

Dear Dean,

I feel as though you shouldn't believe everything you hear or read out side the Bible but that we should believe the whole Bible.

Hewbrews 13-8 reads "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Now if you and I will follow God with all our heart soul mind and strength and meet the conditions set down in Gods plan for us I believe you and I are able to recieve the same results that the Apostles and deciples did of old.

Acts 2-38 tells us how we can recieve the Holy Ghost and Acts 2-39 tells us who it is promised to it reads "For the promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Now if Peter would have said For the promise is unto you and your children and would have stoped there then maybe some one could say it was just for those people at that time, but he goes on to say, "and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lored our God shall call." Dean I believe that includes you and I.

In this tract you gave me on the first page it reads "to speak in tongues always meant to speak in known language etc." But 1Cor. 14-2 reads "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. It seems to me this absolutly contradicts this tract. I would rather believe the Bible, wouldn't you?

Although they did on the day of Pentecost speak in other languages so that these other people heard them speak in their own tongues and God may have had a very definite reason for them speaking so that these other people could hear them speak in their own tongue. But I don't know any other place in the Bible where it is recorded that any one person heard anyone speak in tongues and say he spoke in my language or my tongue as they did on the day of Pentecost. "Acts 10-48 and Acts 19-6" so how can this man believe such a statement as "every case of it in the New Testament was just like it was on the day of Pentecost when men heard them speak in their own tongue. You or any one else show me where in the Bible where anyone else heard some one speak in another tongue and say it is "our tongue and say it is "our tongue" as they did on the day of Pentecost.

Another thing I would like anyone give me scripture where only the Apostles had the power to impart the ^{gift} (page 3 of the tract). Acts 10th chapter 44th to 48th verse tells of the out pouring of the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues but it didn't say that Peter laid his hands on Cornelius or his kins man or near friends.

On page 3 of the tract it gives reference to (1Cor. 13-9) what right has the tract to read supernatural knowledge when the Bible doesn't read that way. Let us not add to or wrest the scriptures to our own destruction. Knowledge hasn't vanished away so don't tell me tongues have ceased. Read it care fully in the KING JAMES VERSION.

The Revised Standard Version reads 1Cor 13-9 "Love never ends; as for prophecy, it will pass away; as for tongues they will cease; as for knowledge it will pass away. 9 For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; 10 but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. 13 So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

Now doesn't Paul in the 9th verse give a reason why prophecy will pass away; and tongues cease and knowledge pass away in that the word "For" means here is the reason for the previous statement 9 "For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect."

Do you or any one else right now you know of have a better knowledge of God today than Paul did then. Can you show me where there is perfection in any one of us so that the imperfect has passed away. Read verse 10. I believe Paul tells when the perfect will come in verse 12 where it reads, "but then face to face." Now when God's people come face to face with Jesus then I believe there will be perfect knowledge and not until then. So how can any one say of a truth, tongues have ceased if our knowledge is not perfect yet and Jesus has not taken us home to Glory? Read verse 12. When God's people come face to face with Jesus, then I believe prophecy will pass away and tongues cease and knowledge pass away. How can you see it any other way according to the Bible, Dean?

And to say that the childhood state of the church needed tongues and adulthood didn't need them seems to me to be very poor reasoning. Now use your own reasoning right here. Don't you think that on the day of Pentecost that those that spoke in tongues recieved the evidence of the Holy Ghost in them when they spoke in tongues. If tongues were needed just to show other nationalities the plan of God's great salvation why did these people that heard others speak in their own tongue ask Peter and the other Apostles "Men and brethern, what shall we do?" (Acts 2-37). Why didn't God speak through these tongues and tell these other people how to be saved if thats why they were needed just in the e-arly church. But it was left up to Peter to tell them what they should do. Acts 2-38 "Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of ~~sin~~ sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now be honest in you heart Dean, don't you think that the purpose of God in the tongues an the day of Pentecost was as an evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost and not God's plan in telling these people what to do to be saved in that Peter was the one who told them how to be saved. Now if tongues was the evidence in the early church why isn't it just as necessary now as it was then.

1 Cor. 14-5 "I would that ye all spake with tongues,"etc. 1Cor.14-18 "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all." 1 Cor.14-39 "Wherefore brethren covet to prophecy, and forbid not to speak with tongues."

Now in reference to the last paragraph of the tract I refer you to 1 Cor. 14-14. "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." Now if Paul prayed in an unknown tongue and didn't know what tongue he prayed in, because it reads my understanding is unfruitful what right has anyone to ask what tongue do you speak in.

Also read 1 Cor. 14-2. Not one verse in this tract or any reasoning of the tract convinces me that tongues aren't for us today. I don't ever want to be guilty of denying the power of Godliness 11 Timothy 3-5.

Think for yourself Dean.

Dear Howard,

I do agree with you about not believing just anything we hear or read outside the Bible, unless it is, of course, found in the Bible or harmonizes with our own reasoning of the Scriptures. In that case, I'll endorse it as such. Some people can explain, much better than I can, things that we agree upon. That is my reason for giving you this tract, written by E.C. Fuqua.

I have gone to some length in studying the arguments you presented in your letter to me. I appreciate such a fine letter in the spirit with which you sent it, and I hope that you will also receive this letter with the kind spirit with which I am sending it. We both can learn much with an unprejudiced, open discussion of God's word. If you will follow with me, I would like to review your letter and see what we both can get from it.

First, I would like to start by explaining how I reason the workings of the Holy Spirit and present scripture for it. I will explain more in detail as I continue through my letter. From the scripture, I come to the conclusion that there are three distinct degrees or measures of the Holy Spirit. In the first place how can I assume that there is any more than one measure? Because in Jn. 3:34, we find that the Holy Spirit was given to Christ without measure, definitely implying that other men might receive the Holy Spirit by measure. This is no proof, in itself, that the Holy Spirit was given by measure, but it surely serves as a basis for my reasoning. I believe, however, that further study on God's word will bear this out to be true. We find that one degree of the Holy Spirit was the baptism in the Holy Spirit. There are two, and only two such baptisms found and they were spoken of as baptisms

Mk.1:8; Matt.3:11; Acts11:15. (Acts11:15 showing that Cornelius received the baptism in the Holy Spirit as did the apostles.) Baptism, among other things, carries the idea of an overwhelming, and immersion, a complete covering. So to carry that meaning to these two instances conveys to my mind that they were completely overpowered by God's pouring out the Holy Spirit, independent of man's works and was once given to the Jews (the apostles) and once given to Gentiles.(Cornelius and his kinsmen)

Another degree or measure of the Holy Spirit we read of is the miraculous power extended to the apostles of the laying on of hands. It was promised only to the twelve. Acts1:1-5. Such miraculous power extended to the apostles seemed to be for a different purpose than the degree of "baptism of the Holy Spirit". The baptism was to prove that God was no respecter of persons, such as he had been under the Mosaic Law. Acts 11:17,18; 1Chr. 16:13. The power given to the apostles seemed to be for the purpose of starting and upholding the spiritual welfare of the respective churches after Christ ascended back to his Father in heaven. Christ, speaking to his apostles said in Jn.14:26, "But the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, 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." In other words, the Holy Ghost would be with them working with them, lest they should forget what Christ had said unto them. No doubt then, the Holy Spirit or comforter played a great part in upholding the spiritual welfare of the respective Churches, and was evidently bestowed for that purpose, working of course, through the apostles. We find that every example of conferring spiritual gifts by the laying on of hands, that an apostle had to be present. Acts 6:6; Acts 8:12-17; Rom. 1:9-11; 11Tim.1:6. The apostles could lay their hands on men who had

been baptized into Christ, who were sound in character, and impart spiritual gifts to men for complete oversight whenever the apostles were not present or were needed elsewhere. Acts 6:3-6. These chosen men could in turn perform wonders and miracles, Acts 6:8; Acts 9:6, but could not pass their spiritual gifts on to others by the laying on of hands, for it was through the apostles that such spiritual gifts were conferred. Acts 8:18.

The general gift of the Holy Spirit was promised to only those that were baptized (water baptism) into Christ, and this gift came after baptism. Acts 2:38; Acts 5:32; 1 Jn.3:24. The gift of the Holy Spirit, then, that we receive today comes when we are obedient to Christ. Jn.14:15-17; Acts 5:32; Rom. 5:5; 1Thess. 4:9. It is received, not by the laying on of hands, but by the hearing of the faith. Gal. 3:2. Since there is only one spirit, Eph. 4:4, the Holy Spirit, I know the Holy Spirit is what Paul refers to here that we received by the hearing of faith. Notice also while you are at Eph. 4:4, Paul also says that there is one baptism, hereby noting that either Holy Spirit baptism or water baptism was, by the time he wrote this epistle, done away. I believe further study on this will reveal which one was taken away.

