

Seek Ye First...

"...the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

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MIRACLES, FADS, FAITH, AND FRAUDS

Michael Light

Have you noticed the amount of miracle workers on television and radio these days? With all the claims being made of miracles occurring on every hand it's a wonder anyone is sick in the world. Are these people frauds? Are they teaching truth? Or, are they simply following a current religious fad?

If one listens to the doctrines taught by these self professed miracle workers great differences become apparent. All of these "Spirit filled" prophets seem to disagree on what to do to be saved. They disagree concerning how to worship God. The Holy Spirit is appealed to over and over as the power behind their work yet the Spirit's word (the Bible) is ignored. The Bible teaches that God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Due to the amount of confusion on the nature and work of the Holy Spirit, people have little or no idea about what the Holy Spirit does and doesn't do today. While it is true that this subject is not the easiest in the New Testament to understand, it is however a subject that can be properly understood. In this issue of *Seek Ye First...* we will be examining subjects and ideas relative to the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. We will discuss miracles from several different directions. We will note what the Bible says about the fact that miracles in the New Testament days were real and actually did happen. Space will also be given to studying what the Bible says about the purpose of miracles. We will also make note of the biblical teaching that miracles were temporary and have now ceased.

The point of this initial article is to look at some of the reasons for the increase in the public's interest in the miraculous as well as the explosion of men and women who claim to have miraculous powers. We have seen a transformation in the religious make-up of America over the past several decades. There has been a shift from a logical reasonable approach to the scriptures to a more emotional, less rational one. Many have adopted a view of religion that the Bible never approved of. Most seem to think that truth is somehow out of reach. That we can never really know any absolute truths. Yet Christ still says, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Most of these people will appeal to their experiences rather than the word of God to justify their beliefs. I don't care

how many modern day "prophets" say other wise, the Bible still calls upon us to turn to the Word as our source of wisdom and strength. Notice what Paul said, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). The word of God is sufficient to show us how to get into a saved state. This same word is able to show us the way to glory. But there is a great ignorance in the land concerning the Bible. When religious people practice religion without knowledge of the word of God great confusion and error will result. Notice, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:1-3). Paul is speaking of the religious Jews of his day. They were committed, they were zealous, but they were ignorant of God's actual will in their lives. This being true all the religion in the world couldn't make them right.

The same is true of many who are seeking a "better felt than told" religious experience. The gospel is material which can be read and understood. Notice Ephesians 3:3-5, "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;" Paul makes it clear we can read and understand the truth.

I would simply ask all our readers to give a few minutes to this issue. If you will read each article with your Bible in hand a clear picture of the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit will come into view. The only way to figure out God's truth on this subject is by examining it in light of the scriptures (2 Timothy 2:15). Please get your Bible out and turn to the various passages under discussion (Act 17:30).

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Seek Ye First...

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Our Purpose

The editors of *Seek Ye First* produce this biblical journal to provide scriptural material dealing with the issues that are currently affecting our families, our nation and the world. Our intent is to challenge souls to return to the "old paths" (Jeremiah 6:16) for their sole source of authority in religious matters. Our policy is to speak as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11), encouraging people to study to show themselves approved unto God, enabling them to rightly divide the word (2 Timothy 2:15). We make every effort to deal boldly with the issues that confront Christianity, with no apology, and strive to do so "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15).

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Tom Moore

In John 14:1-6 Jesus informs His apostles that He is going away to prepare for them, and all obedient followers, a special place of reward. But to the apostles, our Lord made an additional special promise, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). While the New Testament was being prepared it was necessary for the first century Christians to have some means of knowing the will of God when the apostles were not there to inform them. This was the basic reason for spiritual gifts.

In 1 Corinthians 12 we are given a list of nine spiritual gifts that were bestowed in the first century. "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

Since the first spiritual gift in this section of scripture is called the "word of wisdom" it must have reference to the ability to communicate divine wisdom. Thus, the one with this gift is not only able to apprehend divine wisdom, but is able to reveal it to others. It would also seem to include the ability to apply divine wisdom in a practical way to the one's own life as well as to the lives of other men. Therefore, this gift enabled its recipient to give spiritually wise counsel, instruction, and advice.

The second spiritual gift is the "word of knowledge." Again, because it is called the "word" of knowledge it must deal with the ability to communicate spiritual truths and doctrines. The "word of wisdom" and the "word of knowledge" are closely related. Thus, the one possessing this gift would have a clear understanding of the plan of salvation, the organization of the church, and the duties of a Christian.

