEN HAM & BRITT BEEMER
WITH TODD HILLARD



by Ken Ham and Britt Beemer on October 13, 2011

Table of Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Part 1: An Epidemic on Our Hands](#)
 - [Already Gone](#)
 - [Sunday School Syndrome](#)
 - [Not What You'd Expect](#)
 - [The Short Road to Irrelevance](#)
- [Part 2: Solutions Within Our Grasp](#)
 - [The Ready Defense](#)
 - [The Real Deal](#)
 - [Welcome to the Revolution](#)
- [Appendices](#)

Already Gone

Statistics reveal a huge disconnect taking place between our children and their church experience.

Nationwide polls and denominational reports are showing that the next generation is calling it quits on the traditional church. And it's not just happening on the nominal fringe; it's happening at the core of the faith.

In the first scientific study of its kind, the "Beemer Report" reveals startling facts discovered through 20,000 phone calls and detailed surveys of a thousand 20–29 year olds who used to attend evangelical churches on a regular basis, but have since left it behind.

The results are shocking:

- Those who faithfully attend Sunday School are more likely to leave the church than those who do not.
- Those who regularly attend Sunday School are more likely to believe that the Bible is less true.
- Those who regularly attend Sunday School are actually more likely to defend that abortion and gay marriage should be legal.
- Those who regularly attend Sunday School are actually more likely to defend premarital sex.

In this powerful book, popular author Ken Ham and consumer behavior research/analyst C. Britt Beemer combine to reveal trends that must be dealt with now... before we lose another generation!

The trends are frightening, but *Already Gone* shows how to win back our families, our churches, and our world!

Dedications

My parents, Elvin and Margaret Beemer, always told me they would rather see a sermon than hear one. My good friend Harold Anderson endured many challenges in recent years, but as each obstacle arose, his faith soared. I want to acknowledge and dedicate this book to Harold and to his enduring faith.

—Britt Beemer

I praise the Lord for the godly legacy of my parents who trained me to stand uncompromisingly and unapologetically on the authority of the Word of God. This book is not only a challenge from the authors, but from godly parents concerning what each one of us are doing toward preserving that godly legacy for subsequent generations.

Special thanks to my dear friends Jon and Sue Jones for allowing me sanctuary in their home to write my section of this book. ...

And for the AiG donor who provided the funds for this valuable research.

—Ken Ham

About the Authors and Collaborator

Ken Ham

The president/CEO and founder of Answers in Genesis-U.S. and the highly acclaimed Creation Museum, Ken Ham is one of the most in-demand Christian speakers in North America. Ham, a native Australian now residing near Cincinnati, Ohio, is the author of numerous books on the Book of Genesis, the accuracy and authority of the Bible, dinosaurs, and the destructive fruits of evolutionary thinking (including his co-authored book on the “races” and racism, *Darwin’s Plantation*, and the bestseller, *The Lie: Evolution*). He appears frequently on American TV (in one year alone: Fox’s *The O’Reilly Factor* and *Fox and Friends in the Morning*, CNN’s *The Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer*, ABC’s *Good Morning America*, the BBC radio/TV, and others).

Ken hosts the daily radio program “Answers ... with Ken Ham,” heard on more than 800 stations in America (and dozens more overseas) and is one of the editors and contributing authors for AiG’s *Answers* magazine (a biblical worldview publication with over 70,000 worldwide subscribers). The new high-tech Creation Museum near the Cincinnati Airport—which attracted over 700,000 visitors (and several of the world’s major media) in its first two and a half years of operation—was Ken’s brainchild.

C. Britt Beemer

Britt Beemer holds a BA from Northwest Missouri State University and has an MA from Indiana State University. He worked for Congressman Bill Scherle (R-IA) from 1966–1974. After his work with Congressman Scherle, he was a senior research analyst for the Heritage Foundation. He then began to manage and conduct 14 senatorial campaigns, which included exacting research and demanding strategic planning.

In 1979, Beemer founded America's Research Group, a full-service consumer behavior research and strategic marketing firm. Recognized nationally as a premier marketing strategist, he has gained wide acclaim for his work on how, when, and why consumers select their products and services. His client list represents America's top retailers, leading brands, and smaller entrepreneurial companies. His knowledge of consumer preferences increases monthly as ARG conducts thousands of new interviews.

His work has been cited in the media, including the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, *Investor's Business Daily*, *CNN*, *Fox News*, *Fox Business News*, and many others.

He is the author of *Predatory Marketing*, a book on strategic marketing. His second book, *It Takes a Prophet to Make a Profit*, is about emerging trends of the millennium. *The Customer Rules*, released in 2008, details how customer-focused businesses win.

Britt Beemer's expertise covers each phase of survey research, including questionnaire design, sample construction, and data analysis, but especially interpretation. He serves as the senior director of research at America's Research Group, where he personally reviews all research and prepares and presents each strategic marketing plan.

Todd Hillard

Todd Hillard is a freelance writer from San Antonio, Texas, where he lives with his wife and five kids. A former youth pastor and missionary, he is passionate about taking the dreams and stories of others and bringing them to life on the written page.

