

“Do Non-Christians Have Spiritual Gifts?”

I love your ministry and I find myself going to your website a lot as I prepare for Middle School Sunday School lessons. I am going to be teaching on spiritual gifts to teenagers. My 14-year-old son asked a very astute question. He says he knows some very “gifted” non-Christians at school and wondered if the spiritual gifts are only for those who have been born again or if our purpose in life is intertwined with our spiritual gifts. For example, a non-Christian singer who has been given an excellent voice but is not using it for God.

Thank you for the blessing of encouragement! I’m so glad our website is valuable to you!!

I think one’s theology determines the answer. I know lots of people say that spiritual gifts are only given to the born-again believer as if God has nothing to do with people before they trust Christ.

I don’t think it works that way though; I think that since God reveals Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who created us for the purpose of bringing us into the circle of Their love and delight and pleasure and fellowship, that a case can be made that God is everyone’s loving Father (“one God and Father of all,” Ephesians 4:6)—but unbelievers don’t recognize it. That doesn’t make Him NOT our Father; it doesn’t make Jesus NOT “the Savior of all men, but especially of believers” (1 Timothy 4:10); it doesn’t make the Holy Spirit NOT the giver of good gifts. So I think God lavishes all kinds of gifts on all people, but they are especially expressed more fully in those who are consciously connected to Him. I keep hearing stories from Christians who saw evidence of their spiritual gifts even before they were Christians; after they came into the Kingdom, they knew what they were.

Now there are also natural talents, which are different from spiritual gifts. Singing, for example, is a talent, not a spiritual gift. For one thing, it’s not on the lists in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4. Secondly, you can lose a singing voice, but Romans 11:29 says that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.

Have you seen the spiritual gifts evaluation my husband Ray and I put together?
www.probe.org/how-do-you-determine-your-spiritual-gift/

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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