

PETER

Simon (Peter) was one of the first of the original twelve disciples called by Jesus. Peter was also known as Simon, Simon Peter, and Cephas. Peter was outspoken, a bold and ardent disciple, demonstrating enthusiasm and impulsiveness that frequently overshadowed the ministry of the other eleven disciples. Numerous interactions of Peter with Jesus, and lessons to be learned, are found in the gospel writings. In the end, Peter's faith and the ministry Jesus desired of him were confirmed.

Peter hailed from Bethsaida (**John 1:44**) and lived in Capernaum (**Mark 1:29**). Being cities on the coast of the Sea of Galilee, Peter became a fisherman, partnering with brothers James and John (**Luke 5:9-10**). The apostle Paul shared in his letter to the Corinthians that Peter was married (**1 Corinthians 9:5**). Simon met Jesus right after Andrew was called to be a disciple (**John 1:40-42**). Jesus immediately renamed Simon-Peter, meaning *rock*. Sometime later, Jesus extended the call to Peter to be a disciple (**Luke 5:1-11**).

During the three years of Jesus' ministry, Peter was with him. He often spoke for all of the disciples and most notably, made the confession about Jesus "you are the Christ, the son of the living God," after which Jesus declared "I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (**Matthew 16:13-20**). Not long after stating this, Jesus said to Peter, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven," (**verse 19**) a declaration that earned Peter the nickname 'gatekeeper' of heaven. As a result, he was often envisioned or characterized at the Pearly Gates, allowing or disallowing persons into heaven.

There are numerous biblical accounts of Peter. Here are a few examples that highlight the essence of who Peter was and possibly reflect characteristics God may want some of us to possess as followers of Jesus – let the Holy Spirit speak to your heart:

Present with James and John when Jesus was transfigured in their sight, followed by Moses and Elijah appearing. Peter proclaimed "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters – one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah" (**Matthew 17:1-4**).

Called by Jesus to leave the boat to walk on water. After initial success, Peter had to be rescued by Jesus when he lost focus and faith **(Matthew 14:22-33)**.

Rebuked Jesus when he indicated that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer, and die, to which Jesus sharply replied, **"Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men"** **(Matthew 16:21-28)**.

Drew a sword and cut off an ear of a servant of the high priest that came with others to arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane **(John 18:10-11)**.

Boasted he would never forsake Jesus but later denied him three times when confronted by those who had seen him with Jesus **(Matthew 26:33)**.

Spoke boldly with the anointing of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost on which 3,000 persons gave their life to Jesus Christ **(Acts 2:14-41)**.

After initial resistance, ministered to the centurion Cornelius and his family in Caesarea, an event in which many Gentiles, for the first time believed, were baptized in water and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit **(Acts 10:1-48)**. This prompted Peter to say, **"I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right"** **(verses 34-35)**. Peter would go to Jerusalem and share what had happened in Caesarea with the other apostles and church leaders, opening the door to broader ministry to all Gentiles **(Acts 11:18)**.

Wrote two amazing epistles (the letters of **1 and 2 Peter**).

Became one of the most influential leaders in the Church in the first century. By Catholic tradition, he was the first pope.

Died a martyr's death as prophesied by Jesus when being forgiven and restored from his infamous denials **(John 21:15-19)**.

Peter was an ordinary man with extraordinary experiences that yielded much fruit for the kingdom of God. He may have been bold and brash but was afraid at times and had other issues, we sometimes experience, that challenged his faith.

Jesus was patient with Peter, taught him on the spot, or shared important lessons with him at appropriate times. We can all take heart in that.

Were it left to us, we may not have picked Peter to be on the team of the twelve apostles. Fortunately, Jesus saw his potential, as he does ours, nurtured and empowered him to do great things. **Can we do any less?**

This is an introduction on the subject of **Peter**. Here are a few other resources you may wish to explore:

[Who was Peter in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[Peter in the Bible - Scripture Quotes and Summary \(biblestudytools.com\)](#)

[Who Was the Apostle Peter? The Beginner's Guide | OverviewBible](#)

[Who Was Peter and Why Was He So Important? - Bible Study \(crosswalk.com\)](#)

[67 Bible verses about Peter, The Disciple \(knowing-jesus.com\)](#)