heavenly gift the persons supposed have  
*tasted for themselves*), **and have been  
made partakers of the Holy Spirit** (outwardly, the agency would be the laying  
on of hands after baptism: but obviously  
the emphatic word is *partakers*—have become *real sharers:* so that the proper agent is He who only can bestow this participation, viz. God),

**5.] and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of  
the world to come** (what is *the good word  
of God?* The epithet is frequently applied  
to the word of God: see 1 Kings viii. 56;  
2 Kings xx. 19; Neh. ix. 13; Jer. xxix. 10;  
Zech. i. 13; Rom. vii, 12; and usually  
with reference to its quickening, comforting, strengthening power, as sent or  
spoken by God to men. And in consequence if has been taken here to signify  
the comforting portion of the gospel, its  
promises. But it is better to take it  
more generally, as the wholesome and soul-preserving utterance of God in the gospel.

Then it is a far more debated question, what is meant by **the powers of the  
world** (literally, **age**) **to come**. Some have  
said, those *powerful foretastes of glory*which belong indeed to the future state in  
their fulness, but are vouchsafed to believers here. But most Commentators,  
and rightly, **take the age to come** as  
equivalent to *“the world to come,”* ch. ii. 5 [where see note], and as designating the Christian times, agreeably to that name  
of Christ in Isa. ix. 6, in the Septuagint,  
*“the Father of the age to come.”* Then  
the *powers* of this “world to come” be the spiritual gifts, given by the Spirit in measure to all who believed, “distributing severally to every man as He will.” We need not necessarily limit  
these to external miraculous powers, or  
even *prophecy* and the like: but surely  
may include in them spiritual powers  
bestowed in virtue of the indwelling  
Spirit to arm the Christian for his conflict with sin, the world, and the devil), **and have fallen away** (this expression is  
used here, as *“sinning willingly,”* ch. x. 26, and *“departing from the living God,”* ch. iii. 12,—see also ch. x. 29, and ch. ii. 1,—as pointing out the sin of apostasy from Christ: similar to that of the Galatians, Gal. v. 4; and iii. 3. The fear was [see Introd.  
§ iv. 1 [lest these Hebrew converts should  
cast away their confidence in Christ, and  
take up again that system of types and  
shadows which He came to fulfil and abrogate: and nearly connected with this peril was their small progress in the doctrine of  
Christ. While speaking therefore of that,  
and exhorting them to be advancing towards maturity, he puts in this solemn  
caution against the fearful result to which  
their backwardness might lead),—**to renew**[them] **again unto repentance** (there is no  
superfluity, as Grotius thought, in **to renew again**. For the **renewing** would be  
the regenerating in any case, and the  
**again renewing** the renewal of it. Even  
iu the first case, man is *renewed:* in the  
second case is **again** *renewed*. “Instead  
of **unto repentance**, one would expect *in  
repentance*, or *by repentance*, inasmuch as  
*renewal* in full measure can only be brought  
about by *repentance*, amd must therefore  
be preceded by it. But on the other side,  
*repentance* itself, the change of disposition,  
may be considered as the result of the  
renewal of the man having taken place;  
and so is it here: to renew to *repentance*,  
i.e. so to form anew, that entire change of  
disposition precedes.” Bleck. There was  
a very general ancient reference of this to  
*renewal of baptism;* of which view I  
have given examples in my Greek Test.);  
**crucifying as they do** (*“seeing they crucify,”* as A. V. well) **afresh** (some have questioned the possibility of the word here  
meaning to crucify **afresh,** and would render  
it simply *“crucify.”* But it seems hardly  
doubtful that the meaning, as here given,  
is contained in it) **to themselves** (Christ  
was their possession by faith: this their  
possession they took, and recrucified to  
themselves: deprived themselves of all  
benefit from Him, just as did the unbelieving Jews who nailed Him to the  
tree. He who should have been their gain