I'm Giving it All Back to You
Matthew 25: 14-30*
Parable of the Talents
St. Paul's, Romeo
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May the God who creates us, redeems us, and sustains us, be with us this day, and remain with us always. Amen.

The head of the house,
the boss,
the big guy
with all of the power and money,
goes on a trip.
And says to the people left behind.
While I'm gone
I need for you
to take care of some things.
You—I think the world of you
—so I'm giving you five talents.
Which in today's economy—
taking into consideration
the AI bubble, the mid-term elections,
some inflation and the
the fluctuation of the stock market,
five talents in today's market—
is about 2.5 million dollars.
The master says
I'm giving to each of you
according to your abilities.

Here's two and a half million for you.

To the next fellow
he gives two talents—
let say to make our math simple—
1 million dollars.

And to our guy—
The guy to whom I am most drawn—
to him he says, "
And for you—for you—
here's half a million dollars.

I'll be back.

Mister five talent guy—
from all accounts—
doesn't blink—
he takes the five—
and makes five more.
Sweet. The middle fellow—
gets two talents—
1 million and doubles that.
Do these guys even break a sweat?
We don't even know.

But our guy—
my guy.
Gets a half a million dollars
and all he can think—
is oh my God—
this is all I have.
I cannot blow it.
I cannot screw this one up.
I never asked for this—
I didn't want it.
What in heaven's name
am I supposed to do with it?

The boss, he has high expectations,
if I blow this
if I screw up,
I don't even want to think about it.

So our guy buries it.
Rabbinical law was clear:
whoever
immediately buries property
entrusted to him
is no longer liable
because he has taken
the safest course conceivable. (Eduard Schweizer p 471).

He buries it
and wakes up every morning
there after wondering:

"What's today gonna be like?
Is it going be good, is it gonna be bad?
If it is bad, will that reflect on me?

Will people think it's my fault? Will I have done something?
Or is this just going to be one more day after the last?
A day that fades into obscurity?
How often in this one precious life of ours,
with the approximately 4000 weeks we have to live,
how often do the days slide one into the other,
without us thinking or realizing
that yet more precious moment has passed?

Our guy, took what he had,
what had been given to him,
and buried it
deep down in a hole
because he could not bare,
could not imagine,
risking it,
using it
and losing it.

He buried it—
Because of his fear of failing,
his fear of not being good enough,
or worthy enough
prevented him
from using
what had been given to him
to make a difference, to matter.

Woof.

And time goes.
Those days,
those normal days
of waking and rising,
working and sleeping,
they come and go.
And then the owner of the property
comes back.
What's he got to show?

You don't need me
to beat this one home.
He has a tepid life,
lived in fear,
enacted in the shadows.
He blew his chance

to use the gracious gift
given him to make a freaking difference.

He buried that one talent because he was afraid.

Ever looked in the mirror
and decided not to act, not to risk,
because you could not imagine
dealing with the consequences of falling short?

Nothing ever changes, if we do that.
Do you think that God calls us
to keep the peace and preserve the status quo.
Do you worship equilibrium? Fear change?
Let me remind us of a biological,
an undeniable biochemical truth:
The only time an organism is at equilibrium
is when it is dead. (repeat)
What do we do with dead things? We bury them.

And as the boss walks back in,
I can hear him say,
I can hear Jesus say,
"I came that you might have life, and life in abundance."
And I imagine Jesus following on with,
"I really, really wouldn't mind if you took some risks
with this lifetime I've given you."

Here's my ask.
Here's my plea
to myself and to all of us.
We are made in God's image.
God has given us
gifts and talents.
Each one of us.
Use them.
Use them all.
Offer all you have.
All we have.

Digging holes,
squirreling our blessings,
our wealth, our talents away, deep down in a hole
—that is
some serious waste of good dirt.

Come what may—
this is what we know—
our lives are what we have—
to make a difference,
to make a huge awesome difference.
Live on the edge,
take the risk,
spit into the wind,
stick your head out the window,
breathe deeply,
and offer back to God—
every awesome
and awful thing you have.

Make it all
one big fat gift
with an angst encrusted bow.
Then bow before God and say,

"This is it.
This is what I have.
I tried."

Or as St. Ignatius of Loyola prayed some 500 years ago,

Take Lord and receive
all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will
all that I have and possess.
You have given all to me.

To you O Lord I return it.
All is yours,
dispose of it wholly
according to your will.

Give me your love and your grace,
that's enough for me.
me.

In your Holy Name--

Amen.