except that there it is “*all sins.*” As  
to the meaning, the words here are used  
in a different reference from that in St.  
James, where see note. Here it is the  
hiding of offences [both from one another  
and in God’s sight: see below] by mutual  
forbearance and forgiveness, which is  
meant. This has been recently denied by  
De Wette aud Huther, the former understanding the sins rather as those of  
the Christian body, which mutual love  
keeps back from being committed, and  
the latter not excluding the other meaning.  
They would understand the words, that  
love causes God to overlook a multitude  
of sins. This they do partly on account  
of the word *sins,* which they maintain cannot well be applied to the mutual offences  
of common life [sce however Matt. xviii.  
15], and partly on account of “because,”  
which seems to indicate some stimulus by  
which Christian love is recommended. And  
doubtless there is something in this latter  
consideration, especially when we remember  
that the nearness of the divine judgment is a pressing motive throughout  
these exhortations. I do not see why we  
should not take the saying in its widest  
reference, understanding it primarily perhaps of forgiveness, but then also of that  
prevention of sin by kindliness of word  
and deed, and also that intercession for sin  
in prayer, which are the constant fruits  
of fervent love. It is a truth from which  
we need not shrink, that every sin which  
love hides from man’s sight, is hidden in  
God’s sight also. There is but one efficient cause of the hiding of sin: but  
mutual love *applies* that cause: *draws the  
universal cover over the particular sin.*  
This meaning, as long as it is not perverted  
into the thought that love towards others  
covers a man’s own sin by his merits,  
need not and should net be excluded):  
—{9} **hospitable towards one another** (see  
Rom. xii. 13) **without murmuring** (see  
Phil. ii. 14, and note. The opposite to  
*murmuring* in hospitality is simple open-heartedness, Rom. xii. 8: the consequence  
of it, “hidden evil speaking, hateful reproaching with past favours,” as Gerhard  
says here).

**10.]** And this is to be  
so, not merely in the interchange of this  
world’s good offices, but also in the communication of the gifts of the Spirit,  
which are the common endowment of the  
whole body, individual Christians being  
only the stewards of them. **Each man  
even as** (in whatever quality and quantity: but the subsequent injunctions seem  
more to regard the quality than the quantity. It is otherwise in Eph. iv. 7; Rom. xii.  
3. The **as** has no reference to the  
*manner* of reception) **he received a gift  
of grace** (see Rom. xii. 6 ff.; 1 Cor. xii.  
4, 28; meaning, any one of the gifts  
known by that name), **to each other  
ministering it** (to the need of others; his  
store out of which he ministers being that  
gift thus bestowed upon him), **as** (being:  
or, as becometh: see ch. i. 14) **good  
stewards** (there is most likely a reference  
to our Lord’s parable of the talents) **of  
the various** (or manifold: see this illustrated, 1 Cor. xii. 4; Matt. xxv. 15;  
Luke xix. 13) **grace of God.**

**11.]** And this both in speaking and acting.  
**If any one speaketh** (as a *prophet* or  
*teacher*, sce 1 Cor. xii, 8, 10, where the  
several branches of this gift are laid out),  
**speaking** (as in the former construction)  
**as oracles** (not “the oracles;” the meaning is not, speaking in accord with Scripture, but, speaking what he does speak,  
as God's sayings, not his own: as a  
steward) **of God: if any one ministereth**  
(in Rom. xii, 8; 1 Cor. xii, 28, we have  
the several parts of this *ministry* laid  
out), [*ministering*] **as** (see above) **out of**  
(as his store and power of ministration)