

Miracles

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One of the most controversial areas of the Bible is the subject of miracles. This proof, or evidence of Christianity, is usually denied by most scientists; it is even denied by many religious people. It is quite interesting that many who profess to be religious, and base their faith on the existence of God, actually deny the historical fact of miracles. Since the scientist studies in the field of natural law, he presupposes that the ordinary occurrence of natural laws rules out the occurrence of miracles. He assumes that miracles could not have happened in a world that is governed by natural laws. However, much of this objection is only metaphysical wanderings that are based on theory and not facts. Technically speaking, anything as a miracle that happened in the past **is outside the scientific method of study**. Since the scientist can work only in the present, he cannot deny that which is outside the present.

On the other hand, if there are those who claim that miracles occur today as they did in the first century, then the scientist can step in and deny such in reference to the scientific method of study. As we would challenge the scientist who denies the miraculous, so we would challenge the so-called miracle workers today of man-made religions that prevail throughout the world.

Much of the controversy over miracles is the result of a misunderstanding of what a biblically defined miracle actually is. Many have gone to the extreme today by labeling every unexplainable phenomenon a miracle. It may be that God is working in the area of the unexplained—which He is today—but this is not according to the true definition of a miracle as in the Bible. On the other hand, many have called valid miracles only natural happenings. So what are miracles as they are defined by their occurrence in God's Word? Did miracles actually occur? Do we have miracles today? These are questions that must be answered.

Much of the confusion over miracles has been generated by religionists today who are often seeking a following or financial gain. Psychosomatic "healings" in the religious world are often used to define the miracles of the Bible. As a result, the miracles of the Bible have been relegated to a process of mind over matter.

The scientist can explain the psychosomatic occurrence today of what some religionists claim to be a "miracle." He sees the power of mind over matter, and thus, defines the miracles of the Bible to be no more than what fake miracle workers are doing today. He, as well as the supposedly miracle working religionists, view the miracles of the Bible, therefore, through their own psychosomatic experiences of today. As a result, instead of the modern-day miracle worker upholding the Bible as the word of God, he is actually developing a world of skepticism concerning the very source from which he supposedly receives his faith. Instead of upholding the Bible as a valid record of miracles that occurred centuries ago by the power of God, he or she is causing those who are directed by the scientific method of investigation to question the very foundation upon which he supposedly stands. Therefore, amidst all this confusion in the religious world today, it is necessary that we examine again this controversial subject in view of the verifying fact that miracles as recorded in the Bible actually did

occur. The Bible, therefore, must be our dictionary on understanding what a miracle is.

Chapter 1

≈ Definition Of True Miracles ≈

In order to define the miracles of the Bible **our definition must agree with the recorded presentation of miracles that is listed in the Bible.** To define miracles by sources outside the limits of the written word of God would be a great injustice. **The Bible must be our first and primary source for defining miracles simply because it claims to be a valid record of miracles.**

We must use the Bible as our **only** dictionary in our efforts to define miracles simply because people are so easily deceived. They are easily deceived into labelling every unexplainable phenomenon that they experience to be a miracle. We must never underestimate our willingness under emotionally hysterical to conjure up supposedly miraculous events. When one is driven by the excitement of a certain ecstatic moment, we would question whether one's objectivity is affected by what was an emotional experience.

When discussing the subject of miracles, it is imperative to first go to the Bible in order to formulate a true definition of what a miracle is. After we have come to a definition of a true miracle, then we can judge our own experiences. This approach to the study of miracles keeps us from straying from the direction of the word of God to depending too much on our own feelings and emotions. In this way, therefore, we can prove all things and hold fast to that which is true (See 2 Co 13:5).

In the Bible, miracles are usually referred to as **“wonders,” “signs”** or **“powers”** (See At 2:22; 2 Th 2:9; Hb 2:4). We also find the word **“works”** used in reference to miracles (See Jn 5:20; 6:28,29; 7:3,4; 10:37,38). Each of these terms defines a unique area of what a miracle is. Sometimes in our English Bibles

the Greek words are simply translated “miracle.” When the word “miracle” is used, it would be wise to consult a Greek text to determine the original Greek word from which the translation was made. The following points are a brief survey of the Greek words that are used in the New Testament to indicate the supernatural presence of God:

A. Wonder (Greek, “*teras*”)

The term “wonder” emphasizes **the reaction of the people** to the miracle. The reaction of people to the miracles of Jesus is also manifested in passages where *teras* is not used. Examples of these uses would be: *“and her parents were astonished”* (Lk 8:56), *“and they were all astonished beyond measure”* (Mk 7:37), *“and they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure”* (Mk 6:51; see 2:12; 4:41; Mt 9:26; Lk 13:17). None of these passages use the word *teras*. But what is emphasized is the fact that people manifested great wonder at the miracles of Jesus. If a miracle did not cause wonder in the minds of the beholders, **then the very purpose for which miracles were allowed would not have accomplished the purpose of a miracle.** Since the miracles were given for the purpose of confirming the messengers and message of God, **then they had to be so obvious that they were “miraculous” that they would cause the beholders to be amazed at their occurrence.**

The Greek term *teras* is **never used by itself in reference to miracles.** It is always used with the terms “signs,” “powers,” or “mighty works.” Some examples of its use would be, *“signs and wonders”* (See At 2:43; 4:30; 5:12; 2 Co 12:12; 2 Th 2:9; Hb 2:4), *“miracles and wonders”* (See At 2:22; 6:8; 15:12), *“wonders and mighty deeds”* or *“works”* (See 2 Co 12:12).

It must be remembered that Jesus never worked a miracle for the specific purpose of striking wonder and amazement in the minds of the beholders. Miracles were not worked for the mere purpose of satisfying the

idle curiosity of the people. God did not work through people in miracle as a circus performance act (See Mt 12:39).

It must also be noted that the word *teras* does not reflect the definition of a miracle. This word simply conveys the amazement of the people, not what produced the amazement. Therefore, **this word is used in the Bible to explain the reaction of the people, not the occurrence of the event.** A miracle as a *teras* moves us to examine the purpose of the miracles, which purpose helps us to define what a real miracle is. In other words, if a miracle does not cause wonder in the minds of the audience, then the very purpose for the miracle is denied because the happening is questionable. However, the occurrence of the miracles that are defined in the Bible were not questionable occurrences.