The gift of "faith" is the third spiritual gift mentioned in our text. This is not the saving faith that all men are required to have (Hebrews 11:6), nor is it the faith that comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). It seems to be a special confidence in God that enabled one to do that which seemed impossible. This is a faith that "can remove mountains" (1 Corinthians 13:2).

"Gifts of healings" are a fourth spiritual gift of the first century church. This gave one the power to supernaturally restore the sick. The word "gifts" (plural) seems to relate to the different classes of sickness to be healed. This gift is separated from the "working of miracles" because it seems that some had their miraculous powers limited to the area of healing alone.

The "working of miracles" is the fifth among the nine spiritual gifts. This spiritual gift was much larger in scope than the "gifts of healings," for it

involved not only mercy, but also acts of judgment as in the case of Elymas (Acts 13:9-11), and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). Those possessing this gift had power over demons, nature and death.

The sixth spiritual gift is “prophecy.” This gift enabled one to speak the message of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit with reference to the past, present, and future. It enabled him to speak without error. The chief function of this gift was the edifying of the church. “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church” (1 Corinthians 14:3-4).

The “discerning of spirits,” a seventh spiritual gift, gave one the power to recognize the difference between one who spoke by inspiration and one who didn’t. It enabled one to read the heart as was the case with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). This gift would also allow one to discern between truth and error.

The ability to speak in “tongues” was also a spiritual gift present in the first century church. This spiritual gift enabled one to speak in different languages. In Acts 2 when the apostles spoke in tongues “every man heard them speak in his own language” (Acts 2:6). This was not some kind of meaningless gibberish. In 1 Corinthians 14 we are told that the gifts of tongues were not to be used unless they could be understood and/or an interpreter was present. Also note that the gifts of tongues were not a sign for the Christian, but for the non-believing (1 Corinthians 14:26).

The ninth and final spiritual gift is the “interpretation of tongues.” This gave one the ability to translate the words of the one speaking in tongues into words that others not of that language could understand also.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-28, Paul shows how spiritual gifts worked in the church for the edifying of its members. These gifts were not provided for the benefit of the one possessing them, but for the benefit of the church. It is important to realize that those who did not receive a spiritual gift were nevertheless members of the body and important to the whole. One with spiritual gifts was not to feel superior to one possessing a different spiritual gift, or to one not possessing a spiritual gift. They were all members of the one body, all functioning in their assigned place, and all were necessary. If all the members did not cooperate with each other then there would be mass confusion and the body would be damaged or destroyed.

Spiritual gifts were a very valuable tool in the infancy of the church. Today, though, these spiritual gifts have been done away because they are no longer needed since we have everything we need as Christians within the recorded Word of God. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God’s will is revealed through in the knowledge of Jesus, and “his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:3). These miraculous spiritual gifts are no longer required because we have the fully revealed word of God that furnishes all we need to be pleasing to God.

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Theme This Issue:

Miracles

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THE GIFT OF TONGUES

J. D. Sweeten

Words and ideas coexist; one is not without the other. Paul, therefore, tells the Corinthian church, “There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance” (1 Corinthians 14:10, NKJV). Language serves to communicate ideas from one mind to another but have no function if they are not understood. Shared meaning is the goal. God’s great love for mankind is therefore expressed in the fact that the Gospel was preached on Pentecost through the medium of miraculous tongues; men speaking languages they had never studied or mastered and yet speaking them fluently enough to be understood and comprehended (Acts 2:8-11). I can’t imagine the wonder and amazement of those in Jerusalem who heard the Good News in their native tongue. It had to be “a lamp unto (their) feet, and a light unto (their) path” (Psalm 119:105).

In the absence of comprehension, there is always confusion. This confusion is prevalent in many modern-day religious organizations that assert the continuation of miraculous gifts, including tongues. Anyone who has experienced an assembly where these supposed “tongues” are spoken would ask the same question that visitors to the Corinthian church might have asked: “If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?” (1 Corinthians 14:23). Tongues in the New Testament were miraculous manifestations of understandable languages; hence their purpose was edification (1 Corinthians 14:4-6, 19). Tongues were never to be pressed into service without an interpreter. The frequent absence of interpreters in the commotion of today’s charismatic assemblies defies Deity and adds to the disarray of a Devil’s worship. Clarity of language is essential to proper prayer and worship (1 Corinthians 14:16). Among other problems, the Corinthian church’s assembly had turned into a confusing babble of tongues, and Paul’s letter set forth several guidelines concerning the use of this miraculous gift.