We might ask the question, "What is the hearing of faith?" If the gift of the Holy Spirit comes by that manner we should know what it means. We find in Rom. 10:17, that "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit in the measure we receive today is ~~received~~ from the word of God. In essence, I am saying that the Bible teaches a difference between the measures of the Holy Spirit. In the first place, do I go too far by assuming that the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of the Holy Spirit are not the same? Let me give an example to show it could be possible even without the light of the scriptures proving it. Let me would say to you, "I will give you the gift of the

cow, would you expect the cow also? The cow is capable of giving the gift of milk, but such a gift does not include the cow also. You see, it is quite plausible that the gift of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is not of the same measure. From further reasoning of the scripture, I believe without a doubt that God gave to man the appropriate measure of gifts at the time they were needed. If God had intended for his people from generation to generation to continue performing miracles just as they saw fit, could we not then do the same miracles as the early Christians? Let us notice what the apostles could do. You say we can do as they did.

They had power to bind or loose, Matt 16:19; Matt 18:18; remit or retain sins, Jn 20:23; heal all manner of sickness, Matt 10:1, Mark 16:17, 19 Acts 5:15, Acts 19:12; raise the dead Acts 9:36-43; Acts 20:9, 10; speak in tongues, Mark 16:17, Acts 2:4-11. No, God always gave to his people such as was needed at the time it was needed. When the apostles were starting the early churches they no doubt needed miraculous spiritual guidance, and God gave it to them. They did not have the written will of God that they could refer to as we have today. Anyone who would ask, "Why would they need miraculous confirmation in the early church and not need it today?" is surely not realizing the situation and the existence on which the early church depended. I say that kindly, Howard. The early leaders depended on the spiritual guidance to keep them aright in the new doctrine, and the miracles were to confirm that which was spoken. Heb. 2:3 After the word was fully established and confirmed, a more excellent way, that of faith, hope and charity, was to guide the Christian. 1 Cor. 12:31. Today we still have the more excellent way of which Paul speaks. Faith, hope and love, will grow by studying of God's holy words. It is the perfect law of liberty which is our infallible guide. Jam 1:25, "The gospel of

Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Rom. 1:16. We are justified today by faith, not by things which we can see. Gal. 3:22-24.

Discontinuing for now the discussion of the measures of the Holy Spirit, I'd like to dwell on the letter you gave. I am sending you a copy of your letter, in case, you didn't keep one so that we might study it together.

You said that if we will follow God with all our heart, soul, and mind and strength and meet the conditions set down in God's plan, we are able to receive the same results as the apostles. I doubt very much if you really mean that, Howard. Can anyone say of a truth today that they can claim the same results as the apostles did? They might claim to do certain things (things that actually deceive the minds of men) but could they openly perform miracles that are unquestionably miraculous? For instance, could they, by so saying, order a hand to be restored whole which had been withered, or cause the dead to come forth. The apostles could. Christians today cannot. The type of "miracles" the miracle workers perform are not true miracles, but only misleading magical deeds, having nothing miraculous about them. I believe that since the apostles were baptized in the Holy Ghost they had the power to do the things I just mentioned. No one today has that power. To claim power to do certain things and not others is actually admitting to themselves that the apostles had such supreme power that cannot be duplicated. No, I don't see that we do get the same results as the apostles, Howard. Your proof that we do get the same results is that "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." Heb:8. Indeed, I agree that he is our one Lord for ever, but he distinctly uses different methods of dealing with his people as he desires. Would you say then that because Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever,

that the old law of animal sacrifices is bound on us today as it was on his people under the Mosaical Law? Anyone with knowledge of the scripture knows that it isn't. Heb. 13:8 is no proof whatsoever for such reasoning that we should or could do the same things as the apostles.

I would like to say here that I believe God's power to perform miracles is unlimited; also his power to perform miracles through men is unlimited; however, the question of whether he does perform miracles or not is a different question. If you would say, that because Christians disbelieve those that claim to perform miracles, that they are disbelieving the power of God, I would say you were judging unjustly. I believe God gave some in the early church miraculous power, but just because he did then doesn't mean that he always will. The question of Christians believing whether men can perform miracles does not show their belief as to the possibility of God's power. Such an idea I know is prevalent among those who claim miracles, but ^{it} isn't justified. When we reject the belief of the "miracle" workers we don't reject the power of God. The discussion of whether God performs miracles today as he did in the early church is a legitimate one.

Next, you say Acts 2:38, tells us how we receive the Holy Ghost and Acts 2:39, tells us to whom it is promised. I would like to make a correction, Acts 2:38 tells how we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Notice Acts 8:14-17. Peter and John laid hands on Samaritans in order to bestow on them spiritual gifts. The Samaritans had already received the gift of the Holy Ghost because they had been baptized. Acts 8:16. Whatever the gift of the Holy Spirit was or whether they knew what it meant to them, they had received it by necessity, for it is the reward of one's obedience to the gospel. In Acts 2:38 the gift of the Holy Spirit is promised, "Repent and be baptized and ye shall receive," as a reward

for obedience. They of Samaria, then, had the gift of the Holy Spirit because they had been baptized. Acts 8:16. Peter and John's laying on of hands imparted a greater measure of the Holy Spirit. It had to be a different measure, else they received the same thing twice. In such instances as the laying on of hands occurred, the receivers had already received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 19:56, Acts 9:16, etc. Acts 2:39 tells to whom the gift of the Holy Spirit is given. I agree with you there. I also believe it includes you and I.

We know that the baptism of the Holy Spirit imparted a great measure of supernatural power. We know, also, that the laying on of hands imparted some supernatural power to a person, but we cannot find anywhere that it equalled the supreme power of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The measure promised to us is the gift of the Holy Spirit. To get some idea what this gift is, let's turn to Acts 2:38. Peter said to those brethren, "Repent and be baptized in the name of the Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now turn to the next chapter, the 17th through the 20th verses. Here again the same Peter, preaching the same gospel, said again to those who he accused of crucifying the Christ, "Repent therefore and turn again that your sins may be blotted out that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. When Peter said, "turn again that your sins may be blotted out", he meant by that statement, that they should be baptized, because the way to have sins forgiven is through baptism, Acts 2:38. Therefore, his words in both instances consisted of the same things, "Repent and be baptized", but the last part of his statement was different. The first time he said, "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" and the second time he said, "that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord". Maybe what he says the second time is what the first really means. I wouldn't argue that point either way, Howard, but

I thought I would just point it out. The implication is, However, that the gift of the Holy Ghost is by no means gifts of miracles such as some think.

In this tract you doubted the words "to speak in tongues always meant to speak in a known language". You quoted 1 Cor. 14:2. "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men but unto God.. for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." You say this absolutely contradicts the tract. At first it does seem like a contradiction, Howard, but I don't think it is when we consider more things. Paul is writing to early Christians, necessarily in the church, or churches, at Corinth. They should have all spoken the same tongue, naturally. If someone were to speak in the church at Corinth in an unknown tongue, to men present, it didn't mean, however, that the tongue was also unknown to men of a different place or nation. Let me clarify. If I were to speak to a group of men at South Bend in the Japanese tongue such as that tongue, more than likely, would be unknown to them. No man^{would} understand me. Hence, I could not edify them in any way. That is what Paul is writing to the church at Corinth. That he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men but unto God. Those that spoke in an unknown tongue spoke not to men (because they couldn't understand him) but to God only (who really didn't need it). There was not any edifying done because of such an unknown tongue. This lack of edification was what was prevalent in the church at Corinth. That is why in such verses as 1 Cor. 15:2,4, Paul was urging them to edify and speak not in an unknown tongue so that the benefit of each speech could be derived. That was the essence of Paul's teaching. Those that claim "tongues" today are so engrossed in their practice they don't realize what Paul really teaches about tongues. It seems to me you are placing too much emphasis on "for

he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men but unto God, and missing the whole lesson that Paul is trying to put across. He was reprovng those brethern at Corinth for their free use of tongues. To speak not unto men was exactly what was going on at Corinth, so that is the reason for Paul's letter. As is plainly evident later on in the chapter, "For if I pray ~~in an unknown~~ tongue my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful!" What should he do then? He answers it, "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also, etc. That surely teaches that a known tongue should be used. Again in verse 19, he says "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." The question of whether you and I believe that an unknown tongue was a known language or was not a known language in the early church is not nearly as important ~~as~~ the lesson we should strive to get from Paul's teachings. Whether or not the unknown tongue Paul speaks of was an unknown language or just plain jibbling, you must agree with me that he was condemning their unappropriate use of it. His lesson was that all things that ~~were~~ said ~~were~~ to be for the edification of the church, for the benefit of all. If I would come to the church you attend, could I understand all that was said? If not, then you are not practicing Paul's teaching. "Everything," Paul said, "was to be done decently and in order", 40th verse.

Speaking in tongues, we know, was languages on the day of Pentecost Acts 2:8. Also speaking in tongues, was languages when Cornelius' household spake in tongues because they received the "like gift" as the ~~apostles~~, Acts 11:17. Tongues were languages when Paul wrote the Corinthians because he said, "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself." 1 Cor. 14:4. How could one edify himself if he could not understand

the meaning of the tongue? Also in 1Cor. 14:18, Paul says, "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all". Knowing that the apostles spoke in tongues (languages), I don't doubt but that Paul did. Then when he says, "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all" surely implies that those he was talking to spoke in languages to some extent. Again, Paul says, "Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken"? 9th verse. (Such would surely imply that unknown language or tongue would have to be used here.) Again he says "There are many voices (tongues) in the world and none is without signification," 10th verse. (All are languages.) Again if a person prayed in a tongue, 14th verse, how would he know he was truly praying if he didn't know that the words expressed the idea of a prayer and therefore, knew it to be a language. Many, many verses indicate that tongues were for understanding and would therefore have to be languages. I can't see how you can hold to the view that tongues were not languages. Even one example should be sufficient to prove this.