B. Sign (Greek, “*semeion*”)

Richard C. Trench, in his book, *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord*, said that a sign is a “token and indication of the near presence and working of God.” In his book, *Manual of Christian Evidences*, George P. Fisher, added that signs are “tokens of God’s presence and of the sanction thus afforded to the teacher or to what is taught.” And then Gus Nichols, in the *Spiritual Sword*, concluded, “As a sign a miracle is an astonishing wonder which points as a sign of something else—as to the trustworthiness of the performer and speaker of divine truth.”

A sign points more to the teleology of the phenomenon. **It is a manifestation of proof verifying the one who performed it.** Paul worked the “*signs of an apostle*” (2 Co 12:12). This meant that he manifested the proof of his apostleship. He could work certain miracles that would signal that he was a Christ-sent apostle.

The Jews asked Jesus, “*What sign do You show us, since You do these things?*” (Jn 2:18). They desired proof of His sonship (See Jn 3:2). They wanted some signal of the supernatural that verified

Him as a prophet. We would assume, therefore, that anyone who claimed to be sent from God **with a special message** would be proved to be from God by the miraculous work of God.

A miracle as a sign **signified something more than the outward manifestation of the miracle itself**. Jesus' healing of the man born blind had more significance than a mere act of compassion. We must wonder why Jesus healed a crippled man beside the pool of Bethesda (See Jn 5:1ff), and yet, did not heal the crippled man at the gate of the temple (See At 3:1ff). Surely, Jesus knew of the crippled man at the temple, for the man laid there daily for many years.

After the ascension of Jesus, **it was Peter who healed the crippled man**. The fact is that Jesus did not heal everyone, for He had walked by this crippled man on different occasions and left him unhealed. Our question is, "Why?" The answer must lie in the fact that **miracles had a greater purpose than simply compassion on humanity**.

The real significance of miracles was to prove that Jesus was the Son of God. From the miracles of Jesus, Nicodemus concluded, *"Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him"* (Jn 3:2; see 9:16). Nicodemus' conclusion was correct. And thus, **the definition of miracles as signs openly signals that God was behind the person who worked the miracles**. The gospel message of the apostles was confirmed by signs, revealing that their message was from God, not man (See Mk 16:20; At 14:3; Hb 2:4).

That which was confirmed **was and is more important than that which confirmed it**. The gospel of salvation is more important than miracles. Miracles were a secondary factor that proved the authenticity of the ones who preached the gospel. Therefore, any religion that is based on the sensationalism of so-called miracles has simply missed the point of Bible miracles. Men and women must come together to hear the gospel message that has already been confirmed by miracles to be from God.

C. Powers (Greek, “*dunamis*”)

The Greek word *dunamis* is generally translated “powers,” “mighty works” or “mighty deeds” in our English Bibles. When these words are used in reference to a miracle, reference is to the **quality or authority of the messenger**. The miracles of Jesus that are recorded in the book of John display His power over the **quality** of substances (2:1-11), **distance** (4:46-54), **time** (5:1-9), **quantity** (6:1-14), **nature** (6:16-21), **misfortune** (9:1-12), and **death** (11:1-46). Jesus was *“a Man attested by God to you by miracles [dunamis], wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst”* (At 2:22). *“Now God worked unusual miracles [dunamis] by the hands of Paul”* (At 19:11).

The term “powers” is definitive of the divine power manifested in that which was worked, as well as, the divine nature and power in the one who worked the deed. It was a proof that he was from God.

D. Works (Greek, “*ergon*”)

The Greek word *ergon* is used many times in the book of John. It is specifically used to identify the miracles of Jesus (See Jn 5:36; 7:21; 10:24,32,38; 14:11,12; 15:24). This term seems to convey the thought that miracles, as wonderful actions revealed to humanity, were **manifestations of the natural environment in which Jesus lived before His incarnation**.

The work of Jesus was to convince people that He was the Son of God. The miraculous works He did bore witness to this fact. Jesus said, *“For the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me”* (Jn 5:36). In other words, if Jesus was from the realm of the supernatural, then we would certainly expect Him to command that realm. It would only be natural for Him to command that realm of existence from which He came. Therefore, we believe that Jesus came from the Father because He worked the works of the realm of the Father. This was John’s conclusion in John 20:30,31:

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Chapter 2

≈ Designatd Use Of Miracles ≈

In any discussion of the subject of miracles we must bring into the discussion Satan and his works. We must remember that Satan, through misguided individuals, could **deceive** with **lying** wonders and signs. Jesus said, *“For false christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect”* (Mt 24:24). In 2 Thessalonians Paul described the man of sin as one whose coming was according to the *“working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders”* (2 Th 2:9).

We must keep in mind that the early Christians would not be deceived if the signs and wonders that the preceding deceivers worked were actually miraculous. **We would not be deceived if we believed that which was real.** Therefore, the fact that the Bible warns against those who would work wonders that they would claim to be miracles, **is evidence that their works are only deceptions.** They are deceptions by which Satan seeks to lead people away from God.

Satan could “perform” **deceiving** wonders. However, he could never work real miracles. **Miracles are simply not performed.** They are the response of God to the will of those in whom He invested authority to call upon the Supernatural. If Satan could work true miracles through the hands of those he has deceived, **then the miracles of Jesus and the apostles would be nullified.** In his book, *The Gospel Versus Occultism*, Darrel Conley was right on this point:

If the devil also possesses supernatural power and is able to perform miracles, then we would have no way of confirming God’s Word. We would not know whether God was doing it or the devil. ... this is a real problem to those who

believe in the reality of supernatural demonic power. **God confirmed His Word by doing things that no one else could do** [emphasis mine, R.E.D.].

Miracles were validations of the messengers of God. They were evidences that the messenger was from God (See Dt 13:1-4; Ex 7:10-17; Mt 12:24-27; Jn 3:2; Rv 13:15; 16:14; 19:20). The miracles of God were not lying wonders. They were not wonders that were meant to deceive people. With the miracles, God sent also the message. The miracles were true, therefore, because the message was true. The truth of the message was evidence that the bearer of the message was from God.

