this difficult expression will be to endeavour  
to find some clue to the idea in the Apostle’s mind. He speaks, in Col. ii. 22, of  
worldly things which become *corrupt* with  
the using. *Incorruptible* is with him an  
epithet of God [Rom. i. 23. 1 Tim. i. 17]:  
the dead are raised *incorruptible* [1 Cor.  
xv. 52]: the Christian’s crown is *incorruptible* [1 Cor. ix. 25]. The word always  
elsewhere in N. T. signifies the *incorruptibility* of future immortality. If we seek  
elsewhere in the Epistles for an illustration  
of the term as applied to inward qualities,  
we find a close parallel in 1 Pet. iii. 4;  
where the ornament of women is to be  
“*the hidden man of the heart, in the  
incorruptibility of a meek and quiet spirit*”  
—the contrast being between the “*corruptible things, gold and silver,*” and the  
*incorruptible* graces of the renewed spiritual man. I believe we are thus led to  
the meaning here;—that the love spoken of.  
is *in incorruptibility;*—in, as its sphere  
and element and condition, *incorruptibility*—not a fleeting earthly love, but a spiritual  
and eternal one. And thus only is the  
word worthy to stand as the crown and  
climax of this glorious Epistle: whereas in  
the ordinary [A. V.] rendering, *‘sincerity*,’—besides that this does not give the  
meaning of the Greek word,—the Epistle  
would end with an anti-climax, by lowering  
the high standard which it has lifted up  
throughout to an apparent indifferentism,  
and admitting to the apostolic blessing all  
those, however otherwise wrong, who are  
only not hypocrites in their love of Christ).