

Firm on the Facts

So just how much water should you drink a day? It wasn't that long ago that everyone, it seemed, had joined the bandwagon of "drink at least 8 glasses of water a day." These days I am hearing that a lot less. I have lately read others saying that most of us don't need that much fluid every day. Another said that our bodies are quite capable of deciding how much water to absorb, even if most of your liquids consist of coffee. (I am so thankful for that.) No two human bodies are identical.

A more recent "fact" that was widely circulated, by Christians, is that *Christian marriages end in divorce as often as non-Christian marriages*. When I first heard that I thought, "Surely that isn't true." Over the last five or six years I have heard or read it as many times. And the person repeating it is usually using it to promote some new program, or suggesting that we need to do a better job of teaching and preaching, in our churches, on Christian morality.

Despite how many times I have heard the above "fact", I have yet to see any real evidence that supports the "finding" about divorce. I think some Christians, though they don't gossip, do like juicy bits of "statistics" that we can readily and shockingly share with others. It gets repeated often enough by enough different people so that many people accept it as truth.

While I will willingly admit that many people who are members of a church end up divorcing today, there is more to the story. Last week in the Baptist Press, Glenn Stanton shared some new information on this subject. He points to a survey by W. Bradford Wilcox, a leading sociologist at the University of Virginia and director of the National Marriage Project. Mr. Wilcox,

finds from his own analysis that "active conservative Protestants" who regularly attend church are 35 percent less likely to divorce compared to those who have no affiliation. Nominally attending conservative Protestants are 20 percent more likely to divorce, compared to secular Americans. (find the story at <http://www.bpnews.net/BPnews.asp?ID=34656>)

So people who call themselves Christians, but are not active followers of Jesus Christ, ARE just as likely to divorce as the general non-Christian population. But those who are devout followers of Jesus (or any moral religion that supports marriage) are less likely to divorce than non-religious people.

I wish we could say that devoted Christians have fewer divorces than devotees of other religions. Maybe they do and no one has researched it. Another factor involved would be those devoted Christians who are married to non-Christians. That is a whole different dynamic. Paul writes of this in his letter to the Corinthian church. While God wants every marriage to succeed, especially every marriage involving a Christian, it takes two people to make a marriage work. You can be the most devoted follower of Christ and not succeed in marriage if your partner is not willing to work it out and stay. There are so many dynamics

involved in the mix of marriage and religion, that it is rarely as simple as one statistic makes it out to be.

Let us beware of such “findings” that are thrown at us each day. Jesus warns us, in Matthew 7, to beware of false teachers in sheep’s clothing. They are really wolves. Most people who shout a statistic at us have an agenda. Even if it is a moral, Christian, or spiritual agenda, let us use caution in accepting their statistics as fact.

We have an agenda too. We are trying to tell people that God loves them and sent His Son to die for their sins. There is one statistic that God has given us that we must not back down from. It is that every person who fails to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord is bound for hell, not for failing to receive Jesus, but for his or her sins. We are not trusting in a survey or study to support this. We are trusting that God will convict people that this is indeed true.

So while I don’t know how much water you should drink today, I do know that everyone needs Jesus. Let us remain firm on that fact.

- pastor Robin