The message was validated only if it harmonized with previously revealed truth. Paul gave Christians an adequate test by which we could test the message of any messenger. *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed”* (Gl 1:8). In other words, **if someone comes with a different gospel, then certainly that which he works that he claims to be miraculous is a deception.** Since Satan has manifested **deceiving** wonders, each Christian must also put to test with God’s Word all teachings of men (See Jr 23:25-32; Mt 7:21-23; 2 Co 11:13-15; 2 Th 2:7-11). We must never suppose that God would allow Satan to do anything that would confuse the purpose for which He allowed miracles to be worked by His messengers.

The great wonders that were worked by the prophets, Jesus and the apostles were far superior to any deceiving works of Satan. Jesus said, *“Believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him”* (Jn 10:38). Because no one could do miraculous works as He did, Jesus said that these works were substantial proof of His sonship. If they were not, or if Satan could also work equal and valid miracles, then why did God use miracles as a proof of His messengers before the people? **The fact that Jesus did do something that was beyond the ability of His contemporaries is evidence that**

there was something unique about Him.

Nicodemus correctly concluded that Jesus was from God because of the signs that He did (See Jn 3:2). However, if God allowed others to do the same signs, then the audience would have been confused. Jesus was miraculously proved to be the Messenger from God with a new message (At 2:22). He was proved to be such by true miracles. However, if God had allowed Satan to do the same, then who are we to believe? **The fact is that God has not and never will allow Satan to confuse the purpose for which miracles were allowed to be worked.**

In review of what has previously been stated, consider the concept of confirmation. Jesus said that the disciples would go forth and preach. Their message would be **confirmed** by the signs that followed (See Mk 16:20). **God would confirm His presence with the disciples by miraculous signs** (See Hb 2:3,4). The fact of confirmation negates supposed “miraculous” manifestations on the part of Satan through his messengers. In other words, if Satan were allowed to work miracles through his messengers, as Simon the sorcerer (See At 8) and Bar-Jesus (See At 13), **then there would be no confirmation power in the miracles of Philip, Paul or any other New Testament messenger of the gospel.**

We have discovered that advocates who propose that Satan worked or works miracles have no answer to this argument. At least, they back away from the miracles of God’s messengers by affirming that Satan’s miracles were less “powerful” or minor in comparison to the miracles of God’s messengers in the first century. However, this dodges the issue. A miracle is a miracle. There may be special miracles as Paul worked in Ephesus (See At 19:11), but the supernatural power that is manifested by a miracle cannot be said to be in degrees. There is no such teaching in the entire Bible. Satan did not work “lesser degrees” of miracles than the messengers of God.

In the context of this discussion we must also

remind ourselves that the doctrine of miracles of satanic forces is a subpoint of theological dualism. **Dualism is the belief that two equal supernatural forces have existed throughout eternity.** God and Satan are believed to have indigenous supernatural power. They are equal in power, and thus manifest themselves in the world in a confrontation or competition between good and evil. The dualist affirms that Satan can function independent of the power of God, and thus can at will force his will on people. Therefore, Satan is assumed to have the power to exercise his miraculous power as he so chooses in a world wherein he functions outside God's control.

The doctrine of dualism denies the indigenous eternality of God. We must not forget that only God can be eternal. Only God possesses control of all that is supernatural. In other words, there is nothing eternal apart from God. There is no supernatural apart from that which originates from God.

In Colossians 1:16 Paul wrote of the creative work of the Son of God. *“For by Him [Christ] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”* Paul affirmed that all that is seen and unseen has been brought into existence by the creative work of God through the Son (See Jn 1:1-3). Therefore, nothing existed contemporary with God until God brought into existence out of nothing all things that now exist (See Hb 11:3). Satan falls into the category of that which was created. He was not created evil, but as other disobedient angels, freely gave up his proper habitation, and thus was cast down (See 2 Pt 2:4).

Since Satan was created, then he would have no control over the supernatural except through consignment by God. In other words, **he can do nothing supernaturally in the world of the natural unless God allows him.** This was his situation in his temptation and trials of Job, and we would conclude that nothing has changed since. We would have

to affirm, therefore, that Satan has no supernatural power that is eternally indigenous with himself. He did not originate his own supernatural power because he was created. He is only the result of the supernatural power of God. **He thus has no authority to originate supernatural power of himself.**

If God only is eternally indigenous, then all that Satan is or can do must originate from God. God allows him to carry on with his deceptions only insofar as such is in harmony with God's eternal plan to provide an environment for the molding of free-moral characters. We must never forget that God has a leash on Satan. Therefore, it can never be that the devil subjectively makes one to commit sin. Each individual will be held accountable for his or her own sin because God will not allow Satan to subdue free-moral individuals against their will.

Chapter 3

≈ The Miracles Of The Bible ≈

In defining the miracles of the Bible we must determine the characteristics that were manifested in their occurrence. Many times the term miracle is used today to apply to any unexplainable event. When a car rolls over ten times, is crushed into a small pile of rubble, and all passengers escape without a scratch, we are guilty of crying out that a miracle has occurred. The occupants of this car would certainly have been very lucky in escaping with their lives, but it would be an injustice to categorize this and similar events with the miracles of the Bible. For Christians, they can assume that God protected the passengers, but they would do so out of faith.

We are often guilty of labeling every unexplainable natural phenomenon a miracle. In his book, *The Basis of Christian Faith*, Floyd E. Hamilton correctly stated,

... many of the things which men are in the habit of calling miracles are not properly so called. Some people call a

miracle any marvellous event which ordinary men cannot explain by the laws of nature to them, but which could be explained in accordance with those laws if they knew more about them.... A true miracle cannot be explained by natural laws, known or unknown.

A miracle has basic characteristics that must be understood. There are three areas of definition that help us in understanding the true nature of miracles as they are defined in the Bible. These areas of definition rule out the possibility of miracles today because such occurrences are not happening today after the manner by which they are defined in the Bible.