Another thing, we might notice while we're at this particular verse, is that Paul had a greater measure of this gift of speaking in tongues than those to whom he was writing. He says, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all." Paul's greater power of this gift conforms to the fact that God gave to some a greater measure of the Holy Spirit than he gave to others. Paul needed to speak in many tongues, for Christ commanded us to "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." Knowing they did not have the written law then as we do today, we can understand the necessity of tongues in the early Christian dispensation. Today the Holy Bible is translated into every tongue on earth.

Next: You want me to give you scripture where only the apostles had power to impart spiritual gifts. You say that no apostle laid his hands on Cornelius' kinsmen when the Spirit was poured out on them. On this latter example we can dismiss hurriedly. The Holy Spirit was poured out, a baptism, a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, not through the apostles, hence no laying on of hands was necessary. On Pentecost, the same thing. No apostle laid hands on the apostles to impart power. That is why these instances are different from the laying on of hands, in that these in question were baptized by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. The Bible so classifies them that way. Mk. 1:8, Acts 1:5, Matt 3:11. To show you that no one but an apostle could impart spiritual gifts, let's notice the examples of the laying on of hands and who was present. First, Acts 6:6, the apostles asked that men of honest report and full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom to be chosen as deacons so that the apostles would not be hindered from doing their appointed duty. After this was done, the apostles laid hands on them to impart supernatural power. Acts 6:8. Second, Acts 8:14-18, Philip whom the apostles had already laid hands, Acts 6:6, baptized the people and had power to perform miracles, Acts 8:13, but evidently could not transmit his power on to others by the laying on of hands for it was necessary for the apostles at Jerusalem to send Peter and John (apostles) to Samaria to bestow this measure of the spiritual gift to these people, Acts 8:14. Seeing that Philip could perform miracles, Acts 8:6, why couldn't he transmit his power to those at Samaria and save all this inconvenience to the apostles? The only reasonable explanation we can give was that he just didn't have that power. The apostles knew Philip had done all that he could in preaching the word and confirming it with signs and miracles. The power of transmitting the spiritual gift was given only to the apostles. Simon realized that this was so, because the 19th

verse says, "and when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given" he also desired that power of transmitting gifts. He became covetous. Not anywhere can we find where Simon or any one other than an apostle, ever possessed that power to transmit miraculous gifts.

Third, Acts 19:6,7. Paul at Ephesus, inquired whether they had received the Holy Ghost. We find that after they had been baptized, Paul laid his hands on them and supernatural gifts were then imparted to them. Acts 19:5,6.

The preceding three examples of the laying of hands showed that the apostles were the only givers of the gift. Other places where we read of the laying on of hands to impart spiritual gifts again the apostles were the givers, 1Tim 1:6. Paul, an apostle, to Timothy, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." Again, in Rom. 1:11 Paul says, "For I long to see you that I might impart unto you some spiritual gift to the end ye may be established." Notice the implication in Paul's statement. Not only that Paul (an apostle) had to be where they were to give the spiritual gift but that it was to be given to ^{The} end, or for the purpose, of establishing them.

Notice here again, these Roman brethren to whom Paul is writing, had already received the gift of the Holy Spirit for they had been baptized, Rom. 1:6, but it was necessary for Paul, an apostle, to come to them for the giving of the miraculous measure.

Several other times you can find the laying on of hands in the New Testament, but no supernatural gift was bestowed. As example, the act of the Jews seizing Jesus was spoken of in Mk. 14:46, as the "laying on of hands". Again in Lk. 4:40, the laying on of hands meant the direct touching of a person. Likewise in Mk. 6:5. In Acts 4:3 the laying on of hands

meant taking the apostles by force. In Acts 13:3 the laying of hands meant a farewell blessing to those who he entrusted or committed to a good work. In 1 Tim. 4:14 the laying on of hands meant the laying hold of the man Timothy because of a predetermined choice by God, for the work to which he was committed. Notice 1 Tim 1:18, 11 Tim. 1:6. The Israelites in the Old Testament, had an act or ceremony of consecration spoken of as the "laying on of hands". Num. 8:9, Lev. 4:15, Lev. 8:9-20, 11 Chron. 29:23, 1 Chron. 16:20-22. In many such places the words "laying on of hands" was used, but it can be shown that the expression was used in different meanings and that no spiritual gift was bestowed.

Now to go back to your question, Howard. "I would like anyone to give me scripture where only the apostles had power to impart the gift." If Acts 8:18 is not enough proof, Howard, let us note some facts. I have shown all the cases recorded in the New Testament of the laying on of hands that imparted any supernatural gift and shown who was the giver of the gift. Now, I would just like to reverse your question. Can you show me where anyone else but an apostle had the power to impart spiritual gifts? Well now, you might say, "Just because the apostles were the only ones to give gifts is no proof that we cannot give gifts today." Other than the fact that there are no apostles today such a statement might seem true, but since there are no apostles living today (notice the Biblical definition of an apostle, Acts 1:22) and since the apostles were the bestowers of gifts, I can reason only that such miraculous gifts, ceased when the last person died on whom the last apostle laid hands. Such is only a reasonable conclusion on the basis of the foregoing facts. I would like to say, however, that my disbelief in miracle workers does not lie to a great extent on the fact that the apostles were the only ones so far as the record shows that could give spiritual gifts. This is only a portion of the proof that

there are no true miracles today.

Next: You asked what right has the tract to read supernatural knowledge when the Bible doesn't read that way. Well, I know it doesn't read that way, and so does the writer of the tract. He did not quote the Bible (his statement was not in quotation marks), he only gave an explanation. We all have that right. Let's notice what Paul is talking about in 1 Cor. 13:8. He is saying that love (charity) never fails, but the unnatural things as prophecies, "they shall fail; whether there be tongues they shall cease whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." You would agree that the first two things, prophecies and tongues were supernatural, then why not the last? Paul uses all three with the same thought. He is contrasting the usefulness of a natural thing "love", with the supernatural things "prophecies, tongues and knowledge." I do not doubt a bit that Paul ~~had meant~~ a supernatural knowledge from the fact he used the word "knowledge" as an equal with tongues, and prophecies. If he meant ordinary knowledge it was used completely out of place. If the meaning is ordinary knowledge his thought would not be consistent. His contrasting of the natural things with the unnatural things necessarily places knowledge with the the other two, prophecies and tongues. If the knowledge he speaks of is, as you say, just "common knowledge", and it will "pass away" when Christ comes, then surely you haven't studied what Christ taught in Matt 25:31-46. He taught, himself, that in the judgement these would be those that would come to him and say that they hadn't done the things that Christ said they had. Such a lesson surely teaches that common knowledge will not pass away when Christ comes, because we will be able to remember. Again, if our common knowledge would pass away when Christ comes then on what basis will Christ punish the wicked. It would be an unfair judgement if Christ would

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send his people to an eternal hell without them remembering for what reason they were being punished, wouldn't it? I can't see that the knowledge Paul writes of could be common knowledge. I can reason only that it was a "supernatural" just as the other two things he said were. A supernatural knowledge was present then, we know, for as example, Christ said, "The Holy Ghost shall teach you all things and bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Jn. 14:26. Surely the Holy Ghost gave them a "more than ordinary" amount of knowledge. Again I say, it is only good logic that the knowledge of which Paul writes is a supernatural knowledge. I believe further discussion on this will prove Paul's meaning.

