

spirit of a person, or his character. Perhaps we may say, that, when applied to a person, it signifies his essential character, his special personality, and his whole peculiar spirit. This character may express itself sometimes as power or authority, sometimes as spirit or life. In the case before us, therefore, to pray in the name of Christ is to pray in Christ's essential spirit. This includes, 1. reliance on his promises, 2. interest in his cause, 3. possession of his spirit or character. It is, therefore, strictly equivalent to the other expression, "to abide in him and have his words abide in us."

To pray in the name of Christ is, therefore, a very different thing from the mere formal mention of his name at the beginning or end of our prayer. It is not to begin our prayer with the phrase, "We come to Thee in the name of Jesus," or to end it with the formula, "through Jesus Christ our Lord;" nor is it to express in our prayer the intellectual opinion that we are pardoned or saved by the merits of Christ. It is not to express, as a matter of belief, that we rely on his atonement, his intercession, or his advocacy. All this we may do, and yet not pray in the name of Christ. For it is very possible that a prayer beginning and ending with these formulas, and containing quite a sincere expression of these opinions, may not include in its spirit, its aim, or its character the mind of Jesus. Its motive may be selfish, its object purely personal. And if so, it has no claim founded on this promise. It is not "the energetic prayer of the righteous man," which availeth much.

The one essential thing which is necessary to make a prayer a prayer "in the name of Jesus" is, that all its petitions should have their termination in this one, "Thy