A. Miracle Is A Sensed Happening

A miracle is a happening that is recognized as such through the senses. Those who experienced miracles in the Bible recognized the alteration of the ordinary occurrences of natural law. In Acts 3 Peter healed a lame beggar on the porch of the temple. Peter and John were subsequently brought before the Sanhedrin to answer for what they had done. When the Sanhedrin saw *“the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it”* (At 4:14). They said, *“What will we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it”* (At 4:16).

The miracle of Acts 3 was not performed in secret, but before all, even unbelievers. It was not perceived through faith. In Paul’s defense before Agrippa concerning the works of Jesus, he affirmed, *“For the king ... knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in secret”* (At 26:26). True miracles were never the result of the trickery of men. Many of those who rejected Jesus had seen and believed His works, though their hardness of heart kept them from belief in the message of Jesus.

George P. Fisher correctly stated, “It should be added, to complete the idea of a miracle, that it is

something manifest—something that can be known and apprehended by men.” With this understanding it would be a mistake to link the definition of providence with the definition of the miracles found in the Bible.

It must be affirmed that God works behind the scenes today to accomplish His purpose and to answer the prayers of the saints. This indeed may be supernatural, as such, **but not in the definition of those miracles worked by Jesus, His apostles and early Christians in the first century.** Miracles were empirically sensed by people. **Providence is “sensed” by faith.** Both are the supernatural work of God. But in the eyes of the beholders, there is a difference. **We perceive miracles through sight. We perceive providence through faith.**

Providence is God working behind the curtain of natural law, whereas, a miracle is the direct manifestation of God’s working power visible to the senses of people. We may have faith that God works all things together for good (See Rm 8:28), but we cannot affirm this on the basis of empirical experience. Providence is God working in a manner known through faith, whereas, a miracle is God working in a manner known through the senses. In a miracle God suspends natural laws; in providence He works through or uses natural laws. Thus, Vernon C. Grounds was correct when he stated the following in *Baker’s Dictionary of Theology*,

We may define a miracle biblically as an observable phenomenon affected by the direct operation of God’s power, an arresting deviation from the ordinary sequences of nature, a deviation calculated to elicit faith-begetting awe, a divine inbreaking which authenticates a revelational agent.

B. Miracles Are Supernatural Revelations

The presence of the supernatural must be clearly evident in a miracle. In reference to the preceding point, it must also be stated that the occurrence of a miracle leaves no doubt in the minds of the beholders concerning who or what is working. Elijah prayed for a manifestation of God on Mount

Carmel. God answered that prayer with a miracle that firmly evidenced His presence (See 1 Kg 18:17-46). When Lazarus came forth from the tomb at the command of Jesus, the people knew the presence of the supernatural (See Jn 11:43-45). There was no question in the mind of Nicodemus as to whose power was manifested in the miracles of Jesus (See Jn 3:2). These miracles strongly gave evidence to the presence of the supernatural.

C. Miracles Are Unusual Occurrences

A miracle is an event that is different from the ordinary occurrence of natural law. In determining the actual meaning of a miracle we must fully understand its relation to natural law. One common misunderstanding is that a miracle is a “contradiction” of natural law. David Hume, in his *Essay on Miracles*, contended, as others, that a miracle was a contradiction of natural law. This is not a correct understanding of miracles. A miracle is not a contradiction of natural law, **but a laying aside of natural law in order to reveal the higher laws of the supernatural.**

Law refers to the ordinary occurrence of things. Natural law is the ordinary occurrence of the principles that govern the material universe. It would not be logical to affirm that natural law existed before nature. God created all things. Natural laws were created in order to govern the things that were created. God did not leave His creation to operate on its own as the deist contends. God transcends His natural laws by upholding all things through the word of His power. He makes known His presence by manifesting His “higher laws.” The Hebrew writer affirmed that He holds together *“all things by the word of His power”* (Hb 1:3). Jesus said, *“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working”* (Jn 5:17). Natural laws were created, and are thus sustained by God in order to control His creation.

Would it not be reasonable to believe that one reason why God instituted natural laws in the first place was for the purpose of revealing Himself to man

by the use of higher laws, commonly referred to as miracles? If the higher laws of God were commonly in force in the history of the world, then there could be no way for God to reveal Himself through miracles, for the higher laws would be the miracles. Therefore, there would be no such thing as miracle in a world that was openly controlled by the supernatural.

It was necessary for God to create the lower natural laws that He might be able to reveal Himself through miracles. It was necessary for the creation of a world of natural laws in order that we have an environment in which we could exercise free-moral agency. For man to be a true free-moral agent he had to live in an environment that would produce true moral characters. Such an environment could not exist without the second laws. It will only be when we put on the immortal, the incorruptible, that we will live in an environment of the first laws. In fact, we will be immortal and incorruptible because we will dwell in an environment of the first laws that will not allow death and decay.

We must not identify a miracle to be a contradiction of natural law. It is a setting aside of the second laws in order to allow the higher first laws to appear. Trench was right when he stated,

An extraordinary divine causality, and not that ordinary which we acknowledge everywhere and in everything, belongs then, to the essence of the miracle. The unresting activity of God, which at other times hides and conceals itself behind the veil of what we term natural laws, does in the miracle unveil itself; it steps out from its concealment, and the hand which works is laid bare.

A miracle is the “temporary suspension” of the natural in order to reveal the supernatural. Trench explained,

A miracle, where there is an interposition of the divine will, is not anti-natural, but supernatural But while the miracle is not thus nature, so neither is it against nature. Beyond nature, beyond and above the nature which we know, they are, but not contrary to it. The miracle is not unnatural.

It must be understood, as Trench stated, that “miracles exceed the laws of our nature, but it does not here follow that they exceed the laws of all nature.” It is as Hamilton added, “A miracle, as we will use the term, is a departure from the ordinary method of God’s activity.”

The higher laws are miracles to humanity. These are the laws of the heavenly environment of God. This present world is inflicted with pain and sickness. When Jesus unveiled the powers above natural law, He was giving humanity a small taste of heaven.

