**Reflections-11-19-17**

Stewardship, Resources, Fear

*“Are you a million dollar baby?”*

Matthew 25:14-30

1. Jesus tells a story (a parable) about a master who is going away on a journey and entrusts his property to his shares. To one slave he gives 3 million dollars, to the second slave 1.5 million and to the third slave $350,000. All the slaves receive a great deal of money “talents”. Do you believe that God entrusts all people with his property?
2. Most scholars believe that even though the term “talents” refers to money, that it can be equally correct to translate “talents” to mean other resources like wisdom, courage and personality traits. Do you think you are aware of the many resources that your creator has given you?
3. Not all the slaves received the same amount of money. It says that they received money or talents according to their ability. Does it bother you that God doesn’t give everyone an equal amount?
4. The first two slaves worked with their master’s money and doubled the amount. The third slave was trapped in fear and buried his talents. Do you see yourself burying what God has given you? What would “burying your talents” look like in real life?
5. The master was angry with the third slave because he buried the talent even though he received his money back. Do you think the master would have been as angry if third slave ended up losing it all while trying to use it in a positive way?
6. Have you ever been trapped in fear? What frees you from the trap?

**Matthew 25:14-30**

 ‘For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, “Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” But his master replied, “You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”