First, tongues were for the unbeliever. The common practice of denominations today that showcase tongue speaking in their regular assembly or amongst their regular membership has missed the point. Tongue speaking today more often serves to demote a worship assembly into a theatrical dog and pony show. Paul explained that “tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not” (1 Corinthians 14:22). The practical example is the Pentecost event. One of the convincing features that baffled the crowd was that “all these which speak (are)

Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?” (Acts 2:7-8). This impressive example of God’s power enticed the unbeliever to listen and helped produced an audience for the Gospel.

Secondly, even though the tongues of the New Testament church were miraculous, they were controllable. The silly notion that some “spirit” just overpowers one’s presence and takes control of a person to such a degree that one “cannot help it,” and is compelled to burst out is ludicrous, disruptive and unscriptural. Paul reprimanded the Corinthian church for the chaos in their worship assembly, pointing out the fact that “the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (1 Corinthians 14:32-33). The argument for and practice of blurting anything out unrestrained in an assembly of the saints is condemned. Spontaneity of this sort is more likely to feed an ego by focusing attention on an individual than of praising God. “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40). Structure in worship is not stifling traditionalism, it is a holy mandate.

Finally, tongues were inferior. It is no surprise that false religions today promote miraculous tongues. Picking up deadly serpents and drinking deadly poisons (Mark 16:17-18) tends to thin the flock. Tongues are benign, and most can claim to speak in tongues with some degree of impunity. So we see that most folks who believe in the miraculous are more willing to wag the tongues issue. Paul viewed it in quite the opposite way, “for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying” (1 Corinthians 14:5). In fact, Paul even lumps the tongues of men and even angels into a subservient category beneath love (1 Corinthians 13:1). In modern charismatic movements, if miraculous tongues were even possible (and they are not), they would still be overrated.

Like all the miraculous spiritual gifts, the purpose of the gift of tongues in any instance was for edification and the confirmation of God’s truth. They served in a time before the written word and ceased as the church came to full age (1 Corinthians 13:8-11). The theatrical exhibition of modern day tongue speakers is circus and show, not spirituality. Claiming to speak in miraculous tongues today amounts to little more than “speaking into the air” (1 Corinthians 14:9, NKJV).

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Guest Article...

THE CESSATION OF MIRACLES

Pat McIntosh

The miracles of the first century were fascinating. I cannot begin to imagine the emotions one would have experienced in observing the miraculous events recorded in Scripture. Space will not allow a thorough discussion of the crippled that were made to walk, the blind made to see, the sick made well and the dead raised to life.

There are those in the religious world today that will strongly insist that such things continue today. Some claim to be able to speak in tongues (ecstatic speech). Others claim to be able to heal people of cancer, make the lame walk and cause the blind to see. Are their claims valid? Despite the claims of those in the religious world today, the New Testament manifests that the age of miracles has come to an end. We can prove, biblically, that the performing of miracles has ceased in two approaches. First, we will see this from a practical perspective regarding their purpose. Then, we will see this fact from common sense perspective based on what is to be inferred from the account involving Peter's preaching in Samaria (Acts 8).

First, miracles served a distinct and limited role in the first century. This role was one of equipping and confirming. The equipping role they served is declared in that with which the apostles and others would be supplied in their teaching of the gospel. In this regard Christ said, "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16:17-18, NKJV). A few verses later we are told that they went out and preached, the miracles confirming their words (vs. 20).

This is not an isolated account as we can see two instances in which Christ is referenced in the same manner. In John 20:30-31 we are told, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." The seven "signs" John records in his gospel account were written that men would believe that Jesus is the Christ. The second reference to Christ was on the occasion of Peter's sermon on Pentecost. In that great sermon, Peter said that Jesus was "attested by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs" (Acts 2:22). This confirming role was an important one as men could not simply take out their Bibles and teach men the truth as it had not been fully revealed.

The common sense approach in proving that miracles are no longer performed can be seen in at least two ways. The first is in the account of Philip preaching in Samaria (Acts 8). We know from an earlier account in Philip's life that he had been enabled, through the laying on of hands, to perform miraculous deeds (Acts 6:3-7). One of those responding obediently to the message preached was Simon, who had been a sorcerer (Acts 8:9-13). When the apostles at Jerusalem had heard about these conversions, they sent Peter and John to Samaria to lay hands on them that they would "receive the Holy Spirit" as He had not yet fallen on any of them (Acts 8:14-17). A question immediately comes to mind. Why did not Philip lay hands on them if he had the ability to perform miraculous acts? The answer we are to understand is that only certain ones had the ability to pass these gifts on since "through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given" (Acts 8:18). The only ones with this ability were the apostles. Using common sense, we can see that the age of the miracles would not last long past the death of the last apostle as the ability to pass on these gifts would die with him.

