

6 Psychological Tricks to Help You Honor God With What You Eat

A *Time* magazine article in my Twitter feed caught my eye. It summarizes Cornell professor Brian Wansink's six principles for eating less:

One: Don't eat in view of food.

If you have cookies or chips sitting out at your house, you probably weigh eight pounds more than people who don't. Those with breakfast cereal sitting in view typically weigh 19 pounds more; those with soda sitting out weigh 25 pounds more than someone who doesn't.

At a buffet, slim people are more likely to sit facing away from the food, while heavier people are three times more likely to sit looking at it. Watching other people eat causes us to think we need to eat more.

Two: Make food harder to reach. Keeping serving dishes off the table reduces how much men eat by 29 percent. Candy on your desk likely results in a double-digit weight gain.

Three: Plan ahead. Skinny people peruse the buffet before deciding what to eat; heavier people dive in and eat everything they don't hate.

Four: Slow down. It takes 20 minutes for the "fullness signal" to tell us we've eaten enough, but the average American meal takes less than 20 minutes to complete.

Five: Eat fewer foods. Never have more than two items on your plate at a time. People offered three flavors of yogurt consume an average of 23 percent more than those offered one flavor.

Six: Watch those you eat with. If you eat with friends, you'll probably eat twice as much. If your server is overweight, you'll eat more. Especially beware of skinny overeaters; they make your brain think you can eat more without consequences.

Dr. Wansink has a Ph.D. from Stanford in consumer behavior and holds an endowed chair at Cornell University. He is clearly an expert in his field. But I think he's missing a seventh principle that applies not only to our food consumption but also to our way of life.

Plato separated the spiritual from the material; Cyprian of Carthage divided the clergy from the laity; Constantine enabled churches to construct buildings. As a result, we've been taught that spirituality is watching clergy perform inside sanctuaries or holy places on the Lord's day. If we go to church and observe basic moral standards, we've done what God requires. Now we're free to eat what we want and do what we want.

When we see our bodies as ours to use and the world as ours to rule, we see life through the prism of our fallen culture. When we see our bodies as the Holy Spirit's to use (1 Cor. 3:16) and the world as our Father's to rule (Ps. 22:28), we see life through the prism of Scripture.

A. W. Tozer said, "The true follower of Christ will not ask, 'If I embrace this truth, what will it cost me?' Rather he will say, 'This is truth. God help me to walk in it, let come what may!'"

Will you be a "true follower of Christ" today? {eoa}

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