On page three of your letter, you quoted 1 Cor. 13:8-13. You take the position that the perfect Paul speaks of is Christ. I don't doubt one second, ^{but} that Christ is perfect, Howard, but let's see if that is what Paul is talking about here. Let's suppose Christ is the perfect referred to here. Then who is the imperfect? I take it from your letter that the imperfect refers to us. If that is the case, then will we not pass away when the perfect comes? 10th verse. "When the perfect comes (Christ) the imperfect (God's people) will pass away." We know that isn't so since the apostles Paul said that we have the promise of eternal life. Heb. 9:15. Again, let us suppose Christ is the perfect referred to here, as you say, and the imperfect refers to our tongues, knowledge and prophecies. Then to bring these into perfection (you specifically say that our knowledge will be perfect when Christ comes), aren't you robbing the perfection in your argument that rightly belongs to Christ? In other words, Paul gives two conditions, perfection and imperfection. If you use the perfection referring to Christ and use it again referring to the state we will gain at Christ's coming, you are adding another perfection into Paul's meaning. There is only one per-

fection and one imperfection in Paul's teaching and all he says can be placed into these two headings. We shall see later. Again let us suppose as you say, Christ is the perfect referred to here and the imperfect referred to knowledge, tongues and prophecies, and these will last until Christ comes. If this be so, then I would like to ask you when the "more excellent way," will abide, that of faith, hope, and charity, of which Paul is speaking? He says that he would show them a more excellent way than what these gifts would give. 1Cor. 12:31. We find the continuance of his thought in the very next verse when he preaches unto them charity (love). He says love will never fail. As for the imperfect things, prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, they will cease. Why will they cease? Because they are imperfect, 9th verse. The things that are perfect, that will never fail, and will abide or continue on after the imperfect has ceased is faith, hope and charity. This is his summation, Howard, that the more excellent way is faith, hope and charity. Now, if you say the miraculous gifts will last until the coming of Christ, when will the more excellent way abide, that of faith, hope and charity? Your argument would place them in heaven. But can hope abide in heaven? Will faith abide in heaven? Knowing the meaning of faith (faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen), I'm sure faith can't abide in heaven, since what more could we hope for if we get to heaven? When Paul said these three, Faith, Hope, and Charity would abide, there is a strong implication in the word abide itself, that indicate something that will continue on after something else has ceased. If I'd say, "Both my wife and I went home, and she abided," it would have the impression that I had left, wouldn't it? Paul taught to those who had spiritual gifts that the things that would abide, or continue on would be faith, hope and charity.

on, would be faith, hope and charity. Knowing that he teaches the imperfect things are the spiritual gifts, 1 Cor. 13:9, then I'm sure he is declaring that spiritual gifts would cease. The guide from then on, for the Christians is faith, hope, and charity. These three things, when practiced to the fullest extent, ~~are~~ entirely sufficient to make a perfect child of God. Think on that statement, Howard, and see if it isn't so.

Since Paul is comparing the perfect and the imperfect, his subject would necessarily be the same. He must be referring to both the perfect and the imperfect as either beings or things. As you suggested, if you let the perfect refer to Christ(being) and the imperfect refer to man(being) a consistent reasoning, we saw where that would lead us. Not only that, but it would make Paul's statement about the imperfect being knowledge, void. Since Paul's whole lesson is that of a "more excellent way", it is only plausible to reason that the perfect he refers to is that way. Then knowing the imperfect he refers to is another way, 1 Cor. 13:9, it makes Paul's lesson clear. The way of tongues, knowledge, and prophecies is an imperfect way. This way would always lead to confusion and coveteousness as it did at Corinth.

The way of faith, hope and love would lead to unity and a true and abiding devotion. After studying Paul's complete lesson, I can't conceive of any other interpretation than this. Notice: "Charity never faileth; but whether their 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 prophecy in part." We know this was so, for from the beginning of creation, even the inspired men knew and spake only in part, with the conception and understanding of a babe. Truth was presented to each of them in dark hints. Then Paul's lesson was that when that which was to come

would come, and give understanding, then these things that gave only in part would be done away. The perfect, I reason, also refers to a knowledge or understanding, just as the imperfect did; and he compares this understanding unto that of a grown man, just as he does in other writings of his. In the next chapter, he again warns them: "Brethren be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men." In James 1:25, we find that the New Testament law is a "perfect" law. Why not try to apply it to Paul's teachings. "When that which is perfect law cometh, then that which is in part shall be done away. It when this perfect law fully came and therefore known completely, so that it would be able to guide them, then the spiritual helps or gifts would then pass away. They will be no longer necessary. Notice how this reasoning fits in with the next verse: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things." Just as certain as a child needs special consideration, these early Christians ("children") Paul is writing to needed special consideration. Such was given to them when God gave to them spiritual gifts, but Paul teaches such gifts would last only until they became men, at which time the gifts would be no longer needed. I would like for you to notice that Paul teaches practically the same thing to the church at Ephesus. Eph. 4:11-16. Listing some of the "helps" that Christ gave toward the establishment of His Church (he listed more in detail, 1 Cor. 12:28). Paul goes on to show for what purpose they were given: "For the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Paul lists apostles and prophets and other leaders here, ^{who} undoubtedly had spiritual gifts or "helps" in the Church. He pro-

needs to tell for what reason they were given and how long they would last: "Till, or until, we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God." It seems so clear why God gave to those in the early Church miraculous gifts, Howard. They were not yet united in this faith and had not come to the knowledge of God. You might say that we are not united in faith today and therefore we still need gifts, but I don't believe the case is the same, because today it is through our own fault and prejudices that we are divided and have not yet the knowledge of God. As it was then, this new gospel would have, no doubt, been idly taken as just another wind of doctrine had it not been for the miraculous manifestation that proved to the people that this doctrine was truly from God. Thus, the Word was confirmed once to the world. Heb. 2:3,4. A second time is not necessary.

Our infallible guide today is the Bible and the Bible alone. In 1 Tim. 3:16, 17, Paul says, "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." If the scripture is able to furnish us unto every good work, and make us perfect, what more should we need today than just scripture? Saying one needs spiritual gifts today, also is just the same as saying, "Paul you're wrong, we need more than just the scripture." Let's notice further in Paul's letter to the Ephesians he again used the comparison of the "Children as those who are not in complete knowledge of Christ following first one thing and then another, to the "Grown up" who is grounded in truth. "That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, etc, but speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things." As is evident here, the early Christians were surrounded by every wind doctrine. It becomes more

plain then why God needed to give unto them spiritual gifts. You can see for yourself, how such a "wishy-washy" people, only in the infancy of the truth would have established that glorious institution, the Church, without the direct assistance, from God. Again I say, God gave to his people that which was needed at the time it was needed. Miraculous gifts were needed then. They are not needed today. Today we have God's own law in written page. I believe these lessons also teach that it is not when Christ comes that the "children" must wait to become "men" but that we can "grow up" before we ever see Christ. When Paul says in verse 9, 1 Cor. 13, "we know in part and we prophesy in part" I think you will have to agree that he refers to the time when they were children. Then when he says "when I became a man (or when I grew up) I put away childish things" he certainly means they would put away those things that were in part. And he says those things in part are the tongues, etc. I can't see how you can rightly understand Paul's teaching in the Corinthian letter in any other way especially when we study it in the light of all his teaching. Again I will contend that the perfect Paul speaks of here is not Christ. Perhaps you get your reasoning from the 12th verse of 1 Cor. 13. "For now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face." I notice that you emphasized the "face to face" more than they did "for now we see through a mirror darkly." We should not more give "face to face" a literal meaning than we should "for now we see through a mirror darkly" because Paul uses them both for same thought. If you say that Paul meant that they would literally see "face to face" why not say he meant they were literally looking in a glass. He said that along with the other, didn't he? When he says that they would see face to face, it could mean face to face with anything in the figurative language with which he speaks here and certainly cannot be narrowed down to mean only face to face with Christ. In figurative language, I'm looking

face to face with this letter, or in figurative language, I could come face to face with an accident. Both uses of face to face would be just as understandable, figuratively, as that of looking through a glass darkly. It seems to me that this verse, in order to harmonize with the others, must carry the same idea as that of the dark way, to which they had been accustomed, and this more excellent way, that is the main topic of Paul's lesson.

Notice Heb. 10:1, it speaks of the old law as being a shadow. "For the law having been a shadow of good things to come and not the very image ~~of the very image~~ of the things can never etc, make the comers thereunto perfect." Many places in the Bible we get the idea that the old law was not perfect, and rightly so because the Gentiles were in no way saved by it. Likewise, we get the idea that the New Law is a perfect law for all people. When the old law of darkness would be completely removed from the minds of men and when they would open their understanding to the light of this New Gospel then they would see face to face. ^{NOTICE ROM. 7:12, 25; Eph. 3:4, 5.} In 11 Cor. 3:14-18, ^{JOHN 2:7-10} Paul compared the wall of darkness, that was in the Old Law, to that of a veil that could not be removed until they had turned ^{TO} the new liberty which was in Christ. He proceeds to say then, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness." In other words the new way provided a way by which they could see openly, face to face, the glory to which they could attain. The Old Law never provided that vision. The Old Law was a "dark law"; the new law is a "light" law, 11 Cor. 4:4. With a little reasoning you can see how completely this belief fits in not only with Paul's statements here but also with his whole Corinthian letter. I agree, Howard, that Christians had miraculous gifts for their use in the early church, but Paul said they would cease, and the things that would abide would be faith, hope and charity. That is final.

