

Competency To Fulfill Our Calling

Introduction: The final two sessions of our DTS will be focused on the last of the 5-C's – Competency. (Christ, Christ's Community-Family, Christ's Character, Christ's Calling, Christ's Competency).

Competency Defined: To be competent means that we have all the necessary abilities to successfully fulfill Christ's calling in our lives, such as wisdom, skills, talents, gifts, discipline, and commitment. Obviously, there are many ups & downs, trials & errors, set-backs & victories on the way to becoming competent. Competency has many levels, starting with "beginner". We will be growing in all 5-C's the rest of our natural lives and even into eternity. Therefore, growing in ever-increasing levels of competency requires taking risks, patience, even suffering. Christ, himself, learned obedience through suffering. (Heb. 5:8) Practice praying, hearing, and obeying Christ step-by-step, each day. Love inconveniences itself by serving others in both practical and "spiritual" ways. Our competency will grow if our heart motive is to glorify & love God by effectively serving others. If we really want to love well, we will keep growing in our desire and ability to help others become like Christ. We deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow Jesus. That is the key to growing in competency. (Luke 9:23)

Spiritual Power & Gifts: Being a follower of Christ is supernatural. In fact, we can only be a Christian by allowing Christ to live His life through us. It takes the empowerment and leadership of the Holy Spirit to do anything in the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:8; Ro. 8) Therefore, growing in Christ's competency, while it does involve our cooperation, is actually learning how to allow Christ to live His Life through us every minute of every day. The natural realm was created and is sustained from the spiritual (i.e. heavenly) realm. (Eph. 1:3, 1:20, 2:6; Heb. 11:3) Competency in the kingdom is supernaturally natural, and naturally supernatural because it involves the combination of natural talents and abilities that came from God with supernatural power and gifts that flow from God as well.

Mentors/coaches/spiritual parents: God's strategy for assisting our growth in all 5-C's is to be trained by those more mature in Christ than ourselves. God mediates His grace through delegated authority like parents and church leaders. (Eph. 6:1-3; 1 Pet. 2:13, 5:5-7; Heb. 13:17; Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:2; Col. 1:28; Titus 2:15; 1 Cor. 4:14-17; Titus 2:3-5) Those who want to grow in any area of life (sports, job, marriage, family, life skills) aggressively pursue and submit to those who can train them. (Ro. 13:1; Heb. 13:17) We can waste years of our lives by living isolated and independent from the benefit of spiritual leaders. Wrongful treatment from those in authority can cause us to overreact by avoiding authority all together. The answer to bad governmental authority is not NO authority, which is anarchy, lawlessness, and rebellion. The answer to bad leadership is good leadership. Forgive the bad leaders, bless them, and ask God to provide godly servant-leaders who will only help guide you to follow Jesus ultimately, and not themselves.

Discovering your spiritual gifts: "Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy". (1 Cor. 14:1) Spiritual Life flows from Christ in three general categories: 1.) Fruit, 2.) Wisdom & Revelation, 3.) Power & Gifts. That is divine order which safeguards us from imbalance. (Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 1:17; 1 Cor. 14) We are to desire spiritual gifts because they build up the Body of Christ and help advance Christ's kingdom on earth. Here are most of the gifts mentioned in the Bible:

Romans 12:6-8	1 Corinthians 12:29-30	1 Corinthians 12:8-10	Ephesians 4	1 Corinthians 12:28
prophecy	apostles	word of wisdom	apostles	apostles
ministry	prophecy	word of knowledge	prophets	prophets
teaching	teaching	faith	evangelists	teachers

exhortation	miracles	healing	pastor-teacher	miracles
giving	healing	miracles		healings
ruling	tongues	prophecy		helping
showing mercy	interpreting tongues	discerning of spirits		governing
		kinds of tongues		diverse tongues
		interpreting tongues		

Look at the Bigger Picture – Your God-given SHAPE!

The SHAPE acronym has been around for a while now, and we think it’s a highly valuable piece of evangelicalism. SHAPE is an acronym that summarizes five aspects of how God has wired us to serve. It stands for:

S – Spiritual Gifts.

H – Heart, which refers to our God-given passions and interests.

A – Abilities, which can often include non-spiritual, natural gifts.

P – Personality – the unique ways we think and relate to the world around us.

E – Experiences, both positive and negative, that provide us a context from which to empathize with and minister to others.

If you look at spiritual gifts alone, you’ll probably conclude that only those with the gift of *teaching* should be teaching the Bible to anyone. But when you look at the bigger picture, you’ll realize that someone with the gift of mercy can certainly teach others, from their personal experience, how to be more merciful.

In other words, gifts alone don’t determine what we can **do** for God in a fulfilling way.

Answer the Big “What If” Question

If you could do anything for God knowing that resources wouldn’t be a problem and with guaranteed success, what would it be? Usually how we answer that question can propel us in the right direction. Don’t stress about what your gifts are, jump into something that appeals to you.

Jump In and Get Your Feet Wet

In other words, begin serving. We recommend that new believers serve in a variety of areas on a short term basis until they discover that place that really fits with who they are. We will grow through this process of “trial and error” as we understand ourselves better.

Perhaps this is the crux of the issue. God has shaped you for significance and service. So launch out today, get started, and be flexible along the way allowing God to tweak your plans until you find that sweet, satisfying, kingdom-expanding and Christ-exalting niche for which you are divinely wired.