

S

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

H

HEART

A

ABILITIES

P

PERSONALITY

E

EXPERIENCE

Abilities

- Abilities
 - God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well (Romans 12:6a, NLT).
 - Show me a person who doesn't know his talents or hasn't developed them for service to others, and I will show you a person who has little sense of purpose, meaning, motivation and values (Tom Paterson).
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- God uses your abilities to accomplish His purpose
 - There are different abilities to perform service (1 Corinthians 12:6).
 - I (God) have given him skill, ability, and knowledge in all kinds of crafts (Exodus 31:3).
 - The LORD has given them special skills as jewelers, designers, weavers . . . They excel in all the crafts needed for the work (Exodus 35:35, NLT).
 - Whatever you do, do it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men . . . It is the Lord Christ you are serving (Colossians 3:23-24).

Parable of the Talents

- Jesus' teaching about abilities
 - Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away (Matthew 25:28-29, NLT).
 - The first two put his money to work and gained a profit. But a third buried the money. When the boss returned, he rewarded the two who had increased his estate, praising them for being good and faithful.
 - If we hold back the natural abilities God gave us at birth, or if we use those abilities for purposes that don't include God, they will not be used to their full potential.
- Questions you may ask yourself
 - Where do I naturally excel?
 - Are you someone who loves to inspire others?
 - Do you love to work with your hands? Is goal-setting a natural part of your life?
 - Whatever you are naturally good at and love to do; find a way to use it for God.
 - If we hold back the natural abilities God gave us at birth, those talents will not be used to their full capacity.

Misconceptions about Abilities

- People aren't born with skills. All skills must be learned by experience.
 - There are a number of talents which seem to be inborn, or are developed very early in infancy. When people say "He just seems to have a natural talent for it" it's probably true!
- Those skills which must be learned, are learned primarily in the classroom.
 - Some of your most basic skills were learned at home, in the street, or somewhere else outside the classroom.
- If you have certain abilities, you will be very aware that you have them.
 - You are probably using a number of talents or skills that you are not even aware of! You need some process of skill identification.
- Skills that I use at work are only usable in that environment.
 - I couldn't use them in ministry. Hopefully, by the end of this class, you'll see the fallacy of this idea. Be creative!
- Most people only have a very few abilities.
 - The truth is that many national studies have proven that the average person possesses from five hundred to seven hundred skills!

Spiritual Gifts vs. Natural Abilities/Talents

- Both come from God
- Both are used to serve God
- Spiritual gifts are received and matured while talents are inherited and developed.
- Spiritual gifts are acquired by only the saved, while talents are acquired by both.
- Sometimes spiritual gifts are not evident until after conversion.
- Natural abilities (talents) may not automatically become spiritual gifts.



Talents vs. Spiritual Gifts

Natural Talents

Spiritual Gifts

Source	From God Through Parents	From God Independent of Parents
Possessed	From birth	From conversion
Purpose	To benefit mankind in general	To edify the church

God's People Demonstrate Various Abilities

- Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold (Genesis 13:2).
- Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword (Exodus 17:13).
- Deborah, a prophetess was leading Israel at that time (Judges 4:4).
- He (Samuel) asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He (David) is tending the sheep." (1 Samuel 16:11).
- I (Amos) was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees (Amos 7:14).
- Jesus saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me" (Luke 5:27).
- Our dear friend Luke, the doctor (Colossians 4:14).
- One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14).

God Made You with a Purpose in Mind

- God does not waste any part of our lives. Every day of our life, including every skill we develop, has been orchestrated by God to be used in His service once we become a Christian.
- God has always loved to choose His people right off the streets. He used the abilities of many to carry on His work and the vocations at the right place at the right time to be used.
- (God to Moses) “I have chosen **Bezalel**...and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts. Moreover, I have appointed **Oholiab** to help him. Also I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you” (Exodus 31:2-6)
- Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men (Proverbs 22:29)

Identifying Abilities to Serve God Powerfully

- Answer the following questions will help you analyze your abilities
 - What things do you do well naturally, that you have a natural aptitude for, that come very easy for you? (For example, organizing, building, creative, relational, repairing, solving problems, etc.)
 - What things are you able to do well because of special training, education, or practice? (For example, computer skills, musical instruments, drama, special events, leadership training, carpentry, etc.)
 - What things in the lists (see the next slide) do you really enjoy doing and receive a sense of fulfillment in doing?

Check Your Ability

- Use the list to help you recognize what God has gifted you to do. After you mark it, make note of the top five you most excel at and love doing.
- What are your 5 top abilities? Note them here.
- What are some ways you can use the things you love to do to make little deposit of love this week?
 - In your home
 - At work
 - At church
 - In your small group

Rank your abilities

- Love it
 - You can't imagine life without these activities. They make your day complete. Given a choice, you would do these things full-time. These abilities are the way you will meet the needs of the people group you identified in the last chapter. They can be (but don't have to be) part of your job. Your 9-to-5 life may be just tent-making, as it was for the apostle Paul. If you are unsatisfied by what you do full-time, finding what you love to do most could become what you do full-time.
- Like it
 - You may enjoy these abilities and activities, but you don't need to do them on a regular basis in order to feel satisfied. Your attitude toward them is, "I can take it or leave it." For example, you may enjoy coaching or teaching, but these things don't satisfy you like the things you really love.
- Live without it
 - These abilities and activities leave you feeling slightly deflated and disappointed compared to what you love doing. When faced with the prospect of having to do these things, your immediate response is to think about not doing them. When you have to carry out these responsibilities on a frequent basis, you feel drained. You may be able to adequately perform these tasks, but you have little or no desire to do them.

Sanctify Your Abilities to God



1. Identify abilities from God
2. Sanctify them to God
 - Sanctify literally means "to set apart for special use or purpose of God", that is, to make holy or sacred
 - (Mary) "I am the Lord's servant, may your word to me be fulfilled." (Luke 1:38)
 - (Jesus) "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them" (Matthew 21:1-3)
3. Little by little implement them in your daily lives
 - Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased enough to take possession of the land (Exodus 23:30)