Now to go on. In the discussion on whether the adulthood state of the

church needs tongues, you ask, "If I thought that on the day of Pentecost that those that spoke in tongues received the evidence of the Holy Spirit because they could speak in tongues," "and I'll answer," Yes, I do." They certainly knew they had some such amazing power because they not only spoke in tongues but it says they did many signs and wonders. Verse 43. I also believe that the power of speaking in tongues was not given entirely for the purpose of showing other nationalities the plan of God's great salvation although they no doubt played a great part in doing that very thing. The fact that there were several nationalities present on this day and that God chose an opportune time to reach the understanding of everyone by using tongues, shows to me that tongues played a great part in bringing every man to penance. The evidence of tongues themselves did not save anyone, but the understanding that came from the tongues is what really showed them in what a lost condition they really were. Just as it was here, and other places in the Bible, tongues were to be used for understanding, and certainly God took advantage of that opportunity on the day of Pentecost to make all nationalities understand what his plan of salvation was. When Peter said, "Repent and be baptized," those very words conveyed to their minds part of God's plan of salvation and we have no reason to assume that Peter was not yet speaking in tongues whether one at a time or otherwise when he said these words. Tongues surely had to be used even when this was said else how would every man understand him. I definitely believe tongues played a great part in the conveying of God's plan of salvation. The fact that they (even including the 120, if you want) had tongues, however, for their use, did not save them. The fact that the question was asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" proves that. Not anywhere can we find that from the fact that a man had a spiritual gift he knew he was saved eternally. That was not the purpose of spiritual gifts in the early church. For some today to teach that it is necessary to "get it" (whatever "it" is) for their salvation, would

seem to mean from the emphasis placed it, that any evidence of any spiritual gift would prove that they were eternally saved. I can't see that kind of an idea even in the early Christian dispensation when they really did have a miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Show me where a man was ever unquestionably saved from the fact that he had a spiritual gift. Show me where a person having a spiritual gift in the early church ever taught "because I have a gift of God I am assured of heaven." The power of speaking in tongues had a definite purpose, Howard, just as there is a definite purpose for ever everything God does. I don't believe that tongues were ever a mysterious act of God but that they were meant for understanding. If they weren't for understanding what kind of a spiritual upbuilding would they have produced among those trying to learn God's word. Where we find tongues recorded in the Bible we also find the writer talking about understanding also. In general, that was the case. One brings the thought of the other. When the apostles spoke in tongues on the day of Pentecost they were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven. Acts 2:5. Surely the purpose of the tongues were to insure that men of every nation could understand what was being said to them. Furthermore, I believe the tongues acted as a confirmation to the people that what they saw was truly from God and was not just another doctrine. This was evident from the fact the people were astonished at such amazing power that no one but God could create. Consequently, the people hearing Peter saying, "Repent and be baptized", were convinced that it was the will of God, for the miracles proved that God was the author. When the people heard ^{of} the words of Peter, they realized that ~~that~~ what they saw and witnessed was not sufficient to save them. They cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost! Let's stop to notice he

Let's stop to notice here, Howard, that if not only the apostles, but also others received the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (as you reason) then Peter told them they would receive something they already had. When he said, "Repent and be baptized and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," then the gift of the Holy Spirit, which they did not have yet (they were not yet baptized) was surely different from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The proof is still that the gift of the Holy Spirit is different from the complete baptism of the Holy Spirit. It really doesn't matter either way, however, whether just the apostles or the one hundred and twenty, or even a thousand people were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the purpose was still the same. However, when we were discussing this question, I asked you to prove where the one hundred and twenty were present just to get you to notice the reading a little closer and not assume so much. I remember that you found that there were seventeen nations that heard the twelve apostles, which is really no proof, realizing that even one apostle could have spoken seventeen different languages by the power of God. If you can show me that the time when the first chapter ^{of Acts} ended, and the beginning of the second chapter of Acts is continuous, then I'll come more nearly believing that the hundred and twenty were present in that "Upper Room" with apostles. Jesus was with his apostles even before this time in an upper room. Notice Luke 22:12-14. Also notice in Acts 2:1 who the antecedent of "they" would be. Wouldn't it be the closest subject that Luke was just speaking of, which is Matthias and the eleven apostles? The second chapter starts out, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come", there is a strong implication, even in those words, that this is a different day than at the time the first chapter ended. Christ talking to the apostles, Acts 1:2,4,7,8, however, made it clear who was to be endued with the power from on high. Also notice Acts 2:37. However to bring others in on this

power does not change its purpose one bit. You can believe that without much danger, if you wish. I believe as the word indicates, that God gave the apostles power to perform miracles as a confirmation to the people that what they witnessed was from God, and whatever was said unto them would not be idly received as another false doctrine. That was the purpose of the power given to the apostles to confirm, or to bear witness to the word. Heb. 2:3,4. Now, in answer to your question, "Why aren't tongues necessary today if they were then?" You may well ask it this way, "Why isn't it necessary to confirm the word of God over again just as it was confirmed to the people on the day of Pentecost?" That is what all miracles were for, so that that is precisely your question. To answer this, I'll ask you this question. Does the word of God need to be confirmed over and over again? I believe without further proof that the Bible is the "Word of God". It was proven to be that once and for all. Those who desire more proof from God outwardly, are surely weak in faith. Must they always need something they can witness? True faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11:1, Rom. 10:17.

Now let us go on to the last part of your letter. 1 Cor. 14:14. "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." You say that if Paul prayed in an unknown tongue and didn't know what tongue he prayed in, what right have we to ask, "In what tongue do you speak?" Well in the first place, Howard, Paul did not say that he did pray in an unknown tongue, here. He said, "For 'if' I pray in an unknown tongue." In other words, for if I would pray in an unknown tongue my spirit would pray but my understanding would be unfruitful. In the second place, when he says, "But my understanding is unfruitful" the "my understanding", here means his understanding to others and not to himself. In other words, my understanding to others would be unfruitful. The reason he says, "my understanding" was because it would be his understand-

ing that would come from his use of the unknown tongue. So Paul says, "If I would pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit would pray, but the understanding that would come from me (or my understanding, as he puts it here) would be unfruitful or unproductive to those that would hear. You see, Howard, the "my" Paul uses here, refers to the fact that it would be his understanding that was conveyed just as it would be his use of the tongue; neither would be for himself, but for others. That was Paul's whole lesson anyway to use a tongue only when others could understand it. Let me illustrate Paul's meaning of teaching by a similar example. Suppose a Polish person came to your home who spoke both the English and the Polish tongues. Unless you knew the Polish tongue, both of you had better converse in the English tongue for his Polish tongue would be an unknown tongue to you. But if you say to him, "Speak to me in the Polish tongue", he would probably reason that "if I speak to you in the Polish tongue my understanding would be unconceivable." You would understand what he meant. This statement in the first place does not say he did speak to you in this tongue, and in the second place does not mean that the understanding would be unconceivable to himself, but unconceivable to you. Such a manner of teaching is precisely what Paul uses. "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." Paul is trying to show to these Corinthians that the free use of speaking in tongues does not lead to understanding; that is probably why he uses himself as the offender because they could then realize how little they would know if it weren't for his using a common tongue which they all could understand. His method of teaching was that, "If I would do anything like that, how would those listening understand me." Now can't you see that that is the lesson he is trying to give, Howard? If you gather from the 14th verse that Paul prayed in an unknown tongue and didn't know what he

was praying, I believe, again you are missing the whole lesson by Paul's. In the first place, I doubt very much if Paul ever prayed in an unknown tongue so that those present would have an unfruitful understanding. He was so forcibly teaching against their practicing it, I know he wouldn't have done it. 15th verse. I admit that those he was writing to, and also Paul himself, had the gift of tongues; but there was a definite purpose for them there. As Paul teaches, the purpose of tongues was not for confusion such as their use of them produced. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints, 33rd verse. Even "if" gifts of tongues were for us today, we dare not have the confusion of all speaking at once, as we do find in churches of today. I pity the people who won't heed Paul's teaching on this. What he says in the next two verses, 15 and 16, not only shows that the understanding is for others but also answers in an indirect way your question of "What right have we to ask in what tongue do you speak?"

Notice it. "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with ^{*The spirit and with*} the understanding also." Else, (If I didn't), when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned (tongue) say, "Amen," at the giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" What ever was to be done was to be done not only with the spirit but with the understanding also. We shouldn't accept just half of that statement, but all of it. When he says "pray with the spirit," I believe a person does that when he prays earnestly and sincerely, whether in one tongue or another. But when he says "pray with the understanding also", that must limit it to a common tongue that was understood by all. Of course and unknown tongue could be used then, Paul said, if there ~~was~~ an interpreter, but that would still put in the realm of understanding. So, when he says, "What is it then?" it is a question he is asking to summarize his teaching. In other words, What should we do then? He answers it. I will

pray, sing, etc., not only with the spirit but with the understanding also: therefore, if I were to go to a church where they did not speak with understanding, I would know they weren't following the teachings of the apostle, Paul. The reason I would want to know what tongue you spoke in would be so I would know whether I would be edified by coming. If I could not understand what was said, it would be of little use for me to come. Is't that right?

