Christ is not won nor merited by them.  
In Christ, every work done of faith is  
good and is pleasing to God. The doing  
of such works is the working of the life  
of Christ in us: they are its sign, they its  
fruits: they are not of us, but of it and of  
Him. They are the measure of our Chistian life:   
according to their abundance, so  
is our access to God, so is our reward from  
God: for they are the steps of our likeness  
to God, Whatever is attributed to them  
as an efficient cause, is attributed not to  
us, but to Him whose fruits they are,  
*Because* Christ is thus manifested in us,  
God hears our prayers, which He only  
hears for Christ’s sake: *because* His Spirit  
works thus abundantly in us, He listens to  
our prayer, which in that measure has become   
the voice of His Spirit. So that no  
degree of efficacy attributed to the good  
works of the child of God need surprise  
us: it is God recognizing, God vindicating,  
God multiplying, God glorifying, His own  
work in us. So that when, e-g., Cornelius-  
a-lapide says, “It is congruous, and the  
congruous reward of obedience and reconciliation   
(friendship), that if man does the  
will of God, God in His turn should do the  
will of man,” all we can reply is that such  
a duality, such a reciprocity, docs not exist  
for Christians: we are *in God*, He in us:  
and this St. John continually insists on.  
We have no claim *from without*: He  
works in us to do of His good pleasure:  
and the works which He works, which we  
work, manifest before Him, and before all,  
that we are His children. The assertion,  
*“whatsoever we ask, we receive,”* I reserve  
to be treated of on ch. v. 14, 15, where it  
is set forth more in detail).

**23.**] *Summing up of all these commandments   
in one: faith in Christ, and brotherly   
love according to Christ’s command.*  
**And** (see *“and”* similarly used, ch. i. 5,  
ii, 17, iii, 3) **His commandment** (“he  
mentions,” says Bede, “ but *one* commandment,   
and then subjoins *two*, faith  
and love, as being inseparable the one from  
the other. For we cannot love one another  
rightly without the faith of Christ, nor  
can we truly believe in the name of Jesus  
Christ without love”) **is this, That we  
should believe the name** (this unusual  
expression is well explained by Calvin and  
Beza,—the word *“name”* has reference  
to the preaching of Him; so that to  
believe His Name is, to believe the Gospel  
message concerning Him, and Him as living  
in it, in all His fulness) **of His Son Jesus  
Christ, and love one another, even as  
He gave us commandment** (it seems  
natural, with the generality of Commentators,   
to understand Christ as intended  
by **He**, and by the commandment, John  
xiii. 34, xv. 12, xvi. 17).

**24a.**] *General return*, with reference  
to what has been said in the last verses,  
*to the great key-note of the Epistle,*  
**abide in Him**, with which the former  
part of it concluded, ch. ii. 28. This keeping   
of His (God’s) commandments is the  
abiding in God: this of which brotherly  
love is the first and most illustrious example  
and summary. So that the exhortation  
given at the beginning of this portion of  
the Epistle is still in the Apostle’s mind,  
as again ch. iv. 15, 16, and v. 20; see  
also ch. ii. 6, iii, 6, 9. **And he that  
keepeth His** (God’s) **commandments,  
abideth in Him** (God)**,** **and He** (God) **in  
him** (some hold that **He** and **Him** are to  
be referred to Christ. And no doubt they  
would be perfectly true, and according to  
our Lord’s own words, when thus applied :  
see John xiv. 15, xv. 5 ff. Still, from the  
context [see below], it is better to refer  
them to the chief subject, viz. to God.  
In the sense, the difference is not important.   
It is one of the most difficult  
questions in the explanation of this most  
difficult of Epistles, to assign such expressions   
as the present definitely to their precise personal object).

**24 b.**] And of  
one part of this mutual indwelling there is  
*a sign and token*, given us by God Himself,  
viz. *the Holy Spirit*. By the mention of the  
Spirit, the Apostle makes these words the  
note of transition to the subject of the neat