hearts Christ had written it by His Spirit.  
*I bear on my heart, as a testimony to all  
men, that which Christ has by His Spirit  
written in your hearts.* On the tables ofstone and of flesh, see Exodus, as above, Prov. iii. 3; vii. 3; Jer. xxxi. 31—34, and on the contrast, also here hinted at in the background, between the heart of stone and the heart of flesh, Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26.

**4—11.]** *His honour of his apostolic  
office was no personal vanity, for all the  
ability of the Apostles came from God, who  
had made them able ministers of the new  
covenant* (4—6)*, a ministration infinitely  
more glorious than that of the old dispensation* (7—11).

**4.]** The connexion with the foregoing is immediate: he  
had just spoken of his consciousness of  
apostolic success among them (which assertion would be true also of other churches  
which he had founded) being his worldwide recommendation. It is *this confidence*of which he here speaks. **Such confidence, however, we possess through Christ  
toward God:** i.e. ‘it is no vain boast, but.  
rests\_on power imparted to us through  
Christ in regard to God, in reference to  
God’s work and our own account to be  
given to Him.’

**5.] Not that** (i.e. ‘I  
mean not, that’....) **we are able  
to think any thing** (to carry on *any* of  
the processes of reasoning or judgment,  
or faith belonging to our apostolic calling:   
there is no ellipsis, ‘any thing *great*,’ or  
“good,’ or the like) **of ourselves, as if from  
ourselves** (**of** *ourselves* and **from** *ourselves*,  
are parallel the latter more definitely  
pointing to\_ourselyes as the origin),**—but  
our ability** (to carry on any such Proce)  
**is from** (as its source) **God**;

**6.] who also hath enabled us as ministers of the new covenant** (i.e. the *gospel*, Eph. iii. 7; Col. i. 23, as distinguished from the *law:* see 1 Cor. xi. 25; Gal. iv. 24:—the *stone tables* and *fleshy tables* are still borne in mind, and lead on to a fuller comparison of the two covenants),—**not** [ministers] **of** (the) **letter** (in which, viz. in  
formal and literal precept, the Mosaic law  
consisted), **but of** (the) **spirit** (in which,  
viz. in the inward guiding of the Spirit of  
God, the gospel consists. Bengel remarks:  
“Paul, even when he was *writing*, was  
carrying on the ministration not of the  
letter, but of the *spirit*: Moses, even when  
he wrote not, was a minister of the *letter*”):  
**for the letter** (mere formal and literal precept of the law) **killeth** (as in Rom. vii.,—  
**brings** the knowledge of sin, its guilt and  
its\_punishment. The reference is not to  
*natural death*, which is the result of sin  
where there is *no law*: nor to the law  
*executing punishment*), **but the spirit** (of the  
gospel, i.e. God’s Holy Spirit, acting in and  
through Christ, Who “*became a life-giving  
Spirit*,’ 1 Cor. xv. 45. See also below, ver.  
17) **giveth life** (not merely life eternal, but  
the *whole new life* of the man of God, see  
Rom. vi. 4, 11; viii. 2, 10).

**7—11.]** *And this ministration is infinitely ae glorious than was that of  
Moses under the old Covenant.* He argues  
from the less to the greater: *from the  
transitory glory of the killing letter, to  
the abiding glory of the life-giving Spirit.*

**7.] But** (passing to another consideration,  
—the comparison of the two ministrations)  
**if the ministration of death, in letters** (of  
that death which the law, the code of literal  
and formal precept, brought in), **engraven on stones** (it seems strange that  
the *ministration* should be described as  
engraven on stones; but the *ministration*