

Spiritual gifts are those natural, spiritual, or supernatural abilities, capabilities, and inclinations that the Holy Spirit bestows on human beings to enable them to accomplish specific functions in the outworking of God's purposes.

Can natural gifts, spiritual gifts, and supernatural gifts (distinguished in terms of the time of communication and the kind of enablement) be viewed as distinct varieties of spiritual gifts?

In order even to discuss this question we must attempt a definition for each of these varieties:

Natural Gifts may be defined as those aptitudes, abilities, and attitudes communicated by the Spirit of God at physical birth, and/or acquired, nurtured, and expressed during earthly life, by means of αprovidential enablement.

Spiritual gifts may be defined as those aptitudes, abilities, and attitudes communicated by the Spirit of God at spiritual rebirth, and/or acquired, nurtured, and expressed during the Christian life, by means of spiritual enablement.

Supernatural gifts may be defined as those aptitudes, abilities, and attitudes communicated by the Spirit of God at His anointing for a specific vocation or task, and acquired, nurtured, and expressed during the exercise of ministry, by means of supernatural enablement.

The disputed category in this listing is, of course, natural gifts. If spiritual gifts are capacities, abilities, or skills that enable a believer to accomplish a specific service or task for God, then can so-called natural gifts be included in this category in a larger sense? Can they be pressed into His service? Can they be viewed as characteristics with which the Spirit of God endowed believers at birth (and even before birth, in terms of their genetic makeup, transmitted through their parents)? Can natural gifts be viewed as characteristics and abilities and skills that have been developed under the superintendence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that when persons become believers, they are able to seek for and find the calling and tasks for which God has prepared them by discerning the capacities, abilities, skills, and inclinations with which God has gifted them?

If natural gifts (along with spiritual gifts and supernatural gifts) can be included in the general category of gifts God gives to human beings to enable them to accomplish a specific service or task for