

J A N U A R Y 2 0 0 9

the LISTENING

By Betty Thomason Owens

THERE IS MORE TO LISTENING THAN SIMPLY HEARING



Aunt Mary's

*Gardens take loads of work,
but when the labor is done,
you can go back and tuck in a
rose here, a daylily there, a
rain lily over there ... and
when they bloom, they look
like they've been there forever.
Around every corner, you will
find little surprises.*



✕ If I had a nickel... ✕

*How often I heard that phrase when I was growing up!
Amazing how many times it pertained to my habit of complaining.
My mother could have retired a rich woman!*

ANOTHER SYNDROME?

Sometimes I feel dazed
and confused. I am interrupted
so many times that I lose track
of what I am
supposed to be
doing and
then my eyes
glaze over ...
you know the
feeling? I call it
TMTD

Syndrome (too
much to do)!

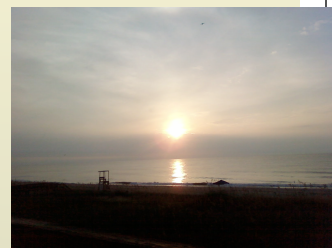


It helps to look at a
favorite picture or read a
favorite verse of scripture —
something to
“ground” me
quickly and
bring me back
to earth. I
backtrack a
little, re-
organize and
then breathe.
Take a coffee
break! *Count my blessings!*

It's time to say ...

*A long time ago, in a land far, far away, lived a
little old man and his strange, furry little
creature who spoke a wondrous language.*

I was reading the posts on an
email group that I keep contact
with, regarding Christian
Fantasy and noticed a similar
thread. Many of them said, “I
can't wait to see what they do



A LAND FAR, FAR AWAY, CONTINUED...

...with that scene in that great Science Fiction Novel! I can't wait to see how they treat this book on film!"

"I can't wait to see how they portray Dreamwalker (fictional character — I made that up) ... on film!"

"I can't wait to see ..."

Okay, I know what they're saying. I love movies too. Especially if it's a movie made from one of my favorite books. Nothing like a well-made movie that sticks to the story and really glorifies the work of a great author.

I just could not help thinking, *I can't wait to see Jesus! I can't wait to see what He can really do! I can't wait to look into His eyes and see the love there. I can't wait...*

All I am saying is, wouldn't it be great if we

all felt that excited about Jesus? Isn't that how it should be?

Jesus tells a story about ten virgins waiting for their bridegroom to come for them. Five of them are well prepared and have plenty of oil for their lamps. The other five have been careless. They were busy, caught up in the cares of this world. I can see them gossiping, laughing and otherwise squandering the days. "We have plenty of time."

"I know he's coming eventually, but not now. I'll go out and get oil tomorrow."

"People have been saying that he is coming at any moment, for years now. We've got plenty of time ..."

The story ends when the bridegroom came and the five who were prepared were able to go with him at once. The five who were not prepared had to run

out at the last minute and try to find oil for their lamps. By the time they found the oil, it was too late. The door was closed.

THE DOOR WAS CLOSED.

That really grieves me. I feel very sad for the five who were left. Where's the mercy? I want to ask. In my heart, I know. They had abused their mercy. They had wasted the divine patience that had been extended towards them. We all know the depth of the Love of God.

His mercy is everlasting.

The oil in the story is the Spirit of God. How do we replenish it? Pray, study the Word, share the Word, give, obey, love, reach out to others ... etc, etc, etc.