Now in regard to your last paragraph, you say, "I don't ever want to be guilty of denying the power of godliness", 1 Tim. 3:5. Truly, I don't either, Howard, but first, let's see what the "power of godliness" is, then we'll know if and when we are denying its power. From the former views you gave in your letter, I presume you reason that the power of godliness is that power of spiritual gifts that you claim to possess, and all that don't claim these gifts are "denying the power of godliness". If you do, maybe you are getting something from Paul's lesson that I am missing. The way Paul applies the power of godliness here, I can't reason that he is talking about miraculous gifts at all. I think you are misinterpreting this verse as meaning the power of God instead of the power of god-li-ness. There is a distinct difference. Godliness is a type of living in which we try to attain God-like virtues. Let's notice ^{elsewhere in} Paul's letter and see if it isn't just that, something we are to practice in our everyday life. 1 Tim. 2:2, "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty". 1 Tim. 2:10, "which becometh women professing godliness with good works." 1 Tim 4:7, "exercise thyself rather unto godliness," 1 Tim. 6:11, "follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." Elsewhere, in 1 Peter 1:5,6,7, "add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and patience godliness; and godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity". I believe these verses are enough to show that Godliness is a human, but God-like virtue.

and is something that should be added just as any other virtue. Now when Paul said in 1 Tim. 3:2-5, that "men would be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, etc.," he then says in verse 5, that these very ones he mentioned would have a form of godliness, but would deny its power in their lives. Surely the only interpretation we can place on that statement (since he said that the transgressors would be the ones having the form of godliness) was that outwardly they would have a form of godliness, but inwardly they would not let godliness rule their hearts. They would continue to resist the truth and not live according to godliness. I don't doubt for a second but that, as Paul says, there is an evidencing power in god-li-ness. Many a man has been lifted from the depths of sin to the realm of a happy Christian by the power of god-li-ness. These people Paul writes of would renounce its power to lead them in a godly life; instead they would be content with sinful, worldly lusts. How we can extend Paul's words to mean miraculous gifts here is more than I can see. Study the context of Paul's lesson, Howard, and I believe you'll see what Paul is saying here. We should always study, first, to see in what way a passage is used before we try to apply it. I could misconstrue several things if I didn't adhere unto the way the verse or phrase was used. It might outwardly seem to mean one thing, but if applied as it should, in the overall lesson, it may not mean that all. Let's notice again the passage in Heb. 13:8. It says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever." Such a "wide open" verse, people invariably latch on to for their proof for practice of nearly anything they can put their finger on in the scriptures. I can see how people not knowing the correct application of that phrase could be led away to practice almost anything. The lesson in which this verse was used was to give comfort and consolation in that he "will never leave thee nor forsake thee." 5th verse. "So that we may boldly

say, the Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me", 6th verse. This is the context of that passage, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever," and it leads to the fact that God has never forsaken his people now, and will never forsake them. People, knowing this would be more likely to pursue the Christian life. From the fact that a verse seems to mean one thing, on the surface, does not allow us to use it beyond its application just to suit our purposes. Many people follow that very practice, however. Misapplication coupled with poor division of the scripture is a dangerous path to follow.

Howard, I have tried to cover all of your letter and give you my understanding and reasoning of the particular scriptures with which we dealt. I affirm that the points I have presented are my own, and that I do "think for myself".

There are seemingly a number of things we disagree on Howard but as long as we both agree on the fact that the Bible is the inspired word of God, we may still be closer together than we think. Our differences can be ironed out, I believe, if we study the Bible with an open mind, using good reasoning. Some people look upon the word of God as being a mysterious, hard to understand revelation and that only those who are inspired(?) can know its teaching. I don't believe that at all. I believe it is as plain a teaching as needed by man. It was prophesied in the Old Testament that this new highway of holiness "shall be for those: and even the wayfaring man, though fools, shall not err therein." Isaiah 35:8. In 1 Tim. 2:15, Paul needs us to "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." This verse is specific within itself and cannot be misconstrued to apply to just anything. Paul says the word of truth must first, be studied, and secondly it must be rightly divided. If I would read any part of the Bible without rightly dividing it, I might be a

thoroughly confused person. There are so many ways God spoke, gave, and dealt with his people as was chosen by him, that I would not know which was applicable to me today if I didn't rightly divide or handle his words. I believe all of the Bible, but I do not believe that all of it applies to us today. At one time God showed his wondrous power openly, such as dividing the waters of the Red Sea, or destroying the earth by flood. Just because he did then, however, does not mean that he will today; furthermore, we read in the Bible that at one time God sent the Holy Spirit to bestow miraculous power and guide the early Christian into all truth. From the fact that God did then, however, does not mean that he will today. Just because we read about something in the Word does not mean that that something establishes a precedent throughout the ages. The Bible, in a large part is ~~but~~ a history recorded for us so that we might believe. ^{FROM 15:4} As you mentioned in your letter, we find recorded in the Bible where the early church not only had supernatural gifts, but that such gifts were strongly coveted, but does that unquestionably mean that Christians today should have the same gifts? Just because we read that early Christians did wondrous things, does that mean that because we are still called Christians today we have the same powers? I don't believe that necessarily follows, Howard. I can show you that there were changes even under the Old Law but the people were still called "Children of Israel". after such changes. It is Gods business if he desires to do away with a thing whether we think he should or not. I believe that God from the dawn of creation has given all that was needed for his people at the time it was needed. At the dawn of Christianity the direct manifestation of the Holy Spirit was needed to keep Christians aright in the truth. Today, the Bible supplants that need. We don't need both the Bible and supernatural manifestation.

We find in the beginning of the church, when only a few knew God's truths, that there was then the greatest measure of the Holy Spirit ever given to man. They could do wondrous things, even to the raising of the dead. Later on, where others became more grounded in the truth, God diminished that extreme power to man and gave to Christians lesser powers such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, healing the sick, etc. People even misused these gifts, we find, in the Corinthian letter. Then after several churches had been established, the apostle Paul declares the ultimate will of God, a more excellent way to lead the Christians, that of Faith, Hope, and Charity. This way, Paul said, would never fail and therefore, would abide. 1Cor. 13:8,13. Something that might be interesting to note, Howard, is that from the beginning of time, God ^{has} had to "spiritually feed" his people with one miracle right after the other. As long as God showed his hand, miraculously, the people followed him, but if God failed to show his miraculous power at times when the people thought he should, they were again disbelievers, and sometimes even became rebellious against God. We can find many cases of that very thing. All their progress, religiously, was put on God's shoulders. I believe God reversed this situation by giving to his people a law that was based on human works. When the inspired apostle Paul said that "yet shew I unto you a more excellent way", he was undoubtedly talking about the way of faith, hope and charity. This way, I believe, made possible a man's salvation upon his own conduct. It literally relieved God from the need of performing an endless array of miracles which when he did were often not respected. The person practicing this way of faith, hope and charity, would develop into a more perfect man and could come nearer to being the type of person God wanted him to be, rather than always remaining as a child whose faith was continually dependent upon God's giving of miracles. That is why, I believe, Paul

said the imperfect would pass away (tongues, prophecies, and inspired knowledge. All three were miraculous.) because by having such gifts, it would never allow men to grow up spiritually and be saved by their own works. The Bible teaches, however, that it is what we do as to whether we will be saved or not. God has done more than his part; now it is up to us. Even without the help of what the apostle Paul says about the cessation of miraculous gifts because of their imperfection, we can understand why God considered it necessary, at one time, to show wondrous evidence of the new Church of Christ, to all people as he did to that idolatrous and most wicked city of Corinth; and, furthermore, we can see that the situation that existed then in having nothing to turn to for revelation of truth, other than men, does not present itself today. Indeed not, we have the sacred inspired word of God itself, in a book we already call the Bible, as those did then that was guided unto all truths by the supernatural impartation of the Holy Spirit. Notice Eph. 3:3,4.

The same truths that the disciples of old acquired from the direct guidance by the Holy Spirit, we have today in the Bible, for the way men in that were guided by the Holy Spirit were the ones that wrote the Bible. That is why I believe there is perfection enough in the word of God because God himself, through men wrote his will. We learn that all that pertains to our souls salvation is found recorded for us in God's will. We learn that if we will live according to God's plan it holds for us a promise of everlasting life. It is our instruction in righteousness and it is able to guide us unto perfection. Since it can, then the Bible itself would have to be perfect. 11 Tim. 3:16. I believe it because it says it can. Realizing

this then why should we expect anything more from God? For one to say that God gave him a direct guidance by the Holy Spirit, it not only lowers the imminent position of the inspired word of God, but also infers that the scripture is not sufficient; furthermore if one says he has a direct guidance by the Holy Spirit it places God as a respecter of persons, which is a contradic-

tion of the word. Acts 10:34. If the Holy Spirit guides directly, what good is the scripture? If a direct plan of salvation is given by the Holy Spirit today, it would have to be the same plan as we find in the Bible, so there really would be no need for that direct conveyance. I believe everything we need to know for our soul's salvation is contained in God's word. If we live by the principles laid down, we can go to heaven.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was once given to a select few. I know no one today is baptized in the Holy Spirit for no one can perform the same wonders that those did who were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Also Paul wrote (in the year A.D. 64 when he wrote the Ephesians letter, Eph. 4:5) that there was only one baptism then, so evidently Holy Spirit baptism had already been done away. I'm not too well acquainted with your religious belief on this subject, Howard, so I don't know quite what to say to you, but I do know, no matter what you practice, that you have not been baptized in the Holy Spirit. If you should ever claim that you or anyone else have been (same power as the apostles?) I defy you to the test of proving it by doing the same miracles that we know could be performed by those who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. That would be a fair test of evidence, wouldn't it? If not, why not? I don't believe anyone has the power today that was manifested in the early church, and when I say that, I am not saying that God could not give it if he wanted to. I just do not believe it is in God's plan of salvation to give miraculous gifts to man. In the Bible, when a miracle was performed, it was really a miracle, something wondrous, without question; furthermore, the word of such miracles was spread to all men. Today, so-called "miracles" are not of that character at all. I never hear about any. I have lived in South Bend for more than a year now, but I have not heard of any true miracle being performed at your church or any other church who claims such. If those who claim miracles, today, were asked to perform the same miracles as the

