

Divorce rate no lower among the born again: A Barna study

News in the [October 5, 2004](#) issue

In one of George Barna's largest national surveys on marriage and divorce, the pollster has confirmed previous findings that born-again Christian adults have the same likelihood of divorce (35 percent) as other Americans.

But the California-based researcher, whose primary market for books and seminars is the broad evangelical world, also proposes that one reason for the similar finding is that couples who profess Jesus as savior are also more likely to marry than to live together.

"If the non-born-again population were to marry at the same rate as the born-again group," Barna said, "it is likely their divorce statistic would be roughly 38 percent."

Using a representative sample of 3,614 adults interviewed between January and April this year, the Barna Group found that the divorce rate is quite similar to that reflected in a survey ten years ago. (See www.barna.org.) This was despite the research group's observation that many conservative churches attempt to discourage congregants from considering divorce.

Faith perspectives make a difference in whether adults agree with the teaching that divorce is a sin unless adultery has been committed—but not as much of a difference as might be expected, according to Barna.

Born-again adults were twice as likely in the 2004 survey as non-born-again adults (24 percent against 10 percent) to affirm that teaching. However, a majority of the born-again group (52 percent) disagreed that divorce without adultery is sin, whereas 74 percent of the non-born-again adults disagreed.