

Is the Church Within One Generation of Dying?

Lord Carey has been quoted as saying the English church is in danger of dying out within a generation.

The newspapers are delighted, as there is nothing most of them would like more than to report the death of the last parishioner who'd stubbornly kept the last church in my country open. The vast drop in **church** attendance in the last 50 years is wheeled out as ammunition.

There's just two problems with this argument. The first is that a quick perusal of what Lord Carey really said shows he was merely saying what is always true: Each generation must own for **Christ** itself. We can't rely on parental pressure—and certainly not societal pressure—to keep up the numbers.

The second problem is that it leaves **God** out of the equation. I do not believe Jesus is finished with this nation. Truth be told, in my lifetime the church has gone through something of a pruning. But now that nobody goes because they are expected to, we are seeing a massive increase in the health of the churches that remain. And some of those churches are **growing** at a pace.

There are some more organized churches that may indeed die in our nation. But sometimes that's a good idea. In the U.S., such dying churches are now routinely making their last act to donate their buildings to a thriving local church. May that trend multiply here. And may the thriving churches never settle, thinking they have arrived, but instead seek the Lord for ways to multiply what God is doing among them. Sometimes that will look like **church planting**, other times helping to revitalize another church, and sometimes multisite churches will offer the accelerated solution they often are.

May God give wisdom to all church leaders at this critical time. But ultimately Jesus is building His church.

I'm confident the newspapers will have died out long before He gives up on us! He will never give up.

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