When I started fly fishing
  I knew that I would need a rod and reel
    and a pair of waders
    and of course a few flies.
What I quickly discovered though
  was that a pair of polarized sunglasses
    were also beneficial.
Because I learned that polarized glasses
  not only darken
    the the sun
    and block harmful UV rays
Polarization also reduces the glare
  on the surface of the water.
    Polarization blocks horizontal light waves
      the source of most of the glare
      allowing only the vertical to get through
But here’s the best part
  I discovered that when one looks through polarized glasses
    I could see the fish down in the water
    I knew where to go
      whereas before
      all I could see was glare.
In today’s gospel
  Jesus teaches that the kingdom of God is like this.
    What one sees
depends upon the kind of glasses one wears.
As Jesus begins the parable
  he tells us about a property owner who’s about to go on journey.
    And while he’s away
      the owner entrusts his property to his servants.
        He gives each of them
          some talents.
Now you’ll remember that even a single talent in those days
  was lot of money.
    One talent could be 75 pounds of silver
      or even 75 pounds of gold--
        a staggering sum in any age.
And in the parable all three servants get talents.
  One get 5 talents,
    another 2,
      and another servant gets 1 talent.
And these talents can be traded
  to make even more talents.
The servant, however, with the one talent
  sees the world differently
    than the other two.
      It's almost like there’s a glare affecting his vision.
The servant with the one talent sees the world
  through the lens of fear.
    And it affects the way he sees his master.
      Because if you ask him
        he’l tell you
          “I’m afraid of him”
            “he’s a harsh man
              a man who takes
                what does not belong to him
                  and a man who reaps
                    where has he has not sown.
                      He’s a mafia boss.”
And so the 3rd servant rather than
trade or invest his talent
    buries it in the backyard.
And even though the listeners
    and we as readers
    know that the master is not like that at all,
    Heres’ the shocking thing
        about the 3rd servant---
the master he sees
    is the master he gets.
In the last few weeks
    the media
    has portrayed a fearful world
        even worse than it usually does.
        And they have lots of help.
            We’ve always know that if it leads it bleeds.
But for more than a year
    commercials have told us that
    we should be afraid
        afraid of people who are different.
            In fact,
                We should be afraid of all sorts of things.
Democrats should be afraid of Republican power
    Republicans should be afraid of Democratic power
            And think for moment of all the fear around Ebola.
After hearing Jesus’ parable this week
    I’m wondering how much of this
        Is just perception?
Could it be that much of what we have seen is glare?
    rather than the real world
        that is God’s world
            beneath the glare?
I heard someone say this week
    that Kim Kardashian
        has had more husbands
            than Americans
have contracted Ebola
   in this country.
And yet we’re bombarded with messages
   that we are not skinny enough
      Not pretty enough
         Not rich enough
            Not successful enough
               That we don’t have enough
                  That we are not doing enough.
                     And that we ought to be afraid

What if like the 3rd servant
   who buried his talent
      and lived his life in fear
         in weeping
            and gnashing of teeth
what if
   we’ve been using the wrong glasses?
What if we right now
   we already have everything we need for happiness
      And What if right now heaven is
         before our eyes
            and we do not see it?

One of my colleagues
   in a clergy group told me about a meeting
      that he had once with some church members.
         He was telling them about some of his plans for the future
            Months later as he told us
               He was still excited about them.

But he said the church members
   cautioned him
      that people would watching him
         and judging him
            and that he should careful
He told us later
   that he could feel the fear in that room.
And though he didn’t tell them at the time
He told us
That He thought to himself
I don’t live in that world
A world of fear
And I’m not about
to start living there now.

It seems to me
the other two servants
in Jesus’ parable had a similar choice
They could fear the world
And be afraid of their master
Or they could trust him
And get up every morning ready--
Ready to use the talents
And Ready to trade
And In spite of what the 3rd servant said about the world
They could choose
to put themselves out there
and live wholeheartedly
And Jesus says
That’s what they did
And the result?
The servant who had five talents
made five more
And the servant who two talents
made two more
And even better than talents--
they came to know
the joy of their master.
peace and purpose in their lives
and so much more.

And what I heard this week
is that you and I have the same choice
We can fall back into fear
or we can get up day and go forward in faith
We can bemoan what we don’t have
  or we can thank God for what we do.
We can complain that there’s not time enough time
  Or we can rejoice in the days we do have.
And We can fuss about this world
  Or we ask God
    how can I make it better?
Which servant are you?
  And What glasses will you wear?