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**Film:** *Buried Talent*  
**Parable:** The Talents  
**Scripture:** Matthew 25:14-30

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### Interpreting *Buried Talent*

The Parable of the Talents involves money, as a talent is a coin. *Buried Talent* involves painting. Why isn't this film about modern day investments? As you watch the film and explore the texts, consider that the original parable examines stewardship beyond that of finance. God leaves many things in our care: money, friendships, charity, talents, etc. The title (*Buried Talent*) is an obvious play on words.

The original parable also involves fear and how fear can inhibit and freeze us. As you watch the film, consider the situation the artists are placed in. They are given an extraordinary opportunity with tremendous resources... but also limited time and instruction.

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### Cultural Background

Wealthy landowners usually delegated the control and multiplication of their wealth to trained accountants, who could be free persons, or as this parable, servants. They also often went on long journeys.

Given the time period, the value of a talent was about 10,000 denarii. One denarius was a day's wage. If you do the math, one talent was therefore worth life's wages for an average worker. Five talents were worth what each of these servants would make in 5 lifetimes.



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### Discussion Questions

- 1) How can we compare the two propositions? (Investing coins in the original parable and creating art in *Buried Talent*)
  - 2) What are some things in your life that you have been entrusted to take care of?
  - 3) Do you sometimes feel that God asks much of you, but you feel a heavy burden to work it out on your own?
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### **Cultural Background (continued)**

One of the safest and least profitable ways of protecting one's money was to bury it in the ground; such buried reserves are still occasionally found where someone never returned to retrieve his or her deposits.

Doubling one's investment was normal, and the servants should have been able to accomplish this. The principle that integrity in smaller matters qualified one to prove one's integrity in larger matters was often invoked in antiquity.

The third slave should have known better; he simply did not care what happened to his master's property. The smallest possible investment, providing interest on a savings deposit, could not have endangered the deposit.



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### **Discussion Questions**

- 1) Tom's character is the most professional of the group. He has a portfolio of work and is quite organized. Given this opportunity to be free to paint whatever he likes, he freezes and fails. What is an opportunity that was presented to you that you ended up burying?
- 2) Jamie's character is a girl right out of college and this is her first interview for a painting job. She is the most nervous of the group and yet she produces a marvelous painting. Even though it's a taboo in the Church to talk about our success... what is a success in your life?

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As you reflect on the parable and the film, consider that Jesus told these stories about our everyday lives. He reveals Himself through common experiences and we should be able to find Him in the most unlikely places. Christ "shows up" while we're sitting in front of our computers at work, cooking dinner or driving in traffic. We always like to learn something during the big moments in our lives, but Christ clearly makes the point that learning about His love, His grace and His mercy can be experienced in the most ordinary circumstances of our everyday lives.

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