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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **LAND OF THE LOST NOT JUST IN THEATERS: New Survey Shows American Churches Filled with Young People 'Already Gone' From Belief Before Leaving the Church as Teens**

**PETERSBURG, Ky., May 26, 2009** – Ken Ham and renowned researcher Britt Beemer take a penetrating look at the mass exodus of young people from church in their book released this week from Master Books, “Already Gone: Why Your Kids Will Quit Church and What You Can Do to Stop It.”

Surveys have consistently shown that more than 60 percent of children who grow up in church will leave it as they become young adults. Ham, president of Answers in Genesis and the acclaimed new Creation Museum, and Beemer, chairman of America’s Research Group, issue a clarion call to Christian leaders everywhere:

“It’s time to wake up and see the tidal wave washing away the foundation of your church. The numbers are in – and they don’t look good. From across Christendom the reports are the same: A mass exodus is underway. Most youth of today will not be coming to church tomorrow.”

ARG surveyed a group of 1,000 young adults who have left churches. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the disillusionment begins early.

“We are losing many more people by middle school and many more by high school than we will ever lose in college,” the book says.

The authors found that the “twentysomethings” who have left church could be divided into two groups – one that never attends and has no plans to return, and another that attends holiday services and plans to attend regularly after they have children.

About 40 percent of the first group has fundamental questions about the truth of the book of Genesis. Fifty-six percent said that secular science had caused them to doubt the Bible. In general, this group is skeptical of biblical authority.

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On the other hand, most of the second group still believes in Jesus Christ. More than three-fourths of them believe that they are saved, but they are troubled by hypocrisy, legalism and self-righteousness in organized Christianity. “The Bible is relevant to them, but the Church is not,” the book says.

One of the surprising results of the survey was the apparent ineffectiveness of Sunday school. Sunday school lessons usually tell children what to believe, but not why. The lessons tend to focus more on stories of inspiration and morality than on providing a factual basis for today’s children to defend God’s Word and live by it in a fallen world.

“The brutal conclusion is that, on the whole, the Sunday school programs of today are statistical failures,” the authors’ survey finds.

The decay begins, Ham and Beemer believe, with a lack of faith in the creation story of Genesis. Children tend to separate the “stories” of the Bible from the “hard facts” taught in school about evolution and the age of the Earth. They look to their textbooks for answers, not the Bible.

“Ultimately, if we are unable to defend Genesis, we have allowed the enemy to attack our Christian faith and undermine the very first book of the Bible,” the book says.

The authors look at today’s churches, and find that they are driven more by man-made traditions than biblical mandates. These churches focus on things like programs, entertainment and music when research shows that people want good Bible teaching.

In the end, Ham and Beemer call for a “new Reformation in the Church,” led by parents, Christian educators, youth pastors and pastors, “to call the Church back to the authority of God, beginning in Genesis.”

Also this week, the Creation Museum, Ken Ham’s brainchild, celebrates its second anniversary. This high-tech center near Cincinnati has drawn over 716,000 visitors and the world’s leading media.

**Note to Editors: For additional information or interview requests, please contact Melany Ethridge of A. Larry Ross Communications at (972) 267-1111. “Already Gone” is published by Master Books.**