early apostles performed, they would fail miserably, and they know it. We know, without a doubt, the early apostles did some things that no man on earth today can do. You may as well admit that fact, Howard. You might reasonably ask though, "How can you, Dean, say we do not have any power in the face of such passages as Mark 16:17, 18 and Luke 10:19, etc?" If you would ask a question like that, I would at least feel that you were sincerely wanting to know the truth instead of clinging to that opinion (we can do as the apostles) ^{in the face} of all fact today. Now, as to what is said that is of interest in that is as pertaining to such passages as Mark 16:17, 18, let us notice: Christ speaking to his apostles said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Now let us reason: Christ said to his apostles, that those that would believe what the apostles said, would be able to, first, cast out devils in "my name". Can you today, Howard, by a word of command, restore one possessed with devil with the calmness and swiftness that was possible in the early Christian dispensation? I can read where that was once possible. Acts 8:7, Acts 19:17, etc. Can you do it today? Secondly, Christ said, "they shall speak with new tongues today?" Speaking, means presenting a language so that the ~~xxxx~~ language can be understandable. Christ promised that in his ^{name} his disciples would be able to intelligibly speak in languages they had never known. I could chatter unknown words myself, and if there were any present that spoke another ^{Tongue}, they could probably find that some of my words, or even phrases, at times, could be applied to their language. Any one can do that; but just speaking a few words or uncontrollable jabber was not promised where Christ was concerned. Those people then could speak in other tongues. Thirdly, Christ said, "they shall take up serpents;" I believe Christ meant deadly serpents here, for there

would be no danger for anyone to do it if he meant otherwise. I can rightly ask, "Can, and would you do it?" You are the one who claims all of these things so I'll leave it up to you to prove it.

Fourth, Christ said, "If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them:". Note that the thing drunk ~~was~~ deadly. Would you be willing to prove this promise was meant for you by attempting this act? Many, many ^{minded} religious people have died because they assumed that this promise was for them. That is a fact we can't overlook. Surely you could not say that they did not believe God. Their very attempt proves that they ~~did~~. All this is your argument, so explain why such deaths occur.

Fifth, Christ said, "They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover". This promise was not that the sick would receive just a partial recovery, or the sick had to be recovered in a church assembly, or the sick would recover just ninety nine times out of a hundred. His promise was that "they shall recover," without one failure. Can you, Howard, personally, heal just anyone, anytime you desire. That was Christ's promise, wasn't it, that all who believe will be able to "lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover"? You do believe, don't you, Howard? You do not disbelieve Christ's words, do you? I do not disbelieve his words either, Howard. Even when I say, "I don't believe you have such power," I am still not disbelieving Christ's words. Christ talking to his eleven apostles told them to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel"; and then he said all that would believe them would be able to have these promises. Do you realize that this promise does not necessarily go any further than to the people then that heard the apostles? There are no apostles today; hence, I am not contradicting God's words when I reason that no such amazing power is with any man today.

Let us notice John 14:12. Christ said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my father." Surely in this promise Christ includes his miraculous works. We find that after Christ ascended, believers did the things that Christ did and even did more, in greater numbers. Can you prove such power exists today by doing all the mighty works that Christ did? If you can't claim all, you can't ^{rightly} claim any, for Christ said that the believers he gave this promise to could do all the works he did.

In Luke 10:17, we find that Christ's disciples had power to cast out devils, seemingly at will. Can you do it today? Can you say unto any evil spirit, "I command you, in the name of the Lord, ~~come~~ out him"? The omnipotent God is not your source of power if you cannot do it as easily as the early disciples did. In the reverse, Christ even makes this promise greater. He said, "Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Would you say that this promise also was for you today, Howard? You had better think first, before you answer.

If you actually believe that all such miraculous power that we read about in the Bible exists today, Howard, do you realize what that would mean? Surely, God does not intend for that to be. We do have people today that claim miracles, and they really think a miracle is performed when even some trifle thing is done; furthermore, the fact that people can see just what they want to see if they watch long enough is only a self delusion, but today's "miracles" are a far cry from what true miracles were in Christ's time. The same type of miracles that is evidenced among those who claim miracles today are the very miracles that are accomplished every day in our lives. Take the ever popular "gifts of healing" claim for instance. Do you know that the very same results that are procured from the "miraculous healing" claim can be procured clear outside of the realm of religion? That has been proven to

be a fact. Anyone that can build up faith enough in a thing that it will cure him of whatever ails him, a greater part of the cure has been accomplished already. The other part will soon follow with such a hope, and initiative on his part. At so-called "divine healings" they will tell a person that if he does not have the faith that he can be healed that they cannot heal him; but again I can show you that faith was not a requisite for being healed. Acts 9:26-42; Acts 20:9,10; Acts 3:1-11; Jn 11:32-45; Acts 16:16-19; Acts 8:6,7; Acts 28:8, etc. In fact, the word indicates that miracles were given, first, to bring about faith. John 20:30,31. From all indications, faith was not necessary when a person was healed in those days. Today "healers" place all their failures on the "lack of faith" excuse. I believe that if there were real miracles today, all people would know it. This belief, that a person is "healed" when he comes to be cured of an ailment, and works himself into a frenzy by an increasing of loudness of music, hollering and wailing and goes away with an illusion that he is cured, I can't see that that is a Bible miracle. Or if a person comes forward using a cane and in the excitement throws away the cane and wobbles down the steps back to his seat, I can't believe that that is a Bible miracle. I don't believe God would do such an incomplete job like that, if he were back of it. In the early Christian dispensation, those sent of God healed whether faith was present or not. If faith was wanting, they healed just the same. People, then, were healed, miraculously, by power of God; people today are healed only by human methods.. This excuse that "things have to be favorable before they can heal(?)" and the fact that "healers" are limited as to things they can do" all goes to prove that the all powerful God is not their source of power. This offer of gifts of healing is, however, an appealing one to the outsider. People who are emotional and are easily swayed by appearances can become strong supporters of such a teach-

ing. I am convinced that some of them actually want to do what is right and they think that they are actually doing right when they practice healings, tongues, etc; but just because their conscience is right or the practice of "miraculous" gifts are appealing to them doesn't make it right in the sight of God. A lot could be said here on the prophecy that these very things would come about. Just to realize that there is this teaching, however, let me quote it: Paul said that the son of perdition, that wicked one, would be revealed before that day shall come, "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." You might be thinking that this prophecy does not apply to you but it truly fits your practice to a "tee." Your very doubting that this scripture applies to your practice, fulfills the other half of the prophecy. "For this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 1 Thess. 2 That is why such practice thrives today, because God has given a delusion to those who love not the truth, The truth, Howard, is the word of God. John 17:17. The word of God is the scripture. 1 Tim. 3:16. We should be guided by the scripture today. 1 Tim. 3:16 To use the scripture as a guide does not mean we should try to imitate all the miracles we find in it. In John 20:30, John said, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, etc. 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." These miracles that Christ did was not written so that we might imitate them, they were written so that might believe. Just reading about miracles does not make us performers of them. In Rom. 15:4, Paul said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of

the scriptures might have hope." The miracles we read about in the Bible is but a history of how God dealt with his people and is given so that we might believe. The people today are blinded to that fact. They continue to practice the very things that Paul says will condemn them. In the question of the Holy Spirit, if I thought I were to "pray through" for the Holy Spirit and miraculous evidence, I would certainly do it, for I want to be saved, but I don't believe we are to do that. I can't find any command that tells me to do that. When I realize that the Holy Spirit was given directly at one time, I first try to find out what the Holy Spirit was and what part he played. Was he to save Christians or to lead them? We can always go to the theory that the purpose of a thing is found by the purpose for which it was used. I find that the Holy Spirit was used to give inspired knowledge unto men so that they would be guided unto all truth, John 16:13. Also the Holy Spirit was to confirm the word or to prove that it was from God. Mark 16:20. Also the Holy Spirit was to bear witness. Heb. 2:4. We find that when a person had been given miraculous gifts by the Holy Spirit he used such miraculous gifts, or should at least, for the benefit of others. I don't believe that there was anything mysterious or hard to understand about his purpose once it was given to man. It was not given for confusion. 1Cor. 14:33. (God and the Holy Spirit are one in Purpose) I think we can conclude that the direct assistance by the Holy Ghost was given only because God saw the need for it, and not just because ~~men prayed for it.~~ Realizing that extreme power was to be done away as more and more people come to the knowledge of Christ, I don't see why any direct miraculous revelation is needed at all today when we ^{have} God's word itself. But as always on a subject as this, some people put the high esteem of the Holy Spirit to an open dishonor. What some people practice in the name of the Holy Spirit is sometimes outright shameful. I have seen and heard their antics. They consider uncontrollable acts as the working of the