We must look forward to the day when the second laws are cleared away with the destruction of this material world. It will be then that God will allow us to live in an environment that is controlled by the first laws. That environment will be a new heavens and new earth (See 2 Pt 3:13).

We must always be careful about allowing people to define miracles. People of this world make definitions according to their own experiences. This is behind the definition that is given in *Webster’s Dictionary*. A miracle is defined as “an event or effect that apparently contradicts *known scientific laws* and is hence thought to be due to supernatural causes, especially to an act of God.”

This dictionary definition is illustrated by what Alfred Walton attempted several years ago in his book, *This I Can Believe*. Walton, who would represent many today, claimed that the miracles of the Bible “have reasonably clear explanations” according to the laws which we know today, but were unknown during the periods in which the miracles were performed.

Albert Wells, in his book, *The Christian Message in a Scientific Age*, also attempted to explain miracles by what we might call the “unknown-natural-law” theory. He wrote,

Study of the healing miracles of Jesus will disclose that his works of healing were wrought through the application of as-yet-unknown laws and methods of healing, laws and methods which have been in part independently discovered by modern science.

Walton and Wells represent those who contend that the supernatural events of the Bible were called miracles by those who experienced them because they did not know the natural laws that were used to work such wonders. They say that we know these laws today and can thus explain the miracles of the Bible. In their books, they try to give a naturalistic explanation of Bible miracles. Such naturalistic theology has invaded the religious world with amazing speed. Concerning this rise of naturalism in religion, R. Hooykass, in his book, *Religion and the Rise of Modern Science*, was correct when he stated,

Deification of nature is still alive, and the fact that this deity has no special cult does not prove anything to the contrary. There was no special cult of Nature in Antiquity, and no temples were erected to it, yet it was adored under the names of other gods.

Such “deification” of nature is witnessed today in the fanaticism of some environmentalists. Environmentalism has become the new religion to many who profess no allegiance to the supernatural of the Bible. In the absence of a true miracle-based belief, the religiosity of those who have lost contact with God is fulfilled in the unbeliever’s allegiance to nature. It has all changed. It has changed from saving people for eternal glory to saving the planet for endless residents of generations to come.

People must be environmentally sensitive and protective. However, the environment in the eyes of the religious environmentalist is often more important than the moral decadency of humanity. To the unbelieving environmentalist, his or her reverence for the environment is the new religion that appeals to the natural senses of man. People’s minds have condescended to the natural things of the world to the exclusion of the Creator of all things. When people give up God, they start worshiping the creation instead of the Creator (See Rm 1:18-28)

The problem with the reasoning of the naturalist is that we have the recorded facts about miracles, and

yet, miracles still cannot be explained by any natural laws known today. The healing of a blind man by placing spittle and clay on his eyes cannot be explained by natural laws (See Jn 9:6,7). What medical power is there in spittle and clay? William M. Taylor is still right today, though he wrote over a half century ago in his book, *The Gospel Miracles in Their Relationship to Christ and Christianity*: “A miracle is a work out of the usual sequence of secondary causes and effects, which cannot be accounted for by ordinary action of these causes.” The miracles of the Bible cannot be explained by the ordinary causes and effects of known natural laws that we experience today. Fisher would add,

In the case of a miracle, the effect is different because the causes are not the same. The variation in the effect is what must take place, supporting such an alteration of the antecedents. If a new cause comes in, it is irrational to look for the same effect as before.

Any effort to explain miracles by occurrences of unknown natural laws is an attack against the supernatural character of the Bible. It is a direct slap in the face of the divinity of Christ. Over a century before scientific skeptics arrived on the scene, F. Bettex, in *Science And Christianity*, answered those today who would deny miracles.

The very essence of a miracle is its intangibility by proofs and reasoning, its incomprehensibility and its incapability of being proved. He who tries to understand and to explain a miracle, to comprehend or to fix such a flash of illimitable, Divine power, shows that he does not know what a miracle is, and in his attempt to explain it only succeeds in making a fool of himself, both from the scientific and the Christian point of view. A miracle scientifically proved and explained would be a logical contradiction.

A scientifically defined miracle would be no miracle at all. Science deals with an investigation of the physical world. Therefore, if there is a scientifically defined reason for the occurrence of any miracle,

then the miracle was only the occurrence of natural law. There was thus no supernatural at work. This is the attack of the naturalist who affirms that all Bible events that were affirmed to be miracles in Bible times were only the happening of undefined natural laws of the time.

Our definition of a miracle does not say that God cannot use natural laws to bring about His purpose. Some of the plagues of Egypt were not unknown occurrences in the land of Egypt. Their **intensity** and their **happening at the voice of Moses**, however, was a miracle (See Ex 7-11). The dividing of the Red Sea by a strong east wind to free Israel from the Egyptians was an example of God using natural law (See Ex 14). It was a miracle and manifested the presence of the supernatural in that **it happened at the precise time that it was commanded by Moses** and with the force necessary to do the job. Of course, the water turning to blood and darkness were not known in Egypt. Evidently, God used no natural laws in these miracles. However, the point is that God has used natural laws to manifest Himself. The natural laws, however, were used in an unusual and unnatural way in order to manifest the presence of the One who has control over natural law.

A miracle, then, is not a contradiction of natural laws but a setting aside of those laws in order to allow the eternal power of God to be released in this world. The case may also be that God used a natural law in an intense or unnatural way in order to bring about a marvelous wonder. The miracles in the Bible cannot be explained by the ordinary occurrence of natural laws known or unknown. In the *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, James Boswell correctly concluded that . . .

. . . “a miracle is (1) an extraordinary event, inexplicable in terms of ordinary natural forces; (2) an event which causes the observers to postulate a superhuman personal cause; (3) an event which constitutes evidence (a “sign”) of implications much wider than the event itself.

Chapter 4

≈ Science And Miracles ≈

It would go without question to state that most scientists deny miracles. This is not the result of scientific proof that is against miracles. On the contrary, it is the result of assumptions on the part of scientists who work in the present and in the realm of natural law. It is not within the scientific method of research to verify through empirical investigation that which occurred in the past. Neither is it within the definition of the scientific method to investigate that which is outside the realm of natural law. In his book, *Protestant Christian Evidences*, Bernard Ramm listed two grounds on which many scientists deny miracles. First, they often deny miracles “on the basis that the supernatural is contradictory to natural law,” and second, on the basis that “miracles do not fit into the universe the scientist works in.”

