**the Son hath the Father also.**As nearly the whole of this Epistle, so  
especially such an assertion as this, formed  
a battle-field for the old rationalists.  
Some of the early Commentators and  
Fathers imagining that *Jewish* error was  
indicated by the denying that Jesus is  
the Christ, the idea has been again taken  
up by Semler, and others, and pressed in the  
anti-trinitarian interest. The Socinians  
and semi-Socinians all evade the Apostle’s  
words by inadequate or far-fetched  
interpretations, understanding the expressions  
in this verse, of not obeying  
the teaching, not following the example,  
&c., of the Son, and by consequence  
of the Father. But the deeper and truer  
meaning of the Apostle’s words has been  
recognized by all the better Commentators,  
with some variations from one another.  
While some mark perhaps too  
precisely the doctrinal character of the  
words, others make their force consist  
too much in an ideal and economical relation  
between the divine Persons. Still  
all are agreed, that that which is spoken of  
is the revelation of the Father by the Son  
only, and that he who rejects this in its  
fulness rejects all that can be known of  
the real essence and nature of the Father  
Himself. “The antichrists denied that  
Jesus, the definite Person whom the Apostles  
had seen, heard, and handled, is the  
Christ. In whatever sense this denial is to  
be taken,—the Apostle speaks merely of the  
fact, as known to the readers;—at all events,  
there is involved in it a denial of the Son  
of God; because it is only as the incarnate  
Son of God [ch. iv. 2], that Jesus is the  
Christ. And in the denial of the Son is  
involved necessarily the denial of the Father,  
since the Father cannot be known  
without the Son, and the Father cannot be  
perceived, believed on, loved, hy any man,  
without the Son, or otherwise than through  
the Son, i.e. the Son manifested in the  
flesh, the Christ, which is, Jesus. So that  
in St. John’s development of the argument  
there are three essentially connected

points: denial of the Christ, of the Son, of  
the Father. The middle link of the chain,  
the denial of the Son of God, shews how  
the denial of the Father is of necessity involved  
in the denial of Christ. And the  
cogency of this proof is made yet more  
stringent by another equally unavoidable  
process of argument. The antichristian  
false doctrine consists mainly in a negation,  
in the denying of the fundamental Christian  
truth, that Jesus is the Christ. But  
in this is involved the denial of the essence  
of the Son as well as of the Father, and  
again in this denial is involved the losing,  
the virtual *not-having* of the Son and  
of the Father. In the sense of St. John,  
we may say, taking the first and last steps  
of his argument and leaving out the intervening  
ones: *He who denieth that Jesus  
is the Christ, hath not the Father*. And  
this necessary connexion between denying  
and not having, is perfectly clear, the moment  
we understand the ethical character,  
the living realism, of St. John’s way of  
regarding the subject. As (ver. 23) we  
cannot separate the knowledge and confession  
of the Christ, the Son, the Father, from  
the *having*, the real possession of, the practical  
fellowship with, the actual remaining in,  
the Son and the Father, so conversely, together  
with the denial is necessarily given the  
*not-having;* together with the loss of the  
truth of the knowledge, the loss of the life  
which consists in that knowledge (John xvii.  
3). In such a connexion, the *confession* of  
the truth is as essential on the one side, as  
the *denial* on the other. Each is the  
necessary manifestation of the belief or  
unbelief hidden in the heart. And this  
*confession* is not to be understood of the  
‘confession of heart, voice, and life,’ as  
Bede calls it, but only, as ch. i. 9, of the  
confession of the mouth (Rom. x. 10, see  
John xii. 42). It is parallel with *bringing*  
a *doctrine*, 2 John 7, 10; and indicates  
the definite utterance of the doctrine  
which was made known by the apostolic  
preaching, ver. 24.” Düsterdieck.

**24, 25.]** *Exhortation to perseverance*