Holy Spirit. If they dance, holler, wail or jabber they reason they have the Holy Spirit for sure. I can't believe, Howard, that the Holy Spirit was ever meant to be that way. Their actions seem more like the actions of the evil spirits that possessed people during Bible times. The Holy Spirit was never meant to bring unintelligible confusion, as that which exists today among religious seats who say they have "it". People in the early church were told not to use even an unknown language if those present didn't understand it. The prophets of old could always control themselves, and they had great truths revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. 1Cor. 14:32. Paul taught that God (and therefore the Holy Spirit) was not the author of confusion in the churches of the saints, but of peace. 33rd verse. How people today can claim that God is with them in their antics, when in the face of 1Cor. 14:33 he says he is not, I'll never know. God through Paul said, "Let all things be done decently and in order." That mark should certainly stand out as to whether we today have God, and the Holy Spirit with us. In the early church, the Holy Spirit revealed the same doctrine to one apostle as he did another, Gal. 3:4,5. If, then, he were speaking directly today, as some teach, there surely would not be the many different beliefs and doctrines as we do find in the world. One person claims a revelation, and another claims one, but both are different. Which one are we going to believe? It is more plausible to reason that neither is from God. Go to the Bible if you want to find the truth. It seems to me, Howard, and it is just my belief, personally, that it would actually irritate God for a person to continually pray for an evidence or direct manifestation, when in the Bible all is told him what he must do. I sincerely believe in prayer, Howard, don't take me wrong. "The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." But, as always, people continue to pray for things that they do not need. If their souls salvation was dependent on miracles gifts, then I believe God would give them, but we learn from the Bible ^{that} the steps of obed-

ience unto Christ does not include miraculous power whatever. We find in the Bible that four steps put people into Christ. Faith (Mark 6:16), Repentance (Acts 2:38), Confession (Rom. 10:10), and Baptism (Acts 2:38). None of these were miraculous. A person then that did these things was added to Christ's Church. Acts 2:41, Act 2:47. Today, if people will take the same steps, they will be added to the same church. They will not have to join any denomination, Christ will add them to His Church. After we are in the Church, it doesn't mean that our work is done. In fact, it has just begun. We, then, have some additional things to do ourselves. These things that are to be added, are not miraculous either. The apostle Peter said, "add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Peter goes on to say that we should "give diligence to make our calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; and furthermore if ye do these things "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, unto the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 1:5-11. These are the kind of virtues that will make us worthy of heaven, Howard. (I use the word "worthy" as Paul used it in 1 Thess. 2:12, "Without the mercy of God all of us would come short of heaven."). Miracles given on the part of God, could not make people worthy of heaven. The apostle Paul said in Phil. 2:12, to "work out you own salvation with fear and trembling." God has provided us a way of salvation, now it is up to us to accept it, *and work it out*, or reject it. If we live godly lives, we will be saved. 1 Tim. 4:8. When in the Bible so much teaching is placed upon the kind of lives we live, we can not help ~~xx~~ think that from Godly living, true Christianity exists. Especially do we reason that way when James tells us that "Pure and undefiled religion is this," "to keep himself unspotted from the world." James 1:27.

11 Peter 3:18, 1 Tim. 6:11,12, Rom. 12: Titus 2, 11 Tim. 3:22-26, Gal. 6:9,10, Luke 11:28, 11 Thess 2:16,17, Rom. 15:4,5, 1 Tim. 2:1-4, 11 Thess. 3:13; James 1:21-25; these are only a few from many scriptures that seem to indicate that Christian living is the thing to be practiced. The apostle Paul in Heb. 2:1-4, said, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at anytime should let them slip." What the people heard was the things to be copied, not what they saw apostles do in miracles. Paul goes on, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation: which at 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 will?" Salvation, Paul said, is something that is learned through words. The miracles were separate and apart from salvation. Miracles were to bear witness that the word was truth. The miracles were not the things to be copied. They were given just ^{to} establish truth. The things which were spoken unto them were the things pertaining to salvation. They were the things, Paul said, not to let slip. Notice such passages as 11 Tim. 3:17; 11 Tim. 3:14,15; 1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 1:16. Indications are that, not only we can gain knowledge of salvation by the word, but the gospel is our "power" unto salvation. I can just imagine God thinking, regarding his people, "you want power, I'll give you power. My word." In Hebrews 4:12, Paul said, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." Any power today, I believe, comes from the word of God. The Bible is the word of God; hence the Bible should be our power. Where a preacher proclaims to a sinner who has never heard the gospel that a Savior died so that he might live, there is power in those very words. From even the lowest type of a sinner, I believe, a person can be elevated to a happy Christian by the effect the preaching of

the gospel had on him; furthermore, I believe that the power of the gospel has a far more reaching affect toward the love which God wants than any physical miracle could ever produce. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Rom. 1:16. I cannot reason that we today need any other power than the Word of God itself. If any person today desires to know of God he must meet him through the word of God. There is not any other way.

You might be thinking, Howard, that I am placing God as a respecter of persons when I say we don't have miraculous power today as people once did. Let us realize though that through all ages God has dealt differently with men. If we would use that kind of reasoning, that we have everything God ever gave to any man, we would soon realize it was not so. We cannot call God a respecter of persons today whenever we compare our blessings to just any age; we can, however, reason that God is a respecter of persons, if in our day and age he would give more blessings to one man than he does another.

Miracles are not a part of true Christianity, Howard. They were used just to bring true Christianity into existence. Many people are ignorant of the fact that all things written in the Bible are not there for us to imitate. Paul said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope." Rom. 15:4. There is a difference between an act of God as a part of the gospel and one performed to confirm the gospel. Miracles confirmed the spoken word, but were gradually withdrawn in proportion as the confirmed word, the New Testament scripture, became more circulated. Even some of the apostles lived to see their almost complete cessation: the apostle Paul who was surely a firm believer, unable to heal Trophimus: "Trophimus I left at Miletus sick". 1 Tim. 4:20. Surely Paul would have healed his co-laborer, if the promise Christ gave, (to those who believe, if they shall lay hands on the sick, they shall recover. Mk. 16:18) was extended until then.

Paul urged Timothy to take "a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." 1 Tim. 5:23. From all indications natural healing was again ushered in, in the latter part of the apostolic dispensation. I believe all miracles from God ceased close to the end of the apostles lives. There is prophecy in the old law that might lead us to believe that miracles were to last forty years. Micah 7:15. I cannot reason that miracles were ever meant to uphold true Christianity, Howard. I mean by that, ^{To be} an integral practice of Christianity. I believe that this "more excellent way" of hope, love and true faith toward God excludes them altogether. All the miracles that were ever showered upon man could not and did not bring about the true love that God rightly deserved. When people in the old law were abundantly blessed with miracles from God they still rejected him. God said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered my children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings and ye would not." Matt. 23:37. Miracles did not bring about the kind of life that would produce love. When people in the new law were blessed with power from God, there was division, confusion, envyings, and strife. 1 Cor. 3:3, 11:18, 14:33. Miraculous gifts to man did not bring about the love God wanted. 1 Cor. 13:2-8.. What seemed to be the answer? It was a more excellent and more perfect way than ^{ever} before; a way that would be no more dependent upon miraculous works by God; a way that would embrace Christianity to its fullest extent; a way by which a person could gain salvation on his own merits: a way that would never fail, that was the answer, Howard. We today should practice this way, and this way alone. It is a wonderful picture, Howard: God's plan of salvation, but I cannot do it justice by just saying we should live by faith, hope, and love. When we study the meaning of these three Christian virtues we can see their wondrous possibilities.

Faith is a sense of confidence in God and Christ; and hope, is the joyous looking forward to an eternity of blessedness; and a love that will activate obedience to the commands of God and Christ. John 14:15; of such is the wonderfully combination today for us to live by and to make us true followers of the Lord. Today the scripture is entirely sufficient as our guide. ~~It is sufficient, to make us believe.~~ John 20:31; it is sufficient to guide us into perfection, 11 Tim. 3:16,17. If anyone should reason that ~~it~~ isn't sufficient, then the more excellent ~~way~~ faith, that God wants us to have, Heb. 11:1, (Substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen) is surely lacking in his heart. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. As Luke so fitly stated, ^{and I apply it to you,} "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."

Before you ask the question again, Howard, "If tongues was the evidence in the early church, why isn't it just as necessary now?", you ask yourself this question, "For what purpose were tongues bestowed to the early church?" The answer to that question will answer the first. Today, reading about such miracles does not make us performers of them, it makes us believers. John 20:30,31.

In conclusion, I would like to say that this letter, however ~~feeble~~ ^{contains} written it might be, ^{is} my own convictions. I send it with the earnest desire and hope that you will give it due consideration; whereby, I will then feel that my efforts have not been in vain. I would like to mention that if you so desire, you can tune in to WHOT every Sunday morning at 8:30 and listen to our broadcast.

Dean Hoggatt