We would consider these the two principal areas of opposition against miracles by the scientific world. However, consider the following objection we would have against scientists who rule out the supernatural, and thus deny the past occurrence of miracles.

A. Miracles Do Not Conflict With Nature

Miracles are often rejected because it is believed that they are contrary to the uniformity of nature. But is this a valid objection? Can scientists reject miracles because they claim that the supernatural is contradictory to the uniform laws of nature? This objection deals principally with the uniformity of nature. But consider first of all that we must determine what is meant by the uniformity of nature. Peter Eckler once wrote in his book entitled, *Searching For Truth*, wherein he defined the uniformity of nature, and in doing so, preserved the thinking of many scientists.

The universe continues in unbroken uniformity regardless of man's puny pretensions No natural law ever deviated an iota from its original path, no grain of matter has yet changed its form without obeying forces that governed it at its birth.

Obviously, there is no room for miracles in such an understanding of nature. However, upon close examination there seems to be a great assumption here that scientists must recognize.

If some scientists reject miracles on the basis of the uniformity of nature, **then they have produced a rejection that is based on a metaphysical (philosophical) assumption.** The assumption that all things in the past and future have and will continue as they are in the present is an unprovable theory. It is a theory simply because we live in the present, not in the past or future. Our past is limited to our lifetime. Our future is limited by our present existence. Whatever is outside this window of existence must be placed in the realm of religion, philosophy or history.

Philosophy has a great habit of not taking into consideration all the facts. It sometimes constructs its philosophies of law before the investigation and verification of the evidence. This seems to be the situation concerning the objection of some scientists with miracles. But an unprovable objection used against that which is believed improbable is not logical. It is an objection often stimulated by prejudice and not factual evidence. No scientist can prove that nature has always been uniform. Therefore, it follows that logically no scientist can use the uniformity of nature in the present as an argument against miracles in the past.

B. Miracles Are Not Of The Scientific Method

Miracles are rejected because they do not fit into the scientist's world. Some scientists oppose miracles on the basis that miracles do not fit into their world of the scientific method. The scientist works in the present. He is engulfed in present natural laws. Anything contrary to this environment is hard for him to accept. Manford G. Gutzke, who was once an unbelieving scientist, but later turned to belief, admitted in a book he wrote, *Plain Talk of the Resurrection*, that when he was a skeptic, **“My mind had been so conditioned to believe in natural law I found it difficult to**

believe in miracles” [Emphasis mine, R.E.D.]. Such is the problem with the scientist who cannot take his or her thinking off natural law for a moment in order to consider the possibility that there is a Being who is above natural law.

The preceding is a fairly accurate picture of most scientists. Their world is a world of natural laws. Those laws are orderly because God made them that way. Any hint of deviation from this order is rejected by the scientist. He can see the **order** of nature. The scientific method is built on this premise. However, the scientist often cannot see the **Orderer**.

Can one deny miracles on the grounds that they are not customary to our present experiences? This question raises the question, Does one have to experience something before he can believe in it? Certainly not! One does not have to experience an earthquake in order to realize that they occur. One does not have to experience the power of an atomic bomb in order to understand that atomic power exists. We have not had the privilege of seeing an angel as did Mary, the mother of Jesus (See Mk 1:26-28). But this does not give us the right to deny that an angel appeared to her. Our lack of experience does not justify denying the experience of others. “To know” does not necessarily mean “to experience.” We must remember that knowledge comes both by experience and by testimony, or logic that is based on that testimony. Ramm correctly stated,

Now, if a man asserts that he will believe nothing that is not customary, he has put out the eyes of science. Certainly no valid objection can be made against miracles on the ground that miracles are so different from what we usually experience, and, at the same time, not urge the same objection against the novelties of science.

We might assume that miracles were more readily accepted during the days of Jesus and the apostles. The scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus, “*Teacher, we want to see a sign from you*” (Mt 12:38). “*And others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven*” (Lk

11:16). They would have been readily accepted, but they could just as well be rejected (See At 4:14-16). Ramm was correct when he stated,

Granted that miracles were easier to believe then than now, still nobody went around ancient Palestine every day restoring sight, cleansing lepers, raising the dead, as Jesus Christ did. Even though those people more readily believed miracles, the miracles of Christ could not but have had a remarkable effect upon their mentality.

During one's inquiry into miracles there is one thing he or she must keep in mind: **We live within our own time.** We cannot live in the past or in the future. Happenings that were experienced by people two thousand years ago cannot be personally experienced today. Upon this basis of non-experience many scientists try to reject miracles. In his book, *For This Cause*, Stanley Sayers, correctly stated,

God on the contrary looks at nature from its start to its finish and charts its events to suit Himself. In one portion of Nature's allotted time He produces events which man in his little allotted time cannot believe because he can neither see before him nor after him. He believes only what he in his time sees and experiences and only what will occur in accordance with what he in his day knows to be natural law.

We must keep in mind, therefore, that one cannot object to miracles because the occurrence of miracles does not lie within the realm of the scientific method. In his book, *Conflict and Harmony in Science and the Bible*, Jack Wood Sears concluded,

... science does not deal with the unique. Miracles are unique. Science has not disproved miracles, because they are outside the sphere of science. Many scientists have denied miracles and have completely repudiated the Bible because of the miracles recorded in it, but science has not and cannot disprove the possibility of miracles any more than science can disprove the existence of any supernatural phenomenon. Science is limited to the material world, to observable fact.

Any time a scientist makes an attack against miracles he has stepped outside the field of science and into the field of philosophy and religion. In other words, when a scientist rejects the historicity of miracles he is simply stating his philosophical or religious beliefs. He has a right to such beliefs. The believer has also not personally experienced the miracles that are defined in the Bible. However, his faith is in the testimony of those who did. Because of the testimony of those who gave their lives for what they believed, the believer affirms that what the first witnesses experienced was true.