A second common sense approach is seen in an epistle from Paul to the church in Corinth. We have already established that the purpose of the miracles was to equip and confirm in the days when God's word had not been completely revealed. Upon completion of that revelation, the need for the miracles would pass. Paul told the church in Corinth, "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part" (1 Corinthians 13:8-9). These miraculous gifts would pass away, "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:10). If we leave the discussion of miracles in their context, we will see that, upon the reception of that which is "perfect" (complete), that which is in part (miracles) would cease.

The televangelists and others claiming to perform miracles draw large crowds. People are misled both by false claims and their own biblical ignorance. Let us boldly proclaim the truth and pray that men come to a knowledge of the truth before it is eternally too late. May we look to "that which is perfect" for our only standard in religious matters.

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THE PURPOSE OF MIRACLES

J. D. Sweeten

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). These timeless words are descriptive of our God, Whose every purpose will be fulfilled, and Whose providence will never be stilled. There is no redundancy with God, nothing superfluous; every act toward and for His creation, every divine will fulfilled, with or without humanity’s involvement, is essential and complete. The will of God will be done, and serve the purpose for which it was ordained.

Those mystifying miracles of the first century church contributed to God’s providential care; they were unique and special. They were for a specific age, for a specific purpose, and for a specific timeframe. Unfortunately, our modern culture’s fascination with miracles has frequently been fodder for the heretic’s cannon. Even the most rudimentary investigation of modern day miracle workers exposes embarrassing failures on the part of these charlatans to conjure up any bona fide marvels. Trickery, slight of hand, and duplicity are the stock and trade of snake-handling sorcerers who prey on gullible and desperate souls, and suckers quick to part with a dollar are never in short supply. Were New Testament people so gullible, or was there an authenticity and purpose to the miracles of the New Testament? Did the apostles perform miracles for money, or were these supernatural feats only temporary tools in the hands of the Master’s craftsmen?

True miracles did exist and to deny they exist today is not a denial of all miracles for all time. God has exercised His supernatural prerogative on many occasions, but never without purpose. When He plagued Pharaoh, each succeeding calamity shot down yet another Egyptian god (Exodus 3:1ff). When the prophets saw visions (Isaiah 1:1), healed diseases (2 Kings 5:1ff), or defied nature (2 Kings 6:6), each incident contributed to the accomplishment of God’s will in calling people out of sin and into a divine relationship. Marring this marvelous purpose are the ever-present false visionaries (Jeremiah 14:14), fake healers (Acts 8:9), and shady shamans (Acts 13:8) who ply their hocus-pocus on the blind and rebellious. The distinction between shadow and reality will always be evident to the thinking mind (Acts 8:13), and the real test for today’s deceitful diviners is *purpose*. Since God does nothing on a lark, what reasoned purpose would New Testament miracles serve in a modern day setting? In order to answer that question, we must understand their purpose in the New Testament.

The Bible is clear in revealing, not only the reality of miraculous events, but also their purpose. Negatively, miracles were not for the direct benefit of those performing

the miracles and they were not intended to serve merely material purposes. While it must have been a heady proposition to speak in a language never studied, or to heal someone of a dread disease, or even to raise the dead, the miracle workers of the New Testament always gave God the glory and NEVER used them to generate “jingle” (they didn’t sell “Prayer Cloths!”). Simon tried to buy these powers and was condemned (Acts 18:8ff). Paul and Barnabas vehemently disavowed any personal honor for the miracles they performed, even in the face of an audience willing to make them gods (Acts 14:11-18). This kind of conduct is a country mile from the ego trips of modern “miracle workers.” Also, New Testament miracles were not motivated by apparent physical needs. For instance, many were healed, but many were not. Was this a divine oversight, or was there more to it than repairing broken limbs? If healing was nothing more than restoring physical health, vast numbers of people flat missed out! Yet, Jesus reprimanded a multitude for merely following Him for a free meal (John 6:26), de-emphasizing its earthly nature in favor of its heavenly purpose. A miracles with deeper purpose clarifies the selectivity with which the dead were raised, the lepers healed, and the multitudes fed.