Todd was born and raised in the Black Hills of South Dakota. He received his BS in pre-med studies and psychology from the University of Utah and his MA in English from Arizona State University. He and his family lived in Turkey for two and a half years. He has 17 years of pastoral experience and has written more than 12 books.

Introduction

The large wooden doors shut behind me with a creak and a heavy thud. Outside, the incessant river of life continues to flow as millions of people jam the sidewalks and rush toward red double-decker busses. Beneath the streets, the London Underground moves the masses by the hundreds of thousands—like blood pulsing through the arteries of this vibrant, thriving society.

But inside, I can hear each of my careful footsteps echoing in the dim quiet. I inhale deeply, taking in the aroma of ancient stones and old books. I see rows and rows of ornate pews—seating for more than 3,000—yet I am ushered into the small foyer area where around 30 chairs are set up and where I join a handful of elderly people with their heads bowed. Humbly and faithfully, those beside me say their prayers and listen to a brief message by a man who speaks of hope—but whose tired eyes seem to feel none of it.

It is Sunday. For hundreds of years the faithful have been walking through the heavy wooden doors on this day, at this time, to gather together and share in the timeless rituals of worship, prayer, and proclamation that made this country the bastion of Christendom for centuries. But this morning I realize that I'm part of a funeral. But it is not the funeral of an individual; it is the funeral of an institution. Within months, the older generation will likely disband and the doors of this church will be shut and locked. The candles will never again be lit. The resounding anthem of the great hymns of our spiritual forefathers will never again echo in its passages.

Since 1969, 1,500 churches in England have heard that final *thud* as their doors were shut after their final service after hundreds of years of active life.¹

Most of the great churches still stand—grand buildings that just 60 years ago were the hub of vital and vibrant activity. Before World War II (and certainly during those turbulent years), churches such as the one I visited that day were the center of community and spiritual life. But now, the communities' life, such as it is, takes place outside of those buildings. Inside, many of them have become musty, dusty, and dark. The Victorian Society of the UK summarizes the situation in a publication entitled *Redundant Churches: Who Cares?*

Invariably, it seems, churches become redundant. The country changes around them and for one reason or another they find themselves bereft of the worshippers needed to keep them going. Many, if not most, of the buildings seem eventually to find new uses, but it is not easy to generalize about how often these uses preserve their architectural and historic interest.²

It's not a small concern. Not far from the famous Westminster Abbey in London I found a sign that read: "Advisory Board for Redundant Churches."

"Redundancy." The dictionary defines that word as "exceeding what is necessary or natural . . . needlessly repetitive." That is a disturbing term to describe a former place of worship, don't you think? Who cares about "redundant churches"? It seems not many these days. There are not many left to really care—except for those who see them for their "architectural" and "historical" value. Now emptied of their intended function, many also see the real estate value of these "needlessly repetitive" buildings. A special government agency oversees the distribution and preservation of these buildings. What does that sound like in formal language?

The Redundant Churches Fund has as its object the preservation, in the interests of the nation and the Church of England, of churches and parts of churches of historic and archaeological interest or architectural quality, together with their contents, which are vested in the Fund by Part III of the Pastoral Measure 1983 (1983 No.1).³

In other words, if what's left has some value physically, it is sold or it is preserved. The rest is abandoned or bulldozed. What has become of the buildings worth keeping?

Other former places of worship have been turned into museums, clothing shops, music stores, liquor stores, nightclubs, and tattoo and piercing studios. One is even now used as a Sikh temple, and some have been converted into mosques.

Hundreds of these churches have ended up in the hands of private owners who convert them into offices or renovate them for use as personal homes or cottages.

It would be something of a relief if these former churches simply represented a shift from traditional worship toward more contemporary worship facilities, but that's not the case. The decline of the Church has followed the plummeting spirituality of a nation that has lost its roots—its foundation. England, the country that was once a cornerstone of western Christianity, is now, by and large, a wasteland of lost souls where the word *God* has many different definitions, with so few these days who would even think of “God” as the Creator God of the Bible.

According to a recent English Church Census:

- Regular churchgoers (of all denominations) amount to 6.3% of the total population.
- The proportion of churches per individuals is now one church to 1,340 people; the size of the average Sunday congregation, however, is 84.
- Between 1998 and 2005, there was an overall decline in regular church attendance of 15%—and the trend continues.
- 40% of regular churchgoers attend evangelical churches, but even these groups are seeing their numbers decline.⁴

All in all, only 2.5 percent of the population is attending Bible-based churches.

One United Kingdom news source in 2003 stated:

Holy Week has begun with an expert prediction that the Christian church in this country will be dead and buried within 40 years. It will vanish from the mainstream of British life, with only 0.5 percent of the population attending the Sunday services of any denomination, according to the country's leading church analyst . . . only 7.5 percent of the population went to church on Sundays and that, in the past 10 years—billed by the churches as the “Decade of Evangelism”—church attendance dropped by an “alarming” 22 percent.⁵



A church in the United Kingdom turned into a rock climbing center



A church (in John Bunyan's home town of Bedford, England) turned into a night club



A church in the United Kingdom turned into a theater



A church turned into a restaurant in the United Kingdom