

the truth as it is presented to us in this chapter. It is no less interesting to us if we consider the questions that we have answered in its progress. What is to become of these bodies? What is to be the future of these souls? What about the cause of Jesus Christ? What about the party of which grace constituted Him the head? What about the issues of His kingdom? What is to be our future? What is to be the standing of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, one with Him and joined to Him by faith? These are among the greatest questions that we can possibly ask ourselves, and we have answers given in this chapter. The answers are not, indeed, presented so much formally as in close and immediate connection with one another, and for immediate practical purposes. They constitute motives. They are the basis of the word with which the text begins. "Therefore, my beloved brethren." They justify the use of it. The idea plainly is this—seeing that Christ is as He has been represented, seeing that He has done what we have just stated; seeing that His people are so closely joined to Him; seeing that their resurrection follows from His; seeing that death will be conquered, and that all His sons will share in His triumphs, and partake of His victories,—“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast,”—and so on. I do not need to remind you, dear brethren, that one of the great differences between Christianity and religious systems that have been presented to the world is illustrated to us in this very particular. You turn to the books or read the records of such men as Plato, Socrates, Cicero and Seneca, and men of that class, and you will find that they contain many statements of admirable ethical truth. They indicate many forms of wrong, they present clearly in many instances the opposite right, but they are distinct from the Scriptures in this regard, that they have no such motive to bring to bear upon the soul as Christianity is fitted to exert. Christ is my Saviour; Christ stood for me; Christ conquered for me; Christ died for me; Christ even lives for me; Christ will come again and I shall come with Him; Christ will have His glory and I shall share that glory; therefore, let me be steadfast and unmoveable. Or, as it is put in other words that you will no doubt easily remember, “Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God with your bodies and your spirits, which are His.” This is, you can see, the connexion in which this word of exhortation comes to us. Because these things are so, therefore be ye steadfast. And you will notice the way in which the apostle addresses those to whom he brings this counsel. “Therefore, my beloved brethren.” He is writing to the Corinthians. There were many elements of difference between him and those Corinthian believers, but there was still more in common. He had lived a couple of years among them; had taught them the truth; had been God’s instrument in guiding their feet into the way of peace; he had caught much of the spirit of Jesus Christ his Lord and Master, the gentle and loving and tender and magnanimous spirit, and so he can say truly to them, “My brethren,” “My beloved brethren.” He has sympathised with them as fellow disciples, as fellow servants, as fellow sufferers, as fellow soldiers, as fellow heirs, and so he can most fittingly use this language. I trust it is in that spirit—in that spirit of gentleness and Christian conviction that I speak to you now, and endeavour to re-echo, in however feeble a way, this counsel dictated by the Spirit of the Lord through His servant to the Corinthians, and which is just as fitting for us and as necessary to us, as it was fitting for and necessary to those believers eighteen centuries ago. “My beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” We need no division here, the words themselves provide it. In the first instance we are directed to be steadfast. Let us take that word as urging upon us firm and fixed adherence to the truth as God has revealed it to us. Let us take it as equivalent to that other exhortation, “Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel.” “Be ye steadfast.” Now I do not need to tell you that intellectual faith, with which we naturally begin, in some respects is like faith of any other kind, in this regard, that it is the