idols: it is here emphatic, and imparts  
force and precision to **Son**.

That  
Peter when he uttered the words, understood by them in detail all that we now  
understand, is not of course asserted:  
bot that they were his testimony to the  
true Humanity and true Divinity of the  
Lord, in that sense of deep truth and reliance, out of which springs the Christian  
life of the Church.

**17.**] **Blessed art  
thou**, as in ch. v. 4, &c., is a solemn expression of blessing, an inclusion of him to  
whom it is addressed in the kingdom of  
heaven, not a mere word of praise. And  
the reason of it is, the fact that the Father  
had revealed the Son to him (see ch. xi.  
25–27); cf. Gal. i. 15, 16, in which passage  
the occurrence of the word “*reveal*” seems  
to indicate a reference to this very saying  
of the Lord. The whole declaration of St.  
Paul in that chapter forms a remarkable  
parallel to the character and promise given  
to St. Peter in our text,—as establishing  
Paul’s claim to be another such *rock* or  
*pillar* as Peter and the other great Apostles, because the Son had been revealed in  
him not of man nor by men, but by God  
Himself. The name **Simon Bar-jona** is  
doubtless used as indicating his fleshly  
state and extraction, and forming the  
greater contrast to his spiritual state,  
name, and blessing, which follow. The  
same ‘Simon son of Jonas’ is uttered when  
he is reminded, by the thrice repeated enquiry, ‘Lovest thou me?’ of his frailty, in  
his previous denial of his Lord.

**18.**]  
The name **Peter** (not now first given, but  
prophetically bestowed by our Lord on His  
first interview with Simon, John i. 43) or  
*Cephas*, signifying a rock, the termination  
being only altered from Petra to Petros  
to suit the masculine appellation, denotes  
the *personal position of this Apostle in  
the building of the Church of Christ*. He  
was the first of those *foundation-stones*(Rev. xxi. 14) on which the living temple  
of God was built: this building itself beginning on the day of Pentecost by the  
laying of *three thousand living stones* on  
this very foundation. That this is the  
simple and only interpretation of the words  
of our Lord, the whole usage of the New  
Testament shews: in which not doctrines  
nor confessions, but *men*, are uniformly the  
pillars and stones of the spiritual building.  
See 1 Pet. ii. 4–6: 1 Tim. iii. 15 (where  
the pillar is not Timotheus, but the congregation of the faithful) and note: Gal.  
ii. 9: Eph. ii. 20: Rev. iii. 12. And it is  
on Peter, as by divine revelation making  
this confession, as thus under the influence  
of the Holy Ghost, as standing out before  
the Apostles in the strength of this faith,  
as himself founded on the one foundation,  
**Jesus Christ**, 1 Cor. iii. 11—that the  
Jewish portion of the Church was built,  
Acts ii.—v., and the Gentile, Acts x., xi.  
After this last event, we hear little of him;  
but during this, the first building time, he  
is never lost sight of: see especially Acts i.  
15; ii. 14, 37; iii. 12; iv. 8; v. 15, 29;  
ix. 34, 40; x. 25, 26. We may certainly  
exclaim with Bengel, “*All this may be  
said with safety; for what has this to do  
with Rome?*” Nothing can be further  
from any legitimate interpretation of this  
promise, than the idea of a perpetual primacy in the successors of Peter; the very  
notion of *succession* is precluded by the  
form of the comparison, which concerns  
the person, and *him* only, so fur as it involves a *direct* promise. In its other and  
general sense, as applying to all those  
living stones (Peter’s own expression for  
members of Christ’s Church) of whom the  
Church should be built, it implies, as  
Origen excellently comments on it, saying, that all this must be understood as  
said not only to Peter, as in the letter of  
the Gospel, but to every one who is such  
as Peter here shewed himself, as the spirit  
of the Gospel teaches us. The application  
of the promise to St. Peter has been elaborately impugned by Dr. Wordsworth. His  
zeal to appropriate the rock to Christ  
has somewhat overshot itself. In arguing  
that the term can apply to none but God,  
he will find it difficult surely to deny all  
reference to a rock in the name Peter.  
To me, it is equally difficult, nay impossible, to deny all reference, in “upon  
this rock,” to the preceding word **Peter**.  
Let us keep to the plain straightforward  
sense of Scripture, however that sense  
may have been misused by Rome.

**church**] This word occurs but in one  
place besides in the Gospels, ch. xviii. 17,  
and there in the same sense as here, viz.  
**the congregation of the faithful**: only  
there it is one portion of that