To understand the difference between these two terms “gift” and “spiritual gift” let’s consider this example:

Imagine two people each receive a car as a gift. Both cars are identical, but each person uses their car differently. The first person uses the car for their own convenience to travel easily and for personal use. The second person, however, turns their car into an ambulance to help sick people get to the hospital, offering this service freely.

Biblically, the cars represent *gifts* from God. But the second person’s choice to use the car to serve others exemplifies a spiritual gift. According to Scripture, a spiritual gift is not just a blessing or talent; it’s a divine enablement given by the Holy Spirit to serve and build up the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:7,: “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good”).

This means that a spiritual gift is given not primarily for personal benefit but for the edification and blessing of others (Romans 12:6-8).

Today, many people possess natural talents or gifts but lack

spiritual gifts in the biblical sense. For instance, some may have the gift of singing but do not exercise it as a spiritual gift intended to encourage and build the church (Ephesians 4:11-13). Others might prophesy or speak in tongues but use these gifts selfishly or for personal recognition instead of serving the community (1 Corinthians 14:12).

Why does this matter? Because Scripture warns that spiritual gifts are to be exercised with love and humility for the benefit of the whole church, not for personal fame or gain (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Paul instructs in,

1 Corinthians 14:12

> “Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.”

The primary purpose of spiritual gifts is to build up the church, the body of Christ, rather than glorify the individual.

So, reflect honestly: Is your gift blessing others and strengthening the church, or is it serving your own interests? If your gift primarily brings honor to yourself rather than to God, you may have a talent but not yet a true spiritual gift empowered by the Spirit (John 15:8).

God calls us to transform our gifts into spiritual gifts by surrendering them to His service and using them to bless others. The result is a life that glorifies God and edifies His people (1 Peter 4:10-11).

Furthermore, Scripture tells us that those who faithfully use their spiritual gifts will be honored at Christ’s return (Matthew 25:14-30, the Parable of the Talents). Only those who serve others with their gifts will be invited to the “banquet” symbolizing the eternal celebration with Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 reminds us:

> “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.
> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.
> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”

The spiritual gift is meant for *mutual benefit* not selfish gain.

In summary: Desire to serve and build the body of Christ selflessly. In doing so, God will transform your natural gifts into true spiritual gifts that bring blessing and glory to Him.

May the Lord bless you as you serve!

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