*God*’ is not added, for the faithful know  
the Son: in the other, it is added, that  
unbelievers may know how great a thing  
they lose.”

Next, the **having the  
Son** must not be explained away, with  
Grotius, by “*keeping the words which the  
Father committed to the Son,*” nor **having**  
life, with the same, by “*having a certain  
right to eternal life.*” The *having the  
Son* is the possession of Christ by faith,  
testified by the Spirit, the water, and the  
blood: and the *having the life* is the actually   
possessing it, not indeed in its most  
glorious development, but in all its reality  
and vitality.

Thirdly, it must be remarked   
that the question as to whether  
eternal salvation is altogether confined to  
those who in the fullest sense have the Son  
[to the exclusion, e.g., of those who have  
never heard of Him], does not belong here,  
but must be entertained on other grounds,  
See note on 1 Pet. iii. 19.

**13.**] This  
verse seems, as John xx. 30 f,, like an anticipatory   
close of the Epistle : and its terms  
appear to correspond to those used in ch.  
i. 4. This view is far more probable, than  
that it should refer only to what has occurred   
since ver. 6, as ch. ii. 26 to ver. 18  
ff. there: or only to vv. 11, 12. Still less  
likely is it that the concluding portion of  
the Epistle *begins* with this verse, as some  
lve thought. **These things wrote I to  
you that ye may know that ye have eternal   
life,** [**to you**] **that believe in the name  
of the Son of God** (the two readings  
come, in the sense, to much the sane. If  
that in the A. V. be followed, then the  
words *“that ye may believe”* must be  
interpreted “that ye may continue to  
believe”).

**14–21.**] CLOSE OF THE EPISTLE. The  
link which binds this passage to ver. 13 is  
the word **confidence**, taken up again from  
the *knowledge* spoken of in that verse,  
This *confidence* is the very energizing of  
our spiritual life: and its most notable and  
ordinary exercise is in communion with  
God in prayer, for ourselves or for our  
brethren, vv. 14–17. Then vv. 18–20  
continue the explanation of the “sin unto  
death” and the “sin not unto death,” by  
setting forth the state of believers as contrasted   
with that of the world, and the  
truth of our eternal life as consisting in  
this, Then with a pregnant caution, ver.  
21, the Apostle closes his Epistle.

**14, 15.**] *The believer's confidence as  
shewn in prayer.* **And the confidence  
which we have towards Him** (which follows   
as a matter of immediate inference  
from the fact of our spiritual life: see ch.  
iii. 19–21) **is this, that if we ask any  
thing according to His will, He heareth  
us** (this confidence may be shewn in varions  
ways, including prayer as one, ch. iii. 22.  
And that one, of prayer, is alone chosen to  
be insisted on here.

**Him** and **His  
will** must by all analogy be referred to the  
Father, not to the Son, by whom we have  
access to the Father. See especially ch.  
ii, 21, 22.

The truth that God hears  
all our prayers, has been explained on ch.  
iii, 22. The condition here attached, that  
the request be **according to His will**, is in  
fact limitation within the reality of the  
Christian life, i.e. in St. John’s way of  
speaking according to the true ideal. For  
God’s will is that to which our glorious  
Head himself submitted himself, and which  
rules the whole course of the Christian life  
for our good and His glory: and he who in  
prayer or otherwise tends against God’s  
will is thereby, and in so far, transgressing  
the bounds of his life in God: see James  
iv. 3. By the continual feeling of submission   
to His will, joined with continual  
increase in knowledge of that will, our  
prayers will be both chastened, and directed  
aright. If we knew His will thorough!  
and submitted to it heartily, it would be  
impossible for us to ask any thing, for the  
spirit or for the body, which He should not  
hear and perform. And it is this ideal  
state, as always, which the Apostle has in