

I was not a major league baseball fan. I did enjoy following the Cincinnati Reds when Sparky Anderson managed Johnny Bench, Tony Perez, and "Charlie Hustle" along with the other team players known as the big Red Machine. I also liked to follow Yogi Berra, the colorful manager of the New York Yankees. In my mind's ear I can hear him saying "Deja vous all over again." Life has a funny way of repeating itself.

My bride and I were married and living close to my folks. We both realized how mother did all the things that kept their family going. Especially after dad suffered a heart attack. Mom tended to their diets. Mom scheduled doctors visits. Mom tended his medications and kept them in supply. Mom cleaned house. Mom did the shopping. I had never noticed all of her efforts living in the home and growing up. Oh I knew her commitment and love, I just never realized the endless duty and devotion showered on dad and me. Until I had a family of my own and looked back inside the home I had grown up in.

When dad purchased a new truck, my bride and I had a special tag made for the front bumper. It read; "Spoiled but not rotten." That Ford F150 was maroon with extended cab and long bed. It was the last vehicle dad owned.

When dad was called home I drove that truck. One of the first things I did was remove the tag. Twenty years later I wish I knew where that tag was. I'd put it on the front bumper of my truck and I'd proudly ride as my bride drove me to wherever I needed to be. Deja vous all over again!

The other day my bride visited the nursing home, hospital, and a few homes; hand delivering some Home Ministry messages; like she does every Monday. She always enjoys these visits. Arriving home she wore one of those smiles that every husband knows means something

is up. I asked how her visits went. And she told me all the highlights. Adding that I had been spoiled. I smiled acknowledging the fact and went about my business, perfectly happy to be spoiled by her. This message was begun almost a week after those remarks. I did not complete it before I had to go for OT. My bride took me and did grocery shopping while I was with my baby sitter, therapist, who noticed the dry skin was gone from my left hand. I told her my bride applied lotion and massaged my left arm and hand. Samantha looked me straight in the eye, and told me I was spoiled. I replied; once a man and twice a baby. Deja vous all over again!

A dear friend told me and continues to remind me that I was blessed ever since my bride hitched her wagon to my star. She knows I found the cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder (Matthew 19:5-6 ASV). I believe man and woman joined in holy matrimony is the smallest foundational unit of a family. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matthew 18:20 ASV). When blessed with children the number in the family increases under the covenant relationship. This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church (Ephesians 5:32 ASV). There are many members but one body. Deja vous all over again! Some may think I am spoiled. I know I am blessed. This is Home Ministry at its best.

Help me surprise my bride with a Happy Birthday April 4th.