would be a setting at liberty) **by** (*from the  
direction of*,—kept in on both sides) **the  
two** (which have been mentioned, viz. *life*and *death:* not, which *follow*)**, having my  
desire towards** (the A. V., ‘*having a desire to,*’ entirely misses the delicate sense)  
**departing** (from this world—used on account of the “*being with Christ*” which  
follows), **and being with Christ** (“this  
place,” says Calvin, “suffices to refute their  
folly, who dream that our souls sleep when  
separated from our bodies: for Paul openly  
declares that we enjoy Christ’s presence  
when we are dissolved in death.” Thus  
much is true: but not perhaps that which  
some have inferred from our verse, that  
it shews a change of view respecting the  
nearness of the Lord’s advent—for it is  
only said *in case of* his death: he immediately takes it up [ver. 25] by an assurance that he should continue with them:  
and compare ver. 6; ch. iii. 20, 21, which  
shew that the advent was still regarded as  
imminent)**; for it is by far better:**

**24.] but to continue in my flesh is  
more needful on account of you** (and  
others—but the expressions of his love are  
now directed solely to them).

**25.] And being confident of this, I know that I  
shall remain and continue alive with you  
all for your advancement and joy in your  
faith** (both substantives belong to **in your  
faith;** it is their faith which is to advance,  
by the continuance of his teaching, and to  
rejoice, as explained below, on account of  
his presence among them);

**26.] that  
your matter of boasting** (not, as commonly  
rendered, ‘*your boasting*’ where the two  
can be distinguished they should be. Their  
Christian matter of boasting in him was,  
the possession of the Gospel, which they had  
received from him, which would abound,  
be assured and increased, by his presence  
among them) **may abound in Christ Jesus**(its field, element of increase, it being a  
Christian matter of glorying) **in me** (its  
field, element, of *abounding in Christ  
Jesus,* I being the worker of that which  
furnishes this material), **by means of my  
presence again with you.**

**27—II. 18.]** EXHORTATIONS TO UNITED  
FIRMNESS, TO MUTUAL CONCORD, TO HUMILITY; AND IN GENERAL TO EARNESTNESS IN RELIGION.

**27.] Only,**—i.e. I  
have but this to ask of you, in the prospect  
of my return.

**conduct yourselves]**  
literally, live as citizens of a polity. The  
“*polity*” being the heavenly state, of  
which you are citizens; see especially  
ch. iii. 20.

**in one spirit]** refers to  
the unity of spirit in which the various  
members of the church would be fused and  
blended in the case of *perfect unity.* This  
*one spirit* of Christians united for their  
common faith would of necessity be the  
Spirit of God which penetrates and inspires them: compare Eph. iv. 3, 4. Then,  
as this Spirit is the highest principle in us,