

PETER

Matthew 16:17



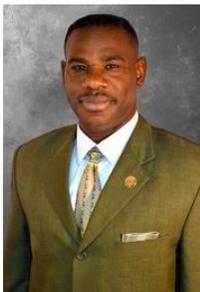
This name in Greek signifies a rock, as does also the name Cephas in Syriac. Peter was one of the twelve apostles, and was also called Simon, [Matthew 16:17](#), and Simeon, [Acts 15:14](#). He was of Bethsaida, and was the son of Jonas, a fisherman, which occupation he also followed. After his marriage he resided at Capernaum, [Matthew 8:14](#) [Luke 4:38](#), though called at a later period to labor else where as an apostle, and it would seem often accompanied in his journeys by his wife, [1 1 Corinthians 9:5](#).

When first introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew, he received from Him the name of Peter, [John 1:42](#), probably in reference to the boldness and firmness of his character, and his activity in promoting his Master's cause. He received his second call, and began to accompany Christ, at the Sea of Galilee near his residence, and thenceforth learned to be a "fisher of men," [Matthew 4:18-20](#) [Luke 5:1-11](#). Many remarkable incidents are recorded in the gospels, which illustrate his character. Among these are, his attempt to walk on the water to meet Christ, [Matthew 14:29](#); his avowal of the Messiahship and divinity of the Savior, [Matthew 16:16](#); his errors as to the design of Christ's incarnation, [Matthew 16:22-23](#); his warm attachment to the divine Teacher, [John 6:67-69](#); his cutting off the ear of Malchus, [John 18:10](#); his boastful determination to adhere to his Master under all circumstances, and his subsequent denial of Him with oaths, [Matthew 26:74](#) [Mark 14:29](#) [John 13:37-38](#); his poignant repentance, [Matthew 26:75](#), and our Lord's forgiveness, after receiving an assurance of his love, which was thrice uttered as his denial of Christ had been, [John 21:15-18](#).

The death and resurrection of Christ, and the circumstances, which accompanied them, led to a wonderful change in the apostle's mind, and thenceforward his bold and steadfast course is worthy of his name. On the day of Pentecost, he was one of the principal witnesses for the Savior; in company with John he soon after healed a lame man at the temple gate, addressed the assembled crowd, was imprisoned, and fearlessly vindicated himself before the Sanhedrin, [Acts 4:8-21](#). We find him afterwards denouncing the judgment of God on a guilty couple who had dared to lie to the Holy Ghost, [Acts 5:1-11](#); visiting Samaria, and rebuking Simon the magician, [Acts 8:5-24](#); healing Eneas and raising Dorcas to life at Lydda, [Acts 9:32-43](#); seeing at Joppa a vision which prepared him to preach the gospel to the gentile Cornelius, [Acts 10:1-48](#); imprisoned by Herod Agrippa, and delivered by an angel, [Acts 12:3-19](#); and taking a part in the council at Jerusalem, [Acts 15:7-11](#).

The Bible gives us little information as to his subsequent labors; but it is probable that the three apostles who were most distinguished by the Savior while upon earth continues to be favored as chief instruments in advancing his cause. Paul speaks of "James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars," [Galatians 2:9](#). Yet in the same chapter we find him publicly reproving Peter for his wavering course in respect to the demands of Judaizing Christians, which he had been one of the first to repel at Jerusalem, [Acts 15:9](#). He seems to have labored at Corinth, [1 1 Corinthians 1:12](#) 3:22, and at Babylon, [1 Peter 5:13](#). Papal writers affirm that he was the bishop of Rome. But the evidence is strongly against this assertion. Paul wrote to the Roman Christians, giving them directions and saluting the principal persons by name; he also wrote six letters from Rome; but in none of these letters, nor in the narrative in Acts, is there the slightest intimation that Peter was or had been at Rome. And as Peter never resided at Rome, he was never made the head of the church universal. Whatever honor and authority he received from Christ, in establishing the first institutions of Christianity and declaring what it enjoined and from what it released, [Matthew 16:18-19](#), the other apostles also received, [Matthew 18:18](#)[John 20:23](#) [1 1 Corinthians 5:3,5](#) [Ephesians 2:20](#) [Revelation 21:14](#).

It is traditionally held that he was crucified upside down at his own request, since he saw himself unworthy to be crucified in the same way as Jesus. Tradition holds that he was crucified at the site of the Clementine Chapel.



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