The Bible gives its reason for miracles clearly: conformation of God’s message. When Jesus gave the “Great Commission,” He said, “signs shall follow them that believe... And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following” (Mark 16:17, 20). The “great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will” (Hebrews 2:3-4). The confused, convoluted communiqués of modern miracle ministers is anything from counterfeit to crooked, but never confirmatory. “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:30-31). The purpose of New Testament miracles, and our record of them, is to confirm our faith in Jesus Christ, and pandering for miracles today is a flat denial of the Scripture’s sufficiency. If God’s inspired Record is not enough, “neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:31).

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ARE BIBLE MIRACLES FACT OR FICTION

Michael Light

The answer to the above question is an unequivocal "yes." Often times when we point out that the Bible doesn't support the existence of miracles today, we are charged with, "not believing in miracles." Nothing could be further from the truth. We most definitely do believe in the biblical miracles as matters of fact. We believe in each and every one of the miraculous occurrences found on the pages of holy writ. However, we not only believe in the Bible miracles, we believe what the Bible teaches about the nature and duration of the miracles. Far too many people refuse to look at the totality of what the Bible says on this subject. As other articles have shown in this issue of *Seek Ye First*, miracles were worked for a purpose (to confirm the message of Jesus and the disciples). Miracles were also never promised as permanent elements in the church, they were temporary. For "whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away... But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13).

The primary purpose of this article is to affirm the fact of the miracles as presented in the Bible. It needs to be stressed that if the miracles of the Bible (both Old and New Testament) did not occur then the Bible is a collection of lies and cannot be trusted. Surprising as it may be, there are many religious people who deny the existence of miracles.

There is an entire school of thought among many religious clerics that denies the possibility of the miraculous. These men and institutions have been influenced by humanism to the extent that they will sacrifice what the Bible says concerning miracles. These people spend much time trying to explain away the miraculous events of the Bible.

I had a professor once who did this very thing. He argued that Moses and the Israelites never crossed the Red Sea. He postulated that they had crossed the Reed Sea, which is not a sea at all. This body of water is said to be only inches deep. He then said that a strong wind could have dried this shallow body of water sufficiently to allow the Jews passage on dry ground. Now friends, this is nothing like what the Bible describes in the book of Exodus. The Bible names the Red Sea as the body of water that was crossed. This is not some shallow body of water. It was impressive enough to drown the entire Egyptian army when God allowed it to close back in on them. Another line of reason has to do with the actions of the Jewish people when they reached the water. If the body of water was only a few inches deep, do you really think they would have even broken stride at its banks? The Egyptian army was bearing down on them with

the desire to destroy them. There is no way they wouldn't have crossed a shallow body of water to escape.

Any time a person tries to trivialize or deny the miracles of the Bible they have adopted a course that will cause their spiritual ruination. Without the miracles there can be no confidence in the word (the Bible) being from God. In fact in John 20:21-22 we read, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." If the Bible miracles didn't happen, then the penmen of the scriptures lied to us, for they present them as true events.

In fact the Bible itself claims to be the product of miracle. Notice what Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The very words of the Bible are from God Himself. The men who penned the sacred text did not originate their message. They were instruments in the hand of God.

Peter adds, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21-22). Some posit the argument that the biblical writers were "inspired" in the same fashion as was Shakespeare. This is a denial of what the Bible teaches about inspiration. The Bible was not written by men (they were not the source), it was written by God. As Peter here affirms, the men spoke (and wrote) as God moved (inspired) them.

Friends without the actual miracles of the Bible we could have no confidence in the scriptures as being from God. The Bible miracles were real, and as such demands a recognition of the unique place of the Bible among all other books. So, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15), for "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). There is no other book on the earth that came from God, hence there is no other book that can show us the way to heaven.

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Jessie and Mayne Crow—Burnet, TX
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Lloyd/Elsie Haggerty—New Braunfels, TX
Pauline Hopkins—Bangs, TX
Michael & Carrie Light—Bangs, TX
Ruth Locke—Austin, TX
Morey & Judy Mast—Waxahachie, TX
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Tom & Carole Moore—Malvern, AR

Walter Nelson, Sr.—Oroville, CA
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Ruth Price—Temple, TX
Kenneth & Anna Reed—Bangs, TX
Brandon & Amanda Renfroe—Birmingham, AL
Michael Riley—El Paso, TX
Roelf & Janice Ruffner—Chillicothe, TX
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In Memory Of

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Reba Hartman
Ed Moore

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