

# Do I Need to Repeat That?

By Dr. James L. Snyder

Of all the holidays during the year that I like, my birthday is at the bottom of the list. Now that I'm at my current age, I prefer not to be reminded that I'm getting older. All a birthday does for me is tell me I'm just getting older. Who wants to be reminded of that?

The problem with celebrating your birthday is everybody asks you that one horrible question. "How old are you this year?"

I usually tell them I'm 12 months older than last year, but that doesn't float any balloons on my birthday.

As usual, this year, on my birthday, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I went out to celebrate at our favorite restaurant.

We had a very lovely dinner together, and as we were finishing our dessert, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me rather strangely and said, "Do you feel old?"

I'm not sure what she meant by that, but looking at her, I reached out, took hold of her arm, gently squeezed it, and said, "I feel old now."

I was smiling, but she was not smiling. I'm still smiling about that.

It's not every day that I can catch her on a question like that.

When I got over that little routine, I looked at her and said, "Do you mind if I ask you a very serious question on my birthday today?"

"Of course," she said, looking at me smiling. "Ask me any question you want to ask."

I should've known she was setting me up, but it was my birthday, and I thought birthdays carry certain exemptions.

"Okay," I said as seriously as possible. "I've read where the average woman speaks 20,000 words a day, and the average man speaks only 7,000 words a day. Can you tell me why?"

She looked at me very sternly and said, "Do you want to celebrate another birthday?"

"It is a very simple question to answer." She cleared her throat, looked at me with one of her looks, and said, "The reason a woman speaks 20,000 words a day and a man speaks only 7000 words is because the woman has to repeat herself three times before the man hears what she is saying."

With that, she stared at me and said, "Do I need to repeat myself?"

I wished I had never asked that question and hoped she would also forget it.

I paid a heavy price for that question for the next several days. Every time The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asked me anything, she always concluded by saying, "Do I need to repeat myself?"

Thinking about this

recently come to the conclusion that hearing is a very important part of any relationship. Not just hearing, but hearing what is actually being said. I wrestle with this all along.

I hear everything The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is saying, but I don't always hear it in the right context.

One verse of Scripture that emphasizes this for me is Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

It is not so much hearing as it is hearing the right thing. My faith in God is based upon hearing the word of God. What is God really saying to me? That is the basis of my faith in God.

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