Chapter 5

≈ Consequences Of Denial ≈

If one admits the existence of God, he must at the same time admit the reality of miracles. This is only logical. If one admits to the existence of the supernatural, then he has at the same time left room for miracles. After all, what worth is there in God if He cannot work above the natural laws of this world?

The denial of miracles, therefore, is actually a denial of the supernatural. It is a denial of God. If God is a God who cannot reveal Himself to humanity, what kind of a supernatural being is He? Does He have any power? Is He a weak and impotent being? If we take away the manifestation of His presence, have we not taken Him away? It was over a century ago that Bettex correctly wrote,

He who allows his belief in miracles to be reasoned away, or even shaken, by professedly scientific arguments, is, to say the least of it, sadly lacking in perspicacity, and would do well to test his conception of an *Almighty* God, and find out what he really does believe. God is miracle, and he who does not believe in miracles does not believe in God, even though he believes that he believes in him; that is to say, he is mentally too weak to grasp both.

Too often there are those who want a Baal god and not an Elijah God. They want a crippled god who is

deaf and dumb and has no power to blast forth fire to disprove the vanities of unbelievers. But the Bible knows no such impotent god. If we deny miracles, we might as well deny God. What possible good would there be in a powerless God?

The consequences of denying miracles are great and many. If we deny miracles, then we must deny the authenticity of the Bible. “The New Testament without the miracles,” wrote John Machen in his book, *Christianity and Liberalism*, “would be far easier to believe. But the trouble is, would it be worth believing?”

If we deny the miracles of the Bible, then we deny the sudden growth of the early church. Such a phenomenal growth would not have been possible without the working hand of God. If we deny miracles, then we deny the inexplicable change in the lives of the apostles and the sudden reality of Christianity. In his book, *The King of Kings*, E. V. Zollers correctly said that . . .

. . . it is useless to talk of throwing miracles overboard and still holding on to Christianity. As a system it is founded on miracles. If its miracles are genuine, its claim is fully substantiated; if false, its claim is utterly discredited and its foundations are swept away.

Chapter 6

≈ The Historical Fact Of Miracles ≈

To substantiate further the fact of miracles one must also consider how and under what circumstances they occurred.

A. Miracles Before Unbelievers

Miracles occurred many times before the eyes of those who did not believe. They were not “*done in secret*” and hidden from the unbeliever (At 26:26). God’s power was no obscure or hidden thing when He poured down fire on Mount Carmel in answer to Elijah’s prayer (See 1 Kg 18:30-40). The raising of Lazarus from the dead by Jesus caused many to

believe, but there were also many unbelievers who witnessed the event (See Jn 11:45,46). The miracles of the apostles were “*manifested to all that dwell in Jerusalem*” and the unbelievers could not deny them (At 4:16). The validity of the miracles of Jesus did not depend on their concealment from the unbelievers.

There are those who would now make the objection that the witness of unbelievers is evidence that the miraculous events were questionable. In other words, if unbelievers actually experienced true miracles, then why did not all who experienced miracles become believers?

We would answer the preceding objection by saying that **we must never underestimate the amount of prejudice that was against Jesus and the other disciples**. The religious leaders of Jesus’ day devised and carried out a plot to kill Jesus. These were religious leaders. They schemed murder, and then, had to relinquish to the rule of Roman law. They thus moved the multitudes to cry out for the crucifixion of Jesus. The extremity of their prejudice against Jesus blinded them to the fact of the miracles that Jesus and the disciples worked. In fact, they confessed that miracles actually occurred, but they just would not accept those who worked the miracles (See At 4:14-16). **The power of unbelief that is based on prejudice is stronger than the empirical evidence of a miraculous event.**

B. No Denials Of Miracles

Miracles were recorded without any denials either by unbelievers or believers. In the gospel records there is not one denial of the miracles that were worked by Jesus. Many could and would have denied the fact of miracles if they were only acts of magic and fraud. But the absence of denials leads us to believe in their authenticity. Judas Iscariot walked with Jesus for over three years. He could have denied the miracles before the Pharisees, but he did not. The other disciples also experienced the miracles of Jesus. During their ministries they underwent severe

persecution. Would it not be reasonable to conclude that in the heat of persecution at least one of the apostles would have denied the authenticity of the miraculous works of Jesus? But they did not. On the contrary, we hear them stating in times of persecution, *“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard”* (At 4:19,20).

Those who believed in the miracles wrote the inspired records of the gospel event. If the miracles were deceptions, would it not be reasonable to believe that these writers would have contradicted themselves when they recorded the facts surrounding the miraculous events? The fact that there are no contradictions in the recorded accounts is evidence that both the miracles and inspiration are true.

The very existence of Christianity is based upon miracle. In other words, Christianity would not exist if it had not first been proved by miracles (See Mk 16:17-20; Hb 2:3,4). We would assume, therefore, that there would be countless contemporary records of secular history that would record denials of these miracles by the enemies of Christianity. Those records do not exist. We have contemporary records that misinterpret and misunderstand Christianity. In this confusion there is the denial of the supernatural. However, no unbeliever in the first century who was familiar with the facts ever denied the validity of the miraculous.

C. Miracles Had Testimony Of Witnesses

The apostles had everything in this world to lose because of their testimony that Jesus was the Christ. Why would they give their lives for one who had deceived themselves and the world? They had been with Jesus for over three years. Would they have suffered so great a persecution for One they had known to have worked only tricks and not real miracles? The point is that the lives of the apostles that were affected by Jesus cannot be answered

without the truth of the miracles of Jesus.

There is no logical reason why the apostles would be so transformed and bold if they had not actually experienced the work of God in the life of Jesus and in their own lives. If they did not actually experience the work of God in the life of Jesus, then the New Testament is a record of lunacy. It is a record of several misguided people who schemed together in order to preach a message that would bring upon them persecution and death. We would of necessity have to deny, therefore, that their courage stemmed only from a “brotherhood pack” to not forsake a message upon which all of them had agreed to preach. When one reads the New Testament, this “brotherhood pack” concept could not have been the foundation upon which those who wrote later concerning honesty and integrity as a behavior of living the gospel?

