

PAUL'S MIRACLES; PROVEN (edited for brevity)

<https://www.retrochristianity.org/2007/06/30/proof-of-pauls-miracles-a-case-of-self-authenticating-testimony/> Posted on June 30, 2007

Case of Self-Authenticating Testimony

"Self-authenticating testimony" is written statements concerning a past event and regarded as accurate if both the writer and recipient of the correspondence shared first-hand knowledge and is for direct written correspondence. It doesn't apply to anonymous letters, hearsay or non-correspondence.

People can lie about what happened to them personally. They can exaggerate about what happened to somebody else. But **people can't get away with inaccurately reporting events that happened to both themselves and those to whom they are writing.**

Imagine: I come to your dinner. In conversation, we fiercely disagree over an issue. I'm so irate that I throw your food at you, smash your dishes and leave in a rage, vowing never to speak with you again. Days later I send a thank you, "Dear friend, thanks for the delightful evening. I genuinely enjoyed the meal and the splendid fellowship, especially the pleasant and stimulating conversation. It's so good to know that we see eye-to-eye on things. I look forward to seeing you again soon." You'd think I've lost my mind or needed an exorcist. Who would write such a wildly ludicrous account to people who know better?

You ask me over to a small Bible study. I arrive, give a lesson, answer questions, pray and leave. But I send the group a letter, "Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I **really enjoyed the time we had experiencing the Holy Spirit. I was especially amazed at the signs, wonder and miracles God did through me, demonstrating Christ's awesome resurrection power in your very midst.** I look forward to doing this again real soon." I lose all credibility because I **hadn't done any signs, wonders, and miracles.** Nobody makes such claims in written correspondence if his recipients would know it wasn't so.

Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians is a written correspondence referring to events that his readers would have been able to confirm or refute. Even liberal scholars regard 2 Cor as one of Paul's "primary letters"; that is, 2 Cor is universally regarded as an authentic letter of Paul.

He wrote, "The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles" 2 Cor 12:2. As he asserts God-given authority as an apostle, **Paul reminded his readers about the signs, wonders and miracles he did when he was with them. This fits our description of self-authenticating testimony.** As in the above, had he not done signs, wonders and miracles in Corinth, he would have lost all credibility the moment they read that claim. Why? Because they would have known! Beyond a doubt, Paul did miraculous deeds in Corinth.

These were not unverifiable T.V. healer "miracles" faked or exaggerated. The people in Corinth would have known right then whether the miracles Paul performed were real.

The people believed in the supernatural (like most people today) and/or were been superstitious (like many people today) but **they weren't all ignorant and gullible.** With all the charlatans running around the Roman empire in those days, **Paul's signs, wonders and miracles stood out if he were to be able to point to them later as proof of his divine authority.** And Paul's actions were more than just one or two isolated events. Paul said *multiple signs, wonders, and miracles*—not just "*a miracle*" or "*a sign.*" And he did them "*among you* [plural]," not to some unknown individual whose story could be exaggerated. These had to have been majorly memorable for Paul to rely on the events to build his credibility in 2 Cor.

Heb 2:3-4 says, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord [Jesus], it was **confirmed to us by those who heard [the apostles], God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.**"

The author claims to have been part of those who were on the receiving end of the signs, wonders, and miracles of the apostles. And **the implication is serious: because God enabled them to**

perform these miracles to confirm that their message about Christ was from God!

Now, **today**, we don't have to have seen Paul's miracles to know, based on self-authenticating statements, that he did them. Second Cor 12:2 proves **without doubt that he actually and literally performed** signs, wonders and miracles.

Paul did miracles, **proving that the message he preached came from God**. He preached Christ as God's Son who became man, died for our sins, rose from the dead, appeared to hundreds of His disciples...and then appeared to Paul, who had tried to destroy Christians until **that moment**.