

## **Hearing Conservation**

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A few months ago, I had a physical examination. One of the things that tests revealed is that I have a slight loss of hearing in certain ranges of frequency. My doctor told me that the loss of hearing is not so great that I can claim that I didn't hear my wife talking to me. However, she did say that what I needed to do was be conscientious about conserving the hearing that I do have.

When I served aboard ship, we really stressed hearing conservation, just as we did when I was assigned to an artillery regiment. It is a known fact that prolonged exposure to loud noises has a negative impact on a person's ability to hear. The military tries to take measures to ensure that we reduce the likelihood that someone will lose their ability to hear.

I suppose that I have spent enough time around loud noises that I have some hearing loss, but not to the degree that I need a hearing aid. When I was on a ship some time ago, one of the officers put a sticker on my hard hat that says, "Produces Hazardous Noise." I hope that is not the case. Regardless, I now take measures to make sure that I protect my ability to hear.

The problem is that prolonged exposure to harmfully loud noises causes us to lose our ability to hear. Even using lawn mowers, power tools or listening to music that is very loud can damage our hearing. There is nothing wrong with any of these things in itself, but each can be harmful to us if we do not take measure to prevent hearing loss.

In our spiritual lives, there are things we can do that can prevent us from being able to hear God. Some of the music we listen to, even some of the stories and conversations in which we engage can be harmful to our spiritual hearing ability. We need to learn to listen to things that are not going to be harmful to our spiritual well being.

In order to conserve our spiritual hearing ability, we won't wear earplugs, but rather will need to make choices. We can choose not to listen to foul language or stories that are malicious. We can choose to watch movies and television shows that are clean and uplifting, rather than those that promote immoral lifestyles. We can choose to go places that are more "G" rated, rather than "adult only" establishments.

My doctor has advised me to take precautions so that I will not experience further hearing loss. I think it is a good idea to let this be a reminder to also take precautions to make sure I will not lose my ability to hear God when He speaks to me. After all, many times God chooses to speak in a whisper, rather than a loud, thundering noise. The loud, booming noise is usually the car next to you at the traffic light.

Protect your hearing, both physically and spiritually. There are things that you really do want to hear.

Semper Fi in the Lord and I hope to see you in church on Sunday.