



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Advanced Study AS016 Character Study : Peter

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1. Who Was He? The brother of another disciples - Andrew. They were both fishermen. Peter was one of three inner-circle disciples of Jesus (along with James and John). There are two indications that was married. Find them in Matthew 8 and 1 Cor 9. His original name was 'Simon'. He became the leader of the fledgling Church in Jerusalem, and wrote two of the letters in the New Testament.

The 2ndC historian Papias said that the Gospel writer Mark got his material from Peter: "*Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered of the things said or done by the Lord, though not in order.*"

2. His Call. Jesus called Peter to follow Him (Mark 1:16-18). What did Jesus mean by "follow me" and in what ways can we follow Jesus when He is not here in the flesh?

3. His 'Great Confession' (Matt 16:13-19). People's ideas of who Jesus is were inadequate. In what ways did the popular opinions fall short of the true identity of Jesus? Peter came up with the right answer. What was it and how did Peter know this? Why do you think it has been called 'The Great Confession'? Jesus gave Simon the name Peter at this point (v18) (Though He had mentioned it previously when he first met Peter - John 14:2) The name means 'stone' or 'rock'. *Cephus* (1 Cor 15:5) is the same in Aramaic. What do you think Jesus meant by "On this rock I will build My church"?

4. His Life with Jesus. Peter was present with Jesus through much or all of His three years of ministry. He must have learnt a lot from listening to Jesus and seeing Him working. Some of the incidents recorded were:

- Present at the transfiguration (Mark 9).
 - Walking on the water (Matt 14).
 - As a tempter to Jesus (Matt 16). Who was Jesus addressing when he said "Get behind me"?
 - Tried to defend Jesus in Gethsemane (Mark 14).
 - His denial of being a disciple (Mark 14).
 - The first to enter the empty tomb of Jesus (John 20).
 - Along with other disciples, met the risen Jesus in the upper room (John 20).
 - His private meeting with the resurrected Jesus and his commission (John 21).
- (According to Paul, there seems to have been an earlier one-to-one meeting - 1 Cor 15:5).

How did Peter act on these occasions, and what does his behaviour tell us of his character?

5. As Apostle and Church leader. Filled, emboldened and guided by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Peter seems almost to have become a different man. He was recognised as the leader of the Jerusalem Church.

- Preaching on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41). Read Peter's sermon and look for signs of his knowledge of God's purpose and events. How do you think he arrived at this knowledge?
- The first to take the Gospel to Gentiles (Acts 10).
- In prison for preaching about Jesus (Acts 12).
- Writing to guide believers in practising their Faith.

For Further Thought and Study: Read the incidents listed in 5 & 6 above, along with a Bible Commentary.