

Talents Given by God for His Kingdom

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Introduction: Talents Given by God for His Kingdom

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), Jesus teaches us that the gifts and abilities we receive from God are not meant to be hidden or squandered. Instead, they are to be used for the growth and flourishing of God’s Kingdom. Each of us has been entrusted with specific talents—skills or inclinations that are uniquely ours—and it is our responsibility to use them faithfully.

This idea is echoed in the business world by the popular and effective concepts found in the book *The 6 Types of Working Genius*. This book helps people organize teams by recognizing and utilizing their unique strengths, ensuring that tasks are accomplished efficiently and effectively. Like all good things, this practical wisdom has deep roots in the Bible, where we see the same principles at work in the lives of God’s people. Just as the body of Christ has many parts, each with its own function (1 Corinthians 12:12-27), every community of believers needs a diversity of talents to function effectively.

No one person can embody all the strengths necessary for the Church to thrive, which is why God has distributed these talents among us. While each of us might be particularly strong in two of these areas, a healthy and vibrant community or team will embody all six. This reflects

Jesus’ promise that “where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20), and the model of church leadership in the New Testament, where different individuals contribute their unique gifts for the common good.

Here are the six talents, or spiritual gifts, that are essential for a Christ-centered community, along with guidance on how to recognize these gifts in yourself and others.

1. Talent of Contemplation (Wonder)

Biblical Example: Mary, the mother of Jesus

Explanation: Contemplators are those who naturally spend time reflecting on the deeper questions of life and faith. They are like Mary, who pondered the mysteries of God’s work in her heart (Luke 2:19). These individuals are often drawn to quiet reflection, seeking to understand why things are the way they are and how they could be better aligned with God’s will.

How to Identify: You might have this talent if you find yourself often lost in thought, questioning the status quo, or feeling a deep sense of wonder at God’s creation and His works. You are comfortable with ambiguity and are deeply disturbed by unmet potential or unfulfilled promises in the world around you.

Bible Verse: “But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.” — *Luke 2:19*

2. Talent of Creativity (Invention)

Biblical Example: Bezalel

Explanation: Creators are those who are brimming with ideas and are gifted at envisioning new solutions to problems. Like Bezalel, who was filled with the Spirit of God to design the Tabernacle (Exodus 31:1-5), Creators thrive in environments where innovation is needed. They see possibilities where others see obstacles.

How to Identify: You may recognize this talent in yourself if you often have multiple ideas on how to solve a problem and enjoy brainstorming new approaches. You are energized by blank slates and love to create something out of nothing, though you may sometimes struggle with narrowing down your ideas to just one.

Bible Verse: “See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills.” — *Exodus 31:2-3*

3. Talent of Discernment

Biblical Example: Solomon

Explanation: Discerners are those who have a gift for perceiving the right course of action, even when the path isn't obvious. Like Solomon, who asked for a discerning heart to govern his people (1 Kings 3:9), these individuals can sense what is most aligned with God's will, often combining intuition with spiritual wisdom.

How to Identify: You likely have this talent if you often "just know" the right decision or feel guided by an inner sense of what is true and just. Others may come to you for advice because of your keen judgment and ability to weigh options carefully.

Bible Verse: "So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong." — *1 Kings 3:9*

4. Talent of Encouragement (Galvanizing)

Biblical Example: Nehemiah

Explanation: Encouragers are those who can inspire and mobilize others to action. Like Nehemiah, who rallied the Israelites to rebuild Jerusalem's walls despite great opposition (Nehemiah 2:17), Encouragers have the unique ability to ignite passion and determination in others, moving a community toward a shared goal.

How to Identify: This talent may be yours if you often find yourself motivating others or leading them to take action. You are likely energized by the idea of rallying a group to accomplish something significant, and you have a knack for getting others excited about a vision.

Bible Verse: "Then I said to them, 'You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.'" — *Nehemiah 2:17*

5. Talent of Service (Enablement)

Biblical Example: Tabitha (Dorcas)

Explanation: Servants are those who find joy in helping others accomplish their tasks. They are essential in any community, as they are the hands that make things happen. Tabitha, also known as Dorcas, is a prime example. She was always doing good and helping the poor, providing clothing and care for those in need (Acts 9:36). Servants ensure that the practical needs of the community are met, enabling others to fulfill their roles effectively.

How to Identify: You may have this talent if you find satisfaction in supporting others and are quick to offer help when it's needed. You enjoy being part of a team and take pride in seeing things through to completion, often working behind the scenes.

Bible Verse: "In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor." — *Acts 9:36*

6. Talent of Perseverance (Tenacity)

Biblical Example: Paul

Explanation: Perseverers are those who are determined to see things through to the end, no matter the challenges. Paul exemplifies this talent through his relentless dedication to spreading the Gospel, even in the face of persecution and hardship (2 Timothy 4:7). Perseverers ensure that projects and missions are completed with excellence and that the community remains steadfast in its commitments.

How to Identify: If you have this talent, you likely find fulfillment in finishing tasks and projects, especially when they require overcoming obstacles. You have a strong sense of duty and are motivated by the satisfaction of a job well done.

Bible Verse: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." — *2 Timothy 4:7*

Conclusion: Building Effective Teams with Complementary Talents

A thriving Christian community or team needs all six talents working together in harmony. While each of us may be particularly strong in two areas, it is by coming together and combining our gifts that we fully embody the body of Christ. When forming teams to accomplish a task, it is wise to ensure that at least three people are involved, with their talents complementing one another to cover all six areas. This approach helps ensure that the task is not only completed but done well, reflecting the excellence and faithfulness to which God calls us.

As Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:16, "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." Let us, therefore, celebrate the diversity of talents among us and seek to use them for the glory of God and the building of His Kingdom.