

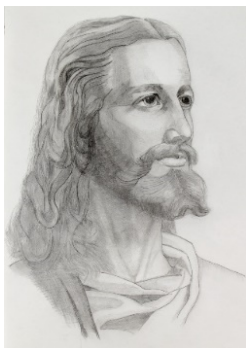


Was Peter the first Pope? – The Rock & Keys

Many people, have been taught that Jesus was referring to Peter as the foundation of the church when He spoke the words of Matthew 16:18, “Upon this Rock I will build my church”.

But does the Bible teach God’s church would be built upon the frailty of man? Especially a man Jesus rebuked a few minutes later with these words found in **Matthew 16:23** “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me?”

Understanding Jesus’ words in Matthew 16 hinges on two important points. The first point is knowing who Jesus is speaking too? The second point is identifying the Greek word Jesus used when He referred to Peter.

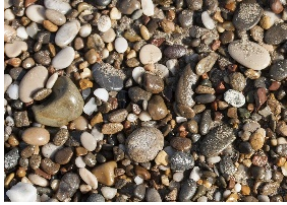


In **Matthew 16:13** we clearly see Jesus is not speaking to one person, but to all His disciples, asking them, “**Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?**” After a short discourse between the disciples and Jesus, Peter confesses in **Matthew 16:16** saying, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”. Responding to Peter’s profession Jesus says in **Matthew 16:18** “... thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Then in **Matthew 16:19-20**, Jesus, now speaking to all the disciples says, “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.”

We’ll come back to the keys and the binding and losing in a minute, but first, let’s examine Jesus’ words when Jesus said “Thou are Peter”.

The Greek word Jesus used for Peter is used 161 times in the New Testament, and it always refers to Simon Peter. That word is “Petros”, which means “pebble” or “rolling stone”.



Peter's character was accurately portrayed as a rolling stone, especially in the light of his confession, that he would die for Jesus, then hours later he denied Jesus three times, saying he never knew Him.



After Jesus called Peter, Petros, the pebble, He said, "upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The word Jesus used here for "rock", was not Peter's name Petros, but "Petra", which refers to a huge, unmoving boulder. This word Petra is never used to designate Peter. Instead it is used repeatedly to describe Jesus, as found in **1 Corinthians 10:4**, where Christ is identified as the Rock, or Petra.

In other words, the church was not built upon unstable Peter, the Petros, the pebble or rolling stone, but upon Christ, the Petra, the unmovable boulder, the Rock of our Salvation!



In addition, Peter did not conquer the gates of hell, but Jesus did! Certainly Jesus proved the gates of hell would not prevail against Him when He resurrected from the dead in triumphant victory. As it is written in **1 Corinthians 15:54-55**, "... Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The Greek word used here for "grave" is the word "Hades", translated as the abode of the dead, the grave, or hell.



You may be wondering, how did the idea that the church was built on Peter get started in the first place? Quite simply, the Catholic Church seeking to have power over the people, sought for a way to tie their false doctrines to the early Christian church. They could think of no better way to do this, than to claim Peter was the first Pope, and they were the successors to Peter, having the keys of the kingdom and the power to bind or loose on earth.

The Papacy knew if they could pull off this deception, that millions would be deceived into believing the Catholic Church is God's true church. Thus millions who did not dig deep and study the Scriptures for themselves would blindly follow them.

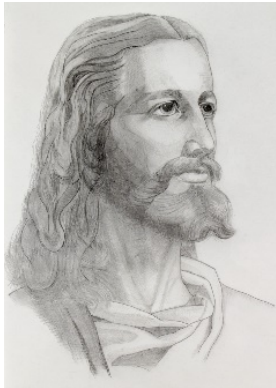


During the latter part of the Dark Ages, God raised up the Protestant Reformation to begin restoring the Bible truths the Roman church had trampled underfoot.



So what about those keys of the kingdom with the power to bind or loose on earth? Did Jesus give this power to Peter alone? No He did not! When Jesus spoke those words in Matthew 16:19-20 He was speaking to all His disciples. You can know this is true because two chapters later Jesus did it again.

In **Matthew 18:1** Jesus' disciples come to Him asking a question and Jesus begins to answer them. In **verses 15 through 17**, after telling them how to handle a brother who trespasses against them, Jesus then repeats **to all His disciples** the same words He spoke to them in Matthew chapter 16.



Here in **Matthew 18:18** Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Therefore Peter was not the only disciple to have this power, Jesus gave this council for all Christian church leadership to follow! Peter, the rolling stone is not the foundation of God's church! Jesus is, and if you still need more proof, then listen to these words from Paul, who wrote the majority of the New Testament, and who plainly says Jesus is the foundation of the church.



1 Corinthians 3:10-11 "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. ¹¹ For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."



Yes my friend, Jesus Christ is the foundation Rock, the Petra, the unmovable boulder of God's church! I encourage you to read your Bibles, dig deep and study to show yourself approved of God. Love Jesus with all your heart, and follow Him, wherever He leads.

The transcript above, created on May 12th 2018, goes along with the Whiteboard video titled, “Peter the 1st Pope? – The Rock & Keys” published on YouTube May 11, 2018 by: Eric Garloff, President, Sapphire Throne Media.

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