

IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

By, Andrew Murray

1

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"Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do.... If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it.... I have ordained you...that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you.... Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.... At that day ye shall ask in My Name..." (John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24, 26).

"*In My Name*" – repeated six times over. Our Lord knew how slow our hearts would be to take it in, and He so longed that we should really believe that His Name is the power in which every knee should bow, and in which every prayer could be heard, that He did not weary of saying it over and over. Between the wonderful "*whatsoever ye shall ask*," and the divine "*I will do it*," this one word is the simple link: "*In My Name*." Our asking and the Father's giving are to be equally in the Name of Christ. Everything in prayer depends upon our apprehending this.

We know that a name is a word by which we call up to our mind the whole being and nature of an object. The Name of God is meant to express His whole divine nature and glory. The Name of Christ means His whole nature, His person and work, His disposition and Spirit. To ask in the Name of Christ is to pray in union with Him. When first a sinner believes in Christ, he only knows and thinks of His merit and intercession. To the very end that is the one foundation of our confidence.

And yet, as the believer grows in grace and enters more deeply and truly into union with Christ – that is, as he abides in Him – he learns that to pray in the Name of Christ also means in His Spirit, and in the possession of His nature as the Holy Spirit imparts it to us. As we grasp the meaning of the words, "*At that day ye shall ask in My Name*" – the day when in the Holy Spirit Christ came to live in His disciples – we shall no longer be staggered at the greatness of the promise: "*Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, I will do it*." What is asked in the Name of Christ, in union with Him, out of His nature and Spirit, must be given. As Christ's prayer nature lives in us, His prayer power becomes ours too. The honest and wholeheartedness of our surrender to all that we see that Christ seeks to be in us, will be the measure of our spiritual fitness and power to pray in His Name.

"*If ye abide in Me...*" He says, "*ye shall ask what ye will*" (John 15:7). As we live in Him, we get the spiritual power to avail ourselves of His Name. As the branch wholly given up to the life and service of the vine can count upon all its sap and strength for its fruit, so

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2

the believer, who in faith has accepted the fullness of the Spirit to possess his whole life, can indeed avail himself of all the power of Christ's Name.

Here on earth Christ as man came to reveal what prayer is. To pray in the Name of Christ we must pray as He prayed on earth; as He taught us to pray; in union with Him, as He now prays in heaven. We must in love study and in faith accept Him as our Example, our Teacher, our Intercessor.

Christ Our Example

When we realize what time Christ spent in prayer, and how the great events of His life were all connected with special prayer, we learn the necessity of absolute dependence on and unceasing direct communication with the heavenly world if we are to live a heavenly life or to exercise heavenly power around us.

Of His baptism we read, "*Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened*" (Luke 3:21). It was in prayer heaven was opened to Him, and that heaven came down to Him with the Spirit and the voice of the Father. In the power of these He was led into the wilderness, in fasting and prayer to have them tested and fully appropriated.

Early in His ministry Mark records: "*And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed*" (1:35). And somewhat later Luke tells: "*...multitudes came together to hear and to be healed...And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed*" (5:15-16).

He knew how the holiest service, preaching and healing, can exhaust the spirit; how too much interchange with men could cloud the fellowship with God; how time is needed if the spirit is to rest and root in Him; how no pressure of duty among men can free from the absolute need of much prayer. If anyone could have been satisfied with always living and working in the spirit of prayer, it would have been our Master. But He could not; He needed to have His supplies replenished by continual and long-continued seasons of prayer. To use Christ's Name in prayer surely includes this, to follow His example and to pray as He did.

Of the night before choosing His apostles we read: "*He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God*" (Luke 6:12). The first step toward the constitution of the Church, and the separation of men to be His witnesses and successors, called Him to special long-continued prayer. All had to be done according to the pattern on the mount. "*The Son can do nothing of Himself... The Father... showeth Him all things that Himself doeth*" (John 5:19-20). It was in the night of prayer it was shown Him.

IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

By, Andrew Murray

3

In the night between the feeding of the five thousand, when Jesus knew that they wanted to take Him by force and make Him King, and the walking on the sea, "*He went up into a mountain apart*" (Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46; John 6:15). It was God's will He was come to do, and God's power He was to show forth. He had it not as a possession of His own; it had to be prayed for and received from above.

The introduction to the story of the Transfiguration is "*He...went up into a mountain to pray.*" (Luke 9:28). The request of the disciples, "*Lord, teach us to pray*" (Luke 11:1), follows: "*It came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place....*" In His own personal life, in His fellowship with the Father, in all He is and does for men, the Christ whose name we are to use is a Man of prayer. It is prayer that gives Him His power of blessing, and transfigures His very body with the glory of heaven.

It is His own prayer life that makes Him the teacher of others how to pray. How much more must it be prayer, prayer alone, much prayer, that can fit us to share His glory of a transfigured life, or make us the channel of heavenly blessing and teaching to others. To pray in the Name of Christ is to pray as He prays.

Christ's life and work, His suffering and death – it was all prayer, all dependence on God, trust in God, receiving from God, surrender to God. Thy redemption, O believer, is a redemption wrought out by prayer and intercession. Your Christ is a praying Christ: the life He lived for you, the life He lives in you, is a praying life that delights to wait on God and receive all from Him. Christ is our example because He is our Head, our Savior, and our Life. In virtue of His Deity and of His Spirit He can live in us; we can pray in His Name, because we abide in Him and He in us.

Abridged from The Ministry Of Intercession by Andrew Murray.