In this context, consider the early death of James at the hand of Herod in Acts 12. Why would God allow such to happen to a Christ-sent apostle in the early establishment of the church. The answer lies in the purpose for which the documents of both Luke and Acts were written. **God allowed James to be killed in order to strengthen for us the testimony of the apostles He preserved.**

We have no inspired records of the martyrs of any of the other Christ-sent apostles. How would we know that they were willing to go to death for what they believed if we did not have at least one record of one who did? If there was no record of at least one martyred apostle, then we might conclude that they all went off into obscurity. But the fact that James was willing to die for his faith reaffirms the strength of the testimony of the living apostles. Because they had actually experienced the miraculous work of God in their lives they were willing to die for their faith. Therefore, we appreciate the Holy Spirit providing for us a testimony through the death of James, that James and the apostles truly believed that God had miraculously revealed that Jesus was the Christ and Son of God (See Mt 16:13-19).

D. Testimony Of The Healed

Miracles have the testimony of those who were cured. Jesus brought sight to a man who had been born blind (See Jn 9). This man was brought before the Pharisees and questioned concerning his healing. Though he was pressured and threatened by the Pharisees, neither he nor his parents would deny that he had been healed (See Jn 9:25). In other words, he could not have denied that which actually happened.

Thousands of people were healed in the first century. Would it not be reasonable to believe that if false miracles were used in these “healings” that at least one of those who was healed would later confess that he or she was not really healed? The fact that there are no denials or confessions of fraud is proof that the healings were real.

Chapter 7

≈ The Purpose Of Miracles ≈

God does nothing without a purpose. He does not unleash His great and powerful hand to entertain mankind. In his book, *Short Essays in Biblical Criticism*, John W. McGarvey once wrote, “A miracle wrought by a man is an exercise of divine power entrusted to the man for some divine purpose.” There is purpose behind the miracles of the Bible. Therefore, when the purpose was fulfilled the miracles ceased.

A. Miracles Were Stamp Of God’s Approval

Many of the miracles found in the Old Testament revealed that God was the only true and living God and that His messengers were sent from Him, not Satan. Elisha, the successor of Elijah, was proved to be the messenger of God by the miracles he worked (See 2 Kg 2). Moses had the witness of God with him when he showed God’s power over the tricks of the magicians of Egypt (See Ex 7:8-13). When these miracles had fulfilled their purpose there was no need that they continue. God did not have to prove continually to Pharaoh after the Israelites were

released, that He was the only God.

B. Miracles Proved Sonship Of Jesus

Miracles authenticated Jesus as the Son of God. John wrote, *“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God”* (Jn 20:30,31). Jesus’ miracles produced faith in the minds of the beholders. *“This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him”* (Jn 2:11). Nicodemus proclaimed, *“Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him”* (Jn 3:2; see 4:48).

“But I have a greater witness than John’s,” Jesus stated, *“for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me”* (Jn 5:36; see 6:14; 10:27,37,38; 11:15; 14:11). When John sent his disciples to Jesus to ask Him, *“Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?”* Jesus responded, *“Go tell John the things which you hear and see. The blind receive their sight and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them”* (Mt 11:2-6; see Lk 7:20-22).

The works of Jesus proved that He was the Son of God and that He had the authority to forgive sins (See Mt 9:6; Mk 2:9-12; Lk 5:26). Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost and proclaimed, *“Men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know”* (At 2:22).

If there were to be such a thing as a “Son of God,” it is reasonable to believe that this “Son of God” should have command of the environment from which He came. Therefore, the working of miracles proved Jesus’ authenticity. He had to work the supernatural in order that gullible people not follow after every so-

called, self-made messiah that ventured upon the stage of history. And certainly, history has proven God right in making miracles the proof of His messengers. Has anyone, anywhere in the history of the world, worked such works as God's messengers in the Bible?

C. Miracles substantiated the early Christians.

Miracles proved that the early Christians were from God. Miracles that were worked by the hands of the first century messengers of Christ testified to their commission from God with the truth of the gospel. Mark recorded,

*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 ... And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and **confirming the word through the accompanying signs.** Amen" (Mk 16:17,18,20).*

The Hebrew writer also wrote, *"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also **bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit**"* (Hb 2:3,4). The witness of miracles was necessary in the first century to authenticate the messengers and the message.

In our courts today we produce witnesses to verify a fact or evidence. The reliability and character of the witnesses plays a vital role as to the truthfulness of the witnesses' testimony. Witnesses are questioned extensively and put to the test by the lawyers. After their reliability is substantiated, and their testimony is placed on record, they are no longer needed. The jury does not take the witnesses to the jury chambers in order to make their decision. They take the record of the trial that contains the testimony of each witness.

So it is with God's Word. Who can find a flaw in the record of the miracles the inspired writers have

recorded for us today? Are not Paul, Peter and John reliable witnesses? Who can find fault or flaw in the life of Jesus of Nazareth? Miracles proved the trustworthiness of the witnesses. The Word of God has been confirmed by miracles. The facts have been established. That which confirmed the testimony is no longer needed. We have the record of testimony with which to make our decision concerning the claim that Jesus is the Son of God.

Miracles must be defined in relation to their occurrence in the Bible. Any other source used in the definition of miracles would produce both an unjust and false definition. Miracles were not happenings of unknown natural laws, nor were they in contradiction to natural laws. They were the manifestation of the working hand of God by the setting aside of natural laws. This manner in which God worked in past times lies outside the scientific method of investigation. Therefore, scientists cannot on a scientific basis deny the past occurrence of miracles.

Miracles of the Bible were facts, but not repeatable facts to be examined today by the scientific method. This does not say that God could not make Himself known today in the same manner as He did at various times in the past. It does say that He has chosen to work providentially behind the wall of natural law. We have recorded in the pages of the Bible those evidences that are necessary to satisfy those who are hungering and thirsting after truth. God now wants us to focus on His word, not miracles that He could work today. Because we have the written word, which the early disciples did not have, we must focus on this word. Our faith is built on the word of God, not on ourselves, or the supposed “miraculous” works of those who would deceive us.



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